



**YORKSHIRE**  
BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

# **Yorkshire Beekeepers' Association Newsletter March 2021**

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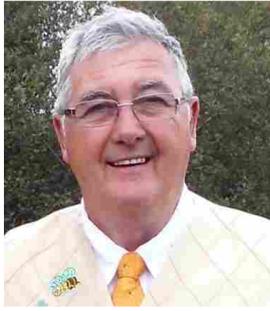
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**Chairman's Reports:** As I am penning this message to you all, it is the beginning of March. I am a little late in getting this to Chris our editor, for which I apologise.

Spring is just around the corner and our bees are starting to move again on milder days.

In our gardens the hellebores, crocuses and snowdrops are all in flower and in the hedgerows are hazel catkins, with the first black thorn blossom just starting to show. All allow our worker bees to bring in a little fresh nectar and, more importantly, fresh pollen to supplement remaining winter stores, to feed the ever-hungry brood as our queens increase their rate of lay.

With luck and, possibly, a little more feeding all our hives and nukes will get through the winter and start to build up once nicely once again.

I hope you are all looking forward to our Zoom module training and Zoom talks? Don't forget our very first Zoom YBKA Delegates Meeting on the 27th of March. We would like at least one and hopefully two delegates from each of our 22 associations to attend, to allow for a good, representative, meeting to deal with all the business of the day and to spread the word on what is happening back in the districts. To date we have heard back from 14:22 of our Yorkshire district associations that will be attending. Relevant reports from committee officers have been sent out already for associations to read and discuss. Hopefully, this will now allow time on the day to be spent answering your questions on the information you have received. There have been no formal propositions, as such, put forward by any association for consideration, but a couple of matters raised recently will be shared on the day for you to consider.

We have some great speakers and subject matter included in the agenda of our Zoom talks over the next two months. I hope each member can take the opportunity to benefit from this programme, and encourage you to book a place through the links issued by Clare, our Education and Training Officer. Clare and the team are now working on the autumn program of tutorials and possible future talks, should this dreadful lock down continue.

Dave Shannon

YBKA Chairman

## Beverley BKA's Annual Auction Sunday 27th June

Our annual auction of beekeeping equipment and colonies of bees is to be held at the usual venue - Woodmansey Village Hall, Long Lane, Woodmansey, Beverley, HU17 0RN.

Viewing of lots commences 10:30, auction commences 11:00.  
For further information please check the Beverley BKA website -

<http://www.beverleybeekeepers.co.uk/2020/>

or Dave Hodgson on 07875 393588.

## BBKA Spring Convention



*Spring 2021  
Convention*  
16-18 April 2021



**The BBKA  
Spring Convention  
An Armchair Event**

**The Spring Convention 2021 will be an on-line 'virtual' event**  
Speakers include: Keith Delaplane (USA), Steve Pernal (Canada) and from the UK - Steve Martin, Celia Davis, Nicola Bradbear, Marin Anastasov, Jane Medwell, Rinke Vinkenog, Colin Pavey, Lynfa Davies, Matthew Pound, Shirley & Richard Bond and more – Plus the Virtual Trade Show and Social Activity.  
Visit [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk) for more news and event updates

# Explanation of the new online BBKA Module Exam and Practical Assessment application system

BBKA has moved from a paper-based application system with payment either by cheque or phone to an online system. The new system is very easy to use and, dare I say, foolproof!

I will describe the application process from start to finish from the candidate point of view.

1. You look at the "Education & Exams" section of members area on the BBKA website and decide that you wish to apply to sit a module exam and a practical assessment. (say Module 1 online in March 2022 and Microscopy in November 2021)
2. You email your association education/examination secretary or me with your name and membership number. All you need to say is that you want the BBKA exams application link. You do not have to state which exam you want to sit. (If you do not know your membership number your association membership secretary will be able to provide it to you).
3. Once your association education/examination secretary or I have received your request we will send you an email link from the BBKA eR2 membership system. This link will look something like:

BBKA Examinations - online application form Inbox X

Beekeeping Membership Services <noreply@membershipservices.org.uk>  
to me

Thank you for your interest in taking a BBKA examination.

