



SURVEY RESULTS – U.K.

Deliverable IO1.A1

This project has been funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

The information and views set out in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Reproduction is authorised provided the source is acknowledged.

Project number: 2019-1-UK01-KA204 062075

PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 22/04/2020

Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Description	Action	Pages
[01]	18/04/2020	Spey Valley Bees	[Creation]	[C]	5
[01]	21/04/2020	Spey Valley Bees	[Updated]	[U]	13

(*) Action: C = Creation, I = Insert, U = Update, R = Replace, D = Delete

Referenced Documents

ID	Reference	Title
1	2019-1-UK01-KA204 062075	Plan Bee Proposal
2		

Applicable Documents

ID	Reference	Title
1	IO1.A1 Deliverable	IO1.A1 National report - U.K.

PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

Contents

1. Introduction	4
1.1 Methodology	4
1.2 Participants.....	4
Key facts:	6
2. Survey results	7
Key facts:	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3. Conclusions	12

PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

1. Introduction

1.1 Methodology

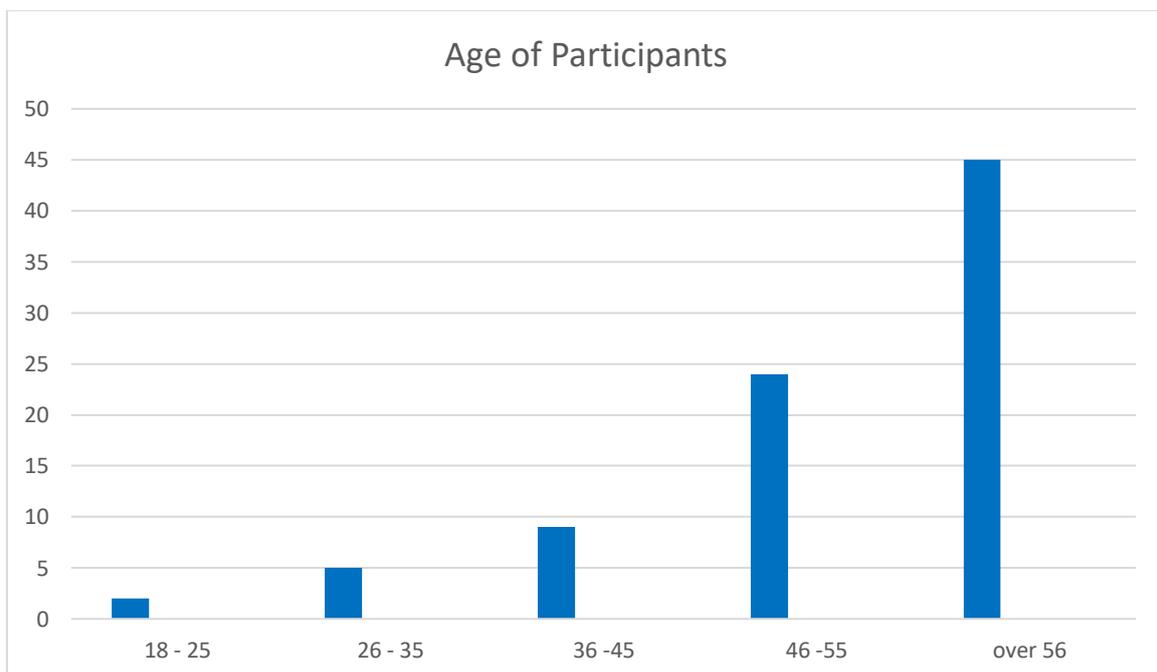
The survey was shared on social media (Facebook and Twitter beekeeping pages) and via direct e mail with beekeepers currently known to Spey Valley Bees Ltd who were invited to take part anonymously.

This resulted in 85 participants, many of whom have agreed to take part in further research and/or activities as the Plan Bee project continues.

1.2 Participants

A total of 85 survey answers were received. The following demographic data were extracted by the responses.

