

Norwich and District Beekeepers Association

Beginners' Course 2026

Thank you for committing to our Beginners' Course. I hope that you will find the following information helpful in preparation for next year.

The course will comprise of four Zoom sessions of approximately 2 hours, including discussion time at the end, and two practical days at our club apiary at Lessingham, Norfolk.

The topics covered in the theory sessions are shown below and sessions start at 7pm. **The dates shown are provisional and may change**, but all Zoom sessions will be held during the winter months.

Zoom Sessions:

Tues 20 January 2026

Introduction to the Club

The colony – who's in it? What do they do? How are they adapted to their roles and how does the colony work together?

The hive – how our hives relate to the natural colony – parts of the hive – different types of hive and their advantages and disadvantages

Tuesday 3 February 2026

How the colony changes during the year and the impact on tasks in the apiary

Good inspection practices

Equipment and record keeping

Tuesday 10 February 2026

Swarms – why they happen – how to prevent them

Siting your apiary

Tuesday 24 February 2026

Pests and Diseases – what they are – how to control them – the importance of varroa control

Apiary hygiene

Apiary Sessions 2026

During late April or May, we will hold four 2 hour sessions at our apiary in Lessingham, Norfolk. These will run on two days – i.e. one session in the morning, a lunch break, and then a second session. Dates for these will be arranged nearer the time and will be weather dependent.

These sessions will reinforce what has been talked about in the Zoom meetings and will cover:

Day 1 Morning:

Inspecting a colony

Recognising the queen, workers, and drones

Recognising brood types and stores

Looking at parts of a hive, lighting a smoker, protective clothing, Health and Safety – anaphylaxis

Day 1 afternoon:

Hooper's 5 Questions – what we are looking for when we inspect

Recordkeeping

Demonstration of the nucleus method of swarm control

Day 2 morning:

How to do a full Disease Inspection and identify any diseases that are present

Apiary hygiene

Day 2 afternoon:

Different methods of removing supers for extraction – Porter Bee Escapes, Hive Quick etc

Looking at extraction and bottling equipment and extracting honey – a brief explanation of honey labelling

In addition to the Course apiary sessions, the club has two Club apiary sessions each month and you are very welcome to come to these for extra support and experience. We also run a mentoring scheme, where you are paired with an experienced beekeeper nearby, for help with your bees.

The cost of the course for 2026 has been kept at £130 and includes:

- Membership
- Disease flipchart
- Life cycle wheel

We are now taking bookings on a first come first served basis.

If you are interested in joining us, please, contact me at ndbkaed@gmail.com

Best wishes,

Jane Horton,

Education Secretary.