

Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP)

Annual Report 2022 – 2023

March 2024

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Introduction

This is the first annual report of the activities of the Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP) following the publication of Scotland's second 10-year Honey Bee Health Strategy in 2022.

The purpose of this report is to outline and reflect on the progress made by the BHIP during the first full year of its second Strategy, the aim of which is to work in partnership to achieve a healthy and sustainable population of honey bees in Scotland.

The BHIP forms a direct link between Scottish Government officials and stakeholders and has been invaluable in gathering information on the views and needs of the sector to provide a steer and guidance to inform honey bee health policy and delivery decisions. The BHIP have also played a crucial role in helping communicate key messages to their respective members.

The Scottish Government would like to thank all members of the BHIP for their contributions and continued support towards the achievements of Scotland's second Honey Bee Health Strategy and look forward to continuing this partnership for the duration of the strategy.

The Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP) and ways of working

The BHIP was established in 2010 as part of Scotland's first 10-year Honey Bee Health Strategy as a forum to allow Scottish Government Officials and stakeholders to discuss challenges affecting honey bees and the Scottish beekeeping sector.

In order to deliver the Honey Bee Health Strategy, the BHIP developed an [Implementation Plan](#), grouping together actions, key issues and objectives as follows:

1. Education, Training and Knowledge Transfer
2. Communication and partnership working across government, operational partners, stakeholders and all of those with an interest in honey bees in Scotland
3. Pest and Disease surveillance, prevention, diagnosis, and control
4. Research and Development
5. On-going review of the regulatory framework

The BHIP meet quarterly and comprise of representatives from:

- The Scottish Beekeepers Association (SBA)
- The Bee Farmers Association (BFA)
- National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB)
- Scotland's Rural College (SRUC)
- NatureScot
- Scottish Government (Delivery, SASA and Policy)
- The devolved UK administrations

The BHIP ensures that governance and accountability is maintained by detailing its progress of the specific aims of the Honey Bee Health Strategy in its minutes which can be found [here](#).

Honey Bee Health Team

The work of the BHIP is supported and delivered by the Scottish Government's Honey Bee Health Policy Team, Scottish Government Veterinary Advisor, Scottish Government Honey Bee Health Delivery Lead, Scottish Government Honey Bee Health inspectors, SASA and SRUC. Collectively this team is referred to as the Honey Bee Health Team and so is referenced throughout this report.

Achievements and progress

Pillar 1: Education, Training and Knowledge Transfer

The BHIP will work on improving the level of education and knowledge of the Scottish Beekeeping community on all issues relating to honey bees.

Educational presentations and talks

The BHIP set a specific action to deliver a minimum of five presentations per year on notifiable diseases and pests, recognition, reporting and control to the Scottish Beekeeping Community. In 2023, the annual target was met. Presentations were also delivered on a variety of topics to a number of beekeeping associations throughout Scotland.

Details of talks carried out by the Honey Bee Health Team as part of the aims of the Honey Bee Health Strategy in the last 12 months can be found in [Annex A](#).

Availability of and access to education

Working in partnership with SRUC, a Bee Health Advisor leads on development and delivery of training for beekeepers and provides advice to SG Honey Bee Health inspectors. The BHIP recognise that there is a need to reach remote beekeeping communities and those who are not members of associations and that to do this it is essential that different formats of learning are explored, for example, bite-sized online training courses and webinars.

In 2023, the Bee Health Advisor has provided a number of in-person talks to local beekeeping associations throughout mainland Scotland and has developed materials such as podcasts on beekeeping in winter, spring and on swarming.

Bee Health Days

In June, Scottish Government and SASA in collaboration with the SBA, SRUC, NDB and local association ran a Bee Health Day in Coatbridge for hobbyist beekeepers which charged £25 per person to cover costs, and included talks delivered by SASA, the SBA and SRUC on bee health in Scotland and how to observe a colony, as well as practical laboratory demonstrations by SASA on foulbrood diseases, Asian hornets, hive and apiary hygiene and shook-warming, and Varroa treatments. The event was fully subscribed and well received by participants.

