

'MAKE A BEELINE FOR FREE HONEY BY GIVING UP LAND'

A HONEY bee-loving councillor is calling on people to help in the quest to save the declining species.

Cllr David Dean, who represents Dundonald ward in Wimbledon, has joined with the Merton Beekeepers' Association in a quest to increase the number of the insects in the borough.

He said there were currently four hives in Merton but wanted this to jump to 60 over the next two years.

Cllr Dean said: "The big problem with bees is that they are disappearing.

"Some people think it's to do with disease, others think it might have to do with mobile phones that's confusing the bees, but it's a bit of a mystery.

"The thing is that London has the best diversity of pollen for bees.

"When you go out in the country you get things like rape and broccoli, so the pollen's quite boring, but in London there are so many kinds from the different things people grow."

Cllr Dean is also a Mitcham Common Conservator, meaning

By NADIA GILANI

that he works to protect the common.

He said: "I've always been passionate about the environment.

"People talk about it costing a lot but that's nonsense.

"What we're looking for now is more private land.

"The association has plenty of bee-keepers but needs more private land to establish their beehives to increase the number of pollinating bees to the requisite level locally.

"The more hives there are for the bees, the more they will thrive and survive.

"It won't cost anyone a bean - the bee-keepers do all the work and residents will have a free supply of honey.

"They'll be known by area so there could be honey from Morden, Mitcham and Lavender honey from Lavender Fields."

If anyone knows of a site or can provide private land for keeping bees, you can contact the Wimbledon Beekeepers' Association at WBKA@wimbledonbeekeepers.co.uk or call 020 7193 7733.

Cllr David Dean at Morden Hall Park next to a beehive 36104c/jf03

