**Kennet Beekeepers Association Rule Book**

**Version control document can be found on the last page.**

1.**Introduction**: The Kennet Beekeepers Association (KBKA) has been created as a Branch Association of, and is authorised by, the Wiltshire Beekeepers Association (WBKA). The WBKA is an Area Association Member (AAM) of the British Beekeeping Association (BBKA). This rule book is designed to provide guidance to Kennet members and officers alike in regard to various policies and standards as referenced in the KBKA constitution. As members of WBKA and BBKA, Kennet members are required to conform with the BBKA and WBKA constitutions. The KBKA branch rules are in place to ensure proper conduct takes place by Kennet members and its committee officers. Officers are voted into office at the KBKA Annual General Meeting that takes place each year.

2. **KBKA Committee** is made up of the following officers and members are voted into the roles at the AGM for a period of 1 year, following which they may stand for re-election. At the AGM each committee member must be proposed and seconded, followed by a simple majority vote by those present at the meeting who are eligible to vote:

2a. Club Chairman and WBKA Trustee

2b. Member representative and WBKA Trustee

2c. Secretary

2d. Treasurer

2e. Membership Secretary

2f. Education & Training Secretary

2g Apiary Manager/s

2h. Web coordinator

2i. Fetes and Fairs Coordinator

2j. Additional officers up to a maximum total committee membership not exceeding 12.

WBKA membership voted in 2022 for the WBKA to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and as a consequence KBKA have voted that the chairman and a member representative must be elected to serve as Kennet Branch Trustee representatives on the WBKA Trustee and Management Board meetings for a period of three years. Any person standing for either position must meet the criteria defined by the WBKA’s CIO Constitution, Clause 12, Sub-section 2, and must be prepared to sign a certifying declaration that this is true.

3. **Code of conduct Rules**

3.1 Members are expected to respect all other members regardless of age, race, gender, colour, creed or disability for example and behave courteously towards them at all times.

3.2 Regardless of the method of communication being used members are expected to be respectful to each other and to each others differing points of view.

3.3 Members are expected to behave courteously to members of the public at all times and not bring Kennet Beekeepers Association (“KBKA”) into disrepute.

3.4 Members are expected to respect all laws relating to wildlife and to care for the environment in their practice of beekeeping.

Should any of the above condition be broken by a member of KBKA the following process will apply:

3.5 The KBKA committee schedule a special meeting to consider the seriousness of the offence and whether the member should be removed from the association. However, before the decision is taken to remove a member from the club the following actions must take place.

3.5 (a) inform the member of the reasons why it is proposed to remove them from membership.

3.5 (b) give the member at least 21 clear days notice in which to make representations to the committee as to why they should not be removed from the membership. A member is entitled to make their point in person, in writing or via a representative should they wish to do so.

3.5 (c) following receipt of the information from the member the committee should meet again to further consider if it is still appropriate to terminate the membership. The outcome of the meeting should be advised in writing to the individual concerned.

3.5 (d) If the member wishes to appeal the decision that has been reached then this matter will need to be referred to the WBKA.

4. **Apiary Rules:**

Introduction:

KBKA currently have two apiaries, the production apiary at Caen Hill, for which there is no member access and the training apiary based at Bishops Cannings. Members have access to the training apiary on alternate Saturdays throughout the season when they can benefit from hands on training under the guidance of the Apiary Manager, together with a band of volunteer beekeepers known as the “A Team”. The Association has developed the training apiary for the benefit of all members, irrespective of skill level and aims to run the regular beginner sessions through the season as well specific Improver sessions for the more experienced beekeepers, covering a range of more advanced topics such as Queen rearing.

Our aim is to provide a friendly and welcoming environment for all, at whatever stage you are at in your beekeeping journey. Beginners will have the opportunity to reinforce their theory learning through practical sessions prior to obtaining their own bees – or having the opportunity to ask the many questions that inevitably arise. The Association encourages and supports these would be beekeepers to join the Introduction to Beekeeping theory course run prior to the start of the season.

4.1 Any member of the Kennet BeeKeepers Association (KBKA) using or visiting either the main KBKA apiary site or any out apiary does so entirely at their own risk. The Association shall not be liable for any damage or injury to the member, or their property.

4.2 Non-members of the KBKA must only visit the main apiary site, or any out apiary, in the presence of an Association member. The KBKA member will be responsible for the actions of the visitor. KBKA shall not be liable for any damage or injury to the visitor or their property.

4.3 Entrance to the main apiary site and any out apiary is acknowledgement and acceptance of the rules contained herewith.

4.4 Parking at any KBKA apiary is strictly at the risk of the visitor(s) and to be in accordance with the instructions given at site.

