

## BEE KEEPING

Bee keeping is a hobby enjoyed by many residents in Manningham. Honeybees will usually provide enough honey for general household needs, and will help pollinate fruit and berry flowers.

### Keeping bees on residential property

Bee keeping may be carried out in the City of Manningham without a planning permit, provided the Apiary Code of Practice is met.

All beekeepers who keep one or more hives are required to be registered with the Department of Primary Industries.

The Code includes a table which specifies how many hives can be placed on different sized lots as follows:

Tenement (Lot) Size	Number of hives allowed without a Planning Permit
500m <sup>2</sup> or less	1
501m <sup>2</sup> to 1000m <sup>2</sup>	2
1001m <sup>2</sup> to 2000m <sup>2</sup>	5
2001m <sup>2</sup> to less than 4000m <sup>2</sup>	10
4000m <sup>2</sup> to less than 1 hectare	60
1 hectare to 2 hectares	100
Larger than 2 hectares	No limit

Honeybees don't just look after themselves. Keeping bees in residential areas requires proper management, otherwise the bees can be a nuisance to those who live close by.

The Code of Practice provides information regarding Apiculture. It specifies particular requirements, including:

- Placing hives in a sunny but sheltered spot;
- Hives must be at least 3 metres from a property boundary fence. This does not apply if a bee proof barrier, not less than 2 metres high, is situated on the boundary fenceline adjacent to the hives;
- Water must be provided on the property where the bees are located, in close proximity to the hives;
- Colonies located in urban areas must be maintained with young docile queens;
- Used hive components not housing bees should be stored in such a way that bees cannot gain entry;
- Prevent or minimize activities of robber bees;
- Observe hive density limits for properties in urban areas;

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- Ensure bee flight paths don't interfere with neighbouring land by:
  - Placing hives away from footpaths and public access ways;
  - Keeping hives in rear yards rather than in the front yard;
  - Placing hives away from outdoor entertaining areas in neighbouring properties.

## Bee Swarms

The swarming of bees is a natural instinct and occurs chiefly from September to December. Swarming is nature's way of creating new honeybee colonies. A swarm is part of a honeybee colony, including a queen, which leaves the parent colony to establish a new hive.

Honeybee colonies must be managed to prevent and minimise swarming. This can be achieved by division of colonies by beekeepers to reduce the population, or by 'requeening' which is the process of replacing the old queen with a new one.

It should not be assumed that swarms found in the vicinity of managed hives have originated from the nearest hive. Swarms arising from other hives, and in particular feral colonies, can fly into nearby managed apiaries.

If swarming occurs, beekeepers must capture the swarm that has left the colony that they own as soon as possible after it has formed a cluster. Swarms must be removed from the property.

Names of beekeepers who will collect bee swarms that are in the open and easily accessible, can be obtained by telephoning the Victorian Apiarist's Association 'Bee Help Line' on 1902 241 059. A fee is charged for the removal of bees. Alternatively, pest controllers can be contacted to have bee swarms destroyed, however this would be at a cost to the resident.

## Neighbourly Responsibilities

It is crucial to remember that some people are extremely sensitive to bee stings.

A swarm of bees can cause distress, particularly if it occurs near a home.

Beekeepers should practice swarm control methods, but if your bees do swarm, collect them quickly to prevent their establishment in your neighbour's yard. Some beekeepers may choose to collect feral swarms in neighbouring properties as a gesture of good will.

Keep good relations by sharing a jar of honey over the fence from time to time!