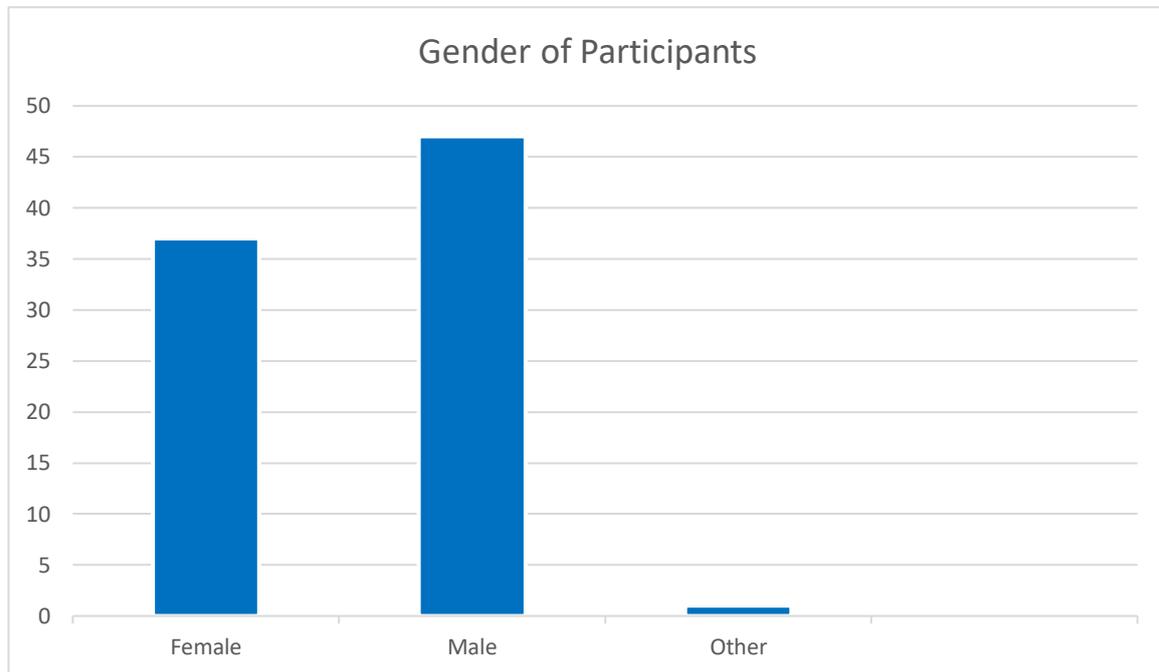
- Age of participants



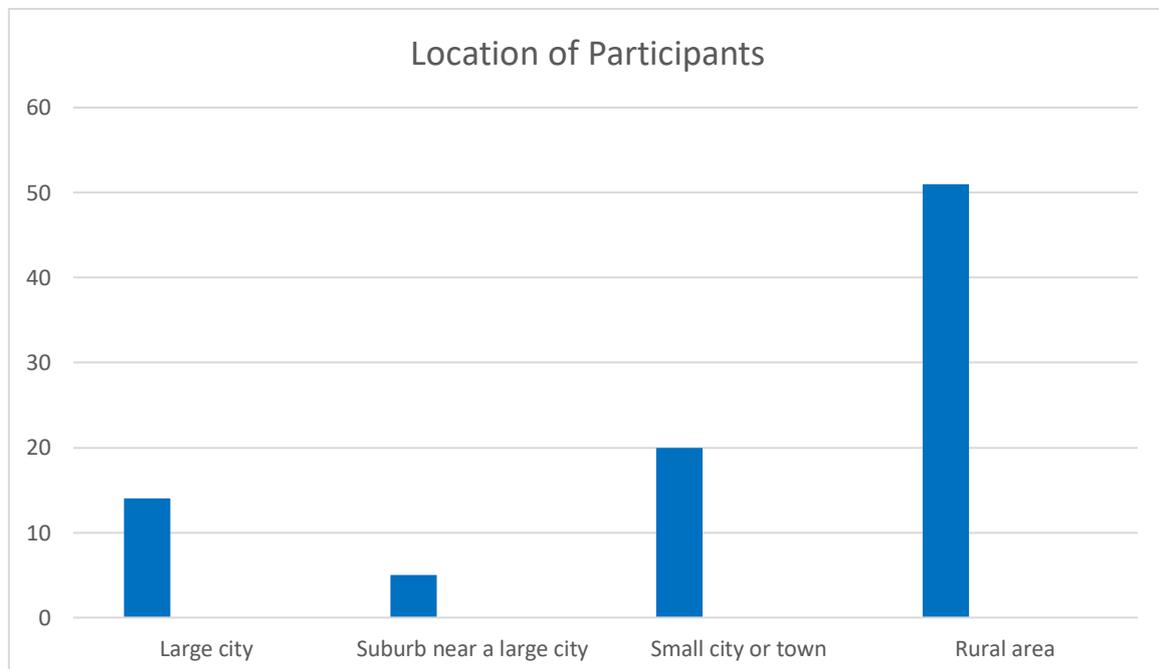
PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

