

**WEST WILTS BRANCH RULES**

Note: the source document for these Branch Rules is the WBKA Trustees Handbook

Original - November 2022

**APPENDIX 3 - Branch Rules of the members of the West Wiltshire BKA (WWBKA)**

1. **INTRODUCTION**

**1.1** The West Wiltshire Beekeepers Association (WWBKA) is 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).

1. **CONSTITUTION and RULES**

**2.1** As a member of the BBKA and WBKA, the West Wiltshire Branch conforms to the:

a BBKA Constitution

b. WBKA Constitution (index is at Appendix 1), and

c. Rules for members of the WBKA at Appendix 2

**2.2** These WWBKA Branch Rules below are for the proper conduct and governance of the West Wiltshire Branch and reflect the local situation and requirements, but where there is a conflict between these WWBKA Branch Rules and those of the WBKA, or the BBKA, then the latter two take precedence.

**3**. **WWBKA ORGANISATION:**

**3.1** Committee

The West Wiltshire Branch is managed on behalf of its members by a Committee consisting of:

1. President (if elected)
2. Chairman
3. Vice-Chairman
4. Secretary
5. Treasurer and
6. Up to seven other members as may be determined at an AGM

These Committee members are considered to be officers of the Branch Association.

**3.2** The Committee has the power to appoint:

1. Education & Training Officer
2. Apiary Manager
3. AHAT Officer
4. Librarian
5. Membership Secretary
6. Swarm Liaison Officer
7. Spray Liaison Officer
8. Webmaster

**3.3 Officers’ responsibilities, tasks and accountability** In the interests of brevity and to avoid duplication, the roles and tasks of West Wilts Branch officers are assumed to be the same as those of their WBKA counterparts within the terms of reference in paragraphs 5.3-5.13 of The Trustees Handbook. Additional specific Branch responsibilities for the Secretary and Treasurer are defined in paragraphs 9.7 and 9.8-9.12 of these Rules respectively. All Branch officers are directly accountable to the WWBKA Committee.

**3.4** The Committee may co-opt not more than two people to become full members of the Committee who may serve until the next AGM and may offer themselves for election at that AGM.

**4. ELECTION OF OFFICERS and TRUSTEES:**

**4.1** The Officers and Committee members are elected or re-elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. Each nominee for committee shall be proposed and seconded and shall be elected by simple majority of those present and eligible to vote.

**4.2**Members seeking election/re-election must:

a. State their intentions in writing to the Secretary not less than 30 days before the AGM.

b. Attend the AGM in person unless there are exceptional circumstances accepted by the incoming Chair.

**4.3** Committee members may serve as such for as long as they wish subject to annual re-election at the AGM.

**4.4** The Office of Chairperson shall not be held by the same person for more than two years consecutively. In exceptional circumstances the Committee may request a person to stand for more than two years as Chairman.

**4.5** Two fully paid up members of the Branch must also be elected to serve as Branch Trustee representatives at Trustee and MB meetings for a period of three years. These persons 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.

**5. MEETINGS**

**5.1 General**

**5.1.1** The Committee shall meet not less than four times a year with a quorum (Clause 5.1.2), with not more than four months between two subsequent meetings.

**5.1.2** A quorum at a meeting of the Committee shall be five, at least one of whom must be an Officer of the Branch.

**5.1.3** At any meeting of the Committee a simple majority of those present shall be sufficient to carry or defeat a motion - the exception concerning expulsion which must then be referred to the Trustees of the WBKA who will then initiate the appropriate procedures (WBKA Constitution, Clause 9.4.(iv)).

**5.1.4** By invitation of the Chair or the Committee, any person, whether or not a member of the Association may attend any meeting of the Committee. That person may participate in the discussion at that meeting but may not vote thereon, and may be asked to leave at any time by a majority of the Committee.

