

Y.B.K.A. eNews

AFFILIATED TO THE BRITISH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION



CONTENT

1.1

FEBRUARY 2011

Advice for beekeepers in the new year

1.2

B.B.K.A. - A.D.M.

A summary of an interesting meeting

1.3

EDUCATION REMINDER

Exam date deadlines

1.4

A TO DO WITH BEES

A story from a new beekeeper

1.5

BISHOP BURTON

Being held the week before Stoneleigh - a first class conference

1.6

HONEY BEE DEMOCRACY

Book revue

1.7

GPC / CALENDAR / RBI

Contacts list and calendar for 2011

Our Chairmans message

YBKA - So much to do.....

As I sit here in the chill of January it is difficult to think about actual beekeeping. Cold fingers don't encourage thoughts of being out in the apiary looking through those colonies and enjoying the real thrill of beekeeping. Yes, after all these years the thrill of seeing the bees go about their lives is still there - the addition is still strong.

It has however been difficult to get away from beekeeping politics. You cannot have missed the many emails, newspaper articles and radio/TV reports on the 'pesticides issue' - We even have an Early Day Motion in parliament.

It would seem that the BBKA executive has almost come to the point of recognising that a very large number of members are not happy with having a financial arrangement with agrochemical companies. As one agrochemical employee put it 'the companies are paying blood money to BBKA - everybody knows that huge numbers of bees have been killed by insecticide sprays'. Well not any more -the original agreement has ended and no new agreement will be made. This is a good thing - We beekeepers cannot afford the bad publicity generated by articles such as those in the Times and Independent. In the last couple of years we have had huge support from

the general public and it would be a shame if this was squandered.

On a more positive note it has been nice to see bees flying on good days and to be reassured that there is life after all those very cold days and nights. I wrote to my friend Tiff, in Perth Australia, telling her about our lovely weather - 23 nights at below -10°C with just one day above 0°C - I sent her a nice picture of hives covered in snow. By return I got a picture of her bees crowding around water barrels - with temperatures of 40°C plus her big problem is transporting water into the bush. She gets huge honey crops (200Kgs / hive).

Bees can be very resilient - one of my city centre hives was pushed over by three boys who clearly need a little bit of strict parenting - despite being exposed to the cold and rain overnight the bees settled as soon as I'd righted the hive and, judging by the amount of fondant they are eating, are no worse for their ordeal.

So now we look forward to a summer of beekeeping - YBKA events include the Bee Breeding Day, a Mead Day and best of all our Bishop Burton Conference. Nice to have lots of good things organised for the near future.

Bill Cadmore
Chairman

FEBRUARY

JOBS FOR THE MONTH

Check that all hives are clear of snow and in good water tight condition.

Heft hives to get an idea of stores remaining.

Make or buy candy and feed this to the bees.

Fill in important beekeeping dates on your calendar

Prepare your records sheets

Get involved in the association



JOBS FOR THE MONTH

For all you up and coming new beekeepers out there who may be reading this e-news for the first time and contemplating becoming a beekeeper in the future, the month of February is very often a good time to start. This is because most beekeeping associations hold their first meetings of the New Year in Feb. Some have a pre booked speaker who delivers a talk on a given subject to the association members, or a slide show or just setting out all the forthcoming meetings for the spring and summer to come along with forthcoming courses and workshops. Many associations will be arranging where they will spend their annual day trip for its members to enjoy country houses, the lavender fields, Beamish Village as an example of many interesting places to visit for all friends and families within the association. It's an excellent time to get in contact with your local beekeeping association secretary and go along and meet all the other members with that view to joining and enrolling on a course for the beginners this coming season.

