

## The Story of Avon

Avon Beekeepers Association (ABKA) is a charitable beekeeping association affiliated to the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA). Its 5 branches cover an area primarily in and around Bath, Bristol and North Somerset, stretching from Chipping Sodbury to Weston-super-Mare and from Axbridge to Yate. This area was the former county of Avon, created in the 1980s. Since then county boundaries have changed again and, although Avon County no longer exists, the branches within ABKA carry on under the Avon banner, as an appropriate description of the catchment area. Members join through one of five local branches:

- [Bath & district branch ; Blagdon & Clevedon & district branch ;](#)
- [Bristol & district branch ;Keynsham & district branch ;](#)
- [Weston -super -Mare & district branch](#)

On the home page of the ABKA web site [www.avonbeekeepers.co.uk](http://www.avonbeekeepers.co.uk) you can click on the branch name for more detail. Where items are underlined and highlighted in bold red below you can check the download list at [www.avonbeekeepers.co.uk/handbook/downloads.html](http://www.avonbeekeepers.co.uk/handbook/downloads.html) for the latest printable copy. The summary of all branch officers and committee are given in [\*\*Branch Contacts\*\*](#) section. Overlaps of areas served by all the branches are given in the [\*\*Map of Branch Overlaps\*\*](#) section although a beekeeper can be a member of any branch .

## What is the Avon Beekeepers Association?

- ABKA is a registered charity, no. 271717, administered under the Association's [\*\*Full Rules\*\*](#)
- ABKA is an area member of the BBKA, which looks after beekeepers' national interests
- ABKA is a member of the South West Counties Joint Consultative Council. Other participating associations are Devon, Dorset, Dorset (South), Cornwall, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire
- ABKA is organised into five branches overseen by an Executive Committee
- All elected Executive Committee members are Trustees
- Indoor and outdoor meetings are organised by the branches and the Executive Committee and all are open to any member of the Association
- The affairs of ABKA are reported through Accounts made up to 31<sup>st</sup> October each year

## Objectives of ABKA

*The Association is established to advance the science of Apiculture and to promote and foster the education of the public therein. To achieve this the Association may co-operate with bodies with kindred interests and make appropriate affiliations.*

## Diary of Events

- **Introduction to Beekeeping Course:** held in late winter or early spring every year. It is usually held on three consecutive Saturdays. This course gives you an understanding of what is involved in setting up and maintaining your own colony of bees. (See web for latest details)
- **The Annual General Meeting:** held in March each year and preceded by a lecture from a leading authority on beekeeping or related subjects. .(See web for latest details)
- **Spring Day School:** This provides a series of lectures for beekeepers on one day that are open to the public and can often be interesting to non beekeepers.(See web for latest details)
- **Local Shows:** Branch members exhibit and/or run stands to give the public a chance to see bees in observation hives, sample local honey, and buy products such as cut comb honey and bees wax. The public can also talk to people who actually keep bees and even learn how to take up the gentle art of beekeeping. (See web for latest details)

## ABKA Executive

The principal officers are

Association Chairman	David Maslen	01179 584 223
Association Secretary	Julie Young	01179 372 156
Association Treasurer	Tony Davies	01934 843 951

See web for latest details of the full list of the [Trustees and the legal requirements](#) of a charity.

## What are the advantages of being a member?

When you become a member of a branch of ABKA, other than as an associate or family member, you are automatically a member of BBKA and get the advantage of membership at three levels:

- **As a member gain the benefits provided by BBKA:**
  - BBKA Newsletters on National events, issues, and updates on technical guidance;
  - Optional assessment of Beekeeping competence to various standards;
  - Free **Public Liability Insurance** related to beekeeping activity- now £5M;
  - Bee Disease Insurance;
  - Access to All Risks Beekeeping Insurance at special rates;
  - The opportunity to influence British beekeeping and sponsor research on bees and bee colony management;
- **As a member of ABKA:**
  - A handbook that includes guidance on keeping bees;
  - Local Education events for new and seasoned beekeepers;
  - The opportunity to influence beekeeping in the Avon area;
  - An extensive library of beekeeping books (see web for the [Library books](#));
  - Access to expert beekeeping advice.
  - [Guidance on Honey Show rules & regulations](#)
- **As a member of the local branch:**
  - Members may go to any events at all ABKA Branches;
  - Lectures, demonstrations and Teaching Apiaries;
  - Plenty of events and opportunity to meet other beekeepers;
  - Hands on help in the art of keeping bees;
  - Local groups for learning the basics of beekeeping;
  - Guidance on sourcing good tempered local queen bees;
  - Beekeeping equipment for hire, and free use of [Equipment for lectures](#).

## Beekeeping Information

- For a list of things the beekeeper should do each month click on to [Beekeeper's Year](#) on the ABKA website for a guide kindly provided by Ivor Davis (ABKA member and former president of BBKA).
- Use the link to the BBKA site [www.britishbee.org.uk](http://www.britishbee.org.uk) for general information on bees, technical leaflets and for information and advice on swarms. This is a particularly good site for beekeepers.
- For information on BBKA's Basic assessment syllabus and other exams, fees, application forms, and a book list for exams use the link [http://www.britishbee.org.uk/examinations\\_and\\_assessments.php](http://www.britishbee.org.uk/examinations_and_assessments.php) on their home page to find what you want.
- Some illustrated DEFRA advisory leaflets on bee disease, prepared by the National Bee Unit, are available and can be obtained in PDF format (quite large) from <https://secure.csl.gov.uk/beebase/public/Advisory/advisory.cfm> or by post from NBU, Sand Hutton, York, YO41 1LZ.