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**Calling all budding Beekeepers!**

**Become a Beekeeper and explore Beekeeping as a business!**

Northern Roots Trainee Beekeeping programme is now open for applications from individuals or community groups based in Oldham.

Northern Roots is creating the UK’s largest urban farm and eco-park in the heart of Oldham. <https://northern-roots.uk/about-us-2/>. One of the first pilot projects is the Northern Roots Beekeeping Hub, an opportunity for local people and community groups in Oldham to learn about beekeeping and explore it as a business opportunity.

The project will be led by local beekeeper Cath Charnock, who comes with a wealth of expertise, a passion for engaging and supporting people, and a track record in running beekeeping projects. The Northern Roots Trainee Beekeeping programme is based at Alexandra Park Depot on Kings Road, will run for 11 months, and is free to participants.

During the programme you will:

• Care for a hive, learn how to handle bees and collect honey, and learn how to breed queen bees and smaller, starter or 'nucleus' bee colonies.

• Explore Beekeeping as a business opportunity and develop bee products to sell under the Northern Roots brand, e.g. honey, candles, lip balm and wax wraps.

• Benefit from a small share of any profits made on products you help create and market.

• Enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits of working with bees e.g. mindfulness, stress reduction, connecting with nature, develop confidence and life skills.

**Apply Now!**

We have 20 places available for Trainee Beekeepers. No prior experience of beekeeping is necessary. To be eligible you need to live or work in the Oldham borough. Please read our guidance information for more detail. The deadline for applications is **Friday 26th June.**

**Contact:** Applications and any further questions not contained in the guidance document should be addressed to**:** Northern.Roots@oldham.gov.uk

**Guidance Information**

**Project Duration and Schedule**

The Trainee Beekeeping programme will start on Tuesday 7th July 2020 and will run until the end of May 2021.

Sessions will be held on Tuesdays at the Northern Roots Beekeeping Hub at the Alexandra Park Depot on Kings Road. The project will run for 11 months and is free to participants.

**Training Sessions and Commitment**

From March to November training sessions will take place **once a week** during the day on Tuesdays. Sessions last 3 hours.

In the winter months, December – February, training sessions will be **fortnightly** on Tuesdays, subject to weather and activity opportunities.

Participants will attend one of two sessions run each day. The morning session runs 10am – 1pm. The afternoon session runs 2pm until 5pm.

Sessions are structured to accommodate caring responsibilities, and preference for specific sessions will be given according to need. Please indicate your preference on the application form.

Bees are living beings that need great care and considerable attention. As such we need all applicants’ express commitment to attend training sessions. Failure to attend sessions will result in removal from the programme.

**Qualifications and Certificates**

Northern Roots Trainee Beekeepers will be issued with participation certificates at the end of the project.

Wider opportunities exist to undertake written and practical examinations to support learning, however these are not an integral part of this programme. If you want to undertake further training whilst on the Northern Roots Trainee Beekeeping programme, our Beekeeper is happy to support preparation for these practical exams. All related fees and expenses must be covered by the participants themselves.

**Typical activities**

The following are some examples of typical activities which you may take part in during the training programme.

* building, inspecting or repairing hives
* introducing a new colony or maintaining an existing one
* feeding or checking the health of your bees
* monitoring the size of your colony and amount of honey produced
* treating your hive and bees to fight disease and pests
* collecting honey from hives
* preparing and bottling honey
* marketing honey and products like beeswax
* mentoring or training new beekeepers, once experienced
* breeding queen bees and smaller, starter or 'nucleus' bee colonies

**Products Created**

Participants will create a number of products, for example, honey, lip balm and candles. A small allocation of the profits from the overall sale of products will be shared between individuals or the community group if the participant is linked with one. Options for other members of the community groups to be involved in tailored workshops exist, subject to a small charge to cover costs. The remaining profit will go back into the Northern Roots Beekeeping project to ensure its sustainability.

**Eligibility**

**Individuals:** Applications are welcome from individuals living or working in the borough of Oldham. No prior experience of beekeeping is necessary, however a firm commitment to attending the training for the full duration of the project is required.

Participants will work in teams of two. You are welcome to apply with a family member or friend. If you apply as an individual, you will be assigned a partner to work with. We require references for all individual applicants. Please include at least one person that knows you in a professional manner, for example a previous employer, or an educator. Please do not include family members or close friends as references.

**Community Groups and other organisations:** We welcome applications from Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) organisations including small local community and voluntary groups, faith groups, registered charities, and social enterprises and co-operatives. Groups must be based or primarily working in the Oldham Borough. We also welcome participants from local businesses and colleges. We request a minimum of two participants and can take up to four participants from each organisation.

**Childcare**

There are no childcare facilities on site. Please make adequate provision for childcare or other caring responsibilities before applying.

**Equality and Diversity**

Northern Roots is committed to championing inclusion for all, so you can be assured we will provide a safe and welcoming environment. We welcome applications from a range of backgrounds, age groups, genders, and ethnicities, and value the different life experiences, approaches and perspectives that individuals can bring. We advocate inclusion and participation for everyone, upholding diversity, fairness, and individual choices. We value difference.

**Application and Selection Process**

Please note there are separate forms for **community groups/organisations** and **individuals.** Applicants should ensure the correct application form is fully completed before emailing it to [Northern.Roots@oldham.gov.uk](mailto:Northern.Roots@oldham.gov.uk)

This is a competitive process. Applications will be assessed on levels of interest, commitment to the programme, and future plans to develop beekeeping.

The deadline for applications is **Friday 26th June 2020.**

**Coronavirus Management**

We take the health and safety of our beekeeper, participants, staff and volunteers very seriously. Thorough risk assessments are carried out for all our programmes in addition to dynamic risk assessments carried out at the time of an activity.

Additional precautions and measures are in place in light of Coronavirus and strict adherence to these will be required throughout the training programme. We are planning to start training sessions in July. Full consideration will be given to government guidance in our approach to social distancing, number of trainees, and the handling and wearing of equipment.

**Future Programmes**

We are seeking to pilot a small, efficient, profitable and sustainable Beekeeping Training Hub for Northern Roots that will engage a range of community organisations and residents in beekeeping. This is a pilot project, and as such we are unlikely to repeat it in its current format. We would like to create a nucleus of skills which could expand in future onto the Northern Roots site and into community spaces.

**More info about Northern Roots**

Northern Roots is creating the UK’s largest urban farm and eco-park on Snipe Clough, 160 acres of green space in the heart of Oldham, Greater Manchester.

Northern Roots will be developed for and with local communities, creating a wide range of activities and businesses on Snipe Clough. This will include growing edible crops at scale, animal husbandry and bee-keeping, forestry, mountain biking, outdoor events and performances, and much more.

We are at the beginning of this journey and are running a number of pilot projects to engage local communities in the development of Northern Roots, of which the Northern Roots Trainee Beekeeping programme is one. For more information, please see [https://northern-roots.uk/about-us-2/](https://northern-roots.uk/about-us-2/%20)