- Gender:



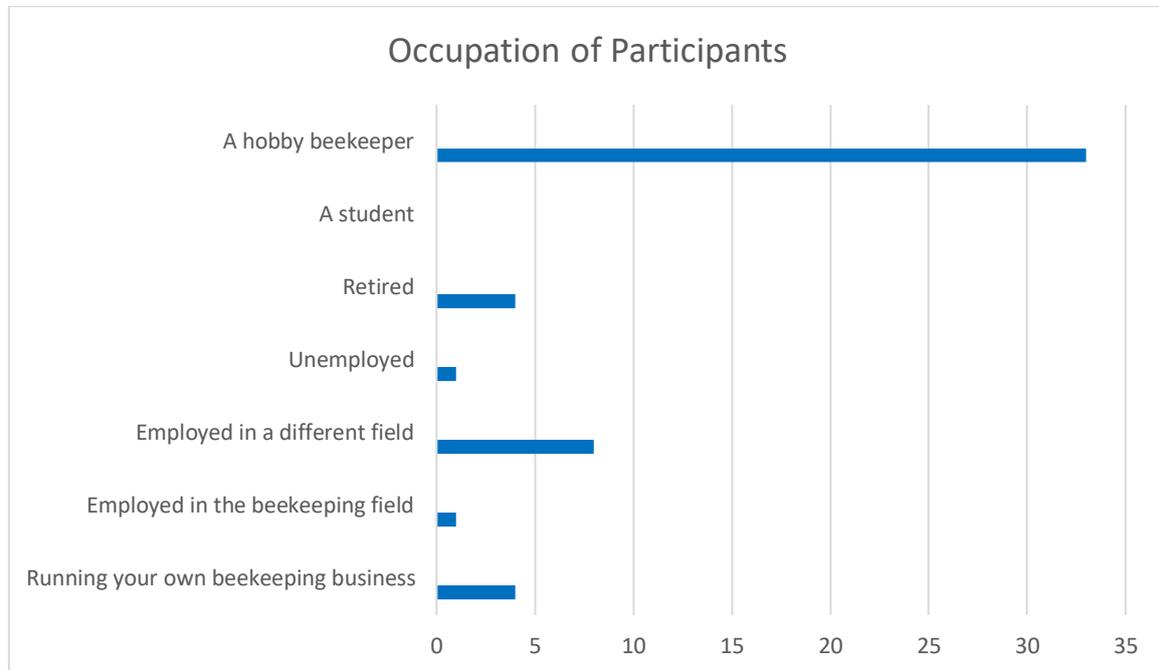
- Location:



PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

- Occupation:



Multiple answers were allowed which resulted in 4 persons employed in a different field but are also running their own beekeeping business, 4 persons retired but also hobby beekeepers, and 1 person employed in the beekeeping field but also a hobby beekeeper

Key facts:

The key facts from the above responses are:

- 55% of participants were male
- 53% of participants were aged over 56 years while only 6% were under 36 years of age
- Almost 60% of the participants live in rural areas
- The majority of participants are hobby beekeepers

