

## Activities & Benefits of Membership

- **Monthly Meetings** are usually held on the first Friday in the month, at 8pm, in Chadwick Hall, Main Road, Gidea Park (behind St Michael's Church). Most meetings have a speaker, topics may be about bees and beekeeping, but also related topics such as flowers, herbs, wildlife, etc.
- **Educational Courses** are run every year. A Beginners' Beekeeping course and Queen Rearing are the usual ones. Sometimes courses on beekeeping-related topics, such as candlemaking, insects, pollen analysis, microscopy, etc, may be held. A modest charge is made.
- **Garden Meetings** in summer, in one of the Out Apiaries, or in a member's garden if there are hives there. There may be a speaker, or a demonstration. One summer meeting includes a barbecue.
- **Apiary Tour**, usually on a Saturday or Sunday in May. This disease inspection tour is led by the Bee Inspector and includes the Division's Out Apiaries and members' apiaries if they wish.
- **Honey Show** held in October, just before the National Honey Show. Entries are free and there are classes for honey (including novice class), wax, mead, confectionery and photography. The entries winning first prize in some of the honey classes are automatically entered into the National Honey Show.
- **Harvest Supper** is held following the Honey Show (modest charge).
- **Town Shows** we may attend include Eastbrookend Fair, Planet Havering, and Havering Show. Members can sell their honey and other products, with the Division taking a commission. Candle-rolling is always enjoyed by the children.
- **Hive building/frame making** session is held each year to help new and experienced beekeepers learn how to put the kit together.
- **Bulk Buys:** the Division usually makes some bulk purchases, such as honey jars, for members to buy at reduced prices.




# Welcome to Romford Division of Essex Beekeepers' Association



*How to get started in Beekeeping...*

*...with help from Romford Division*



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## Who are we?

Romford Division is one of nine divisions of Essex Beekeepers' Association. We are a group of beekeepers living in the London Borough of Havering, Dagenham, Ilford, Thurrock/Grays and Brentwood.

Romford Division was founded in 1949: the EBKA was founded in 1880 and became a charity in 1993.



## What are our aims?

Our aims are to promote the art of beekeeping, by:

- running an interesting and informative programme of meetings and events for members
- giving support to member beekeepers, including practical help and advice
- organising education courses such as:
  - for beginner/potential beekeepers
  - for more experienced beekeepers, to improve their yields and management techniques
  - queen rearing, to improve colony quality within the Division and to help beginners
  - on bee-related topics, such as candlemaking, for beekeepers and the general public
- mentoring beginner beekeepers and helping them to set up their first hive at reduced cost
- educating the public at Shows and other events about bees and beekeeping
- working with schools, within the curriculum, to extend knowledge of bees and beekeeping



## Beginner Beekeepers

*Beginner beekeepers are welcomed and encouraged.*

### Getting started

Beginners are encouraged to attend a course to get a grounding in the theory and practice of beekeeping before acquiring bees of their own.

After the course, the Division can help a new beekeeper in three ways:

### *Equipment:*

The beginner beekeeper can take advantage of the discounts usually available to the Division to set up a complete new hive for approximately £250 (2009 prices), including smoker and hive tool. [Buying new is strongly advised because secondhand equipment often turns out to be less than the bargain it seemed, it may not be a complete set, and will certainly need careful sterilisation. New frames and wax will be needed in any case as old comb should never be used.]

### *Bees:*

The new beekeeper is started as soon as possible with a small colony of bees (a 'nucleus'). This colony can be built up to a full colony within one season and, if early enough, the beekeeper may even be rewarded by harvesting his or her first crop of honey the same year.

### *Mentor:*

A new beekeeper will have a 'mentor' who is an experienced beekeeper. The mentor will assist the new beekeeper with colony inspections, answer queries, etc, and generally help the new beekeeper to become confident in handling the bees and managing the year's work.