A Bee Health Day for commercial beekeepers was planned which was intended to combine practical demonstrations with an opportunity to discuss SG bee health policy, however, due to low uptake the event was cancelled.

Plans for a Bee Health Day in 2024 will be developed in due course.

Talks to local beekeeping associations in areas where foulbrood disease found for first time

Following an outbreak of American foulbrood (AFB) in the Lothians in 2023, in addition to conducting extensive surveillance in the areas affected, the Bee Health Advisor and the SG Bee Health Delivery Lead delivered talks to the local beekeeping associations in the area where disease was found for the first time. As part of the outbreak response, they delivered two presentations on consecutive nights to several beekeeping associations who came together in both Bathgate and Tranent. Over the course of the two nights, 85 beekeepers attended. They received an update on the outbreak, information on disease identification, how to get in touch with the bee inspectors, biosecurity advice and a demonstration using a dummy hive on how to carry out a disease inspection. Following positive feedback from beekeepers, the team have now implemented this as part of their standard procedure to address disease outbreaks in new areas.

EFB Control Plan re-certification course

As part of the requirements of the [EFB control plan](#) its signatories must attend a re-certification course every three years. The first re-certification course since the Covid pandemic took place in May in Perth and involved diseased comb demonstrations, presentations on biosecurity and the requirements of the EFB control plan. The attendees completed an assessment at the end of the course in both disease recognition and the requirements of the plan. The course also included a talk from a commercial bee farmer in England who successfully eradicated EFB from his business.

Attendance at events

Royal Highland Show

In June 2023 at the Royal Highland Show, Lorna Slater, Minister for Green Skills, Circular Economy and Biodiversity visited the honey tent, hosted by the Scottish Beekeepers Association (SBA), to meet those with an interest in honey bees and to discuss issues affecting the beekeeping community. The SBA along with the SRUC Bee Health Advisor promoted the new Varroa map and hosted a stand with posters on Asian hornet, useful information sheets and free wildflower seeds.

Scottish Beekeepers' Association Annual Convention

The Scottish Beekeepers Association Annual Convention took place in Dundee in September 2023. The theme for the convention was honey bee health and two guest lecturers gave informative talks on the subject. Representatives from the Honey Bee Health Team, comprising SG, SRUC and SASA officials attended the event.



The Honey Bee Health Team hosted a stand with informative posters, leaflets and an Asian hornet model on display. The Team enjoyed the day and were delighted to meet members of the beekeeping community.

Pillar 2: Communication and partnership working across government, operational partners, stakeholders and all of those with an interest in honey bees in Scotland

The BHIP will ensure regular and effective communication between government, operational partners, stakeholders and all of those with an interest in honey bees through the quarterly meetings of the BHIP. Key issues will be identified and communicated to the beekeeping community as and when required using the most efficient communication strategies.

BHIP meetings

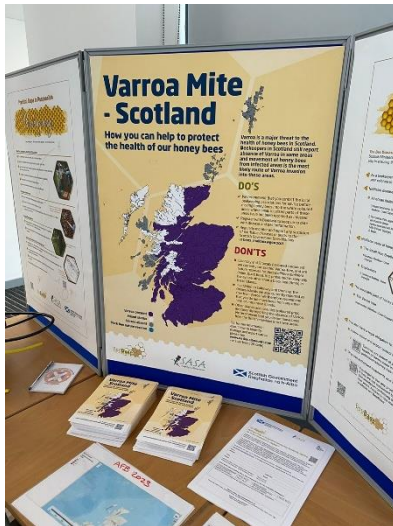
The BHIP met on a quarterly basis throughout the year. Minutes from the meetings are published on the Scottish Government Honey Bee Health pages following each meeting and can be accessed [here](#).

Varroa mapping exercise

Varroa continues to be one of the main causes of honey bee colony losses in Scotland and is considered endemic in the UK except in some small pockets in remote areas of Scotland. The BHIP identified Varroa controls as a key issue and set an action to create a Varroa map showing where particular care is needed in order not to spread the parasite into Varroa-free areas.