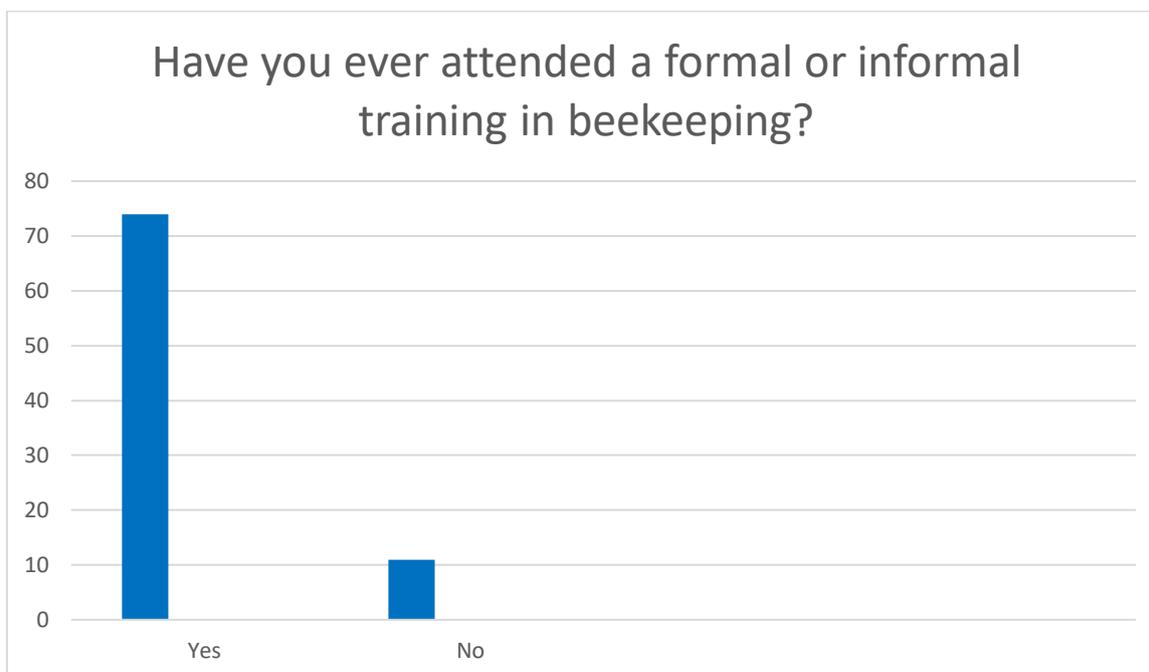
PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

2. Survey results

This section contains more detailed information on the participants beekeeping knowledge, skills and on running a business.

Question: Have you ever attended a formal or informal training in beekeeping?



- **If yes, please provide more details (title, organiser, length, type, etc.).**

Below is a sample of further answers from participants who replied 'Yes' to this question