For the more established beekeepers there are still things within the apiary that need your attention, for now is the time when although things from the outside of the hives seem quiet, inside within the centre of the hive cluster things are moving at a little faster rate now. Within a broodless colony the overall temperature maintained is about 20°C however now the bees are raising this at their centre to about 34° – 35° where the queen is starting to lay larger patches of brood and the bees are busy cleaning out cells within the centre of the hive for their queen to begin the arduous task of once again building up the colony to its maximum over the next few months. Pollen is now starting to appear again in the form of the Crocus and Snow drop Celandine and Hellebores, and on the warmer days the bees will be out there foraging and seeking out these flowers. By now all the Oxalic Acid treatments should have been completed however if you are one of those

beekeepers who are not sure of this treatment then a short dose of another varroa application is at this time a very good idea along with the first monitoring counts of the year, starting the hive off clean of varroa before the main brood build up. Many of your older over-wintered bees will at this time of year start to perish with the excess workload of heating and foraging and it's quite a tentative time for the colony until a larger majority of their workers are up and flying so to speak. Food at this time of year is essential and if stores are lacking then you must keep up a good steady food source to encourage growth within the colony. This can be fondant where a pollen substitute can be added, candy, or if the weather and temp. are sufficiently high a weakened liquid feed can be given, I recommend over 11°C with a mix of 1-1/2 pts water to every bag of sugar, you can also add a small amount of a nosema compound to the mix once again ensuring the bees are kept healthy. Now also is the time to start to get all your equipment cleaned and new frames and boxes put together for the forthcoming seasons start. Don't put wax in frames as yet but wait until they are required to complete them. Check again all existing boxes within the apiary for damage from wild animals or wood peckers and if they are damaged wait for a mild day and quickly replace them with as little disturbance to the colony as possible. Finally check your entrances and floors and ensure they are all clear and free from dead bees of any other possible blockages allowing the bees to fly in and out without hinder.

1. Summary- Join a club,-
2. Check for Varroa and treat where drop is high,
3. Ensure floors and entrances are clean and clear.
4. Keep a weekly check on the food supply,
5. Check for damage of apiary boxes and repair or replace where poss.
6. Start to get frames ready for spring.

Happy Beekeeping
Dave Shannon

British BKA

Annual delegates Meeting - 15th January 2011

This is my second ADM and now understand the process far better than last year. This year 60 delegates were present. As a result of Yorkshire moving our AGM to December, I felt I was much more informed to represent the Yorkshire views at the ADM. The meeting is held at the National Beekeeping Centre at Stoneliagh Park it commenced promptly at 10-30 & this year finished at 3pm. It still means a 14 hour day and 425 mile round trip. The first part of the meeting is taken up with the various sub-committee reports, before moving on to the "interesting" process of managing through the various propositions.

In no particular order and to keep you informed :-

Education Sub committee – Course in a Case is well received the first one (white) issued, 5 in total are planned, the next one being Yellow, then Red / Green / Blue – have you realised the colour coding yet? The increase in new beekeepers are posing a challenge with their desire to know more. There is a concern over the range of differing levels of advice being given (I don't think in Yorkshire we have too much of a problem) it is suggested that those running beginner classes should at least have some formal qualifications, minimum being the General Husbandry Certificate. The interactive hive DVD concept is delayed due to ill health of its project leader David Bancalari. The BBKA news letter is to become a monthly full colour version (its actually cheaper in full colour than spot colour as now). A concern was raised that it would become a competitor of BeeCraft but only 1/3 of the BBKA members actually subscribe to BeeCraft.

Surrey Shield – this is awarded each year to Area Associations who have carried out the most successful numbers of Basic Exams – the award for 2010 went to Surrey. However, Yorkshire were second, it is based on actual numbers and a % of the association membership. Perhaps in 2011 we can take the first place – being the largest Area Association it would be good, we were only 15 away from being first.

Capitation issues – always a thorny subject, capitation has remained steady for the last 3 years and we all know costs of everything have increased. I was mindful of a possible increase when I addressed YBKA AGM in December. A £1 increase was proposed when this went to the vote the results were 49 for / 6 against / 5 abstentions. YBKA need to take this to our spring conference meeting and discuss along with the research proposals. For information the Adopt a Hive scheme is run via a 3rd party and SAGA, it has brought ~£30k profit into BBKA.

Nominations for Election – there were 5 vacancies and 5 candidates (4 for 3 year, 1 for 1 year) "our" David Aston was successful gaining a 3 year position. Michael Young of NI was somewhat scuppered by one delegate "suggesting" he was in favour of pesticide endorsement, without him being present to defend himself and as the subject is so touchy it did sway the voting, however common sense prevailed and he was awarded the 1 year appointment. I am fortunate to have met him a number of times and believe he has a great deal to offer BBKA.

