



Educating beekeepers and the public

Introduction

London can offer a rich habitat for bees. Beekeeping in the capital has seen a surge in popularity in recent years. This is not without its challenges as honey bees do not usually live in high colony densities in urban cities such as London.

What are the challenges?

- Siting of the beehive in a position which is suitable for both the bees and the public
- Sufficient surrounding forage to support a colony of bees
- Prevention and/or minimising swarming
- Hygiene matters - so as to ensure the colony is in good health

It's important that beekeepers in cities ensure there is sufficient available forage, keep non-aggressive bees, prevent swarming and reduce the spread of disease between colonies.

The changes we would like to see

- All beekeepers in London to be trained and supported in keeping bees
- Beekeepers to ensure they only keep bees in a suitable location. "Suitable" in this context can mean from the perspective of the bees, the general public and the beekeeper. These do not always reconcile.

What we're doing on this issue

We provide training and support for new beekeepers. For our members we actively encourage and support them to take the [BBKA Basic Assessment](#) run by the British Beekeepers' Association. This assessment is broad in its scope and includes all the challenges set out above. We even reimburse member's assessment fee when they pass.

We are proactive in encouraging our members to register their colonies with [Beebase](#). This means that if a serious bee disease is found in the immediate area then others keeping bees within the area and who are Beebase registered are notified and so put on alert. Beebase is operated by the [National Bee Unit](#).

What you can do to help as a member of the public, local authority or business

You don't have to be a beekeeper to become a member of the LBKA. We offer full membership for beekeeping members and associate membership for non-beekeeping members.

You can plant flora in your garden, on your flat roof or in your window boxes with bee and other pollinator insects in mind. Planting forage can make a difference to the local insect population. This is a comprehensive topic and is dealt with elsewhere on our website.

