

PETERBOROUGH & DISTRICT
BEEKEEPING ASSOCIATION

BEGINNER'S BEEKEEPING COURSE

SPRING 2025

This course is open to anyone who is interested in bees, in their lifestyle and the benefits they provide for the environment, in pollination, in what the bees produce and in their benefit to the economy of the country (estimated at £ 500 million+ p.a.).

Each week one of our association's experienced beekeepers will take you through various beekeeping themes, from different stages of a bee's life from egg laying to the adult bee foraging for nectar and pollen from the different trees, farm crops and the flowers in your garden.

You will be shown the different hives in use today and how to assemble key equipment a beekeeper needs. You'll find out how bees produce honey and beeswax, how they communicate and what keeps these sociable creatures bonded together.

If you do decide to keep bees a beekeeper in your locality may be found for you as a "bee buddy" to help you to get started and to call upon for assistance if needed. Whether you decide to keep bees or not we hope you enjoy the course and find it worthwhile.



COURSE OVERVIEW

Please note: 2.30pm start, located at the Christie Hall, Wansford, PE8 6JS. With the final 'hands on' session taking place at the association apiary, Sacrewell Farm orchards, PE8 6HJ (subject to weather conditions please follow the hive signs). Cost: £80.

MARCH 22ND: INTRODUCTION

PDBKA - who we are, what we do
The importance of beekeeping
Origins of beekeeping; honey hunting; skeps; modern hive styles
What is a honeybee?
Basic equipment, sources & cost
The BBKA & bee keeping publications

MARCH 29TH: HONEY BEE BIOLOGY, LIFE CYCLE & BEE KEEPING YEAR

Life cycle of the honeybee
Bee morphology
Swarming: reasons, control & management
Beekeeping calendar & seasonal flow
Spring build up
Summer management
Preparations for overwintering

APRIL 5TH: THE HIVE

The colony & brood nest
Hives and woodwork assembly
Hive maintenance & frame assembly
Different hive types
Brood sizes
Theory of bee space
The Nucleus Box



APRIL 12TH: THE COLONY

The Queen : her importance in the hive
Queen mating
Castes – Queen, worker, drone
Division of labour in the hive
Bee communication: physical / chemical
The Hive Mood

APRIL 19TH: HIVE PRODUCTS & BEE FEED PLANTS

Local forage crops
Pollination, nectar, honey
Feeding bees
Showing and display
Wax, propolis and pollen
Honey varieties & extraction, selling
Mead (honey wine)

APRIL 26TH: PRACTICAL HIVE INSPECTIONS, ASSOCIATION APIARY SACREWELL FARM

(SUBJECT TO WEATHER CONDITIONS)

Siting hives / setting up an apiary
P.P.E. Good working practice, hygiene
Pests & parasites, brood & adult diseases
Risks with neighbours & animals
Handling bees
Questions & queries

MAY 3RD: ANNUAL AUCTION

Riverford food, Sacrewell Farm, in the barnyard, beyond Association Apiary (follow the signs)

For any further details for bookings & payments, please contact P.D.B.K.A. Secretary: Yvonne Banke on: peterboroughbees@hotmail.co.uk