

Surrey Beekeepers' Association (BKA) – Bee Disease Insurance (BDI) report 2025

The County of Surrey and the area of Surrey BKA are not the same. Kingston and Wimbledon divisions of Surrey BKA, are included in Greater London area statistics for reporting bee diseases and pests on BeeBase. BeeBase is the National Bee Unit (NBU) website which provides a wide range of apicultural information for beekeepers including disease statistics.

The overall ongoing trend in the last few years has been a reduction in the numbers of colonies diagnosed with AFB and EFB which is hopeful and that beekeepers are more aware of their recognition and take action.

In 2025 active season, the National Bee Unit (NBU) reported on BeeBase that the total number of colonies inspected in the County of Surrey was 990 and, of these, 26 colonies were found dead and in the Greater London area, 516 colonies were inspected and 18 were found dead.

American Foul Brood (AFB)

AFB is a spore forming bacterial disease, *Paenibacillus larvae*, that is reportable to the NBU usually via the local bee inspector. AFB was reported in Surrey this year in Farnham (1), Godalming (7), Weybridge (10), Staines (5) Leatherhead (1) and in Epsom and Sutton (1). In neighboring areas, the disease was found in SE London (2).

In England, most of the outbreaks of AFB were diagnosed to be found, as in previous years, in Devon and Cornwall.

European Foul Brood (EFB)

EFB is a bacterium disease *Melissococcus plutonis*, that is reportable to the NBU usually via the local bee inspector. In 2025, outbreaks occurred in Farnham (4), Farnborough (1), Weybridge (11), Leatherhead (2), Kingston & Esher (26), S Reigate & Horley (2), Godalming (7), Staines (5), Epsom & Sutton (1).

In Greater London that is part of Surrey BKA area, EFB was found in SE London (7), Woolwich & Eltham (8), Epsom & Sutton (3).

Other diseases and pests

Varroa

The varroa mite, *Varroa destructor*, is a parasitic mite of adult bees and brood and is notifiable to the NBU via Bee Base (the Animal and Plant Health's National Bee Unit website to help beekeepers) so that its spread can be monitored. Varroa is now considered to be indigenous in the UK.

Asian Hornet

Asian hornet, *Vespa velutina*, is notifiable to the Non-Native Species Secretariat. Monitoring for arrival of this insect is strongly encouraged throughout the UK, but especially in areas where likelihood of arrival is considered to be highest (S & SE England) and this includes the area of Surrey BKA. In the UK, Jersey has the greatest incursion of this insect which destroys and consumes honey bee colonies. Unfortunately, pest has no known predator.

Up until 2023, the number of Asian hornets found in England was relatively small, but this year, there has been a significant increase where many incursions have been reported, predominately in south-east England but they have gradually been spreading further north. Surrey BKA has been monitoring any incursions carefully and reporting them.

Tropilaelaps and small hive beetle

Although these exotic pests are not yet known to be present in the UK, they would pose a significant threat to honey bee colonies should they arrive. If any member thinks they have seen *Tropilaelaps* (*Tropilaelaps clareae*, *Tropilaelaps koenigeru*) or small hive beetle (*Aethina tumida*) in the UK, they need to report the sighting straight away to their local bee inspector.