**5.2** **Special General Meetings**

**5.2.1** A Special General Meeting (SGM)may be called at any time by the Branch Committee or shall be so called on receipt by the Secretary of a request signed by ten paid up members of the Branch stating the purpose for which the meeting is required. The date of the SGM and full details of the business to be transacted at the meeting shall be notified in writing by email to all members of the Branch two weeks before the date of the SGM’. No other business may be transacted other than that for which the SGM has been called.

**5.2.2** An SGM, so requested, must be called within 30 days of the request.

**5.3 Annual General Meetings**

**5.3.1** The Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the members shall be held within two months after the end of the Branch’s financial year (30th September).

**5.3.2** Members must be given at least two weeks notice in writing of an AGM.

**5.3.3** The Chairperson shall present a report of the year's proceedings at the AGM.

**5.3.4** A statement of accounts for the past year shall be sent to members not less than two weeks before the date of the AGM and the Treasurer shall formally present it at the AGM.

**5.3.5** Written notice of any resolution for consideration at an AGM, with the names of the proposer and seconder, must be received by the Chairperson or Secretary not less than thirty days before the AGM.

**6. MEMBERSHIP**

**6.1**  Membership of the Branch is governed by the conditions laid out within the Constitution of the WBKA, Clause 9.

**7. SUBSCRIPTION**

**7.1** Persons wishing to be members of the Association shall pay an annual subscription. The Branch subscription shall be determined by the Committee. The annual subscription shall apply from the beginning of October. The subscription shall include any contribution or capitation to Wiltshire Beekeepers Association (WBKA) and British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) together with any Bee Diseases Insurance (BDI) premium for up to and including three colonies.

**7.2** Persons may subscribe to the Association as an Associate Member providing that they do not keep bees, or that they subscribe fully (inclusive of County and BBKA capitation) to another beekeeping association. The subscription for an Associate Member will be set by the Branch Committee to exclude any WBKA and BBKA capitation fees or BDI premium, and therefore such persons will not benefit from these associations.

**7.3** Membership shall lapse on the subscription being three months in arrears.

Other benefits provided by subscription (such as WBKA membership, BBKA membership and BDI insurance) will lapse in accordance with their policy and it is the subscriber’s responsibility to understand any issues of non-payment.

**7.4**  A family member (with the same postal mailing address), who is not a beekeeper in their own right, shall be considered a social member.

**8. COMMITTEE**

**8.1** The affairs of the Association shall be conducted by the Committee which shall comprise of the officers and other members as defined in Clause 3.1 (a) to (f).

**Committee Responsibilities**

The responsibilities of the Committee are to includes, but not be limited to:

**8.2** Pursuing the objects of the Association, as defined in Clause 3 of the Constitution of the WBKA.

**8.3** Providing support and advice, where required, to any individual, group or organisation in pursuing activities as described by the aims of the Association.

**8.4** Being responsible for the administration and disbursement of the funds of the Association, the application of grants and the co-ordination of fund raising efforts.

**8.5** Organising social activities in so far as they encourage the cameraderie of members and do not distract from the principal objects of the Association.

**8.6** Keeping other members and the WBKA regularly informed of such activities using the full range of social media and the Branch website.

**8.7** Ensuring all members are registered expeditiously on the BBKA eR2 database.

**Secretary’s responsibilities**

**8.8** The Secretary is responsible for keeping minutes of Committee meetings and ensuring committee members receive copies of draft minutes soon thereafter. The Secretary also shall be responsible for keeping minutes of annual and special general meetings and ensuring members receive copies of draft minutes before the next relevant meeting.

**Treasurer’s responsibilities**

**8.9** The Treasurer is responsible for advising the Committee on financial matters, keeping the accounts of the Association, and for preparing a statement of accounts that shall be independently checked by a suitable person agreed by the Committee, and presented to the AGM for adoption.

**8.10** The Committee shall determine who shall be authorised to sign cheques and other documents on behalf of the Association.

