



# Romford Division



## Dates for the Diary

**Committee Meeting:** Thursday 13th November, 7:30pm, via Zoom.

**Next Division Meeting:** Thursday 6th November

**Topic:** The Effect of Pesticides On Nature

**Venue:** St Nicholas Church, Elm Park

**Woodcote Avenue, Hornchurch RM12 4PY**

[Link to Map](#)

**Speaker:** Nick Mole, Pesticides Action Network

**Julie Mugglestone and Colleen Manley**

**Demonstrating Soap Making at last month's meeting.**



**NOVEMBER Beekeeping Notes**

All feeding should be finished by now. (If you worry that the stores may not last all winter, then have some fondant available to give them **later on**.)

Close off the ventilation at the top of the hive and put some insulation under the roof. Most important is that the **Queen Excluder** should be **OFF**, and **mouse guards and woodpecker guards** should be **on**. I remove the varroa insert but some people like to keep it in. Just make sure it does not get too damp, it is damp that kills bees, not cold.

Check that the hives are on stable stands, on slabs, not grass or earth, and strap the boxes together if your apiary is windy. Maybe a brick or two on top as well.

The final job for the year is to clean your spare equipment. Assess your super combs and discard any with pollen in them as this will go mouldy in winter. Any frames (super or brood) that have had brood in them will attract wax moth, so these will need to be discarded, or frozen to kill the wax moth eggs and larvae. Clean off propolis from frames you are keeping and repair equipment where needed. That's your outdoor jobs done!

Indoors you need to finish and tidy your beekeeping records now as you will not remember what happened by spring! Make your plans for 2026 and take advantage of sales. It's not long till Christmas!

**Pat Allen**

**Yellow Legged Hornet (YLH) Update**

I would like to say that the number of YLH reports had slowed down, but 6 more nests have been discovered this month alone.

As of 23rd October, the Animal and Plant Health Agency's National Bee Unit (NBU) informed us that they have received further credible reports of YLH's. This means that currently there has been a total of 527 sightings in 2025.

**Kent;** Alkham, Womenswold, Brook, St Margaret's, Godmersham

**East Sussex;** Wadhurst

As of 23rd October, 155 confirmed nests have been found this year.

**Garry Furnell, YLH Coordinator.**

**ROMFORD HONEY SHOW**

Great to see so many exhibits. Given the very challenging hot weather our bees have done an amazing job.

Well done to all those members who entered the show and congratulations to this year's winners. Special thanks go to Jim McNeill for stepping in to judge at the very last minute, this being due to cancellations by not just one but three judges for various reasons.

If you missed it this year, make sure next year's show and supper get booked into your diary early.

**Angela Mander**

**Photos can be seen on the next two pages**

Romford Honey Show, photos Supplied by Sue Richardson





## Romford Honey Show, photos Supplied by Sue Richardson



## Soap Making Using Wax, Julie Mugglestone 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025

An initial word of warning from Julie;

***To make soap you use caustic soda and distilled water, which has to be poured into a stainless steel dish. It is imperative that you use stainless steel. Julie warned that If you use aluminium or a glass Pyrex bowl the caustic soda could cause an explosion.***

***If you want to sell your cosmetics you have to abide by an enormous amount of legislation and have your product tested. if you have the required safety assessment for making lavender soap and decide to change one ingredient, to make lemongrass soap instead for example, you will need to apply for a new safety assessment.***

you can look up what is required to sell cosmetics on the internet, there are plenty of recipes and good information online. The internet gives you a basic guide of what you have to conform to. Soaps, balms, hand creams can be given to friends and relations are not required to be covered by legislation if they are given as gifts. If you plan to sell your soap you will need to take out liability insurance to protect yourself against any legalities brought against you.

Now the warning is out of the way, let's make soap! You have to wear a mask, long trousers, tops with long sleeves and rubber gloves so that you are completely protected. PPE is very important!

Firstly, pour distilled water into your stainless steel container, which is put to stand on a heat proof mat. Sodium hydroxide (lye) is added to the water. Always add the lye to the water, not the other way around! Stir and leave to cool.

Heat a separate bowl in a Bain Marie until the water reaches 49 degrees, and add in Olive oil, castor oil and shea butter, gently mix the ingredients. If you are using coconut oil, stand the coconut oil container in hot water so that it melts before adding it to your mix, then add one tablespoon of honey if desired (for honey soap). Lastly check the distilled water (lye) mix, it will have taken a while to cool and the ideal temperature to use it is 49 degrees, if it is not cool enough wait before adding it to your ingredients. Make sure you're wearing goggles, and your skin is covered still!

Once the distilled water and lye have completely dissolved and all oils have melted, add 7.2 grammes of wax into your mix. At this point you can add your fragrances (doing so earlier will cause them to evaporate). Lemon grass, lavender or rose, which can be added along with rose petals.

