



PRESS RELEASE

for immediate use

Friends of the Bees is a new, UK-based charity founded to conserve and protect bees, to educate people about bees and to research and promote more natural beekeeping methods.

Friends of the Bees was inspired by the Natural Beekeeping Network – a growing, worldwide movement of over 1500 beekeepers in 160 countries who are developing more natural ways to look after their bees. Nearly half the membership is in the UK.

Many of these beekeepers started down the path of 'natural beekeeping' after reading *The Barefoot Beekeeper*, a book written by Friends of the Bees director Phil Chandler.

He says, "The recent stories of honeybees being in decline have made many beekeepers look more critically at the way they treat their bees. We don't want to have to medicate them or put synthetic chemicals into our hives – it goes against all our instincts and detracts from the public's perception of honey as a natural, unadulterated product."

"We are working with the Soil Association to match organic farmers with local, natural beekeepers, so farmers will have the benefit of bees on their land, and the bees will have the benefit of the greater biodiversity found on organic farms."

"Where we differ from traditional beekeepers is that we are less concerned with honey yields and more with the wider implications of helping to maintain a valuable species in the best possible health. You cannot do that by making them dependent on drugs."

Friends of the Bees is a way that everyone can become involved with bees – and not just honeybees, but also the other native species, including bumblebees and mason bees, which are also very important pollinators.

"We expect to be promoting the work of other organizations working along similar lines, such as Bees for Development, the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and the Global Bee Project, who have all expressed support for our aims. Co-operation is

important if we are to make a real impact."

Natural beekeeping events and courses will be available from spring 2010 in a number of locations, starting with Embercombe in Devon.

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Resources

Friends of the Bees web site www.friendsofthebees.org

Natural Beekeeping Network www.naturalbeekeeping.org

Embercombe www.embercombe.co.uk

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Friends of the Bees is a company registered in England & Wales with registered number 06931807

Registration with the Charities Commission will happen as soon as we raise the required £5000 to qualify for registration.

Registered Office: Rectory Cottage Church Road Yatton North Somerset BS49 4HH