**8.11** The financial year of the Association shall be from 1st October to the 30th September.

**9. BRANCH APIARY**

**Purpose of the Branch Apiary**

* 1. The WWBKA maintains a Branch Apiary whose purposes are to provide:

1. A practical hands-on teaching facility where new beekeepers can learn and practise the art of beekeeping under the supervision of experienced members.
2. Continuation training for more experienced beekeeping members,
3. A focal point for informal meetings that underpin the camaraderie of a hobby club.
4. Generate club funds through the sale of honey and practical training.

**Management of the apiary**

**9.2** The beekeeping within the apiary is conducted in accordance with the BBKAs best practice of beekeeping and disease control paying particular attention to the requirements of the DEFRA plan ‘Healthy Bees – Protecting and improving the health of honeybees in England and Wales’.

**9.3** The apiary itself is managed by the Apiary Manager whose responsibilities are defined immediately below in paragraph 10.5. This excellent facility is available for use by any of the membership, but all requests for such use must be directed through the Apiary Manager.

* 1. Equipment used in the upkeep/maintenance of the apiary is only to be operated by Club members who are competent in such use.

**Responsibilities of the Apiary Manager**

**9.5** In order to provide the range of activities (para 10.1 above) which is effectively managing the livestock facility year-round, the Committee will appoint an Apiary Manager. The Manager’s responsibilities include but are not limited to:

a. Overall health, safety and security of the apiary building, the associated site and its bee livestock.

b. Being the direct liaison link between the Branch and the land owner.

c. Ensuring public liability insurance is in place and a copy of which must be displayed in the Clubhouse at all times.

e. Maintaining an optimum number of colonies to meet Branch needs.

f. Ensuring the apiary has sufficient serviceable equipment and that items such as hive tools are routinely sterilised in a soda water bucket.

g. Ensuring any beesuits borrowed on a temporary basis are laundered by the borrower and returned before the next formal apiary meeting.

h. Supervising honey extraction, including first filter of honey and storage in buckets.

k. Selling extracted Club honey in buckets to members, and

l. Informing the Treasurer of each sale including the name of the purchaser and agreed price.

m. Providing apiary reports to the Committee at Branch Committee and Annual General Meetings.

n. Regularly inspecting the Branch colonies as appropriate for the beekeeping year.

**Responsibilities of the Assistant Apiary Manager**

**9.6** The Committee will also appoint an Assistant Apiary Manager whose broad responsibilities are to assist the Manager with his duties in para 10.5 and more specifically:

* 1. Deputising for the Apiary Manager when appropriate.
  2. Reviewing the apiary risk assessment annually.
  3. Creating and publishing the annual programme for Branch apiary meetings in consultation with the Apiary Manager, and after liaising with the Branch training team to ensure Branch training needs are met.
  4. Attending Committee meetings as a member.

**Branch apiary sessions**

**9.7** During the summer beekeeping season, the Branch runs a programme of fortnightly apiary sessions, normally on a Saturday, and this is published at the beginning of each season by the Secretary. The aim of each session depends on a combined requirements of the bees, the weather and the training team.

**Apiary Session Leaders**

**9.8** Each apiary session has a specified Session Leader who must be a competent beekeeper who holds the BBKA Basic qualification. They are assisted by a minimum of at least one other Club member. The broad role of the Session Leader is to lead and manage the session (on behalf of the Apiary Manager), but their duties also include preparation beforehand (as defined in para 10.9 below) as well as the execution of their duties on the day (paras10.10 -10.11).

**Preparation and briefing duties**

**9.9** On the day of their duty at the Club apiary, the Session Leader should arrange to meet the Apiary Manager one hour before the formal start time to be briefed on:

1. The overall aim of the session
2. Any specific beekeeping requirements for the Branch colonies
3. Any specific training requirements of the Training Team
4. The anticipated weather and any go/no criteria
5. Any other apiary task requirements for members during the session

**Apiary session day duties**

**9.10** On the day of the session, the Session Leader should ensure that they and their supporting member(s):

a. All visitors to the apiary are indemnified and supervised.

b. Have sufficient milk for hot drinks

c. Identify and prepare the equipment required for the aim and/or tasks of the session, and

d. Once the attending members are gathered, brief members on the session, allocating tasks as required to meet the aim – and bearing in mind the beekeeping experience of those attending to teach or mentor.

