

The Tivvy Buzzette

Tiverton Beekeepers Newsletter

February 2025



Quince Honey Farm - a buzzing business!

Photos © Quince Honey Farm



This month Tiverton Beekeepers had an interesting and entertaining talk from Paddy Wallace who gave us an insight into commercial beekeeping at Quince Honey Farm.

Paddy spoke about how the business came into being and a brief history of the company from its humble beginnings through the war to its relocation from the north down to the sunnier and warmer climate of South Molton (or that was the idea). From the experiences recounted that wasn't necessarily the case.

Paddy described the difference between commercial and recreational as having to attend the bees in all weathers and not have the option to wait for a better day. Time constraints also have an influence on how the apiaries are set out, transported around the farms including taking hives to Scotland for the heather.

An interesting fact that use of a red light when moving hives in the dark does not disturb them. He described how the tourism element has like most farm diversification become an important part and how his son Ian and now the boss has developed it into the attraction we see today.



Quince Honey Farm is well worth a trip especially if you need to go to Thorns which is part of their complex. The talk was enjoyed by all and of course was concluded by tea, coffee and some fine cakes.

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Quince Honey Farm, Devon, EX36 3RD



**Tiverton Beekeepers are a branch of the Devon Beekeepers' Association
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Masthead photo by Kat Smith: <https://www.pexels.com>

January Committee Meeting Report

Twelve members attended the meeting and six members sent their apologies.

Finance - Our financial situation is sound and members renewal subscription are nearly all complete. We currently have 111 registered members, 20 partner and 2 local.

Apiary - Malcolm gave us an update on our Apiary at Knightshayes which continues to thrive. We also discussed replacing our cabin at the site. It was decided to produce some detailed plans based on what we think is appropriate for our needs and present them to the National Trust. One of the committee will be looking at the possibility of obtaining grants to help with any costs.

Education - There was a report on the 2024-25 Beginners' Course which is going well. Eleven of our members have expressed their interest in an Improvers Course which will take place during March at a cost of £30. This fee will be used to pay for their Basic Assessment if they choose to take the assessment following the course. The Branch have an increasing number of schools and groups who are requesting a talk on bees and beekeeping. As a result we are putting together a couple of PowerPoint presentations so more of our members are able to respond and present the talks. We confirmed our monthly members talks until May, details can be found on our website.

Shows - Our show commitment during 2025 was discussed and it was decided that we will be going to Devon County Show, Mid Devon Show and Plymtree Country Fair. It is traditional for the Branch to enter the Stevenson's trophy in the Devon Beekeepers' Marquee at the County Show but unfortunately Sue Francombe who has been successfully leading the project for the past 4-5 years is having a rest this year so we are looking for a new volunteer(s) to lead and help on this year's display. We are very grateful to Sue who has done a wonderful job for us winning prizes along the way. We agreed to

investigate the purchase of branded polo shirts for those who help at the shows.

Social Media - Vicky who looks after the social media and press for us would like to start using reels on our Facebook page so she is looking for material to post. There will be more on this in the Buzzette.

Asian Hornet - Tracy gave us an update but fortunately there wasn't too much to report.

Website - William confirmed that the website was up to date.

Bulk Buying - Richard told us that twenty-six orders had been received for fondant and that he hopes to promote it earlier next time. So far we had twelve orders for frames and foundation. Members are to be surveyed to find out what they would like from the Bulk Buying Scheme.

Buzzette - Frances would like material for the Buzzette to be submitted to her by the 20th of each month rather than the 23rd. There has been an issue with the ER2 system that is used to circulate the Buzzette as it is reducing file size from 5 to 2 megabytes. Jon, our secretary, will investigate why this has happened and review if a link to our website is a better option than sending it by email.

Correspondence - Jon told us that a trader was looking for a beekeeper to supply him with 200 jars of honey a year - members to contact Jon if interested.

A big thank you was extended to Vicky for organising the Christmas Social. There was so much positive feedback that the hall has already been booked for 6th December 2025 and Vicky will book the same caterer, Elsie May. Three delicious cakes were kindly provided to go with our cup of tea at the meeting!

Next committee meeting - 6th March 2025.

2025 BBKA Spring Convention

Bookings and ticket sales for the 2025 BBKA Spring Convention (4th - 6th April, at Harper Adams University, Shropshire) start at noon on Monday 27th January. The full programme, FAQs and additional information is available at www.bbka.org.uk/springconvention.

A few stewards are also still needed and any member interested in stewarding at the Convention is asked to contact scstewards@bbka.org.uk

We hope that as many members as possible will take part. This is their organisation and their Convention - an opportunity to meet up with, and learn from, beekeepers and traders from all around the country and indeed from other parts of the world.



Bookings open Noon 27 Jan!



Harper Adams University, Shropshire, TF10 8NB

Friday 4th – Sunday 6th April 2025
Bumper Trade Show Saturday 5th

20+Lectures & 70+Workshops/Seminars

Wristband ticket prices held at 2023 prices
 Trade Show only tickets just £6 on the day

Programme, FAQs & Bookings:
www.bbka.org.uk/springconvention



Your association needs you!

Social Media Content

You may be aware we have a Facebook page where we share information about beekeeping and details of our stands at the shows we attend. We also share swarm collectors details so the public can contact us regarding swarms. Currently a lot of what we share is from other pages.

This year I would like to grow the page and share more visual posts with pictures and video reels of our own local honey bees. This is where I need our members help! If you are happy for your pictures to be shared on social media please can you send me pictures and video clips (don't worry if your talking in the clip I can add music over it) of your bees, equipment, funny stories, bee keeping fails (believe me I could have started a book with all mine) this could be filming yourself doing an inspection or changing fondant. Anything you think is interesting and I can share please send my way!

These can be sent by WhatsApp on 07989420229 or to my email: vjmorrish@outlook.com

