



Gravesend Branch Newsletter

February 2026



TEAM WORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

The forum meeting in January looking at good and less good bee equipment purchases together with questions and queries was much enjoyed by the members attending.

At our last committee meeting a suggestion was made to contact a selection of Branch members to see if we are providing a range of services and interest to them, and to this end you may receive a telephone call from one of us.

Our next meeting is on Saturday 7th of February at 10am to tackle the equipment that needs cleaning ready for the coming season. Please bring rubber gloves, hive tool or similar for scraping, blow torch/gas gun, and any old scrubbing or pot brushes you may have. Many hands make light work - refreshments will be provided.

Winter musing...



Have you noticed the bluebells are already nudging the ground as the tips break through in ancient woodlands? A step ahead of them are the snowdrops, to me, they are the whispers of spring.

Snowdrops are the promise of spring and symbols of hope and purity. They are resilience to the cold and are able to grow & flourish in January.

They are a vital food source for our emerging queen bumbles as well as any other pollinator in need although ignored by deers. Clever nature!

Annual Branch Lunch ...

The menu for the Branch lunch scheduled for Saturday 28th February at Bartellas will be circulated when it is to hand, also the updated Branch programme with corrected dates/days.

Bartellas
RESTAURANT & BAR

Taster Course.

This year's Taster Course will take place on Sunday April 26th and there are still a few places vacant should you know anyone who is interested, the application form is on the Branch website



Asian Hornet Update!



Tony Warren is preparing a simplified list of what we need to do and when, regarding the Asian hornet, to provide as much chance as possible to protect our bee colonies to fit in with our necessary bee inspections. This will be circulated in due course.

While she is sleeping...

Asian hornet queens are currently inactive although fertilized, snuggled up somewhere hibernating. She will start to wake up in March alongside our native European hornet and wasps.

As temperatures rise (typically 4–5 consecutive days above 12°C, which can start from mid-to-late February), these foundress queens will soon emerge to build small, tennis-ball-sized "primary nests". So, while she is sleeping let's get ready to rumble and prepare our defence!

Swarm Contact...

Would those members who are willing to collect swarms and also those members who would like to have an available swarm please let Wanda Barnard know, she will be managing this process and can add your name to the appropriate list. Her mobile number is 07886 904956 and her email is wandabarnard08@gmail.com