



## BEEKEEPING EDUCATION MODULES

### The Role Of The Bee Team

These presentations are funded by the Scottish Government as part of Scotland's Honey Bee Health Strategy

Welcome, This presentation is part of a suite of modules developed by the Scottish Government and SRUC to provide local associations advice and information on statutory beekeeping requirements, best practice, and how the Scottish Government provides support to Scottish beekeepers.



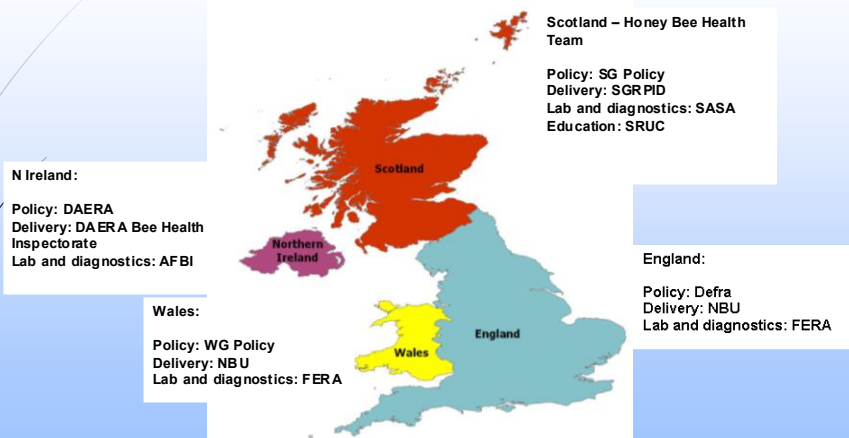
## Aims and Objectives

To provide an overview of the work in the Scottish Government to support the Scottish Government's Honey Bee Health Strategy

This presentation is to explain the Role of the Scottish Government in Honey bee health. Honey bee health is taken very seriously by the Scottish Government and these presentations have been developed as part of its current 10-year Honey Bee Health Strategy which we will look at shortly. The aim of this presentation is to introduce you to the 10-year Honey bee health strategy, Implementation Plan and the role of the Bee Health Improvement Partnership. It will also explain the different teams who make up the Honey Bee Health Team.

There are QR codes throughout this and other presentations that will take you to the pages referenced on the slides.

## Honey Bee health across the UK



Honey bee health is devolved to Scottish Ministers.

There are three distinct teams in the Scottish Government (SG) which tackle different elements of the Honey Bee Health Strategy. Scottish Honey Bee policy is developed by the SG Policy Team which is part of the Animal Health & Welfare Division. Inspections are carried out by a team of inspectors in SG Rural Payments and Inspection Division (RPID). Laboratory and diagnostic work is provided by SASA (Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture). In Scotland, our education work is sub-contracted to SRUC (Scottish Rural College). All these teams work together to deliver improvements to honey bee health in Scotland and are collectively known as the Honey Bee Health Team. In England, bee health policy is developed by DEFRA and the operational side of bee health is delivered by the National Bee Unit – the NBU. FERA provide diagnostic and laboratory work for the NBU. Neither Defra nor the NBU are responsible for any aspect of bee health in Scotland.

In Wales, bee health policy is the responsibility of the Welsh Government, but their bee health operational work is sub-contracted to the NBU, and their laboratory and diagnostic work is undertaken by FERA.

Northern Ireland bee health policy is developed by the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) and inspections are undertaken by the DAERA Bee Health Inspectorate. AFBI provides scientific and laboratory support.

Despite operating independently to address the specifics of honey bee health in each

One way that is done is by sharing BeeBase, the national database for beekeepers. The Scottish Government funds BeeBase on behalf of Scottish beekeepers as a resource to help both beekeepers and bee inspectors track and be informed of disease outbreaks, and provide information on disease and good bee husbandry.

It is important to note that while honey bee health is devolved to the different UK administrations, some matters affecting honey bees and beekeeping remain reserved to the UK Government. Decisions affecting the import of honey bees from the EU, inspection points at UK ports, for example, are matters over which the Scottish Government has no remit.

# Honey Bee Health Strategy and Implementation Plan

“Working in partnership to achieve a healthy and sustainable population of honey bees in Scotland”

Pillar 1: Education, Training and Knowledge Transfer.

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

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

Pillar 4: Research and Development.

Pillar 5: On-going review of the regulatory framework.