Varroa records on BeeBase, alongside historical SASA records and reports from Scottish beekeepers, were used to map areas where Varroa was reported present; areas where reports were mixed (i.e. smaller localised areas within the area reporting presence/absence); and areas where there were no reports of Varroa. The map also highlights the islands of Colonsay and Oronsay which are currently considered Varroa-free and are nature reserves for *Apis mellifera mellifera* (Amm, Black Bee) and that it is prohibited to keep any honey bee other than a black bee (Amm) in these islands.

Utilising the Varroa map, a communication strategy was developed to reach as many beekeepers as possible, using a variety of communication channels and approaches. A poster containing the map and advice for beekeepers was put on display at both the Royal Highland Show in the Honey Tent in June 2023 and the Scottish Beekeepers Association (SBA) Convention in September 2023. Accompanying flyer leaflets were also available at these events as well as at SRUC talks.



The SBA shared the poster on their social media channels and Scottish beekeeping associations were asked to display it in their local areas and share in relevant local premises to increase awareness. The Varroa map was also published in the Bee Farmers Association and BeeCraft magazines. A copy of the flyer can also be found on BeeBase by clicking [here](#).

The Varroa map will be updated annually to take into account new reports of Varroa incidence. Beekeepers are encouraged to register on BeeBase and report any incidence of Varroa to help ensure that the map is as accurate as possible. The Varroa communication strategy will also be updated prior to next season with further plans e.g. display at targeted ferry ports in 2024.

Misuse of medicines and potential residues in honey

The Scottish Government has a requirement to provide 10 samples of honey each calendar year to the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) for analysis for presence of medicinal residues. The BHIP, through its implementation plan, also set an action to consult with the VMD and Food Standards Scotland (FSS) regarding misuse of medicines and potential residues in honey. In June, SG officials met with representatives from Scottish local authorities, VMD and FSS to discuss the issues and challenges around reporting, identification, testing, standardisation of practice and enforcement.

Communication with beekeepers about nearby notifiable disease outbreaks

Following feedback from the beekeeping community, the BHIP set an action to ensure expedient and timely communication with beekeepers about nearby notifiable disease outbreaks of both American foulbrood (AFB) and European foulbrood (EFB) including an explanation of potential impact on beekeepers in the area, what to look for, and recommended steps to take.

Following the first finding of AFB in Scotland in 2023, officials released a [press release](#). This attracted media interest and articles from The Scottish Farmer and Sky News.

Throughout the 2023 beekeeping season, SG Officials have carried out prompt and effective communications ensuring the beekeeping community in the local area are made aware of any outbreaks in a timely manner with clear information on the action taken, what this means and next steps. Notifications are sent to the local beekeeping association in the affected area as well as BHIP members sharing notifications with their respective members. One challenge the BHIP faces is reaching those beekeepers who are not registered on BeeBase or who are not engaged with an association. The BHIP will continue to explore ways to reach this group through its communication and engagement strategies.

Ministerial letter to beekeepers

Unfortunately, 2023 saw unprecedented levels of both American and European Foulbrood outbreaks in Scotland. The Scottish Government takes honey bee health extremely seriously and in August, Environment Minister, Gillian Martin wrote to Scotland's beekeepers to remind them of best practice and actions to be taken to help maintain the health and wellbeing of honey bees. The full letter can be found [here](#).

Meetings of the devolved administrations

Scottish Government officials meet regularly with counterparts in England, Wales and Northern Ireland to discuss issues affecting bee health. Meetings take place every five-six weeks and the main topics for discussion include imports and exports and other EU and legislative issues such as implementation of the Animal Health Law. These meetings are essential to maintaining relationships, open communication and keeping abreast of what is happening in each country which may impact Scotland.

BeeBase

BeeBase is the Animal and Plant Health Agency's (APHA) National Bee Unit (NBU) website. It is designed for beekeepers and supports Defra, Welsh Government and Scottish Government bee health programmes and provides a wealth of apiculture information on a variety of issues such as honey bee disease recognition, management control techniques and legislation. Scottish Government pays an annual contribution to the NBU to enable Scottish beekeepers to have access to BeeBase.

March 2023 saw the launch of the new version of BeeBase with the addition of a new page dedicated to beekeepers in Scotland which contains Scottish specific content and is managed by the Scottish Government's Honey Bee Health Team. By utilising BeeBase, the BHIP ensure that Scottish interests are considered.

