

# WHITEFRIARS BEES

## WHAT'S THE BUZZ WITH BEES?

Honeybees are often considered to be the highest form of insect life. They live in a well organised community or colony that does not need to hibernate. They produce honey and store it in a wax honeycomb that they build. Honeybees live in cavities in the wild or in beekeepers' hives, where they can be looked after and their honey harvested.



## WHO'S WHO IN THE HIVE?

There are three types of honeybee in a hive: one queen, thousands of female workers and hundreds of male drones. A worker bee works very hard. She looks after the young, builds the honeycomb, collects nectar and pollen and makes honey. A male drone bee doesn't do any work – his only job is to mate with the queen!



## BEES ARE ENDANGERED!

Bees are vital to our food chain, helping plants to reproduce. One third of the food we eat would not be available if it wasn't for the hard-working bees! However, there has been a huge fall in bee numbers due to parasites, pesticides, habitat loss and new farming methods. You can help by planting early flowering plants and trees for pollen.



## BECOME A BEEKEEPER!

The Canterbury Beekeepers club supports and teaches beekeeping in East Kent. We meet monthly with talks during the winter and apiary visits during the summer. We also run beginners' courses for those who want to start or just like to learn more about this fascinating hobby. You can contact us via our web site (see below).



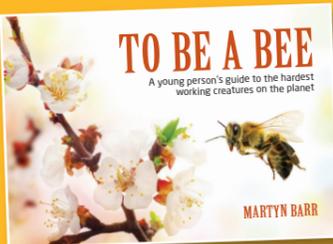
## WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

When it's cold, bees snuggle up together to keep warm. They may fly out in January if the temperature is over 8° C to defecate away from their hive. In February and March, the queen starts to lay eggs again and worker bees collect pollen to feed the young. Beekeepers have to make sure the bees don't run out of stores of honey and may need to top them up.



## A HIVE OF ACTIVITY

Beehives come in all shapes, sizes and materials, depending on when and where they were made. Modern hives like the Whitefriars ones are simple wooden boxes with a hole for the bees to fly in and out of. Inside, there's an upper level for storing the honey and a lower level where the queen lays her eggs and the young are reared.



Whitefriars has sponsored a young person's guide to bees to help you find out more about these fascinating creatures. Available from local bookshops or online at [www.ToBeABee.co.uk](http://www.ToBeABee.co.uk).

About 1,000 years ago, the 'white' friars that lived here kept bees. They ate the honey, used it to brew honey wine (mead) and made candles for their church with the beeswax. Canterbury Beekeepers, in association with Whitefriars, have installed two hives on the roofs of these shops to help pollinate the city centre's flowers and to provide an education facility for new beekeepers. The Whitefriars bees will collect nectar and pollen from flowers, shrubs and trees over a mile away, covering the whole of the city.

If you have a hive in your garden, vegetables will grow better, fruit trees will produce more fruit and your garden will be buzzing with life! To find out more about keeping bees, visit the Canterbury Beekeepers website:



Scan this QR code with your smartphone for a direct link to the website.

**Canterbury Beekeepers**  
[www.canterburybeekeepers.org.uk](http://www.canterburybeekeepers.org.uk)

**WHITEFRIARS**  
[www.whitefriars.eu](http://www.whitefriars.eu)