Blend together using an electric whisk making sure to mix well to the consistency that almost looks like a smoothie. It will gradually thicken until it leaves a trail rather like whisked double cream would leave. Tap the tin on the bottom to make all the bubbles rise to the top and burst. The mixture will resemble the consistency of thick custard. Pour into moulds before it starts to set. Tap the moulds again to release any further bubbles. You can sculpt the top of your soap with a patten if desired when it is in the mould.

Once the soap has been in the mould for 24-48 hours remove it from the mould and place on parchment paper, afterwards continuing to turn every day to eliminate water. It has to be left for four weeks before it can be used.

Julie made 12 bars of soap. The ingredients costing £34.73 would make 36 bars of soap.

### ***Jilly Speakman-Bell***

#### **Julie's Ingredients by weight:**

Olive Oil	358g
Coconut Oil	225g
Shea butter	177g
Castor Oil	32g
Beeswax	7.2g
Distilled water	276g
Lye, sodium Hydroxide	111g
Honey	1 tbsp
Fragrance	2 tbsp

#### ***A photo of the finished product***





## Essex County Conference

The theme of the conference was “the health and well-being of Bees and Beekeepers”

The first of the speakers was Kevin Thorn, he is a bee farmer with 50 plus hives around Lavenham Suffolk. His goal is to improve his Bees to be calm, healthy and productive. While working to educate beekeepers in his area.

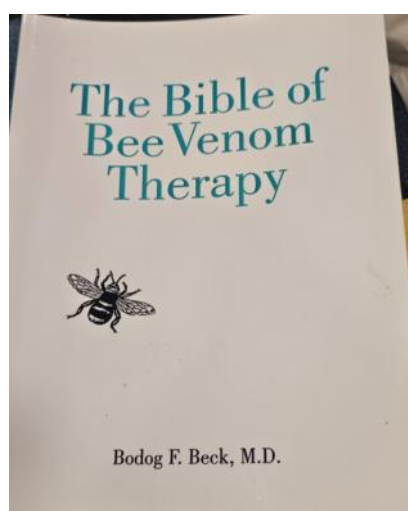
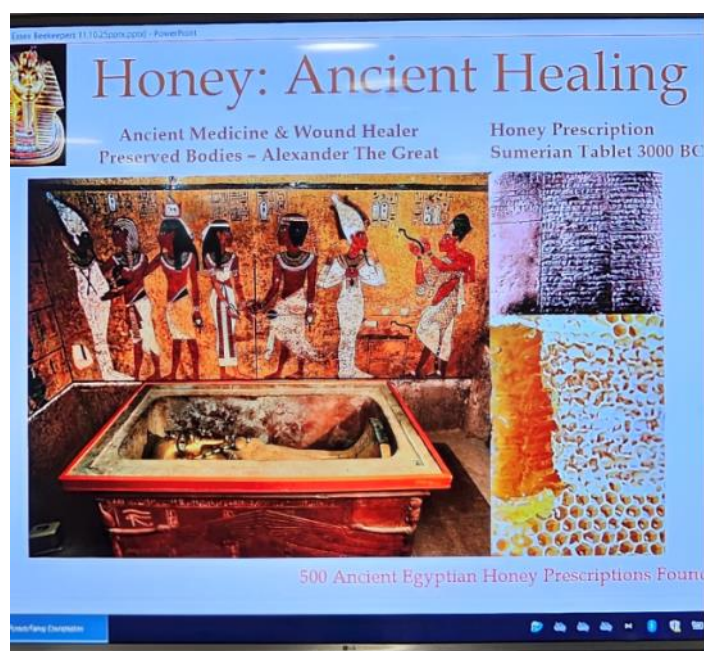
The second speaker was Bridget Strawbridge, a wildlife gardener, amateur naturalist and advocate of bees. She writes and campaigns to raise awareness of the important of diversity of native wild bees and has published a book [“Dancing with Bees”](#)

The third speaker was Dr Gerry Brierley who practices “Apitherapy” - the healing powers of the honeybee. Gerry became very ill with Lyme disease which is a debilitating condition, she found use of bee stings helped in her treatment of the disease and has since open up her research into other uses of the bee products such as; propolis, pollen, royal jelly.

I thought all three speakers were very good and well worth my day. Thanks to Colchester Beekeepers' Association.

**Garry Furnell**

**Photos of some of source material for the last conference speaker, Dr Gerry Brierley**



**National Honey Show Entries**

The list of winner's entries from the NHS that I took on behalf of our Romford Members

2 Jars Light Honey 2nd

2 Jars Medium Honey VHC

2 Jars Dark Honey 3rd

1 Jar Gift Honey 3rd

They will get their certificates at the Christmas Social

**Jim McNeill**

**December Meeting**

**Thursday 4th December, 8pm.** This will be our **pre-Christmas Get-together** back in the usual place - Chadwick Hall (behind St Michael's Church), Gidea Park, RM2 5EL.

Everyone is welcome, bring the family. No speaker, but we usually have a fun quiz, though there is no guarantee of prizes!!

Please bring some food to share, and bring your own drink and glasses.

Please also will you **each** bring a small, wrapped gift so that everyone gets a gift in the free raffle.

**Pat Allen**

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