The BHIP, through its communications, continue to encourage beekeepers to register on BeeBase and keep the locations of their apiaries up to date. This helps the Scottish Government Bee Health Team assess if there has been a risk of disease spread to a beekeeper's bees which is important for those within an area where disease has been confirmed.

Scottish Government Bee Health website

The Scottish Government has a dedicated web page on honey bee health which contains guidance on policy, diseases and pests, legislation and inspections. In addition to BeeBase, this is a helpful source of information for beekeepers in Scotland. The Bee health pages are reviewed and updated regularly throughout the year to ensure up to date communication is available to the beekeeping community.

Magazine articles

Scottish Government's Honey Bee Health Team regularly contribute to the Scottish Beekeepers Association monthly magazine. During 2023, the team produced four articles for the publishing months of April, August, September and December covering topics such as Varroa, honey residues and fraud, as well as an informative article for beekeepers on what to do if they receive a disease notification email and finally a summary of the 2023 beekeeping season from the Bee Health Delivery Lead.

Additionally, SRUC's Bee Health Advisor produced an article for the Agribusiness magazine on farming and beekeeping.

Pillar 3: Pest and Disease surveillance, prevention, diagnosis, and control

The BHIP work in partnership on the development and implementation of effective strategies for surveillance, prevention, diagnosis and control of honey bee pests and diseases. The BHIP also aims to continue to emphasise the importance of promoting effective biosecurity and good standards of husbandry.

Scottish Government Honey Bee Health Inspectors

The BHIP set an action in its Implementation Plan to develop a proportional and expert Bee Health Team in Scotland able to deliver statutory bee health activities across Scotland. A number of additional Honey Bee Health inspectors were recruited, and as part of a process of continuous professional development, all SG Honey Bee Health inspectors received refresher update training and evaluation prior to the start of this season. The 2023 training included a practical demonstration from the National Bee Unit on exotic pest inspections.

A group of Honey Bee Health inspectors and the SRUC Bee Health Advisor also attended a technical training event held in York in April 2023 hosted by the National Bee Unit (NBU). Inspectors gained new skills in the detection and identification of the notifiable pest, *Tropilaelaps*.

Notifiable disease inspections

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Inspected Colonies	8418	12648	11791	14394
AFB Colonies	8	10	10	36
EFB Colonies	180	125	109	212
Inspected Apiaries	412	463	570	580
AFB Apiaries	5	10	7	13
EFB Apiaries	76	61	61	100
Inspected Beekeepers	101	123	168	167
AFB Beekeepers	1	5	6	6
EFB Beekeepers	15	15	16	25

The inspection figures for the 2023 season are shown above. 2023 saw increases in the levels of both American foulbrood (AFB) and European Foulbrood (EFB) found in Scotland.

Evidence gained from analysing historical inspection data shows that it can take up to two years for a colony to develop clinical symptoms of EFB. As a result, inspectors targeted their surveillance inspections to hobby beekeepers whose apiaries had been within 3km of confirmed notifiable disease in 2021 or 2022. Having a better resourced team of inspectors meant the team were able to conduct more specifically targeted risk-based inspections in areas known to be high risk for disease.

Inspectors supported beekeeper through the process of dealing with a notifiable disease, providing assistance where required and giving advice on biosecurity.

There was an increase in the number of colonies infected with AFB this year affecting different beekeepers to those previously affected. An outbreak of AFB in the Lothians required extensive surveillance in the affected areas, inspecting over 40 different beekeepers.

Varroa Working Group

Varroa is one of the main causes of honey bee colony loss in Scotland. To address this, a Varroa Working Group (VWG), chaired by Matthew Richardson of the Scottish Beekeepers Association and comprising of expert stakeholders and government officials, including SASA, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), Food Standards Scotland (FSS), Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and representatives from other devolved administrations, has been established and met on three occasions during 2023.

In September the VMD were invited to discuss Varroa medicines with the Group, specifically to address the Scotland-specific issues affecting application of Varroa treatments. The group agreed some work was required to produce guidance for beekeepers on where to find additional information and how to interpret the package information with the aim of making it more accessible and easier to understand.

