

## **Wooden Block Hotel**

### **Items required:**

- *Power drill with multiple drill bits ranging from 2mm to 12mm*
- *A block of untreated wood, any height, but minimum 15cm deep (Make sure if using a piece of log that there are no splits or cracks)*
- *Paper straws or paper that can be rolled into tubes (optional)*
- *1 or 2 thin pieces of wood or alternative to use as a roof*
- *Sandpaper*

### **Instructions:**

1. Drill holes to around 10cm deep using different diameter drill bits into your block of wood, making sure not to go all the way through to the other side. Keep the holes far enough apart so that the wood between them will not split (2cm should be fine).
2. Sand down the entrance to the holes as sharp splinters can damage their wings on entry.
3. Use the other piece(s) of wood to create a roof, ensuring it allows water to roll down the sides and not into the hotel.
4. (Optional but preferred) Line the holes with paper straws, or rolled up pieces of paper depending on the diameter. This means that your bee hotel will last longer as the paper tubes can be carefully removed and replaced once bees have emerged in the spring, preventing build-up of disease.
5. Fix your hotel at least a metre off the ground on a warm wall (south or south-east facing) and wait for your guests to arrive.

### **Overwintering**

At the end of the season (end of October/beginning of November), the larvae will be cocooned, ready for winter. In order to protect the larvae from harshness of winter and predators like mice and birds, it is best to move the filled bee hotel into a dark box.

For the bees to be able to find their way out, the box needs to have a small exit hole which is a short distance from the nesting tubes. Make sure that the exit hole is facing east or southeast so that emerging bees can warm up on the outside.

Leave another bee hotel nearby that is empty and clean as the bees can then return for the following year.

### **Cleaning**

Once the adult bees have emerged, clean any debris out of the wooden tubes with a pipe cleaner and then dip in a solution of one-part bleach to three parts water for three minutes and then dry. This will help to prevent the spread of disease; however wooden tubes should be completely replaced every two years to prevent the build-up of pathogens.

If using paper straws, these can be removed and replaced before washing the hotel in bleach and will allow the hotel to be used for several years before replacing.

