



Beginners' Course

2025

Session 1

**Meet the Team + more
about beekeeping**

Agenda

Item	Description	Lead	Duration
1	Introduction and Course Overview	Sue	10 mins
2	About the Association	Colin	10 mins
3	Meet the Committee Members	Team	25 mins
4	Get to know each other	Sue	20 mins
5	Tea Break		15 mins
6	You want to be a beekeeper	Colin	15 mins
7	Mentors	Sue	5 mins
8	Getting your bees, equipment, & provisions	Colin	10 mins
9	Future Association Meetings	Sue	5 mins
10	Q&A	Sue	10 mins

Housekeeping (For us not the Bees!)



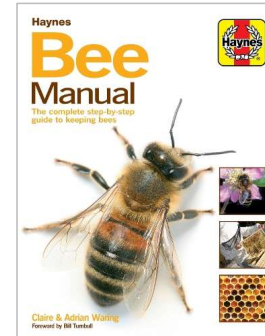
Course Overview

AIM: To provide a basic theoretical introduction to Beekeeping followed with a practical session to enable progression towards successful and competent beekeeping

Date	Subject
18 th January	Meet the Team + more about beekeeping
25 th January	Lifecycle of the Honey Bee
1 st February	Equipment
1 st March	Wintering and Spring build up
15 th March	Swarm Management
22 nd March	Pests and Diseases
29 th March	Honey and Hive Products

Key Resources

- Haynes Bee Manual: Claire and Adrian Waring
- Northamptonshire Beekeepers' Association (NBKA)
 - Website <https://northantsbees.org.uk>
 - Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/groups/Northantsbees>
 - Library
- British Beekeepers Association (BBKA)
Website <https://www.bbka.org.uk>
- National Bee Unit (BeeBase)
Website <https://www.nationalbeeunit.com>

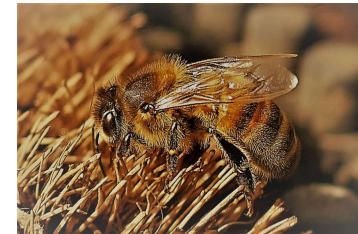


About the Association (1)

Founded in 1882 - became a Registered Charity in 1987



Primary objective: “to advance the education of the public in apiculture in Northamptonshire”



A member organisation i.e. accountable to our members and members vote for the committee of officers and other trustees elected annually at the Annual General Meeting

We are a part of the British Beekeepers' Association (itself a member organisation)



About the Association (2)

Monthly meetings with presentations/ lectures

Training – courses & advice/ assistance from other members and education for schools and others

NBKA Apiary - practical beekeeping instruction & advice

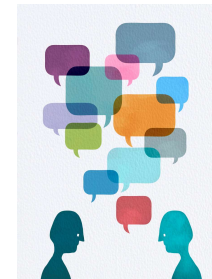
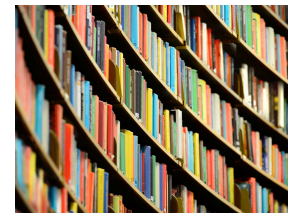
Volunteering at local events