The main objectives of the VWG are to implement the following objectives identified by the BHIP:

- Improve the education and knowledge of Varroa management and control in Scotland
- Support beekeepers in their management of Varroa, including protecting honey bee populations in areas where Varroa is not known to be present or has only recently arrived
- Create Varroa management guidance for Scottish beekeepers taking into consideration Scotland's climate, honey flow calendar and management practices. This includes, but is not limited to:
 - Identifying the Varroa treatments that are most suitable for use
 - Identifying the correct timings of when suitable Varroa treatments can be used
 - Providing guidance on the correct use and disposal of Varroa treatments
 - Providing guidance on the efficacy of different Varroa treatments

In June 2023, the VWG agreed that a Short Life Working Group should be established to develop a Varroa Learning Package for beekeepers. This group operates as a sub-group of the VWG and reports to that Group.

Imports

Import controls are in place to reduce the risk of the introduction and spread of exotic bee pests and it is important anyone importing bees comply with all the import conditions in order to protect the health of honey bees in the UK. Imports from countries other than EU member states must enter via a border control point. Following the UK's exit from the European Union imports of honey bees from EU member states into GB are restricted to consignments of queen honey bees only with up to 20 attendants and must be checked at destination on a risk basis.

When the importer receives a consignment of imported honey bees, they must transfer the queens to new queen cages before they are introduced to any local colonies. They then must send the original cages, attendant worker bees and other material that accompanied the queen bees from their country of origin to SASA within 5 days of receipt for examination for the presence of the Small Hive Beetle and Tropilaelaps mite. In 2023, there were two imports with SASA carrying out one post-import check on risk basis.

For full information on importing bees into Scotland, please refer to the following [guidance](#).

Asian hornet

Asian hornets are aggressive predators that feed on other insects and pose a serious risk to honey bees and other native species. The BHIP have been paying close attention to the Asian hornet situation in England. The significant rise in Asian hornet nests found this year is concerning and while none of these were found in Scotland, it emphasises that steps must be taken to avoid the possibility of these pests establishing here. This year, there have been two reports of Asian hornets in Scotland, however, on investigation these were identified as other insects and no action was required.

Scottish Honey Bee Health inspectors are trained to deal with an incursion should it occur and in September the Bee Health Delivery Lead and Deputy travelled to Jersey for refresher training.

