



# Healthy Bees Plan 2030

## Implementation Plan

October 2021



*Cover photo: checking Varroa mite drop on hive insert*  
Image courtesy of Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA), Crown Copyright.



© Crown copyright 2021

This information is licensed under the Open Government Licence v3.0. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/)

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/publications](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications)

PB ref. 14698

Information about this publication is available from:

### **England**

Animal and Plant Health and Welfare  
Defra  
Room 11G35, York Biotech Campus, Sand Hutton  
York  
YO41 1LZ

Tel: 020 80261586

Email: [BeeHealth.Info@defra.gov.uk](mailto:BeeHealth.Info@defra.gov.uk)

### **Wales**

Land, Nature and Forestry  
Welsh Government  
Rhodfa Padarn, Llanbadarn Fawr, Aberystwyth  
Ceredigion  
SY23 3UR

Tel: 0300 062 2290

Email: [HoneyBeeHealth@gov.wales](mailto:HoneyBeeHealth@gov.wales) or [GwenynMellach@llyw.cymru](mailto:GwenynMellach@llyw.cymru)

# Contents

Introduction.....	4
Actions.....	5
Outcome 1 .....	5
Effective biosecurity and good standards of husbandry, to minimise pest and disease risks and so improve the sustainability of honey bee populations	
Outcome 2.....	7
Enhanced skills and production capability/capacity of beekeepers and bee farmers	
Outcome 3.....	9
Sound science and evidence underpinning the actions taken to support bee health	
Outcome 4.....	10
Increased opportunities for knowledge exchange and partnership working on bee health and wider pollinator needs	
Glossary.....	13

# Introduction

The Healthy Bees Plan 2030 was published in November 2020 alongside a review of the original Healthy Bees Plan, which had been in place from 2009 to 2019.

This Implementation Plan develops the four outcomes set out in the Healthy Bees Plan 2030 into manageable actions. Bee Health stakeholders will work together over the next ten years on these actions and any others identified, to improve the health of honey bees across England and Wales. As with the new Healthy Bees Plan, this implementation plan has been developed together with bee health stakeholders and actions have been identified that can be taken, not just by government, but individually or jointly by stakeholders and the wider beekeeping community.

The four broad outcomes in the Healthy Bees Plan 2030 that we will work towards are:

1. Effective biosecurity and good standards of husbandry, to minimise pest and disease risks and so improve the sustainability of honey bee populations;
2. Enhanced skills and production capability/capacity of beekeepers and bee farmers;
3. Sound science and evidence underpinning the actions taken to support bee health; and
4. Increased opportunities for knowledge exchange

Some of the actions set out in the following pages were identified from the review of the first Healthy Bees Plan, while others emerged from subsequent Bee Health Advisory Forum discussions. Actions have been assigned owners and a timescale for delivery. The new plan runs for 10 years but the implementation plan will be refreshed approximately every 3 years, allowing a light-touch review of:

- (i) actions completed to date;
- (ii) actions ongoing;
- (iii) whether any new actions need to be added.

Work is ongoing with stakeholders to identify suitable measures of success so that progress can be monitored for each of the actions set out in the Implementation Plan.

Many partners in the Healthy Bees Plan 2030 commission or contribute to research and will continue to do so individually and with others. The plan does not, however, envisage a shared funding resource, rather a sharing of ideas and priorities to provide a complementary programme of research.

# Actions

## Outcome 1

Effective biosecurity and good standards of husbandry, to minimise pest and disease risks and so improve the sustainability of honey bee populations

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>Surveillance</b>	1	Continue statutory risk-based inspections using revised RAG rules (Red/Amber/Green) to target inspector resources effectively	NBU	Ongoing from start of plan – first review December 2021 (annual)
	2	Formal review of RAG rules to determine whether effectiveness can be improved	NBU	First review complete March 2024 (3-yearly)
	3	Informal summary review of effectiveness of RAG rules	NBU	Ongoing from start of plan – first review December 2021 (annual)
	4	Review triaging of Call Outs by Beekeepers (COBs); consider hive-side materials available to beekeepers; emphasis on photo evidence; possible protocol for referrals to local BKA	NBU/BBKA/WBKA	Review complete December 2022
	5	Explore scope for improvements in beekeeper ability to recognise foulbrood	NBU/BBKA/WBKA	Review complete December 2023
	6	Continue Voluntary Sentinel Apiary scheme with Small hive beetle trapping in high-risk colonies	NBU	Ongoing from start of plan – first report December 2021 (annual)
	7	Review usefulness of 2:1 target ratio of Enhanced Sentinel Apiaries to High-Risk Points – explore alternatives as required	NBU	Review complete March 2022 – findings implemented by March 2023
	8	Explore ways of improving engagement among association members in respect of pest and disease recognition	BFA/BBKA/WBKA/NDB	Report by March 2024