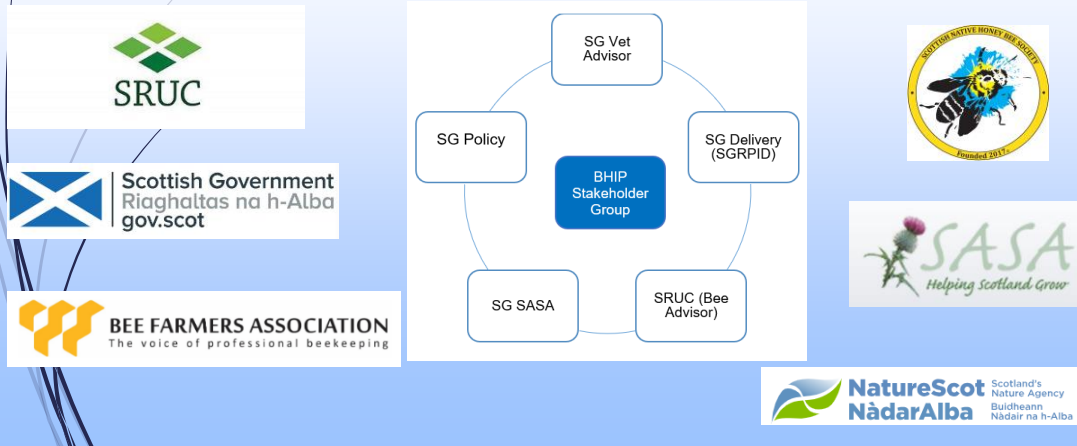


The Scottish Government Honey Bee Health Team is responsible for Honey Bee health in Scotland. The second 10-year Honey Bee Health Strategy which was published in 2022 underpins the actions of SG . The Strategy aims to address the challenges facing honey bees and beekeepers and is intended to achieve a sustainable, environmentally balanced and healthy population of honey bees in Scotland, for pollination and honey production.

The Strategy is supported by an Implementation Plan which sets out the specific actions required to meet the aims of the Strategy. The key issues and how these can be addressed are set out under five pillars: Education; Communication and partnership working; Pest and Disease surveillance, research and development; and ongoing review of the regulatory framework. It is important that beekeepers understand that SG delivers honey bee health for the benefit of beekeepers, honey bees, the environment and the economy. The strategy was made with beekeepers for the benefit

of beekeepers. You can all have an input into the SG honey bee health strategy through feedback and communication through the adequate representatives of the BHIP.

## Role of the Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP) Stakeholder Group



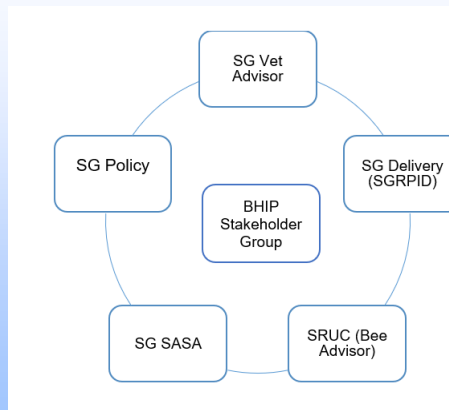
The Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP) is the expert group which informs the Scottish Government's Honey Bee Health Strategy and the supporting Implementation Plan. The Partnership is comprised of representatives from the SBA, the BFA, SNHBS, SRUC, NatureScot and Scottish Government (including SASA). It exists to provide a representative approach to addressing issues affecting honey bee health in Scotland and aims to improve honey bee health, pollinator environment, and the Scottish economy.

It meets quarterly to discuss progress against the Implementation Plan and agree actions to take forward.

Following each meeting the Implementation Plan is updated to record agreed actions and any activities undertaken.

If you have any questions or matters you wish the BHIP to discuss you should contact one of these representatives and ask them to do so.

## Scottish Government Bee Improvement Partnership (BHIP)

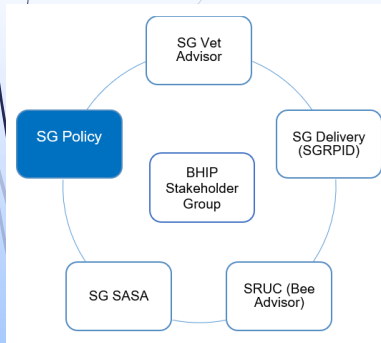


The Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP) is made up of component parts from different parts of Government, SRUC, representatives from key bee health stakeholder groups and observers from the Devolved Administrations.

All these groups and teams work together to develop approaches and take forward actions to improve honey bee health per the Honey Bee Health Implementation Plan.

In the next slides we will look at each of the component parts of the Scottish Government's Bee Health Improvement Partnership (BHIP) and what they do.