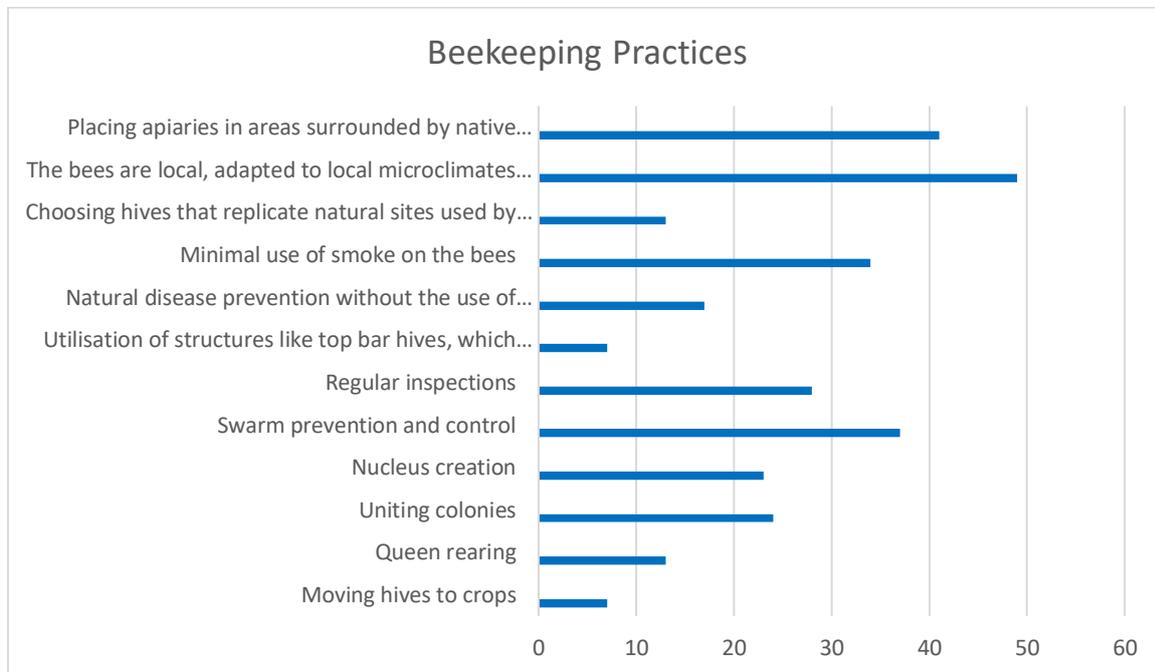
1. Beginners courses
2. Healthy BEES project courses
3. Local Association 6 week evening classes
4. Training provided by my local beekeeping association and the Scottish Beekeeping Association
5. BBKA General Husbandry
6. Master Beekeeper training
7. 'Making the move into Bee Farming' with Tony Harris
8. 6-week Queen rearing course
9. SBA honey processing and wax workshops
10. Healthy BEES with Tony Harris/Ann Chilcott
11. Sustainable beekeeping, 1 day
12. Preliminary beekeeping with Cafe Antrim run by Mid Antrim Beekeepers Association
13. Ongoing attendance at club training events and apiary visits

PUBLIC

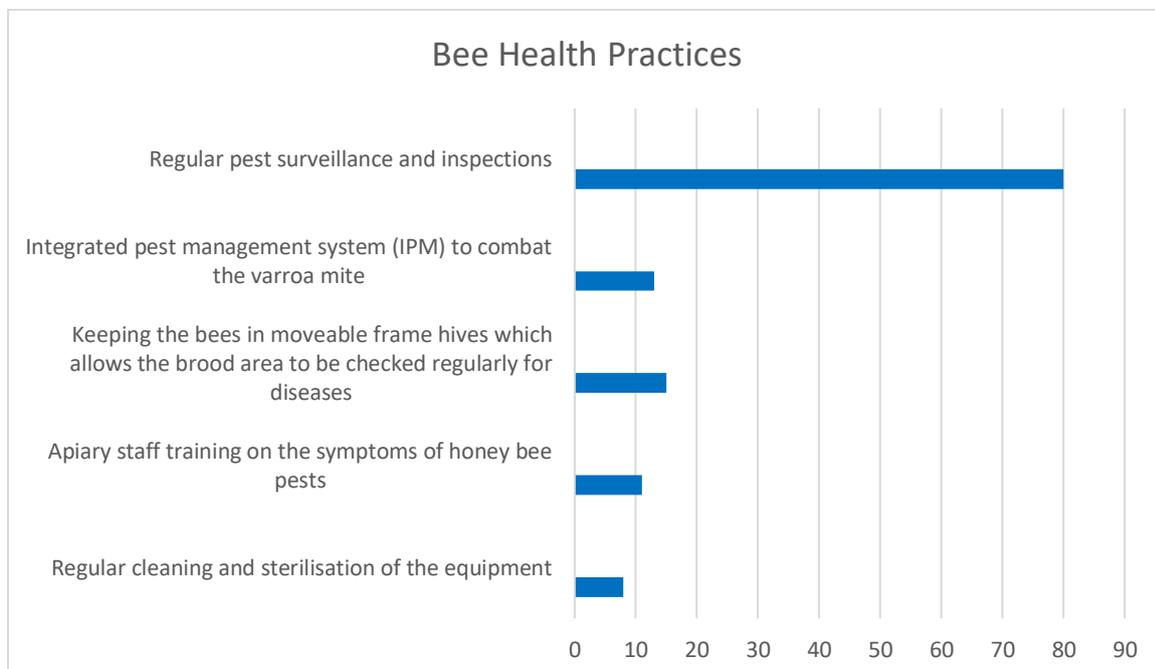
Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

14. Introduction to beekeeping, bee health, Queen Rearing. All at Moray Beekeeping Association led by Tony Harris.

Question: Which of the below beekeeping practices are you familiar with?