If you wish to proceed with your application please click on the link below to complete the online application form:

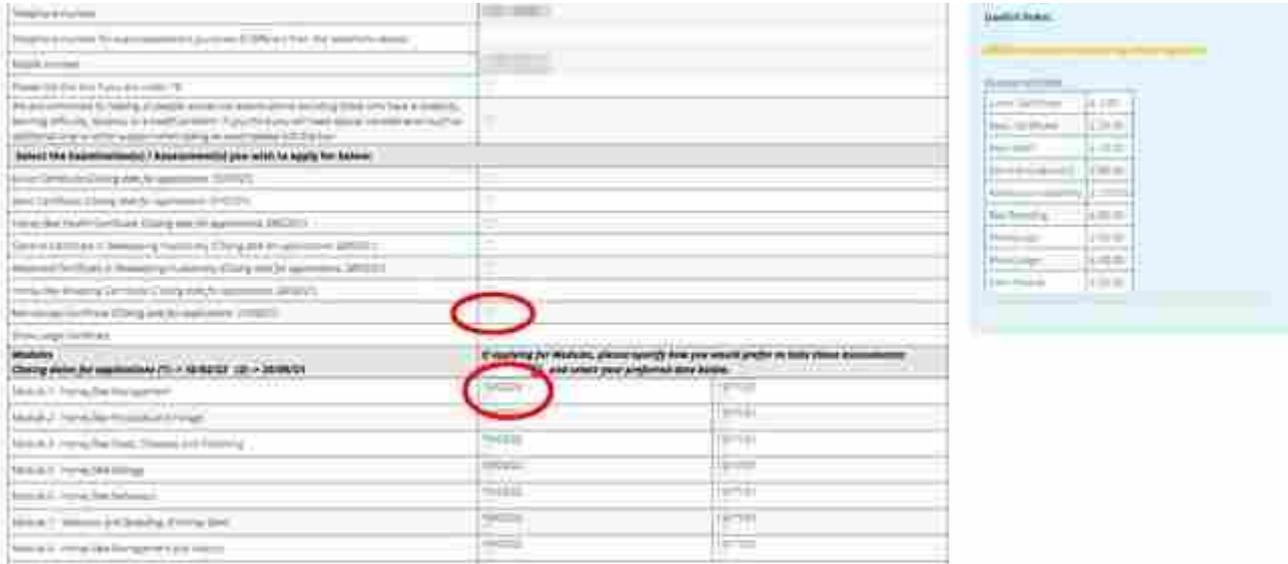
<https://er2.membershipservices.org.uk/ExaApplyOnline/0a>

Should you have any questions, or if you would prefer not to apply online, please contact your local Exam Secretary.

Yours sincerely

The BBKA Examinations Board

4. You just click on the blue hyperlink in the email, and it will take you to the online application form.
5. You complete the application form and select the exams that you wish to sit. (in our example we said Module 1 online in 2022 and Microscopy in 2021) The application form will look something like:



6. Once you submit the form you will be taken to the BBKA online payment portal where the total fees for your exams will be shown. You can pay by credit or debit card.
7. You will then receive an email acknowledgement and that is the end of the process.

Please note that if you are applying to do the Junior, Basic or the Bee Health Practical Assessment then you **MUST** speak to your association education/exams secretary before applying. This is because the assessment will be carried out in your association apiary or another association's apiary and each association may have different guidance and policies on how, when and where the assessments take place.

Please do not hesitate to contact your association education/exam secretary or me ([examination@ybka.org.uk](mailto:examination@ybka.org.uk)) should you require any further information.

Below is a list of names of the district examination secretaries by association that are on eR2.

<b>District Association Examination Secretaries</b>		
<b>Branch#</b>	<b>Association</b>	<b>Name</b>
11	Barkston Ash	Tony Bowey
12	Barnsley	Val Francis
13	Beverley	Patrick Lynch
14	Darlington	Shirley Bond
17	Doncaster	Liz Morris
18	Easingwold	
19	Halifax	Elaine Robinson
19	Halifax	Paddy Walker
21	Huddersfield	
22	Airedale	Chris Hardy
23	Leeds	Cath Graham
24	Malton	David White
25	Northallerton	Angus Deas
26	Richmond	Keith Bartlem
27	Bradford	
28	Ryedale	Rhona Sutherland
29	Scarborough	Steve Muchow
31	Rotherham	Bronwen White
32	York & District	Patricia Rains
32	York & District	Bruno Hannemann
33	Wharfedale	Laurie Prowse
34	Wakefield	Mark Buckley
34	Wakefield	Mark Millard
35	Whitby	Tony Jefferson
37	Selby	Chriss Line

**Note: BBKA has stated that it hopes to run practical assessments in 2021 and that all arrangements will be dependent on COVID 19 restrictions.**

Kirit Gordhandas,  
YBKA Examination & Assessment Secretary  
examination@ybka.org.uk

**BBwear 10% discount for district BKA members –  
new arrangements to claim this offer**

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Please note that Beekeeping Supplies UK are now offering this facility on

behalf of BBwear. Members are asked to use this route and the discount code below, rather than going direct to BBwear.

“To obtain the 10% discount on BBwear clothing, your members can use the discount code YBKA10 on [www.beekeepingsuppliesuk.com](http://www.beekeepingsuppliesuk.com)

If you could please request that they do not go directly to BBwear, it would be appreciated.