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>Voluntary biosecurity</b>	9	Review existing Best Practice Guidelines and develop new ones to fill any gaps	NBU	Review complete March 2023
	10	Develop comms to highlight biosecurity steps that all beekeepers can take, including safe sourcing of bees	Defra/WG/ NBU/BBKA/ WBKA/NDB/ BFA	Comms published March 2023
	11	Improve beekeeper swarm collection skills	BBKA/WBKA	Advice published by March 2023

## Outcome 2

Enhanced skills and production capability/capacity of beekeepers and bee farmers

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>Disease Assurance Scheme for Honeybees (DASH)</b> Building on DASH success to support and train professional bee farmers.	12	Publish DASH membership criteria	NBU/BFA	Publish by March 2022
	13	List numbers of successful DASH members annually to publicly acknowledge biosecurity compliance	NBU/BFA	Ongoing – first report March 2022 (annual)
	14	Offer DASH to accredit further appropriate candidates with >50 hives	NBU/BFA	Initial offer September 2022 (annual)
	15	Review audit of DASH members	NBU/BFA	First report March 2022 (annual)
	16	Review how to extend and provide DASH refresher training	NBU/BFA	Review complete March 2023
	17	Pilot online training methods	NBU/BFA	Pilot ends September 2021
	18	Review DASH scheme every 3 years (delivers value for money and benefit for bee farmers)	NBU/BFA	First review complete March 2024 (3-yearly)
<b>Training Programmes</b>	19	Encourage beekeepers to pass the basic assessment (or equivalent) within the first five years of beekeeping	BBKA/ WBKA	Ongoing from start of plan – first progress update March 2022 (annual)
	20	Recruit sufficient assessors to allow basic assessment to be offered to all beekeepers within their first five years	BBKA/ WBKA	Ongoing from start of plan – first progress update March 2022 (annual)
	21	Identify essential HBP 2030 core topics for education by summer 2021	BHAF	Core topics agreed September 2021
	22	Develop training programmes with delivery methods that are accessible and appropriate for a wide range of beekeepers	BBKA/ WBKA/NDB	Develop by September 2022

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>Training Programmes</b>	23	Develop a pre-keeping product – what you need to know/consider before you obtain a colony	NBU/WBKA/BBKA	Product available December 2022
	24	Attract people to become future beekeeping educators	BBKA/ WBKA	Ongoing from start of plan – progress update March 2022 (annual)
	25	Develop a programme of at least 5 online presentations each year, to be made available to all beekeepers	NBU	Ongoing from start of plan – progress update March 2022 (annual)
	26	Mentoring - develop framework that local associations can use to set up schemes. Reflect best practice; aim for scalability, to accommodate available resources	Defra/WG/ BHAF/ working group	Framework available December 2021
	27	Review options for a training offer for professional beekeepers, such as continuous professional development scheme	BFA	Review complete December 2022
<b>BFA Apprenticeship Scheme</b>	28	Maintain the Bee Farmers' Association Apprenticeship Scheme	BFA	Ongoing from start of plan – progress update March 2022 (annual)



## Outcome 3

Sound science and evidence underpinning the actions taken to support bee health

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>Using technology to promote bee health</b>	29	Review ways of using technology to improve recognition and detection of pests and diseases	Defra/WG/NBU/Fera	First review December 2022 (3-yearly)
	30	Review National Bee Unit online literature	NBU	Ongoing from start of plan – progress update March 2022 (annual)
<b>Research Collaboration</b>	31	Explore setting up an online science sharing platform	Defra/WG/BHAF	Feasibility report March 2024
	32	Discuss research priorities during a dedicated annual science meeting in addition to regular BHAF meetings	BHAF	Trial meeting February 2022
<b>Communicate sound science</b>	33	Cascade information to beekeepers, bee farmers and beekeeping educators; celebrate World Bee Day annually by focussing comms on current science	BHAF	First comms May 2022 (annual)
<b>Bee health risk assessments</b>	34	Review pest risk assessments for Asian hornet and Small hive beetle	Defra/WG/NBU/Fera	Review by March 2023

