



## White Lion Walk launches new Bee Apiary



At 12pm on Wednesday 25th May the head of Guildford in Bloom, Councillor Jennifer Powell I visited White Lion Walk Shopping Centre in Guildford to cut a ribbon to officially launch the Centre's new Bee Apiary.

The Bee Apiary – located on the roof of the shopping centre – is part of the Centre's Bee Awareness Campaign which has been developed in an effort to raise awareness of the plight of the honeybee.

According to the nation's beekeepers, the English honeybee has been in serious decline over recent years and if this trend is allowed to continue, not only will it contribute to a serious shortage of honey but it will also have serious implications on the nation's agriculture, with many producers relying on the honeybee to pollinate their crops.

"Bees pollinate about one-sixth of the world's flowering plants and some 400 species of its agricultural plants. Poorly pollinated plants produce, poorer quality and lower yield fruits and fewer seeds with detrimental consequences for the economy," says Steve Cotney, Centre Manager of White Lion Walk. "One of the few farm activities that can actually increase yields, not just protect existing crops from loss, is to encourage good pollination by bee management."

The introduction of the bee hives on the roof of the building yard poses no threat to the general public or visitors to the Centre and from there, bees will be able to go about their natural activities, producing honey and pollinating local crops unhindered.

"As a result of various environmental changes over recent years, a large number of bee habitats have been destroyed resulting in a serious decline in bee populations in general and the honeybee in

particular," continued Steve. "We wanted to try to help reverse this trend by providing a safe, secure and secluded environment for a bee apiary and the roof of White Lion Walk is the perfect location. I am optimistic that this venture will prove doubly successful - not only helping the environment but any excess honey produced, over and above the bee's requirements, will be sold to benefit local charities."

In order to better understand what is required and to be able to provide a suitable environment to develop and grow the bee colonies, members of the Centre Management team have attended various training programmes as well as becoming members of the British Bee Keeping Association.