**Post session duties**

**9.11** On completion of any apiary training session, the Session Leader is responsible for ensuring that:

1. In the apiary:
   * 1. All hives are re-assembled and secured for anticipated weather conditions.
2. No loose equipment or consumables are left outside.
3. All smokers are extinguished and stored within the “Smoker safety point”.
4. The five bar gate is closed, latched and padlocked with key returned to Clubhouse cupboard.
5. In the Clubhouse:
6. All equipment is left tidy, with

ii. All foundation, tools, chemical treatments and

1. The five bar gate padlock key and toilet padlock key to be returned to
2. The storage cupboard which is to be locked and
3. Cupboard key placed in external key safe.
4. All drink and refreshment items are clean and left in closed containers.
5. Opening window is securely closed.
6. All electrical lights and switches are OFF.
7. All used crockery and cutlery are taken home for washing.
8. The information white board is updated for the next planned users.
9. Floor mats to be shaken, floor swept and mopped dry (with equipment stored in the toilet).
10. Both doors are bolted and locked with Clubhouse padlock.
11. The Clubhouse padlock key is returned to the external key safe.

d. In the meeting area, the:

1. Table and chairs are wiped down
2. External electrical socket is switched OFF and weatherproof lid closed
3. Beekeeping equipment storage area/shelving is clean and tidy

e. In the toilet shed, the:

1. Portaloo is left clean with the seat and lid down
2. Floor is swept and mopped dry
3. Mop and cleaning materials are returned to storage area
4. Door is bolted closed and the padlock locked
5. Padlock key is kept in the Clubhouse cupboard

f. Before leaving Spinney Farm:

i. The external key safe is shut and locked checking that there are two keys within.

1. All WWBKA rubbish from the apiary, clubhouse, meeting area and toilet has been collected and is being removed for disposal off site.
2. All cars have left the apiary parking area, and
3. The main five bar gate is closed and latched.
4. If there are any issues of concern, inform the Apiary Manager or the Assistant Manager, ideally, prior to departure.
5. On completion of the session, the Session Leader must contact the Apiary Manager to provide a full debrief on the session, and include any specific action that might be required subsequently with the Branch colonies.
6. **BBKA SWARM COLLECTION SERVICE**

**10.1** The BBKA operates a 24/7 national swarm collection service which can be accessed by members of the public who require help to remove swarms of honeybees from their properties. The service is provided by locally based ‘approved swarm collectors’ who are experienced and competent beekeepers selected and appointed by local area associations on behalf of the BBKA, and who undertake the task on a voluntary basis. Members of the public can access the service by visiting the BBKA website [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk) where they are guided to a map on which the location of each swarm collector is indicated by a ‘pin’ on the map. By inputting the postcode of the swarm location and clicking on the pins nearest to that location the enquirer can obtain contact details for their nearest swarm collectors.

**10.2** In Wiltshire, the onus for recruiting suitable beekeepers rests with Branches and, within the West Wilts Branch, the Committee has adopted the following selection criteria. Members who wish to become ‘approved swarm collectors’ on the BBKA’s list must:

1. be a registered member (or partner) of West Wilts Branch of the WBKA, and
2. have achieved the Basic Beekeeping Certificate, or
3. have kept bees for at least five years, and
4. have proved their competence by having successfully captured and hived at least one swarm, and
5. be familiar with the BBKA Guidelines on swarm collection (BBKA leaflet L004: ‘*Collecting a swarm’*), and
6. be familiar with the BBKA’s “Swarm Collectors Protocol” (see paragraph 11.5) and be committed to work to the standards of that protocol.

**10.3**  The list of approved beekeepers for the forthcoming season should be drawn up by the beginning of March each year, and updated accordingly on the eR2 membership database by the Membership Secretary.

