

Hive Installation Creates a Buzz at Gypsum Quarry

Three hives - each containing up to 50,000 bees – have been located near to the entrance to the quarry site, where there is enough suitable forage. The hives will 'overwinter' there in the hope that the bees will get busy, ready to produce some spring honey. (Honey bees must gather nectar from two million flowers to make one pound of honey!)

Beekeeper, Tristan Dixon explains why this location is good for bees: “Sadly, due to various diseases and pests like Varroa destructor, 'wild' honeybee colonies have been virtually wiped out. The honey bees' survival therefore depends upon beekeepers like me. So, I am really pleased to find this location for more hives.”

Kevin Glasper, Bantymock Quarry manager said: “Saint-Gobain is keen to encourage and protect local biodiversity around its sites. And with campaigns like 'No Mow May'* the protection of the bee population has been very much in the news. So, we are very pleased to be playing our part.

“Working with a bee expert like Tristan, we were delighted to find that we have good conditions here at Bantymock Quarry. We hope the bees settle well here and we can look forward to receiving some honey in due course.”

In addition to the beehive installation, there have been several other biodiversity wins for Saint-Gobain Formula and its sister company British Gypsum. Recently they were able to celebrate the return of an almost extinct butterfly with a siting at Bantymock Quarry. The Grizzled Skipper has been identified in restored areas of the quarry – the result of years of carefully planned biodiversity and ecology work.

Saint-Gobain and its companies have also worked with Nottinghamshire Biodiversity Action Group (NottsBAG) to create species habitat for the Grizzled Skipper at other sites. In 2019, as part of NottsBAG's 'Grizzled Skipper Project', the company donated railway ballast to create a suitable site near Granby in South Nottinghamshire. And at the company's site near Bunny Woods near East Leake, it created two butterfly banks including suitable plants like wild strawberry and creeping cinquefoil.

Bantymock Quarry is operated by plaster and gypsum manufacturer Saint-Gobain Formula – one of Saint-Gobain's many companies, and sister brand to British Gypsum which operates several mines and other manufacturing sites in the East Midlands. The Quarry supplies gypsum for the production of high-quality plaster products for use in applications such as ceramics, food industry, brewing, decorative work, medical and dentistry.

*www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/no-mow-may

BEE FACTS:

- A strong colony flies the equivalent distance from Earth to the Moon every day.
- Bees fly about 55,000 miles to make just one pound of honey, that's 2.2 times around the world.
- Bees have been producing honey in the same way for over one hundred and fifty million years.

(Source <https://www.bbka.org.uk/honey>)