



## Helping Save West Sussex Honey Bees



With the warmer weather bringing honey bees out to feast on our abundant wild and garden flowers and trees, you'd be forgiven for thinking that bees were plentiful in our region. Sadly this is not necessarily the case. Between 1985 and 2005 there was a fifty per cent decline in honey bee colonies in the U.K. From November 2008 to April 2009 nearly one in five of honey bee colonies were lost, and across the UK there are now virtually no wild bee honey colonies left. To counter this alarming decline, West Sussex Beekeepers Association are calling for more people to get involved in saving the honey bee.

West Sussex is fortunate in having an active population of beekeepers and WSBKA Chairman Roger Patterson of Slinfold is frequently asked 'What can I do to help the honey bee? I'd like to support bees, but I don't want my own hive.' Our local beekeepers recognise that for practical reasons beekeeping is not an option for everyone so they are supporting the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA) new **Adopt a Beehive** scheme which makes it possible for more people in West Sussex to become 'armchair' beekeepers and support the honey bee. This makes an ideal present for someone that will give real benefits, rather than something that will just help to fill a landfill site.

The **Adopt a Beehive** scheme has adapted the familiar 'adopt an animal' concept to raise revenue to be directed at:

- Research programmes into honey bee health and husbandry
- Education programmes to teach best practice for beekeepers.

Funds raised by **Adopt a Beehive** will be used to directly fund honey bee research projects and to help provide training for local associations like West Sussex BKA in the best ways to keep their bees alive and healthy.

People are also invited to buy local honey to support West Sussex beekeepers. It is on sale at various outlets throughout the county.

For more information about Adopt a Beehive, see [www.adoptabeehive.co.uk](http://www.adoptabeehive.co.uk)

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For more information on the BBKA visit [www.britishbee.org.uk](http://www.britishbee.org.uk)