When drawing up the list, the Branch Swarms Coordinator will check whether those who were on the list for the previous year wish to remain on the list.

Any other members who have applied to become BBKA Swarm Collectors, should be considered by the Branch Committee against the criteria listed in paragraph 11.2 (above) and, if considered sufficiently experienced and competent, their names may be added to the list. If the number of names on the list is considered too few, approaches could be made to other members who satisfy the criteria, especially if they live in areas where there would otherwise be no approved BBKA swarm collector.

**10.4** Thereafter, the Swarms Liaison Officer will brief the swarm collectors on:

1. The contents, meaning and implications of the Swarm Collectors Protocol
2. Whilst the primary purpose of the swarm collection is to provide an important service to the public, a secondary benefit is to provide a useful source of bees for other branch members (especially beginners) who need them. Obviously, the collectors may sometimes need a swarm themselves but they should not allow their own needs (i.e whether they need a swarm, or not) to determine whether to go out to collect a swarm.

Tel: 02476 696679 www.bbka.org.uk

**10.5   BBKA’s Swarm Collectors Protocol**

The BBKA’s Swarm Collectors Protocol, which is available on the BBKA’s website at <https://www.bbka.org.uk/branch-and-association-resources> is reproduced in these Branch Rules for members ease of access. It is intended to identify the necessary knowledge and standards, which are felt to be required of any beekeeper who undertakes to collect swarms on behalf of their Association and the BBKA. Its terms are summarised below:

**Considerations:**

* *Dealing with a swarm of honey bees can be a difficult task. It is therefore recommended that new or inexperienced beekeepers should not undertake this work until they have received appropriate training within their Association and gained sufficient knowledge and experience of swarm collecting.*
* *Telephone calls from the public can relate to* ***all*** *flying insects and not just honey bees i.e. wasps, bumble bees, solitary bees etc so the beekeeper must know what advice to provide should the reported problem not be honey bee related.*
* *Members of the public are generally concerned about swarms of honey bees and the beekeeper must be able and confident to deal with the situation and maintain a safe working environment.*
* *As a member of any swarm collecting system, it is expected that a beekeeper whose name is on the collectors list will remain on the list for the whole of the season.*
* *If a beekeeper accepts a “swarm call”, the beekeeper then owns the problem until it has either been resolved or they pass it to a fellow beekeeper to resolve i.e. it must not be ignored.*
* ***N.B. BBKA Insurance is invalid if the swarm collection is done for commercial gain.***

**Recommended Person:**

* *A Swarm Collector must be a beekeeper with experience of bees and beekeeping.*
* *Be aware of, and be able to assess the potential dangers and risks associated with swarm collecting to themselves, the public and property and deal with them appropriately.*
* *Have received training & experience of collecting a swarm together with an experienced beekeeper; who will have mentored the beekeeper in the task to ensure that the beekeeper is able to undertake the task correctly and safely.*
* *They should be aware of the public liability insurance restrictions associated with their membership, i.e. whilst the beekeeper can request payment of expenses associated with the work or a donation to their Association, the beekeeper cannot:*

*Undertake the work for commercial gain i.e. cannot make a charge for the service, nor*

*Sell-on the swarm to a third party.*

* *Be familiar with the BBKA Guidelines on swarm collection (BBKA Information Leaflet L004 – ‘Collecting a swarm’).*
* *Know what to do in respect to the safe disposal of the swarm after it has been collected, i.e. hive it or pass it to another beekeeper.*
* *Be able to communicate with the public and be prepared to show their BBKA membership card if requested.*
* *Be physically able to perform all tasks.*
* *Be contactable by telephone, but that does not imply that the beekeeper has always to be available to collect swarms, or to accept all calls.*

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**10.6 Distribution of swarms.**

To help find homes for the swarms collected by the Approved BBKA Swarm Collectors, the Branch Swarm Coordinator will maintain an annual list of those branch members who would like to provide a home for a swarm. Those Branch members who would like to receive a swarm can supply their contact details to the Swarm Coordinator to add to the list. Besides its use for swarms captured by the appointed Swarm Collectors, the list could also be used to find a home for any other unexpected swarm which a branch member wishes to pass on to somebody else.