4.5 The KBKA will appoint one or more Apiary Managers who may co-opt Apiary Assistants as required (sometimes known as the A-Team). The Apiary managers are accountable to the KBKA Committee.

4.6 The Apiary Managers will be responsible for general management of the apiary site(s) they look after.

4.7 The Apiary Manager’s decision is final in all matters relating to the husbandry of the club's bee. If any problems arise as a result of this policy, the matter may be taken to the KBKA Committee for final decision. Responsibility for an out apiary may be delegated to an Apiary Assistant.

4.8 The Apiary Manager will be the primary key holder (terminology used in this instance relates to actual keys and/or lock combinations) for the main apiary site and any out apiary. Members of the KBKA (in particular Apiary Assistants will be keyholders) may be key holders for the main apiary site and/or an out apiary, but only with the approval of the Apiary Manager or the KBKA Committee. The Apiary Manager will maintain a list of all key holders. Each key holder will be responsible for locking and securing the apiary after their visit.

4.9 Members who are not apiary key holders and who wish to visit the main apiary site may do so on set apiary diary dates, or when apiary classes are planned. Other visits must be made with an apiary key holder(normally an Apiary Assistant) with the knowledge of the Apiary Manager (or delegated Apiary Assistant).

4.10 Clean bee suits and gloves must be worn at all apiary inspections.

4.11 Members must not use their own equipment on any KBKA hive without prior consent of the Apiary Manager (or delegated Apiary Assistant). All equipment must be cleaned after use.

4.12 Smokers must be knocked out in a manner which does not pose any fire risk.

4.13 By prior agreement with the Apiary Manager (or delegated Apiary Assistant) and following disease inspection of the colony, a member’s bees may be hived at a club apiary. This must only be temporary, to include but not limited to, relocation of hives, quarantine, re-queening or temperament assessment. Under exceptional conditions, and by prior agreement with the Apiary Manager and the KBKA Committee, a member’s bees may be hived at the main apiary site. This will be for an agreed period but which may be subject to revocation or extension. The member’s equipment must be clearly marked and identifiable. A fee equivalent to two 1lb jars of honey (based on the KBKA guide honey price for the current year) will be charged by KBKA.

4.14 Any member temporarily hiving bees on a KBKA out apiary (or main apiary site) shall agree to notify the Apiary Manager (or delegated Apiary Assistant) the location from where the bees are to be moved from and to where the bees are eventually moved to. This will assist the KBKA with disease control and traceability should a notifiable disease become apparent on the out apiary (or main apiary site).

4.15 No bees are to be removed from the main apiary or any out apiary site without notifying the Apiary Manager (or delegated Apiary Assistant).

4.16 No rubbish or debris is to be left on the main apiary or any out apiary site. This includes wax and hive debris. This must be removed and disposed of responsibly by the person or persons concerned. Repeated failure to do so may lead to the member being banned from any KBKA apiary site and if applicable, be requested to remove their hives from any KBKA apiary site.

4.17 Any KBKA member carrying out duties or routine management of the KBKA ‘s colonies shall update the colony and/or apiary records in the prescribed format.

4.18 Any KBKA member carrying out routine management of colonies must advise the Apiary Manager (or delegated Apiary Assistant) immediately, ideally no more than one calendar day, of any colony welfare concerns that could harm a colony. These shall include, but are not limited to, disease, queenlessness and shortage of stores.

4.19 Any dispute arising for the operation of these rules must be notified to the KBKA Committee in writing. Verbal presentations, at the discretion of the KBKA Committee, may also be made. A decision will be determined by a majority vote of the KBKA Committee. That decision will be final and absolute.

4.20 Any member’s beehive(s) or colony(ies) not visited for a period of three months or not properly maintained in accordance with good beekeeping and bee husbandry practice, the said member will be notified verbally and in writing to remove the beehive(s) and bees from the main apiary site or out apiary. If after a further four weeks the equipment has not been removed, it will be deemed to have been abandoned and thereby, the title and ownership will pass to the KBKA.

4.21 If any hive is suspected to contain a notifiable disease the local bee inspector will be contacted, and an inspection of all hives on the apiary arranged. All members using KBKA apiary sites do so on the understanding that the National Bee Unit Bee Inspector may inspect their colonies. Should any colonies have to be destroyed, or a shook swarm arranged there can be no recourse by the owner to the KBKA. If other disease is confirmed, treatment is required if the hive(s) is to remain on any KBKA apiary site. Any treatment used must be an accepted treatment and must be acceptable to the Apiary Manager (or delegated Apiary Assistant)

4.22 Any member visiting either the main apiary site or any out apiary site must respect the landlord’s wishes, both stated and implied. This should include considerate parking and restricting activities to only the apiary site and paying due diligence to the requirement of dipping footwear before entering the site.