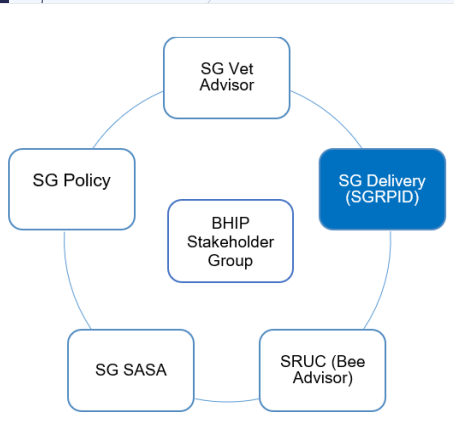
## Role of SG Policy Team



- Responsible for developing and overseeing implementation of the Honey Bee Health Strategy
- Reporting to and updating Scottish Ministers on honey bee health matters and progress on the Strategy
- Developing honey bee policy in line with legislation and in close collaboration with Veterinary, RPID, SASA, SRUC and other colleagues
- Developing communications around honey bee health
- Working in partnership with other UK Government administrations and SG policy areas to integrate and promote honey bee health interests
- Contingency Planning

The Scottish Government policy team are the link between the BHIP, the wider Honey Bee Health Team, Ministers, Scottish Parliament, other government teams and bodies including NatureScot, the general public, and other UK administrations. The team provides advice to Ministers on recommended actions, based on the expert advice of the BHIP and the rest of the Honey Bee Health Team, and ensure that the Minister's priorities and policies are taken forward. It is also responsible for developing contingency planning to protect against potential pest incursions or disease outbreaks.

## Role of Bee Health Inspectors



- Inspect bees for notifiable diseases and pests
- Monitor exotic pest risk points
- Track and trace activities for non-native invasive pests (e.g, Yellow-legged hornets)
- Undertake surveillance around outbreak areas
- Take honey samples on behalf of Veterinary Medicines Directorate to test for medicinal residues

Provide advice to beekeepers on:

- disease and pest recognition
- biosecurity

Honey Bee Health Inspectors are authorised to carry out bee health inspections and other related activities on behalf of Scottish Ministers under the Bees Act 1980, the The Bees Diseases and Pest Control (Scotland) Order 2007 (as amended) and the Bees Diseases and Pests (Scotland) Control Order 2021 (as amended).

This empowers them to access premises, inspect hives and other equipment related to keeping bees and producing bee-products, to see medicine records, and take any action as deemed appropriate or as mandated by law. The Bee Health inspectors are trained to identify signs of disease and pests, and to provide advice on disease and pest recognition and biosecurity.

Inspections are conducted on a risk basis with beekeepers identified for several reasons such as their proximity to disease, imports, sales of bees, around risk points for exotic pests including airports, harbours, zoos and garden centers. Inspectors conduct surveillance around notifiable disease outbreaks supporting those who have confirmed notifiable disease as well as responding to callouts from beekeepers when they suspect that a notifiable disease is present. The Bee Inspectors use BeeBase as one of their key tools in targeting inspections and alerting beekeepers to outbreaks, so do ensure that you are registered on BeeBase and keep it up to date to be certain

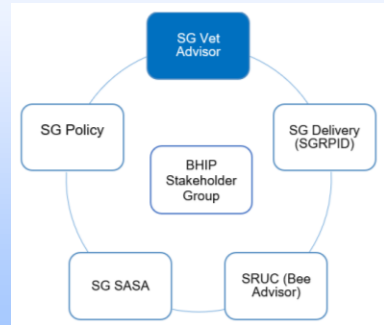
that you can help keep your bees protected.

Our inspectors are friendly, approachable, and keen to help you keep your bees healthy and productive. If you suspect disease, you **must** contact the Bees mailbox straight away. It is a legislative requirement that you report any suspicion of notifiable pests and diseases.

## Role of Senior Veterinary Advisor

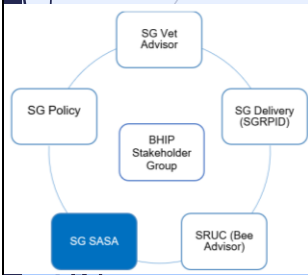
Provides advice on:

- Surveillance
- Disease control and eradication
- Epidemiology
- Veterinary Medicines
- Public health
- International trade
- Bee health



The Scottish Government has a number of Veterinary Advisors. The Honey Bee Health Team has a Senior Veterinary Advisor who provides technical veterinary advice to the Bee Health Team to help inform policy and the implementation thereof, as well as providing advice around pest and disease outbreaks.