Propositions - the bit we were all waiting for – to try out the new hired-in electronic voting system, all I can say is how beneficial it was to proceedings and saved loads of aborted time counting cards etc, so quick and simple. The contentious one was obviously the Pesticide issue, so much has been written and circulated to lots of people on this one and I feel it has done severe damage to us as a group of Beekeepers – I am please it is finally behind us, the proposal was amended slightly and common sense now prevails. This has been on the ADM agenda for the last 5 years in some form or another - my personal view is - all the rubbishing of people and whipping them into a frenzy, that has gone on over the last few months has done nothing to forward us as beekeepers - it has damaged the good will that the "Fighting the Pollination Decline / Smokers in Whitehall" developed and has shown us to be a fragmented group intent on internal squabbles and in-fighting that was going to help no-one. It has taken time away from spending our efforts on

education of the persons using such pesticides - the A5 booklet everyone got with the last BBKA newsletter is a good start

The Cleveland proposition to join BBKA as an Area Association did actually get passed. The Yorkshire stance is that we are opposed to lots of small associations being Area Associations of BBKA as we feel we have a significant benefit (YBKA are the largest by the way) as we are able to obtain world class speakers at our events such as Bishop Burton, smaller associations are not able to have the "clout" to secure these types of speakers. Some information;- there are ~25 Area Associations with <100members, this means lots of Delegates that need to travel to the ADM and the additional cost of expense claims does not seem to aid the workings of the BBKA – we are paying for the expenses of the ADM out of our Capitation. However that said the card vote for Cleveland to join was 40 for / 15 against / 5 abstaining, I immediately called for a "registered membership vote" which yielded 9478 for / 7647 against / 1953 abstaining. So it was carried and we push onwards. I still find it hard to understand why delegates abstain – to me it shows a breakdown in obtaining information from their members.

During the various debates, 2 fairly vociferous delegates were present (representing a combined total of <150 members) that created a lot of time consuming debate, which could indicate that small Area Associations are not the way forward.

I have also been monitoring the comments on the ADM via the BBKA discussion forums – for those who have not dipped into this it can be quite interesting. What I hate however is the fact that people don't use their own names – it you have something to say let it be known who you are - sorry thats me on my soap box again !

If people don't like what is done at the ADM then its up to them to start at their local association level and put themselves forward for election, even up to the BBKA exec level if they really want to change things. The process is you lobby your delegate they represent your Area Association, the voting is done and if it is not what you wanted as an outcome you tried, now you have to get on with it.

Tony Jefferson

Education Reminder

The closing dates for applications to sit any Modules is 10th February 2011.

General and advanced husbandry and Microscopy 28th February.

All appropriate documentation and fees available on the British beekeepers website
<http://www.britishbee.org.uk/>

Y.B.K.A. Events

Details are almost finalized for 2 YBKA events which will be held in the near future - which will be popular so get ready to book your places as soon as the March enews is issued....

Bee Breeding Day	March 26th	Harrogate Showground
------------------	------------	----------------------

Helping district associations start their bee breeding programme this year

Mead and Honey Wine Day	Date to be announced	Harrogate Showground
-------------------------	----------------------	----------------------

How to make Mead / What it should taste like / Tricks of the trade

A TO DO WITH BEES

A STEEP LEARNING CURVE FOR 2 NEW BEE OWNERS

After attending local bee meetings for a few months and completing a beginners course my sister Jacqui and I took delivery of a nucleus of local bees on the 25th May 2010, safely ensconced in their new hive we left our bees to settle in and could hardly wait for the following week when we would check through the hive to make sure all was well.

2nd June our first hive inspection – we were excited and a little apprehensive as we donned our new pristine beekeeping suits and lit the smoker in preparation for our first foray into the intriguing world of the bee. Slowly and methodically we inspected each frame, making notes as we went. It was satisfying to find the queen with her green marker, newly laid eggs and brood in various stages of development. We closed up the hive, the lid seemed a little stiff to get into place but we dismissed this, we gave each other a hive five and congratulated ourselves on a successful first inspection.

A few days later our mentor Tony suggested that we give our bees a feed of syrup as the weather wasn't very good and it would help with wax building, so I bought the sugar and made up a pan of syrup. I phoned Jacqui to tell her the plan "I'm going to put a feeder in the hive tomorrow morning, I'm not actually going into the hive so no need for you to come down" famous last words on Sunday evening. Monday morning dawned and I got togged up in my beekeeping suit feeling rather over dressed just to put a feeder on top of the glass quilt.