BBwear were getting a bit irritated with people calling about the discount, and I don't want them to stop letting me offer it.

We do hold some stock of the BBwear range however, most orders will be dispatched directly from BBwear.

If anyone has any questions, they are free to contact me using the details below.”

Thanks,

Mark Pettitt

Beekeeping Supplies UK Ltd

[sales@beekeepingsuppliesuk.com](mailto:sales@beekeepingsuppliesuk.com)

07743879761

## March in the Apiary

Well February went from sub-zero to + 8/10C overnight. The bees started flying and then the temperature went bitterly cold again. The bees must not know whether they are coming or going.

March can also be a temperamental month and, to me, is the most critical month of the year for the bees. Many of the winter bees are dying and the colony is approaching its weakest, just when the queen will be increasing her rate of lay, resulting in more mouths to feed. Clearly stores can be in short supply so it is important to continue hefting the hive or, on a warm still sunny day (above 10C), you can take a quick look at the feed levels by lifting the crown board. It is not time to start undertaking full inspections which will cause precious brood temperature to drop. A majority of beekeepers wait until April to conduct a full brood inspection, ideally when the temperatures are starting to reach 14C.

There is the debate of whether to feed syrup or fondant. I personally continue with fondant throughout March. If planning to give a liquid feed it is best to check the long-range weather forecast to ensure there are no cold spells predicted. If providing a liquid feed, it is best to use a contact feeder

allowing bees immediate access to the feed and limiting the amount they are able to take. The intention is to provide syrup that the bees will use as an immediate feed, rather than store in cells. If making syrup yourself, at this time of year, the strength should be 1:1. (that is 1kg of sugar stirred into 1.25 litres of hot water, or 1lb of sugar to 1 pint of water, in old money). This is referred to as a light syrup. Remember not to use brown sugar as it contains impurities that can upset a bee's digestive system. Also remember not to overheat the syrup as heating sugar can change its nature.

### **Contact feeder above crown board (use an empty super as an eke)**



Pollen supplements can be fed throughout March, especially if the weather prevents bees from flying and collecting pollen themselves. Good nutrition is essential for larval development. Pollen intake in the first 5 days of an emerged bee is essential for gland development ensuring they can perform all the future duties required of them.

On a warm day, old floors can be replaced with clean and if you under-supervised going into winter, those supers can be removed. Remember, if performing these tasks, be quick, causing minimal disturbance to the colony. I tend to find that if the super was on top the bees will be occupying it and the queen has most likely started laying in it.

If you are unfortunate enough to find a colony that has died, try to establish what happened. Close the colony up to prevent robbing, or, ideally, take it away to thoroughly sterilize the boxes before putting them back to use in the coming season. A sample of bees can be taken, and a check conducted for Nosema. If you do not know how to do this or don't have a microscope, I am sure an association microscopist would check the sample for you. A sample of 30 bees is required in a container such as a matchbox.

If you find bees with their rear ends sticking out of the cells this is an indication that the bees have starved. Bees can often become isolated from

food stores elsewhere within the colony when temperatures deter them from leaving the cluster. If the bees have been dead for some time the combs are likely to be mouldy.

March is the time of year to really make sure you have all the equipment available that you may need entering the spring. You need to prepare for the season ahead and perhaps refresh yourself on what to expect when conducting your first brood inspection. Be particularly aware of the brood diseases. I hope many of you joined the YBKA module sessions on Pests and Diseases, that were excellent. If not, there is a lot of material on 'Beebase' to help refresh your knowledge. You can download colony record sheets from the BBKA website, if you do not have a recording system of your own, to make a note of your findings at each inspection throughout the year. These can be found in the Members' area, under 'Members' Resources'.

Finally, as spring approaches we need to be aware that many insects that hibernate will be emerging to make increase and this includes the Asian Hornet (*Vespa velutina*) queens. Whilst there were very few Asian Hornet reports last year, with just the one nest located in Gosport Hampshire, we must remain vigilant regarding this invasive species. Once established, the Asian Hornet could have devastating effects upon honey bee colonies and other native pollinators. Set out monitoring traps around apiaries. Coming out of hibernation, the queens will be searching for carbohydrates such as nectar. An ideal bait is a sweet solution, such as 'Trappit', a wasp bait. When using monitoring traps remember to check them regularly so that you can release any bio catch.

You can make a monitoring trap and the NBU have a leaflet on Beebase with instructions on how to produce one from a plastic bottle. There is also a 'YouTube' video recording. I am aware that the NBU will be releasing information on how to produce a mark 2 version, soon, which is easier to make.

## **NBU design Monitoring Trap**



Being optimistic the sun will shine, the flowers will bloom as early as mid-March and the bees will burst into life as winter is over!