## Role of SASA



- ▶ Provide the following diagnostic services:
  - Laboratory diagnosis for notifiable pests and diseases
  - Identification and analyses of all Yellow-legged hornet individuals or nests
  - Screening samples of hive debris for the presence of Varroa destructor
  - Analysis of adult bees in cases of unexplained colony loss
- ▶ Investigate cases of suspected pesticide abuse or misuse through the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WIIS)
- ▶ Provide training and scientific advice to inspectorate and policy colleagues as well as at training events to beekeepers and bee farmers.
- ▶ Contribute to and advise on research related to honey bees and beekeeping

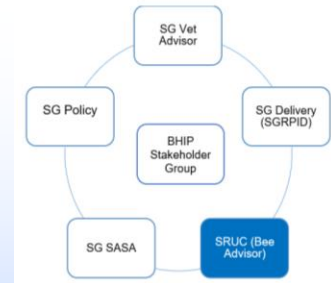
Science and evidence underpins the Scottish Government's honey bee health activity. SASA are the Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture body and carry out bee disease diagnostics and analysis, and a range of related activities on behalf of Scottish Ministers. You should initially contact the bees mail box with any concerns but you then may be directed to [Bee Health | SASA \(Science & Advice for Scottish Agriculture\)](#) **And to** [Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme \(WIIS\) | SASA \(Science & Advice for Scottish Agriculture\)](#) **for poisoning issues**

## Role of SRUC

The role of the SRUC Bee Advisor is primarily concerned with bee health and education through:

- ▶ Partnership working as part of the Bee Health Improvement Partnership
- ▶ Providing advice to Scottish Government as part of the Honey Bee Health Strategy
- ▶ Mentoring support and advice to all beekeepers including inspectors
- ▶ Organising strategic targeted education and events such as Bee Health Days
- ▶ Promoting good practice and improving standards

Contact [Lorraine.Johnston@sruc.ac.uk](mailto:Lorraine.Johnston@sruc.ac.uk)



The Scottish Government funds a Bee Health Advisor at Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) who provides support, advice and education service for beekeepers, focussing on the Scottish Government's priorities of recognition, management and prevention of notifiable and reportable pests and diseases, as well as good biosecurity. The Bee Advisor feeds back information from the beekeeping community to help the Scottish Government understand education gaps, and she provides advice on how to address those.

## Learning and training resources available: Scottish Government and SRUC

- Association talks
- Support for self-organised training events
- Training modules
- Podcasts
- BeeBase
- Webinars



The Scottish Government and SRUC have a range of learning resources to help you

We can provide talks to associations – and when there are significant outbreaks of notifiable disease in areas we always provide a talk to beekeepers to provide advice in those circumstances.

We can support an in-house training event if your association or organisation wants to run one

We have a suite of training modules you can use in your own talks as well as podcasts and of course there is information on BeeBase.

If you would like further information on what is available and how we can help, please drop the Bees mailbox an email.

## How to contact one of the SG teams

- The Scottish Government's Honey Bee Health Team is keen to help ensure that honey bees in Scotland are healthy and productive.
- If you have a query about your bees' health, or wish to report suspicion of a notifiable disease or arrange an inspection, or have a question about the Honey Bee Health Strategy, you should contact the Bees Mailbox. Please note the underscore between "Bees" and Mailbox"
- Your query will be directed to the appropriate team for a response.

[Bees\\_Mailbox@gov.scot](mailto:Bees_Mailbox@gov.scot)

If you have any query and you are not sure who to direct it to contact the beesmailbox and they will put you in touch with the right person

## BeeBase Registration

- Important tool for disease control
- Free to register and use
- Safe and secure
- Protects your bees/neighbours bees/Scotland's bees
- Scottish specific pages on BeeBase
- Incredibly useful resource for information and guides
- Maps/charts/stats of disease outbreaks all publicly available



All beekeepers are strongly encouraged to sign up to BeeBase. It's free, secure, and provides advice on beekeeping and – crucially – only uses your data to provide you with targeted updates on notifiable disease outbreaks in your area and allow inspectors to contact you if you are in a risk zone to carry out an inspection. It's a great resource that is maintained by the National Bee Unit and Scottish Government so you can be sure that you are seeing accurate and up to date information. We encourage you to keep your data up to date on BeeBase, especially when you're moving your bees to and from the heather, so you can be kept apprised of any outbreaks near you, and to have a look at the disease maps and trends so you can see where there are hotspots of disease to help you make decisions about purchasing bees from those areas, or moving bees into or out of them. There is also a wealth of information on BeeBase in terms of leaflets, guidance and education.

## Resources Available – Others

[BeeBase – Information for Scottish Beekeepers](#)



[Scottish Beekeepers Association](#)



[Bee Farmers Association](#)



[Honey bee health: guidance - gov.scot](#)



Here are some of the Government and SRUC resources available to you. If you have any queries you can contact the Honey Bee Health Team by email.

Information about how the Scottish Government supports honey bees in Scotland can be found via the QR codes.

SRUC podcasts on honey bee management can be found using the QR code.

## Honey bee Health strategy links



[The Honey Bee Health Strategy 2022 - 2032 - gov.scot](#)

[Scotland's Honey Bee Health Strategy: implementation plan - gov.scot](#)



These links will take you to the Government 10 year Honey Bee Health Strategy and the updated Implementation plan



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Many thanks