

Some thoughts on EMBA's position on keeping bees on business premises

- 1) EMBA's role would be as a facilitator, helping those businesses who would like to have bees on their premises to find beekeepers who would like to be involved. EMBA would make sure a) that businesses know what the implications would be of having bees and that only those who can provide certain important conditions would be involved and b) that only beekeepers who are suitably experienced and meet certain criteria would be considered. Apart from this, EMBA would have no responsibility for the bees, the premises or the beekeeper.
- 2) What is involved for businesses and what they should be able to provide. Keeping bees anywhere is a serious responsibility and roofs on business premises provide a particularly challenging environment. Beekeepers must consider the bees and the general public. Important factors include careful positioning of hives, 24 hour accessibility and storage. It is essential that these matters are resolved satisfactorily before premises can be accepted as being suitable. Of the greatest importance is the issue of 24 hour accessibility throughout the year.
- 3) The suitability of beekeepers. Beekeepers should be members of EMBA and the SBA, (the SBA provides insurance cover, including public liability insurance). They should have kept bees successfully for at least 3 years and have passed the Basic Beemaster examination with distinction. They should also have an apiary of their own, to provide back up and flexibility in the event of bees having to be moved. They should provide contact details, including a telephone number through which they can always be reached. Similar details of a named alternative beekeeper meeting the same conditions should also be available
- 4) Consideration should be given to drawing up an agreement between the business and the beekeeper which makes clear the responsibilities of both.

Kim Flottum's *The Backyard Beekeeper* has useful information on rooftop beekeeping and encourages thought about accessibility, who else uses the roof, how high the building is, how many hives can be kept, how the bees will get water and how the problems of exposure and wind will be dealt with.