

North Somerset Beekeepers





that we have been in this year the Branch has done its best to fulfil its aims.

On that note I would like to wish all members a very Happy Christmas and look forward to returning to more normal practices in 2021.

Thanks from the Treasurer – Tony Slater

A big Christmas thankyou to the vast majority of members who are now paying their subscriptions on-line.

Membership Renewals Reminder – Heather Pitch

Thank you to all those members who have already paid their subscription for 2020/2021. Can I please remind the remaining 24% to do so as soon as possible as I will be sending out a final reminder email on 1 January. Those that have not renewed by 31 January will be marked as lapsed.

If you do not wish to renew or if your Gift Aid status has changed, please email heather@pitch.plus.com.

BDI Insurance Cover

During the last season I received several NBU alerts informing me that EFB had been confirmed within 3km of one or more of my apiaries.

There is an article in December’s BBKA News by Celia Davis stating: “BDI policy is not to pay anything if the full number of colonies, in every apiary, is not covered. Providing you have adequate cover, compensation will be paid linked to current prices”. Her advice is to “count up all the boxes which may, at some time in the summer, contain a colony of bees, and pay for that number”.

All subscriptions and premiums that are paid before 31 March will take effect immediately. These, plus any “top up” paid after 31 March will not enjoy cover for 40 days following payment. For more information, have a look at the BDI webpage:

<https://www.beediseasesinsurance.co.uk/about-1/learn-more>

Basic BDI covers your first 3 colonies, including nucs. Apideas and mini-nucs are not covered so do not need to be counted in your total.

Please check your cover and if you need to increase it, please make the following payment:

No of Hives	Extra BDI
0-3	£0.00
4-5	£2.00
6-10	£5.25
11-15	£7.75
16-20	£9.50
21-25	£11.10
26-30	£13.60
31-35	£16.10
36-39	£18.10

to the Branch Account No: 01839153, Sort Code: 30-99-51 and send an email to heather@pitch.plus.com so I can update the BBKA database.

Message from our apiary manager – Eric Sortwell



As we come to the end of 2020; looking back it has been a big disappointment not to be able to welcome club members and new beekeepers to the Apiary.

Hopefully, next year we will be back to normal, or a sort of normal, and be able to make full use of the Apiary.

Throughout the year a small, dedicated team of volunteers has been looking after the club hives and bees. We are currently treating the bees with oxalic acid; the mite drop from each hive has varied very substantially, some as low as twenty, others well over a hundred over a three-day period. We have checked their stores to ensure they have sufficient to see them through the winter and put on fondant where needed.



The grass cutting team has had an early Christmas present; the committee have approved the purchase of a new mower and strimmer. This should make life a lot easier next year.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the Apiary team for their support throughout the year, in helping to ensure that North Somerset Beekeepers has a top quality Apiary.

Wishing all members a Happy Christmas and Healthy New Year and we look forward to meeting you in 2021.

Review of talk by Julia Common – Annabel Lewis

On December 3rd Julia Common, from the Delta area of the Frazer Valley, just outside Vancouver gave a fascinating talk to our members.

Firstly, Julia talked about Hives for Humanity, a society that she set up with her daughter, where the aim is to connect people to nature, community and themselves. It started with a single bee hive in downtown Vancouver and Julia freely admits she had misgivings and preconceptions of who she would be dealing with. The project quickly expanded and involved at-risk populations of people with tasks like gardening, beekeeping and fostering connection to land and community. You can find out more about this at the website www.hivesforhumanity.com .

Julia then went on to talk about large scale pollination with her bees and especially inside 6 hectare greenhouses where the bees were pollinating strawberry plants. Her bees were being used where the farmer had been unable to get the usual bumble bee pollinators. Julia now has this as a regular arrangement, as her honey bees worked so well.

Finally, Julia talked about beekeeping using nucs only and how she was focusing on this as it involves far less heavy lifting and the bees are doing as well for her as they did using full size hives. Hopefully, this will be a topic of another talk for us in the future.

Julia's talk was recorded and can be viewed at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/96IKHJWf3X0Hykse>

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Passcode: zr83Uyj+

The bee carol – Carol Anne Duffy

Silently on Christmas Eve,
the turn of midnight's key;
all the garden locked in ice –
a silver frieze –
except the winter cluster of the bees.

Flightless now and shivering,
around their Queen they cling;
every bee a gift of heat;
she will not freeze
within the winter cluster of the bees.

Bring me for my Christmas gift
a single golden jar;
let me taste the sweetness there,
but honey leave
to feed the winter cluster of the bees.

Come with me on Christmas Eve
to see the silent hive –
trembling stars cloistered above –
and then believe,
bless the winter cluster of the bees.

<https://mysecondspring.ie/blog/bee-carol-carol-ann-duffy>