Remembering that the roof had felt stiff after the last inspection I took it slowly easing the roof off the brood box very gently and then off it came along with the crown board, the glass quilt and one of the frames of bees which had been stuck to the glass quilt with wax, this then fell onto the grass at the side of the hive. Panic, bees were everywhere pinging off my veil like little kamikaze pilots. Far from not going into the hive I had burst into it like a maniac and without any bee calming smoke. I retrieved the frame from the grass and carefully put in back into the hive then replaced the glass quilt, put on the feeder with the empty super the crown board and lid, phew.

I heard Jacqui's landrover coming up the road so I went to the gate and flagged her down and retold the story as her and Colin listened to the events that had happened only minutes before. We all stood watching the cluster of angry bees around the hive entrance hoping upon hope that I hadn't killed the queen, all of a sudden a bee flew straight at Jacqui and into her hair, stinging her on the forehead, another flew at Colin as we retreated to the safety of the house and a cup of tea to calm our nerves. What had I done to our new bees.

I phoned Tony to tell him what had happened and he offered to come and check them for us, I gratefully took him up on the offer. On Tuesday teatime Tony arrived and methodically checked through the hive, there was no sign of the queen but he thought he could see a patch of eggs (bad light) we would have to check again in a few days time.

Sat 12th June – Jacqui and I inspected the hive again today, they had taken another jar of syrup but still no sign of the queen or any eggs, there were however several queen cells with larvae in them and two of them were sealed. As we were pondering what to do we noticed a chap leaning on the gate talking to my husband Steve, he introduced himself as Dave Young, a fellow Whitby beekeeper, he had heard us talking about queen cells and suggested that he fetch a couple of nuc's and split the hive into three, we phoned Tony our trusty mentor and he agreed that this was the best course of action so the hive was split leaving us one queen cell and Dave taking the two nuc's with a queen cell in each to be mated at Robin Hoods Bay.

So here we were, less than three weeks after taking custody of one hive of bees I had managed to kill the queen, the hive had been split into three and we were left with a depleted colony. The out come of the story is that we now have two thriving colonies of bees and hopefully (without too much interference from me) they will survive the winter and we will go into spring and the new beekeeping season with a lot more confidence and know how and with the help of our new beekeeping friends we will increase our colonies. Thanks to the Whitby Beekeepers Association our eyes have been opened to the fascinating world of bees.

Karen Parkin

THE YORKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

In conjunction with Bishop Burton College
Saturday 9th April 2011

YORKSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION
53rd CONFERENCE
AT BISHOP BURTON COLLEGE, BEVERLEY
EAST RIDING of YORKSHIRE

" Honey Bees and Beekeepers in our Natural Environment "

Our Speakers for the day**Dr Giles Budge**

Dr Giles Budge has worked in plant pathology research and development for 10 years. Giles started work at the National Bee Unit in October 2007 as the research co-ordinator. Prior to this, he was responsible for the development of real-time PCR-based diagnostics for bee pests and diseases and the delivery of the EFB study.

Prof. Keith S. Delaplane

Professor, Department of Entomology, University of Georgia,

Prof. Delaplane's expertise is in honey bee management, sustainable bee health management, bee foraging ecology, social evolution, and crop pollination. He oversees an off-campus lab of one dedicated state-funded technician, one soft-money technician, 1-2 graduate students, and 1-2 hourly workers. The lab work over 200 hives. He is the author of several books on beekeeping.

John Hendrie

John has been involved with bees and beekeeping almost all his life, having been stung at the age of two by one of his father's colonies. Since graduating from university in 1971, he has held many offices in local beekeeping associations, including branch secretary (12 years) and treasurer of Kent BKA (8 years), He was appointed to the exam board of the BBKA in 1991, is a vice chairman of the National Honey show and a director of Bee Craft magazine.

Programme

0900 – 0930	Registration
0930 – 0935	Welcome and Introductions
0935 – 1030	Prof. Keith S. Delaplane Honey bee ecology and its application to beekeepers
1030 - 1050	Coffee
1050 – 1150	Dr Giles Budge Colony losses
1200 – 1300	John Hendrie Communication in bees
	Luncheon
1400 – 1500	Prof. Keith S. Delaplane Honey bee genetics and breeding
1500 - 1545	Discussion Talk with the speakers in smaller groups
1545– 1615	Tea Goodbyes and disperse

Other Attractions**Northern Bee Books**

A variety of the latest beekeeping publications will be on sale.