Honey extraction equipment available for hire

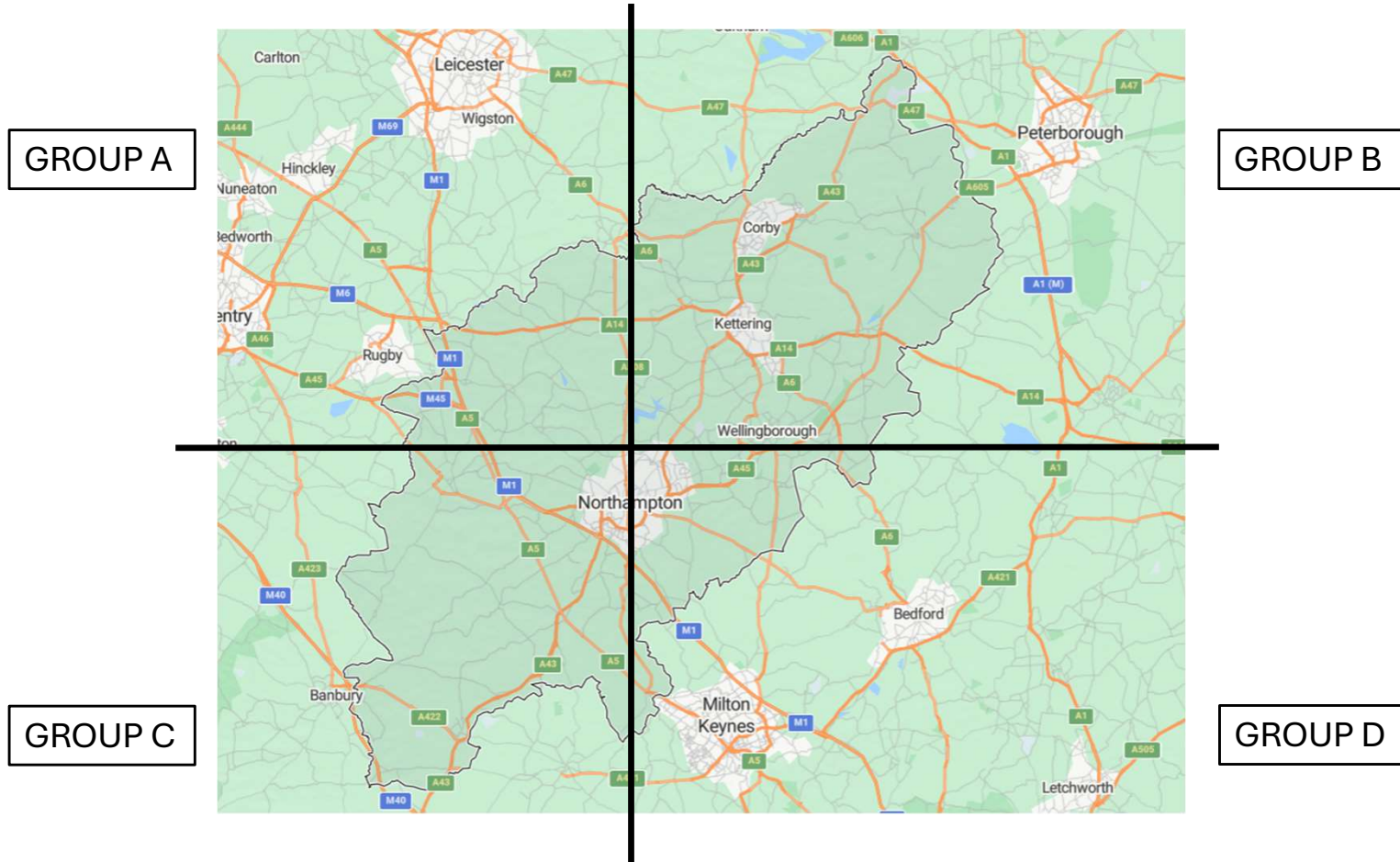


Meet the Committee and Team Members

- President: Derek Holmes – Equipment Steward + Librarian
- Chair: Colin Dillon Davies – Apiary Team + Asian Hornet Action Team Coordinator
- Secretary: Mike Hall (+ Membership Secretary)
- Treasurer: Ray Goodman
- Hazel Goodman - Vice Chair + Events Coordinator
- Phillipa Williams - Programme Organiser + Safeguarding
- Tricia Wood – Communications
- Sue Sneesby - Training
- Phillipa Ferguson
- Andrew Gudger
- Phillip Shepherd
- Angela Litchfield
- Liam Simpson
- Graham Padden



Get to know each other



Get to know each other (2)

Questions to consider:

- Have you kept bees before?
- Why are you interested in beekeeping?
- What are you excited/ nervous about?



COFFEE/ TEA BREAK





You want to be a Beekeeper

- Apiculture = the keeping of bees and a study of their life and habits
- Keeping Honey bees, *Apis mellifera*, is a fascinating and rewarding pursuit

Key considerations for being a Beekeeper

Your role

- Pollinating insects provide important economic and ecological benefits to humans, wildlife and flowering plants
- Honey bees, *Apis mellifera*, are the third most economically important agricultural livestock globally after cattle and pigs



- **Managing livestock – you have a duty of care to look after them properly**
- **Requires time and physical input:**
 - e.g. Summer – weekly inspections, moving parts of the hive full of honey
- **Any disease needs appropriate management**

Key considerations for being a Beekeeper

Location

Where to keep bees – the site = an apiary

- Good access in all weathers and sufficient space
- Avoid frost pockets
- Sunny, well-drained & firm ground. Sheltered from prevailing winds & damp
- Nearby clean water source and forage
- Away from public footpaths and bridleways
- Consider your neighbours and their pets (an out-apiary may be better)



Key considerations for being a Beekeeper

Stings

- Prevention is best :–
 - (i) have gentle bees
 - (ii) wear protective clothing
 - (iii) choosing sensible times and weather to open hives
 - (iv) correct use of smoke and gentle handling
- When not prevented the sting, venom sac and venom pump are left in the skin – best to remove as quickly as possible and clean the wound.
[If appropriate antihistamine cream/ tablets can be used (seek GP consultation regarding interactions with other medications etc.)]
- Anaphylactic shock
SEEK EMERGENCY HELP IMMEDIATELY
If you know you have an allergy to bee stings it is inadvisable to undertake beekeeping unless you have discussed this with a qualified medical practitioner



Mentors



- An allocated local NBKA member who can give a less experienced beekeeper help and advice over a period of time
- Useful help to develop and effectively manage your colony on a practical basis (and hopefully in harvesting honey!)
- A helpful reminder for all the bits of this course you forget or have only heard of in theory!
- Passing on experience, knowledge (and opinion)



Getting your bees, equipment, & provisions

- Don't panic/ rush – there's time!
- Bees – we aim to provide a swarm to each Beginner who:
 - (i) has completed the course
 - (ii) wants a swarm
 - (iii) is ready (i.e. has an apiary set-up & equipment)
- Sign up on the swarm list



Getting your bees, equipment, & provisions

- Equipment session on 1st February
- Basics:
 - 1) A hive (including frames and wax)
 - 2) A bee suit + gloves
 - 3) A hive tool
 - 4) A smoker
 - 5) A tool tray/ box
 - 6) Soda crystals, bucket and a sponge



Getting your bees, equipment, & provisions

- Honey and hive products – session on 29th March
- Extracting honey is exciting, tasty.... And sticky!
- Equipment - can be borrowed from NBKA
- Jars – can be purchased from the Sales Steward
- Candles etc. – more to follow



Future Association Meetings

- 8th Feb - Keith Bartlem: Flying with Bees
- 8th Mar - Colin Dillon-Davies: Yellow Legged Hornets (AKA Asian Hornets); Northants AHAT & Strategy
- 12th Apr - Dave Bonner: Nucs- Nice things come from small packages
- 10th May - Jim Vivian-Griffiths: Swarming- Opportunity or Problem
- 14th Jun - NBU Bee Health Day
- 12th Jul - Summer BBQ
- Aug - no meeting
- 13th Sept - Kevin Thorn: What Beekeepers worry about and don't need to
- 11th Oct - Honey Show
- 8th Nov - Dr Gerry Brierly: 100 years of Beekeeping
- 13th Dec - Christmas social

NBKA Honey Show 2023



Q&A



or email: nbkatrainingeducation@gmail.com if
you have questions after we've finished