Diagnostic support

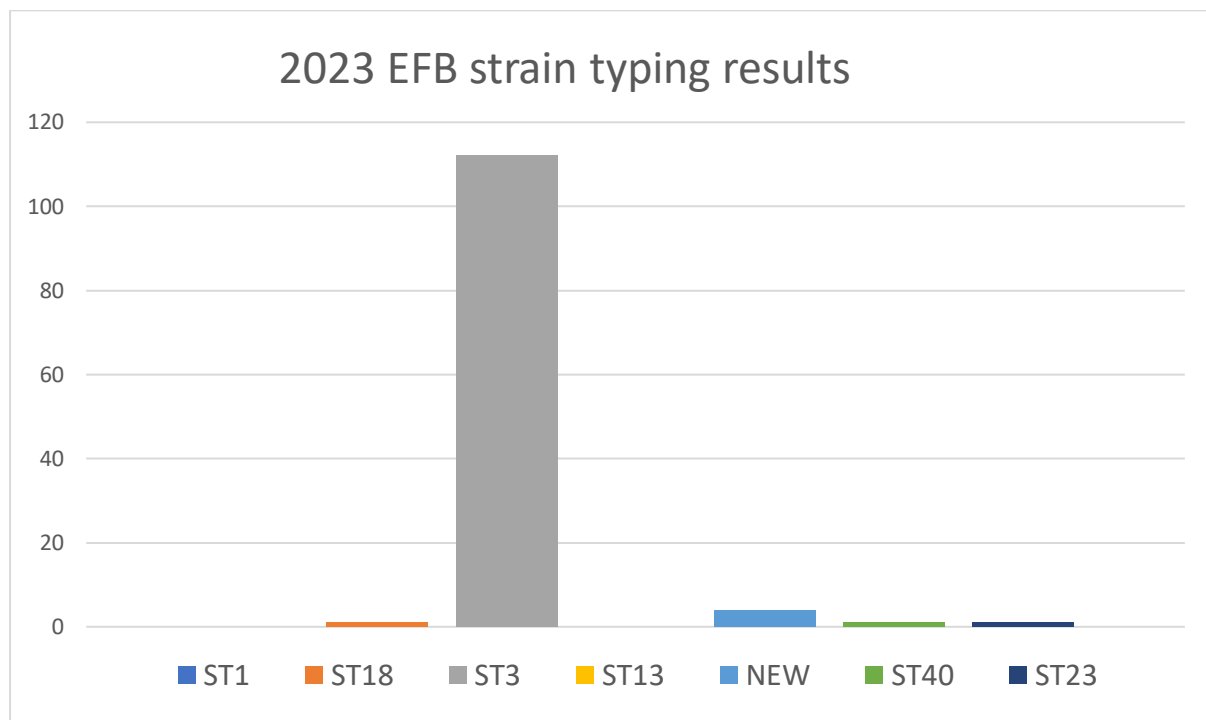
Foulbrood

SASA work very closely with the bee health inspectors in the field and provide the diagnostics and advice for the inspection team to allow them to specifically target their resources.

SASA also provided technical advice such as recommendations on colony destruction and sterilisation procedures for affected businesses, and best practice on sampling techniques and use of the lateral flow test kits.

It has been a busy season in the lab for the team at SASA carrying out diagnostics, strain typing, sub clinical analysis and providing advice and support to both policy and delivery teams. A total of 388 samples for foulbrood testing were processed and

reported on by the laboratory in 2023. A minimum of one sample from every foulbrood positive apiary was analysed for strain type, with results fed back in real time to delivery colleagues to inform control and containment procedures.



EFB strain types in 2023 – the above chart shows the most common strain type in 2023 was ST3, with this strain detected in a total of 112 cases. There were four cases of the as-yet unnamed strain which was first detected in 2022, and one case each of ST18, ST40 and ST23.

In addition to the routine disease testing, in 2023 SASA carried out a limited trial of a molecular screening method for the EFB pathogen. This test is highly sensitive and evidence shows it can detect the presence of the pathogen when symptoms are absent from the colony (sub-clinical testing). Testing was carried out on 129 samples of adult bees from five separate beekeepers, with results used by the inspectorate to inform the disease control strategies for the affected businesses.

Varroa testing

A total of 112 samples were analysed for the presence of Varroa mites. All samples from Orkney continue to test negative for Varroa, but mites were detected in the colonies of two separate beekeepers from the north of the Isle of Skye.

Adult bee disease and pesticide analysis

SASA has analysed 16 samples of dead bees from colonies which have died out without clear cause. These investigations found one case of Acarine disease, eight colonies infected by Nosema spp., two cases of suspect Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus (CBPV) and four colonies with evidence of high Varroa levels and Deformed Wing Virus (DWV).

Three of the above samples were also analysed for pesticide residues. No pesticide residues were detected during the analytical investigation. Further data is available [here](#).

Pillar 4: Research and Development

As outlined in the Honey Bee Health Strategy's Implementation Plan, the BHIP will ensure that decisions, bee health policy, disease prevention and control strategies are underpinned by sound science and evidence. The BHIP will identify areas requiring further research and development, working in partnership with the scientific and beekeeping community and commission/recommend research which could make a positive impact on bee health in Scotland.

Designation of SASA as a UK Official Laboratory

Honey bee health is a devolved matter in Scotland and SASA is the government laboratory responsible for providing bee disease diagnostic service in Scotland as part of their remit to provide scientific advice and services for Scottish Ministers.

However, the responsibilities of the UK's animal health laboratories, and the process by which they are designated, are reserved to the UK Government and are outlined in the Official Control Regulation ("The OCR," EU Reg 2017/625; from 31 December 2020 amended and retained in UK legislation under Statutory Instrument 2020/1481). The Animal Diseases Policy Group (ADPG) agreed that the Devolved Administrations could apply for UK Official Laboratory status for designated laboratories, enabling those laboratories to undertake certain activities.