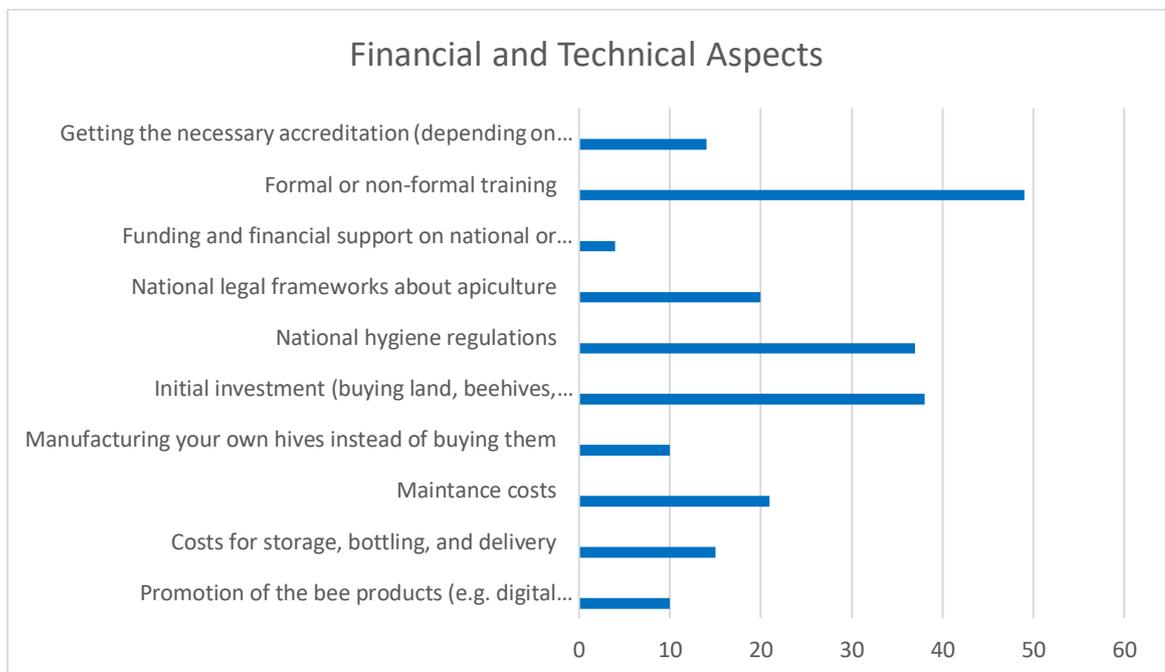
Question: Which of the below bee health practices are you familiar with?