'Til next month  
Mark Millard

## **BIBBA Free Webinars**

Details of free BIBBA webinars are here:

<https://bibba.com/webinars-four/>

**Two top talks for your diary! Open to all YBKA members**

**Thursday, March 18th, 7-9pm: Dr Jamie Ellis and Mating biology of the honeybee**

Register at:

[https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcrfu2vqz0uHtOowabl7tRjyAKor\\_M4Xo dx](https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcrfu2vqz0uHtOowabl7tRjyAKor_M4Xo dx)

Individual honey bees and honey bee colonies both reproduce. In this lecture, you will learn about the mating and reproductive habits of queen

and drone honeybees. The reproduction of individual bees will be placed in a larger context with that of colony-level reproduction, a feat accomplished by the swarm.

-

Dr Jamie Ellis is the Gahan Endowed Professor of Entomology in the Department of Entomology and Nematology at the University of Florida. He has a BS degree in Biology from the University of Georgia (USA) and a PhD in Entomology from Rhodes University in South Africa. At the University of Florida, Jamie has responsibilities in extension, instruction and research. Regarding his extension work, Jamie created the UF, South Florida, and Caribbean Bee Colleges, and the UF Master Beekeeper Program. As an instructor, Jamie supervises PhD and Masters students. Currently, Jamie and his team have over 30 active research projects in the fields of honey bee husbandry, conservation and ecology, and integrated crop pollination

### **Thursday, April 1st, 7-9pm: Randy Oliver and Reading the combs - Understanding bee biology over the course of a season**

Register at: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJ1lf-6rpjkuHNWqKB-MJtFf7cveUg-VOJ62>

By acquiring a better understanding of the biology of bees, nutrition, parasites, and pathogens over the course of the season, and by learning to "read the combs," the beekeeper can then make better informed management decisions adapted to his/her particular situation.

Randy runs the not-for-profit website [Scientificbeekeeping.com](http://Scientificbeekeeping.com) with the aim of providing evidence-based and scientifically verified explanations of the biological processes occurring in the hive, as well as the effects of various management options allowing the beekeeper to make informed practical management decisions. Based in California, Randy has been a regular contributor to the American Bee Journal since 2006 and aims to provide beekeepers with a resource of readable and straightforward information on how to practice good bee husbandry, and exercise environmental and community responsibility.

**Clare McGettigan: Education and Training YBKA**  
**([education@ybka.org.uk](mailto:education@ybka.org.uk))**

# YBKA CALENDAR 2021/22

Friday 12<sup>th</sup> March: GPC Meeting 6pm (Zoom)

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> March: Beetradox (Sandown Park – postponed, watch website)

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March: Training for invigilators and candidates for BBKA on-line Modules Exams (details tbc)

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March: YBKA Delegates Meeting 10am (Zoom)

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> April: BBKA Spring Convention (virtual event – see BBKA website)

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April: BBKA Modules Exams (on-line only)

Friday 14<sup>th</sup> May: GPC Meeting 6pm (venue/medium - tbc)

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> July: Great Yorkshire Show (Harrogate Showground- tbc)

Friday 16<sup>th</sup> July: GPC Meeting 6pm (venue/medium – tbc)

Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September: GPC Meeting 6pm (venue/medium – tbc)

Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October: GPC Meeting 6pm (venue/medium – tbc)

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> to Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> October: National Honey Show (Sandown Park – tbc)

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> November: Cosmetics Workshops with Dr Sara Robb (tbc)

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> November: BBKA Modules Examinations (venue/medium tbc)

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November: YBKA AGM (venue/medium - tbc)

## Committee Details

Dave Shannon is Chair of YBKA

Mark Millard is Vice Chair

Norbert Cooper continues as Treasurer

Kirit Gorhandas is Examination and Assessments Officer

Clare McGettigan is Education Training Officer

Linda Schofield is Secretary

Tony Jefferson is the YBKA Delegate to BBKA.

Chris Barlow continues as Newsletter Editor

David Lamont continues as YBKA Webmaster

## Classified Adverts

Do you have anything bee related for sale or are you wanting something bee related? If so, please email [newsletter@ybka.org.uk](mailto:newsletter@ybka.org.uk) the editor for a free sale or wanted listing

Thorne's large, stainless steel steam wax extractor complete with steam generator. Used a couple of times and in very good condition. A bit small for my setup sadly. I'm looking for £250 or very near. On Thorne's site at £430. Call Rich on 07801 847487 to view in Strensall York if interested.



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We will be having a one day sale online on **Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> March** which is the same day as the Welsh Beekeepers' Association Spring Convention at Builth Wells so keep an eye out on our website, facebook or twitter page for sale items due to the cancellation of this year's beekeeping exhibitions! Thank you for your continued support and please stay safe!



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