**10.7 Recording movement of swarms**

For the benefit of those who accept swarms, Swarm Collectors are encouraged to keep a record of each swarm (or cast), showing where the swarm was collected from, and who the swarm was passed on to. This will enable the member who received the swarm to be alerted if they have been given a swarm which was collected from an area where a bee disease or bee parasite is subsequently discovered.

**11. MENTORING**

**11.1** **Mentoring Programme**

The Branch runs an annual mentoring programme primarily to provide the correct level of practical support for:

1. Graduates of the Beginners Course once they have completed the second practical session at the Club Apiary, and
2. New members who join in the middle of season AND commit to joining the next Beginners Course, or
3. Exceptionally when members need some additional support .

**11.2 Role of the Mentoring Coordinator**

The Mentoring Coordinator is required to provide an annually documented list of mentors and mentees having:

1. Approached all students on the Beginners Course to identify which ones either have bees, or plan to get bees during the upcoming season.
2. Identified sufficient volunteer mentors
3. Matched mentors and mentees initially by geographic proximity, but taking into account the experience of both parties and/or any special requirements.
4. Gained agreement from the Basic Course Director for the proposed pairing.
5. Informed all mentors and mentees (normally by email) with whom they are paired for the upcoming season.

**11.3** The formal mentoring programme is deemed to be in effect from the point at which Beginners Course graduates complete their second apiary practical session in the Spring of the forthcoming season until 30 March of the following year. This ensures that mentees are supported as their colonies emerge from the winter, but then allows mentors to be available for new students. However, as many mentoring pairings lead to on-going friendships, there is no reason why any mentoring beyond that date should not continue - but outwith the formal programme.

**11.4** It is fully recognised that the success of mentoring arrangements relies significantly on the chemistry and relationship between the two individuals involved.

If either member – or the mentee in particular – feels that they are not getting the maximum harmonious benefits from the pairing, they should discuss the matter with the Mentoring Coordinator in complete confidence.

**11.5** **The role of a Beginners Mentor**

The role of a Beginners mentor is to provide one to one support to a nominated new beekeeper for their first beekeeping season, with such support ranging from:

1. Encouraging new Beekeepers to attend the Apiary fortnightly throughout the season.”
2. Advice by phone and/or email on basic beekeeping matters as and when requested by the Beginner.
3. Meeting the Beginner at the Branch apiary for dedicated one-to-one mentoring and practical training as agreed with, and programmed by the Apiary Manager.
4. Assisting with weekly inspections at the Beginners apiary (if mutually agreed)
5. Assisting with weekly inspections at the Mentor’s apiary (if practical and convenient)
6. Ensuring the Beginner is made aware of any training or experience that they would otherwise not be aware of.

**12. LIBRARY**

**12.1** Members may borrow books free of charge from the Branch Librarian. Whilst in their custody, members are responsible for the care and protection of the books (some of which are now out of print) and must return them to the Librarian in good condition as soon as practicable. It is the responsibility of the “Borrower” to replace any losses and/or rectify damage.

1. **CESSATION**

**13.1** In the event of the Association ceasing to function or wishing to close, the residual funds and assets of the Association shall pass to the WBKA to be held in trust for a · period of five years, after which time they shall become the property of the WBKA.

1. **INTERPRETATION OF BRANCH RULES**

**14.1** No Branch Rule shall be interpreted such that it will contradict either the Constitution of Wiltshire Beekeepers Association and/or that of the British Beekeepers Association.

**15. ALTERATIONS**

**15.1** An alteration to the Branch Rules shall only be made at an AGM or SGM providing members receive in writing the proposed alterations not less than fourteen days before such a meeting and the proposed alterations are accepted by not less than two thirds of those present and eligible to vote.