## Outcome 4

### Increased opportunities for knowledge exchange

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>BeeBase Access</b>	35	Improve BeeBase usability for beekeepers to simplify beekeeper updates	NBU	Ongoing from start of plan – first progress update March 2022 (annual)
<b>Communicate legal obligations of beekeepers</b>	36	Develop a new BeeBase page to link to legislative requirements; update relevant literature as necessary; best practice guidelines	NBU/Defra/WG	Page published December 2021 – leaflets updated March 2023
<b>Increase opportunity for sharing best practice</b>	37	Facilitate sharing of information amongst local groups for both practical beekeeping and commercial awareness	BBKA/WBKA/BFA	Ongoing from start of plan – first progress update March 2022 (annual)
	38	Support comms around updated training, advice and guidance materials	BBKA/BFA/WBKA/BDI/NDB	Ongoing from launch of updated guidance – first progress update June 2022 (annual)
	39	Review range of best practice advice guides: identify gaps, rationalise and reduce duplication across these guides and other materials; develop guidance to address these gaps	NBU/BHAF	Ongoing – first tranche of material available March 2022 (annual)
	40	Develop leaflet on beekeeper density and forage availability	Defra/WG/NBU/NPS/BBKA/WBKA	March 2022
<b>BeeBase records</b>	41	Explore, and encourage uptake of, accessible ways for beekeepers to update beekeeping information in the field/hive-side	NBU	Feasibility report March 2024
<b>Professional development</b>	42	Support professional development training/material/event for bee farmers	BFA/NBU	Ongoing from start of plan – first progress update March 2022 (annual)

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>Understand beekeeping diversity and accessibility</b>	43	All partner beekeeping organisations to encourage registration on BeeBase of members and apiaries	BHAF	Ongoing from start of plan – first progress update March 2022 (annual)
	44	Promote mentoring/support to improve beekeeping skills and provide a supportive inclusive community (links to Action 26)	BBKA/ WBKA/BFA	Ongoing from start of plan – first progress update March 2022 (annual)
	45	Record diversity information to understand if the beekeeping community needs to take further steps to be diverse and inclusive	BHAF	Ongoing from March 2022 – first progress update March 2023 (annual)
	46	Transfer association membership data (“eR2”) to BeeBase to minimise data entry duplication for beekeepers and improve accuracy of the “Current Beekeeper” list	NBU/BDI/ BBKA/ WBKA	Launch in August 2023
<b>Improve Online Offering</b>	47	Promote and continue to identify and improve opportunities for learning, maximising online learning	BHAF	Ongoing from start of plan - first progress update March 2022 (annual)
<b>Increase opportunity for sharing best practice</b>	48	Update and promote NFU ‘Farming for bees’ leaflet, which provides advice for farmers on providing food for bees, apiary sites and best practice when using insecticides; review advice in consultation with BHAF members	NFU	Leaflet updated December 2021
<b>Increase opportunity for sharing best practice</b>	49	Review barriers to take-up of BeeConnected online tool for connecting beekeepers with farmers, to notify beekeepers when neighbouring farmers apply insecticides	NFU	October 2021
<b>Promoting on-farm honey bee measures</b>	50	Work with the Championing the Farmed Environment (CFE) partnership, to promote on-farm measures that benefit honey bees	NFU	Ongoing from start of plan - first progress update March 2022 (annual)

Theme	Action no.	Action	Partners	Period and reporting
<b>Working with European partners</b>	51	Work with Copa-Cogeca to represent the interests of bee farmers at a European level	NFU/BFA	Ongoing from start of plan - first progress update March 2022 (annual)
<b>Bee Health Advisory Forum Refresh</b>	52	Update Terms of Reference	NBU	Update complete December 2021
	53	Review membership of the forum	Defra/WG	Review complete December 2021
	54	Consider themed agendas and/or specialised annual meetings to discuss issues in detail	BHAF	Implement December 2021
	55	Review format of highlight report	NBU	Review complete December 2021

## **Glossary**

BBKA	British Beekeepers' Association
BDI	Bee Diseases Insurance Limited
BFA	Bee Farmers' Association
BHAF	Bee Health Advisory Forum
DASH	Disease Assurance Scheme for Honeybees
Defra	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Fera	FERA Science Ltd.
HBP 2030	Healthy Bees Plan 2030
NBU	National Bee Unit
NDB	National Diploma in Beekeeping
NFU	National Farmers' Union
NPS	National Pollinator Strategy
PRA	Pest Risk Assessment
WBKA	Welsh Beekeepers' Association
WG	Welsh Government