Following a successful application by the Scottish Government, the UK Chief Veterinary Officer confirmed that with effect from 7 September 2023, SASA was officially designated as a UK Official Laboratory for honey bee health, pursuant to Article 37 of Regulation (EU) 2017/625 (OCR), and authorised to conduct analysis, tests and diagnosis for official controls and other official activities purposes.

PhD Studentship

Emerging scientific evidence indicates that managed pollinators, even when native as honey bees are in Scotland, could potentially have a detrimental effect on wild pollinators. The BHIP identified that it is key that beekeepers are provided with the appropriate education to ensure awareness of these potential issues, and that research is vital to fully understanding and mitigating these risks.

As well as the presentations on this topic carried out by the team as detailed under pillar one, funding has been approved for a PhD studentship at the University of Edinburgh, starting Autumn 2023. The aim of the project is to investigate interactions of managed and wild pollinators in natural environments. The outcomes of this project will hopefully provide key Scotland-specific evidence on if/what the risks are to wild pollinators in Scotland.

Work to eradicate Varroa from an isolated apiary

SASA has been working closely with a beekeeper on the Isle of Skye whose colonies had recently acquired Varroa through accidental introduction. A strict isolation and control program has been implemented by this beekeeper since mites were detected in 2021, guided by the SASA Senior Entomologist and Dr David

Evans, and testing results in 2023 indicate that Varroa may have been successfully eradicated from this apiary.

SRUC investigation into Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus (CBPV)

In 2023, the the Bee Health Advisor started working with Peter Richard Rios from SRUC and Giles Budge from Newcastle University on the histopathology of chronic bee paralysis in honey bees. This work aims to characterize the histopathologic changes in affected bees and it is hoped the findings will help to demonstrate which organs are affected and clarify routes for virus transmission.

Pillar 5: On-going review of the regulatory framework

The BHIP work in partnership with the Scottish Government to ensure that the legislative framework and enforcement powers are adequate for the achievement of the objectives of the honey bee health strategy.

Compulsory registration of beekeepers and reporting of hive movements in Scotland

BeeBase is our best tool for effective disease control as it allows identification of potential contact colonies easily. However, there is currently no legal requirement to register as a beekeeper or report the location and movement of honey bee colonies.

The new [EU Animal Health Regulation \(AHR\)](#) requires compulsory registration of beekeepers and notification of movement of beehives. Scottish Government has a stated policy of aligning with EU regulations so far as is reasonable and practicable, and a [survey](#) of Scottish beekeepers in 2022 indicated there was some appetite for mandatory registration. The BHIP set a specific long-term action to explore mandating registration in order to provide Scottish Ministers with advice on this issue.

Requirements for establishing officially free Varroa areas in Scotland

The BHIP recognises the serious threat and impact that Varroa has on honey bees and beekeeping and consideration of the process and requirements for establishing official Varroa free areas in Scotland is one of the actions in the Honey Bee Health Strategy's Implementation Plan. This will continue to be taken forward in conjunction with the Varroa Working Group and remains a longer-term action.

Conclusion and forward look

During its first full year of a new Strategy and as detailed above, the BHIP have delivered on several of its specific actions and made progress on others, all towards addressing a range of important issues and achieving the desired outcomes for honey bee health in Scotland.

Turning towards 2024, key priorities for the BHIP include:

EFB Control Plan

- As part of the ongoing work to ensure that the Plan is fit for purpose and signatories can fully comply, the Plan will be reviewed during 2024. The BHIP will look at lessons learned from previous seasons, consider if existing controls are sufficient, and reflect evolving knowledge on EFB spread and control.

Asian hornet

- As the risk of an Asian hornet incursion in Scotland increases with the steep rise in numbers located in England during the 2023 season, the BHIP has recommended Honey Bee Health inspectors shadow counterparts in the National Bee Unit and Defra during the 2024 season in their response to sightings to gain further experience on how to tackle any incursion into Scotland.
- The Scottish Government will publish its Asian Hornet Contingency Plan setting out the procedures to respond to a suspected or confirmed incursion of the Asian hornet in Scotland.

