

**2020 – In Bee-view:
Sure, it sucked for us,
but how about our bees?**

**Out with the old...
Brand new website
launching soon!**

**A-Maisy-ing Work!
Epic illustrations
by Kat Whelan**



A Broken, Record Bee-reaking Year

In the year for Bad News that was 2020, we're delighted to be able to kick things off with a few positives! For example, it's clear that, more people took an active interest in solitary bees than ever before, with our website and shop experiencing record-breaking levels of traffic in 2020!

Website sessions:	74,725	+ 148%
New Guardians:	495	+ 49%

We also had an absolutely incredible response to our returns service this year, with over 70% of active Guardians succeeding and sending a package to our Freepost address:

Returning Guardians:	1087	+ 47%
Occupied tubes returned:	25,740	+ 80%
Occupied drawers returned:	197	+ 319%



The slight downside of this level of success is that processing all the returns has taken a lot longer than initially anticipated, which has resulted in a delay to the publication of Guardian tube results. If you are one of the many eager to find out what was inside the occupied equipment you returned, we're sorry to confirm that the wait will be a little longer than previously indicated, with results currently expected to be distributed towards the end of January, rather than December. We thank you for your patience and understanding!

New nesting space created:	18,097m	+ 170%
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On the left, a statistic we can all take pride in – the total amount of nesting space generated by our customer's purchases over the year. Incredibly, all the nesting tubes and drawer channels add up to a combined length of over **18 kilometres!** That's a sizeable amount of new habitat for solitary bees installed in the UK in 2020 – well done, all!

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Guardians on the Google Map...

We're incredibly close to the launch our new-look website, which we anticipate will be going live in mid-January 2021!

One new element that we're particularly buzzing about is the addition of an interactive map, with pins showing locations around the world where our solitary bee nesting sites are installed. Data for the map will be entirely crowdsourced and submitted via an online form.

Inclusion of locations are entirely at an individual's discretion., so existing customer and Guardian locations will **not** be automatically placed on the map. If you would like your nesting site location(s) to be featured on our Tube Atlas (we're still working on a name), please complete the submission form when it is made available on the new website. And if this isn't for you, that's fine – no further action is required to opt-out.



Updated product guides and new products for 2021!



We recently gave all of our product guides a visual makeover and refreshed certain elements of the guidance contained within, ready for the season ahead. Our latest product guides are always available online for free via our resources page and we recommend all Guardians take the time to download and view them before cocoons are dispatched in Spring.

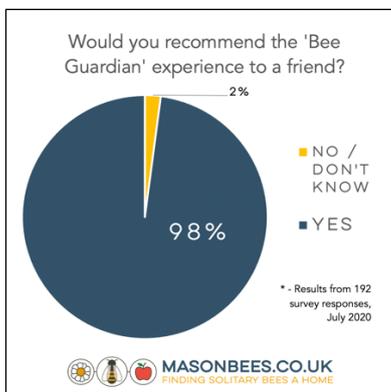
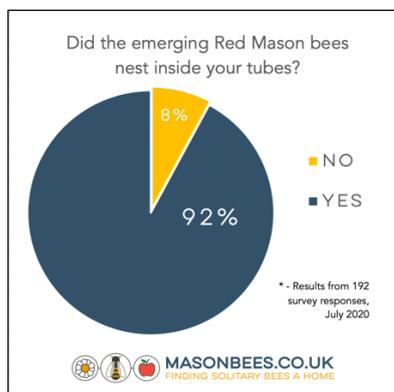
We're also delighted to announce a handful of new products that we'll be adding to our new-look shop before the start of the 2021 season, including:

- **Seasoned tube packs:** Each seasoned tube is a combination of a clean inner inside an outer taken from a tube occupied by Red Mason bees in 2020 – the pheromones retained in the outer layer will give any bee hotel a ratings-boost!
- **Tube Combi-packs:** We're adding a new range of combi-packs to our product pages – complete tubes and refills packaged together for the best value!
- **Gift vouchers:** By popular demand! We're delighted to confirm that a range of prepaid gift vouchers will be available to purchase on our new website.

Treating You Right ...

After a long hunt for a treatment that satisfied all of our (admittedly narrow) criteria, we're pleased to have finally selected a wood waterproofing product to work with.

Since September, we have been applying Roxil Wood Protection Cream to the exterior surfaces of our wooden products before sale. The waterproofing qualities are advertised to last for 10+ years, which should vastly reduce the demand for maintenance and improve the longevity of our wooden nesting sites without negatively affecting the bees that use them.



Our Survey Says ...

We had an absolutely fantastic response to our first Guardian Feedback Survey, with an overwhelming majority of the 192 respondents reporting both nesting success and customer satisfaction. Massive thanks go out to all the Guardians who completed the survey – the information you provided helped us prepare for the Autumn and the positive feedback certainly helped take the sting out of an emotionally challenging year!

We're committed to continually improving the experience of our Guardians, so expect another survey during next season. If you weren't able to complete this survey but have feedback about this season that you'd like to share with us, we'd still like to hear from you! Send an email with your comments at any time to contact@masonbees.co.uk.

Bee-hind The Scenes with MasonBees.co.uk

We're aiming to expand our digital horizons even further in 2021 and release a series of videos showing our various techniques in more detail. We've already invested in new camera equipment that's been up over the Autumn and Winter months, capturing some great footage of our tube extraction and cocoon screening process. We've shared a couple of timelapse videos on our social media channels already this year, and we'll be getting to work on editing some more lengthy videos after everyone's results have been issued. Make sure to look out for episodes of 'Bee-hind The Scenes' on our website and social media over the year ahead!