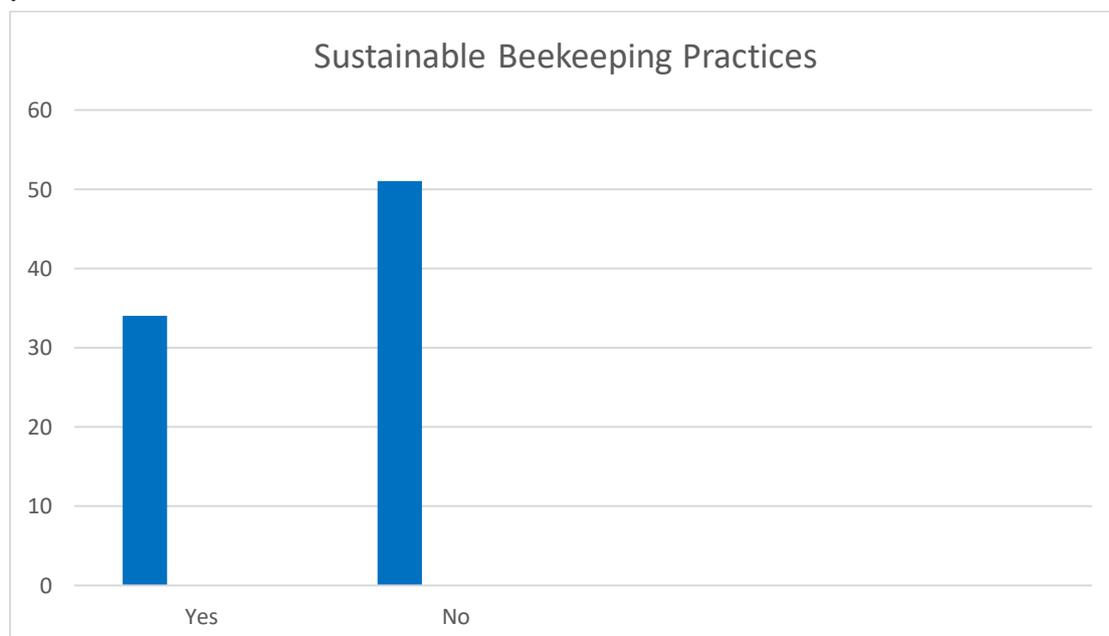
PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

Question: Which of the below financial and technical aspects of setting up and running a beekeeping business are you familiar with?



Question: If you are a working in the beekeeping field, are you following any sustainable beekeeping practices?



PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

- **If yes, please provide more details (title, organiser, length, type, etc.).**

1. Breeding own queens and overwintering nucs
2. Growing field of pollination mix and also 3,000 Hazel trees
3. Growing own stocks with locally adapted bees, using local mating apiary
4. I raise my own queens
5. I source bees locally and do not buy in from other areas
6. IPM
7. My entire beekeeping practice (!?)
8. Producing nucs and bees for replacements
9. Treatment free beekeeping and rearing
10. Wooden hives

It must be stressed that the term 'sustainable beekeeping' is not understood by many beekeepers and there is a group of beekeepers who call themselves 'sustainable' beekeepers in opposition to 'regular' beekeepers. Many of the practices of 'sustainable' beekeepers are in fact NOT sustainable and are considered by many as irresponsible and counter-productive. Any successful beekeeper, wishing to be profitable, must use sustainable methods in managing the bees because if the bees did not survive they would go out of business.

Question: What do you consider the main obstacles in setting up and running a beekeeping business?

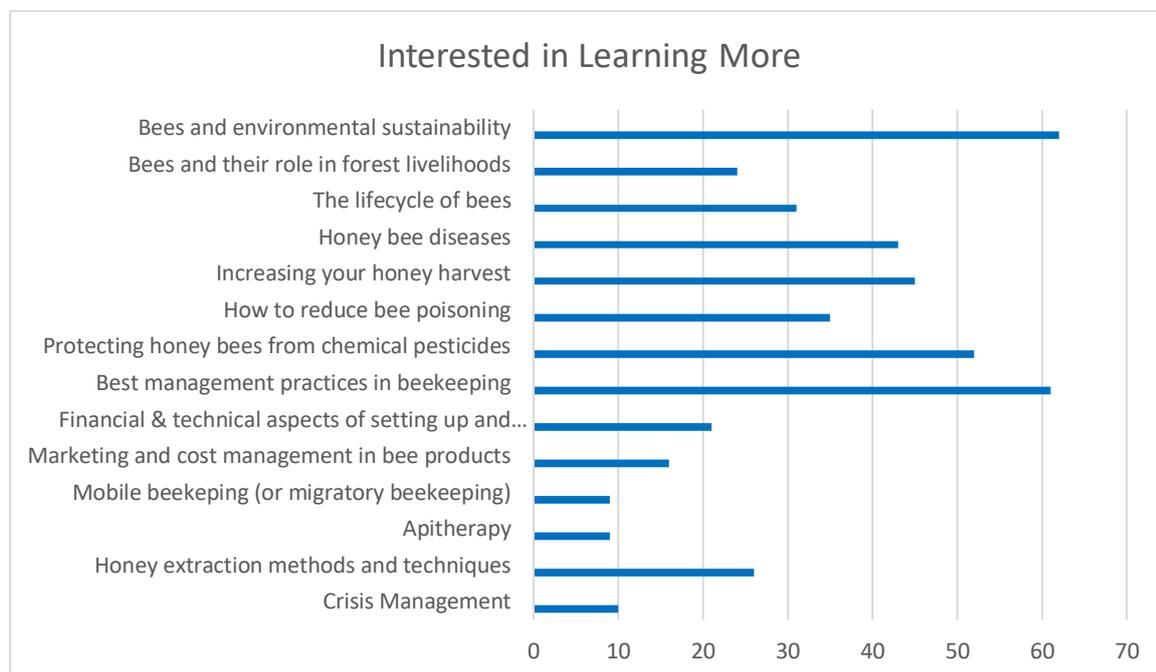
Participants were asked to write down the main obstacles and here is a selection of responses.