National Bee Unit

An information stand will be available.

Stamfordham Beekeeping Supplies

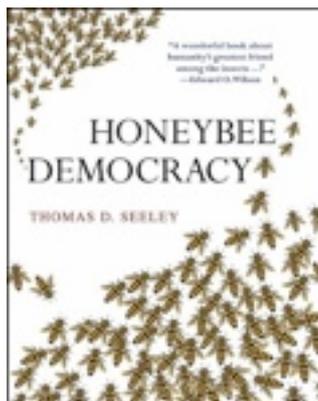
Suppliers of quality beekeeping supplies

Yorkshire Beehives

Hive made to order by local craftsman

Compak-Spink

Suppliers of all sorts of containers and honey jars



What an excellent book for the beekeeper and general reader. If you are interested in nature then you will be interested in this book. If you are interested in how a scientific study can be carried out with honeybees then this is the book for you.

The colony is presented as a democracy ruled by workers.

In spring, a bee colony's thoughts turn to swarming. The queen and about two-thirds of the workers leave their hive to search for a new home.

The swarm perches on a nearby tree, then sends out a few dozen scout bees to scour the neighbourhood. Their job is to find, measure and evaluate every hollow tree or other enclosed space. When the scouts return to the several-thousand-strong swarm, they dance atop the other bees, telling them what they have found.

A potential nest must be large enough to hold ample honey to feed the colony through the winter, high enough to offer protection from predators, and have a small entrance for the same reason. The vigour and duration of each scout's dance reflect her enthusiasm for the site she has found.

We understand how all this works thanks to Tom Seeley, a Cornell University entomologist who has devoted almost 30 years to studying the "house-hunting" behaviour of honeybees. In *Honeybee Democracy*, Seeley carefully narrates his many seasons of experiments using plywood nest boxes that could be moved and modified at will. He discovered what bees like in a home, how scouts measure the dark interiors of these boxes and, most of all, how the swarm "votes" to decide which nest to occupy. Once Seeley and his colleagues knew what size box, in which location, would constitute the best future nest, they set out a variety of boxes on an island, and let swarms choose. They consistently chose the best site. He knows from years of observation that, in the wild, most swarms die over the winter because they are not able to find a suitable home. The decision-making process, he says, is both effective and efficient, involving a "debate" over the several sites the scouts discover. When a scout returns and dances vigorously, other scouts fly off to check on her choice. Over the course of hours or days, they reach a consensus, and advocates of rejected sites simply stop plumping for them. This selfless process works because all the bees in the swarm are the queen's daughters, and they share the common goal of colony survival. Though an individual bee is not particularly intelligent, the collective "swarm intelligence" produces impressive results.

Honeybee Democracy is a brilliant display of science at work, with each experiment explained and illustrated. It is only at the end, when Seeley tries to introduce honeybee democracy at departmental meetings at Cornell, that his persuasive book falters. Humans are different: we are not all siblings, we rely on leaders, and we make choices for selfish reasons.

Yorkshire Area Representatives

Airedale, Wharfedale, Bradford, Leeds	Bill Cadmore 01132160482 bill.cadmore@ntlworld.com
South Riding, Doncaster, Barnsley, Sheffield	Dave Shannon 01302-772837 dave_aca@tiscali.co.uk
Halifax, Huddersfield, Wakefield, Pontefract	Phil Gee 01422886114 pjgphilgee@aol.com
Beverley	Wendy Maslin 01482656018 wendy@maslin.karoo.co.uk
Northallerton, Thirsk & Richmond	Roger Chappel roger@rchappel.orangehome.co.uk
Easingwold, York & Barkston Ash	Tom robinson mautomrobee@btopenworld.com
Whitby, Scarborough, Malton & Rydale	Tony Jefferson 07749731945 stoneleabees@yahoo.co.uk

On the Keeping of Bees by

John Whitaker

This excellent book for novice
beekeepers can be purchased
from

<http://www.ypdbooks.com/the-natural-world/355-on-the-keeping-of-bees-YPD00325.html>



Bees can be good for plants in more ways than one, scientists have found.

