

## Bailey Frame Change

The best way to get bees going in the spring is with a bailey comb change. This process should be done at least once every two years, to keep the bees on clean healthy comb.

As always this manipulation is dependent on the weather. Towards the end of March, start of April (before Drone production starts) is usual.

Put a fresh brood box with fresh frames and foundation on top of the existing brood box.

Help the bees by feeding with a 1:1 mix of sugar/water to encourage the wax workers. They can build comb on wet days. Only feed until the comb is drawn. You don't want the bees storing sugar.

I have had eleven frames drawn, and the queen up in the second box in a week... sometimes it takes longer (2-3 weeks). I have had one hive do nothing for 3 weeks, only to catch up and pass the hives on either side of it within a week. Like children all hives are different.

Once the Queen has started the nest in the upper box it is time to introduce the Bailey Board.

Shut the bottom box entrance. Put the Bailey Board (Queen Excluder on the underside) on top of the bottom box. Put the top box back on ensuring the Queen is present in the top box. The bees returning to the now closed old entrance will move up and find the new entrance above.

The bottom box containing the old nest will hatch out in the next three weeks. If you have left this procedure a little later in the season, and there is Drone brood present, you will have to let the drones out every few days, or you will get a lot of dead bees stuck in the Excluder (as the Drones will not be able to get through the Queen Excluder).

Once all the old brood has hatched in the old nest, the bottom box and Bailer board can be removed. At this time add a cleaned Queen excluder, and a super or two to keep the workers busy!

This process is less draconian than a shook swarm, but should only be done with healthy bees.



**THORNE**

**E.H. THORNE (*Beehives*) LTD**

Beehive Business Park, Rand, Nr. Wragby, Lincolnshire LN8 5NJ

Tel. 01673 858555

sales@thorne.co.uk

www.thorne.co.uk