4.23 Any breach of the above rules could constitute a breach of the conditions of membership that could lead to disciplinary action and/or revocation of the offender’s membership.

4.24 **Apiary FAQ’s**

Q: What is the cost of attending the fortnightly sessions at the apiary?

A: Access is free to members

Q: Do I need to have attended the Introduction to Beekeeping theory course before I can attend the practical sessions?

A: Although we strongly recommend that you do so, it is not obligatory but you will gain far more understanding of the practical side of beekeeping in the early stages if you have done so.

Q: What should I wear to attend the practical sessions?

A: A bee suit with veil is of course mandatory [and sensible], see below. Most standard one layer bee suits offer good protection from stings and especially if you wear a long sleeved shirt and trousers underneath. [you can purchase multi layered suits that offer guaranteed protection at greater expense] Wellington's or at least boots that cover your ankles are also advised [no Crocs - yes, it has happened] together with a pair of Marigold type washing up gloves. See ‘will I get stung’ below.

Q: Will I need my own bee suit?

A: Please bring your own suit if possible. The Association does have some spare suits but they cannot be guaranteed. You can pay a great deal for a bee suit but it is equally possible to buy a good quality one for well under £70. We recommend a one piece rather that separate jacket and trousers [one less gap for the bees to find!]. It is also advisable to order a bee suit at least one, if not two sizes bigger than your usual fitting to give yourself plenty of room to move, and to stay cooler.

Q: Do I need to bring any other beekeeping equipment for the practical sessions?

A: No, we provide the necessary kit in the early stages and it is best to see what is needed before buying what you might think you will require.

Q: Can the Association help me to find bees for myself?

A: Yes, the Association offers unbiased advice and guidance across every aspect of beekeeping, including training, clothing and equipment, hives and bees. We very strongly suggest that you attend the Introduction to Beekeeping theory course and the practical sessions prior to getting your own colony as many new beekeepers give up in the first year or two due to the loss of their colony through lack of experience.

Q: Will I get stung?

A: There is always a chance that you will get stung but unless you suffer from Anaphylaxis [see below], it normally causes little more than temporary discomfort. In the normal course of events, and provided that they are treated with respect, bees seldom become defensive enough to sting although it can never be guaranteed. If you think you may suffer from anaphylaxis then you must inform the Apiary Manager prior to any session. It is a thankfully rare occurrence but bee stings are a recognised trigger in some cases.

Anaphylaxis:

https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/immune-system/anaphylaxis

5. **Swarm Collecting policy:**

5.1 How can a member become a Swarm Collector for KBKA.

* The member can indicate on their membership/renewal form that they are interested.
* All parties interested in collecting Swarms in the forthcoming season are identified by the club secretary.
* A verification process is carried out by the club secretary to ensure that adequate knowledge and experience has been gained by those wishing to collect swarms.
* When the ratified list of swarm collectors has been completed, the first name, post code, contact information is then uploaded onto the KBKA and BBKA websites.
* Members of the public may approach the swarm collector for their area directly or if they are unable to help for any reason the swarm co-ordinator’s name and contact number is provided on the KBKA website.
* Swarms identified to the swarm co-ordinator are highlighted to collectors in the nearby vicinity and if no response within a few hours the notification will be extended out to all registered swarm collectors.
* Swarm collectors may be listed at 2 post code sites as their bees may be located at a different area to their registered postal address.
* If members wish to gain experience of swarm collecting, please let your club secretary know and you can be put in contact with an experienced collector in your area.
* All swarm collectors are to be aware and abide by the procedures detailed at points 5.2 – 5.7 below.

**Note to Swarm Collectors** -When a member of the public thinks they have found a swarm of honeybees and then contacts the Swarm Co-ordinator for Kennet BeeKeepers Association (KBKA) the club will contact a suitable member to collect that swarm. It is important that the collection procedure is done safely and responsibly. These guidelines are to ensure that all on the Associations list of swarm collectors are aware of the proper procedure that will be expected of them while removing a swarm of honey bees on behalf of KBKA.

5.2 KBKA swarm collectors are expected to abide by these guidelines. All members who are registered for collecting swarms will have had prior experience before they are included on the KBKA list of swarm collectors.

