

This is the first in the series of 'Read the comb' that appeared in the Devon Beekeepers Association journal - 'Beekeeping'.

Examining a brood chamber comb and deducing the recent and present condition of the colony is a vital skill. We invite you to examine the comb below, make an assessment and consider the implications for the colony.



photo 'Pollinator'

Read the analysis below to see if you agree with our contributor 'Pollinator':

This frame is in poor condition and the queen seems to be poor as well.. There is an irregular inconsistent brood pattern with some random drone cells present. There is no shortage of stores but not much pollen visible. It appears that the queen has been replaced by supersedure. There is a good-sized recently opened queen cell and another just under the top bar broken down from the side, almost certainly after the new queen had killed off her potential rival. The old queen may still be present but not for long. If she is not marked it will not be easy to be certain which one is which but the bees will know.