- Climate, weather
- Understanding the market
- Time and space
- Cost and finance
- Land access
- Capital. Space for expansion
- Funding, honey extraction equipment and facilities
- Finance
- Having sufficient (other) income for setting up and running costs until the business becomes self-sustaining
- Experience
- Set up cost
- Accreditation, training and funding
- Finding suitable apiary sites
- Lack of knowledge

PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

Question: Which of the below areas are you interested in learning more about?



Key facts:

- 88% of the participants have attended formal or informal training in beekeeping
- Beekeeping practices that respondents state they are most familiar with are:
 - Keeping bees that are adapted to local microclimates and environment
 - Placing apiaries in areas surrounded by native vegetation or organic operations, free of GMOs and pesticides
 - Swarm prevention and control
 - Minimal use of smoke on the bees
 - Regular inspections
- Beekeeping practices that respondents state they are least familiar with are:
 - Moving hives to crops
 - Utilisation of structures like top bar hives, which allow the bees to create their own hive
 - Choosing hives that replicate natural sites used by bees, e.g. hollow trees, cavities, wooden hives
- The main bee health practices that most respondents state they are familiar with is overwhelmingly:
 - Regular pest surveillance and inspections

PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

- The financial and technical aspects of setting up and running a beekeeping business that most participants are familiar with are:
 - Formal or non-formal training
 - Initial investment (buying land, beehives, equipment, bee colonies, etc.)
 - National hygiene regulations
 - National legal frameworks about apiculture

- The most common obstacles in setting up and running a beekeeping business among the participants are:
 - Experience
 - Cost and finance
 - Understanding the market
 - Accreditation, training and funding

- The areas most participants want to learn more about are:
 - Bees and environmental sustainability
 - Best management practices in beekeeping
 - Protecting honey bees from chemical pesticides
 - Increasing the honey harvest

3. Conclusions

The analysis of survey's results suggests that there is a well-structured education system available to beekeepers in the U.K. with 88% of participants stating they have attended formal or informal training in beekeeping.

Training is available for beginners, intermediate and advanced beekeepers if they wish to take participate although training in helping beekeepers to run a beekeeping business is limited.

Although 60% of participants stated that they do not follow any sustainable beekeeping practices, the answers in other parts of the survey show that sustainable beekeeping is being practiced by many of them. For example, 58% state their bees are local and adapted to local microclimates and environment, 48% place apiaries in areas surrounded by native vegetation or organic operations, free of GMOs and pesticides and 44% practice some sort of swarm prevention and control.

Additionally, 94% of participants state they carry out regular pest surveillance and inspections which is a key tool in sustainable beekeeping.

The main obstacles in setting up and running a beekeeping business were stated as lack of experience, lack of funds and not understanding the market and this is where there is a gap in available training in the U.K.

PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020

Finally, it should not be a surprise that the vast majority of participants (73%) wish to learn more about bees and environmental sustainability, followed closely by learning about best management practice, protecting honey bees from chemical pesticides and increasing the honey harvest.

PUBLIC

Spey Valley Bees	Deliverable: IO1A1
Plan Bee	Version: 1
IO1.A1 Survey results – U.K.	Issue Date: 21/04/2020