5.3 On being informed that there is a swarm to collect. Contact the person who has contacted KBKA as soon as possible that day and check for your own sake the following:-

* How long has the swam been there?
* Reassure that person that new swarms are usually docile, but also advise them to stay away from the bees.
* Check they are Honeybees and not wasps or bumble bees going into a building/roof.
* Ask where the swarm is, how high up?
* Will you be able to reach it?
* You will need the land owners permission to collect, ensure you have received this before proceeding.
* Is it in a public place? If in a public place you must be very responsible and make sure you have someone with you to ensure people do not get close to the bees while you are collecting them. You also need to leave a notice warning that there is a swarm box that will be collected that evening.
* Is it a swarm and not an established colony of honeybees secure behind a wall or ceiling/roof?
* If they are inside a chimney, cavity wall or in a roof space it is most likely to be an established colony and as such this type of work is a private arrangement with a qualified and insured person and is **not covered by KBKA/BBKA insurance.** No action should be taken that brings KBKA into disrepute.

5.4 Equipment Required:

* Bee suite and gloves
* An apiary and hive to put the swarm when collected.
* Nuc box/skep or strong cardboard box and sheet to cover.
* A bungee or cord to fasten the box lid.
* Cloth to cover skep.
* Smoker or water sprayer sometime needed.
* Secateurs are really useful for swarm collection when in hedges.
* A charged mobile is good should you need directions or some extra help.
* Bee brush.
* Possible step ladders.
* Transport to collect the swarm that evening.

5.5 When you first arrive:

* At the swarm site you need to establish if you can collect the swarm without help, and that the bees are not in an impossible place for you to reach.
* If you do need help now is the time to arrange this before you start collecting the bees.
* Once you are sure you can manage, you need to inform the person(s) (if they are there) that you will take charge of the collection and explain that you will knock, or shake the bees into a box/skep, or onto a cloth on the ground and then leave an upturned box there for the bees to walk up into during the rest of the day, hoping that you will have the Queen.
* The idea being that as long as the Queen goes into the box/skep the bees will signal to the flying bees that she is there and by dusk they should all be in your box/skep.
* Explain that you will leave your box/skep there, propped up on a stick so the bees can enter and join the Queen, until dusk when all the flying bees should have come home to their Queen.
* You can then seal up the box/skep, or wrap it in cloth or gauze, so that the bees can breath, but not escape.
* You then are ready to take them to your apiary and set them up in a hive in the position you wish to place them.

5.6 At Dusk:

* KBKA will expect all swarm collectors to return in the evening.
* A swarm that is taken and removed during the day will leave the flying bees with no Queen and no home to come back to.
* This may leave some very annoyed and angry bees around, leaving the public in danger of being stung for several days in that area.

5.7 Remember:

* If you say you can take the swarm, it becomes your responsibility to complete the task and remove the bees.
* Sometime things do go wrong, but KBKA expects every member on our Swarm collection list to be responsible and take all reasonable precautions.
* You have public liability insurance cover of up to £3,000,000- but this is made null and void if you make any charges.
* If in doubt please get another member to help you and remember you are not only representing yourself as a beekeeper but the reputation of KBKA.

6. **Honey sold at KBKA events:** From time to time KBKA attend fetes and fairs and offer honey for sale to the public. Members honey which is of a satisfactory quality may be sold at these events at an agreed price determined by the KBKA committee. A 10% commission is payable to KBKA on all honey and bee product related sales.

7. **Extractor Hire:** KBKA have honey extractors available to members for hire. The cost of such hire is advertised on the KBKA website and members are expected to pay promptly upon collection of the extractor and to return it within 7 days in the condition in which they borrowed it. It is expected to be returned having been fully cleaned and undamaged.

8. **KBKA members must respect and adhere to the following BBKA policies**:

8a. Safeguarding Policy and Procedures.

8b. Equality, Diversity and Inclusiveness Policy.

8c. Whistle Blowing Policy.

All of the above can be viewed on the BBKA website through the link below and whilst the documents state that each branch will have their own versions KBKA will adhere to those versions prepared by BBKA:

<https://www.bbka.org.uk/risk-assessments>

9. **Interpretation of Branch Rules**

No Branch Rule shall be interpreted in such a way as to contradict either the Constitution of Wiltshire Beekeepers Association and/or that of the British Beekeepers Association.

10. **Alteration to the rules.** An alteration to the Branch Rules shall only be made at an AGM or SGM. Members must receive in writing the proposed alterations not less than fourteen days before the scheduled meeting date. The proposed alterations can be accepted so long as the meeting is attended by at least 20% of paid up members of the association who are eligible to vote and the motion being carried by at least 75% of those voting members present.

**Version Control Document.**

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| **Version** | **Date** | **Brief detail of Amendment** | **Approval** | **Updated by** |
| V1.0 | Feb 2022 | Final version prepared and sent to WBKA for inclusion in the constitution paperwork | Approved by current KBKA committee members | E. Lewis |
| V2.0 | Jan 2023 | Inclusion of New Apiary activities and rules | Approved by current KBKA committee members at Jan 2023 meeting |  E. Lewis |
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