Education

- The BHIP is to roll out a standardised training module in 2024 for local associations to include in their beginner to beekeeping training. This module will inform beekeepers on relevant legislation, notifiable diseases, non-native invasive species, the functions of the Honey Bee Health Team, the role of the Scottish Government Honey Bee inspectors and how to engage, the Veterinary Medicine Directorate and approved medicines etc.
- A Varroa-specific training module will also be rolled out.
- A new SRUC web page on honey bee health to be launched

Compulsory Registration

- Work will begin in 2024 to engage with the sector on the feasibility of and appetite for compulsory registration and reporting of apiary locations.

If you would like to keep up to date with the progress of the work of the BHIP, its implementation plan is updated following every meeting and can be accessed [here](#).

Annex A

Month	Topic	Audience	Presented by
January	Managing Varroa	Mull Beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
January	My six months in bee health	Stirling and Dunblane beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
January	The impact of managed bees on wild pollinators	North Ayrshire Beekeepers' Association	SASA Senior Entomologist
January	Responsible beekeeping	Helensburgh Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
February	Pollination	Peebles Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
February	Responsible beekeeping online	East of Scotland beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
February	Responsible beekeeping	Fife beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
February	Preparing for winter and spring	Fortingall beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
February	Responsible beekeeping	East Lothian beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
February	My year in bee health	SBA Webinar	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
February	Role of the bee inspector	Ayr & District Beekeepers Association	Delivery Lead for Bee Health
March	Shook swarm	West Linton Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
March	Varroa Management	Polkemmet Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
May	Responsible Beekeeping	Inverness Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
August	How to do a disease inspection (practical)	South of Scotland beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor and Inspector
August	Lothian AFB/EFB outbreak – update and disease recognition	Polkemmet Beekeepers Association	Bee Health Delivery Lead and SRUC Bee Health Advisor
August	Lothian AFB/EFB outbreak – update and disease recognition	East Lothian Beekeepers Association	Bee Health Delivery Lead and SRUC Bee Health Advisor

Month	Topic	Audience	Presented by
August	How to do a disease inspection	Elgin Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
August	Preparation for winter and spring	Inverness Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
August	The nuc method and Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus (CBPV)	Easter Ross beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
August	Beekeeping for disease prevention	Dingwall and Caithness Beekeepers Associations	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
September	Responsible beekeeping	Perth and Glasgow Beekeepers Associations	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
September	Winter preparation and Varroa	North Ayrshire beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
September	Foulbroods	Cambridgeshire Beekeepers' Association	SASA Senior Entomologist
September	Disease recognition, biosecurity and how to carry out a disease inspection	Spey Beekeepers Association	Bee Health Delivery Lead
October	Pollination and biodiversity	Western Galloway Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
November	CBPV and shook swarm	Aberdeen Beekeepers Convention	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
November	CBPV	Tarland Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
November	Beekeeping for disease prevention	East of Scotland beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
November	Preparing winter and spring	Baldrigon Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
November	Preparing for winter and spring	Polkemmet Beekeepers Association	SRUC Bee Health Advisor
November	Responsible beekeeping	Kelvin Valley beekeepers	SRUC Bee Health Advisor

Glossary

Abbreviation	Description
ADPG	Animal Diseases Policy Group
AFB	American foulbrood
AHR	Animal Health Regulation
Amm	Apis mellifera mellifera
APHA	Animal and Plant Health Agency
BFA	Bee Farmers Association
BHIP	Bee Health Improvement Partnership
CBPV	Chronic Bee Paralysis Virus
DEFRA	Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs
DWV	Deformed Wing Virus
EFB	European foulbrood
EU	European Union
FSS	Food Standards Scotland
GB	Great Britain
KM	Kilometre
NBU	National Bee Unit
NDB	National Diploma in Beekeeping
OCR	Official Control Regulation
SASA	Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture
SBA	Scottish Beekeepers Association
SEPA	Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
SG	Scottish Government
SRUC	Scotland's Rural College
UK	United Kingdom
VMD	Veterinary Medicines Directorate
VWG	Varroa Working Group

Contact Details

The Bee Health Improvement Partnership is contactable through the Scottish Government's Secretariat Support:

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