Researchers in Germany discovered that the flapping of bees' wings scared off caterpillars, reducing leaf damage. Many wasp species lay their eggs in caterpillars, and so caterpillars have evolved to avoid them. The sounds of bees' and wasps' wings are similar.

Writing in the journal *Current Biology*, the scientists suggest this is an added bonus of having bees around, as well as the pollination they provide.

"Our findings indicate for the first time that visiting honeybees provide plants with a totally unexpected advantage," they write. "They not only transport pollen from flower to flower, but in addition also reduce plant destruction by herbivores."

Hairy moments

The ingredients for this experiment were bell pepper and soybean plants, beet armyworm caterpillars, and honeybees. Researchers set up experimental plots of the plants, added the caterpillars, and allowed the bees to enter some of the plots but not others. When the caterpillars had turned into pupae and buried away in the soil, the scientists went back into the cages and measured the extent of leaf damage - the amount of munching that the

caterpillars had indulged in. In plants that had not fruited, the presence of bees reduced caterpillar damage by about 60%.

The researchers believe the caterpillars were sensing the bees' presence through the tiny hairs on their bodies, which enable them to detect vibrations in the air. "These sensory hairs are not fine-tuned," said lead researcher Jurgen Tautz from the Biozentrum at Wurzburg University. "Therefore, caterpillars cannot distinguish between hunting wasps and harmless bees." When plants had borne fruit, the caterpillars were able to hide in the fruit and the bees had much less effect. In many countries, numbers of bees appear to be declining, for reasons that are not entirely clear.

According to a recent Australian survey, this is not affecting crop yields on a global basis, but it is affecting pollination in some regions and is clearly of concern to entomologists trying to understand the causes.

If this German research is confirmed, it will provide another reason for trying to keep bees alive and well.



Yorkshire Beekeepers Association General Purposes Committee

Chairman

Mr William Cadmore
01132160482
bill.cadmore@ntlworld.com

Vice Chairman

Tony Jefferson
07749731945
stoneleabees@yahoo.co.uk

Hon. Secretary

Brian Latham
01132643436
brian.latham@ntlworld.com

Hon. Treasurer

John Whittaker
01937 834688
johnmartinwhittaker@hotmail.com

Equipment Officer

Roger Chappel
roger@rchappel.orangehome.co.uk
01325315741

Education/Examinations

Wendy Maslin
01482 656018
wendy@maslin.karoo.co.uk

Bee Husbandry

Tom Robinson
mautomrobee@btopenworld.com
BBKA ADM Delegate

Tony Jefferson
07749731945
stoneleabees@yahoo.co.uk

Environment and spray liaison officer

Vacant post
Information Officer
Kate Wallace
kate.wallace41@googlemail.com

Web Master

Roger Chappel
roger@rchappel.orangehome.co.uk
01325315741

YAS Representative

Michael Badger
0113 294 5879
buzz.buzz@ntlworld.com

School Day Organiser

Phil Gee
01422886114
07769650059
pjgphilgee@aol.com

NBU Representative

Ivor Flatman
01924 252795
07775 119436
ivor.flatman@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Honey Show Organisation

Dave Shannon
01302-772837
dave_aca@tiscali.co.uk

Newsletter Editor

Bill Cadmore
01132160482

Y.B.K.A. DATES

YBKA Spring
Conference
March 12th 2011
Yorkshire Showground

Bee Breeding Event
March 26th 2011
Yorkshire Showground

Bishop Burton
9th April 2011
Bishop Burton College

Schools Days
14th-15th June 2011
Yorkshire Showground

Great Yorkshire Show
12th-14th July 2011
Yorkshire Showground

AGM
December 3rd 2011
Yorkshire Showground

GPC Meetings
4th February 2011
6th May 2011
17th June 2011
23rd September 2011
3rd December 2011

Regional Bee Inspector **Ivor Flatman**, tel. 01924 252795
e-mail ivor.flatman@fera.gsi.gov.uk

NBU office: National Bee Unit, The Food and Environment
Research Agency, Sand Hutton, York, UK, YO41 1LZ

Email: nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk

Telephone: 01904 462510

Web site: <https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/>