

2025 Surrey Yellow Legged (Asian) Hornet Report for Surrey Beekeepers Association AGM

This report summarises the activity undertaken by the Yellow-Legged (Asian) Hornet coordinators across Surrey during 2025, as we continue our efforts to defend the county from incursions of this invasive species.

This year, four nests were found within Surrey. All were successfully tracked from sightings reported to the National Bee Unit (NBU) and destroyed within days of discovery. Each nest has been sent for DNA analysis to determine whether they are linked to previously known incursions - indicating potential overwintering - or whether they represent entirely new, likely hitch-hiked arrivals. In addition, a further nest was located and destroyed close to our northern border in Bromley.

The NBU expects to publish its analysis “after Christmas”.

Our work has continued to focus on three key areas:

- 1.Ensuring beekeepers remain well-informed about the Yellow-Legged Hornet.
- 2.Raising public awareness of the risks it poses to the broader ecosystem.
- 3.Monitoring and attending reported sightings to confirm or discount the presence of the hornet.

A review of 2025 Activity:

Spring

With few nests reported close to Surrey in 2024, our spring monitoring was more limited. An early report came from a family in France familiar with YLH, who believed they had seen one at Painshill Park, Cobham. Fortunately, Weybridge Beekeepers have apiaries in the park, and—with support from the local seasonal bee inspector—we monitored the area for several weeks, noting no further suspicious activity.

Summer

Our summer events calendar again provided excellent opportunities to engage the public. With help from many volunteers across Surrey and neighbouring associations, we attended several county-scale shows. We spoke to hundreds of visitors about better insect identification and the risks posed by YLH.

The triple resin identification blocks (purchased last year from SBKA ring-fenced funds) proved invaluable, as did the large YLH model, originally seen at the Chelsea Flower Show, which was displayed at 14 public events.

On 15 August, the NBU confirmed and destroyed a nest at Holmbury St Mary.

Autumn

Shortly after Asian Hornet Week, three additional nests were discovered and destroyed within Surrey:

- 12 September – Godstone
- 12 September – Holmbury St Mary (second nest)
- 4 October – Coldharbour

Winter

The BBKA is running four forum-style Zoom sessions to support YLH coordinators, and Surrey is actively participating in them. As further best-practice guidance becomes available, we will be better placed to plan our 2026 strategy.

Looking Ahead to 2026

Mapping has highlighted a significant number of 1 km squares across Surrey that currently lack a monitor. Filling these gaps is a top priority. We ask beekeepers to contact their divisional YLH coordinator to claim a square convenient for them. Once we understand beekeeper coverage, we will enlist public volunteers and partner organisations to monitor in the remaining areas.

Plans are underway for a bigger and more impactful programme of “Asian Hornet Roadshows” in 2026 to help inform the wider public and reinforce the ecological risk should this predator become established.

We strongly encourage all divisions to share the monthly AHAT newsletter and for all members to read it to stay informed of the fast-moving situation. Together, we can keep the Yellow-Legged Hornet out of Surrey for as long as possible.

The Surrey Yellow-legged (Asian) Hornet team co-ordinators are

Division	
Surrey County	Helen Worwood (Epsom)
Croydon	Alex Haswell
Epsom	Nick Fry, Peter Ward
Farnham	Julie Trice
Guildford	Becca Moore
Kingston	Avis Marshall
Reigate	Kevin Selfe,
Weybridge	Michael Main, David Ramsay, Andrew Halstead
Wimbledon	Gareth Morgan
Trustee	Tim Lovett