

Harlow Hill Allotment Association

POLICY FOR KEEPING BEES

BACKGROUND

Honey Bees are critical in safeguarding food production in this country. Their populations in the wild have crashed over the past thirty years as a result of changing agricultural practices and the rise of foreign species, parasites and diseases. Urgent action at all levels is required to stop this decline.

A well-managed hive of bees can be a delight to those who come in contact with them. They provide honey, wax for both lighting and art work and also increase productivity on both an allotment and surrounding food production sites. The key to successfully keeping bees is good management. The following sets out the framework within which this allotment manages its bees.

LEADERSHIP

The Allotment Committee is responsible for overseeing this policy. This involves approving, or otherwise, decisions regarding the successful management of hives on the site managed by the Association and leased from Harrogate Borough Council.

MANAGEMENT OF THE HIVES

The day to day management of the hives should be the responsibility of an appropriately trained beekeeper. The minimum requirement is someone who has successfully undertaken the Harrogate and Ripon Beekeeping Association Beginners Course or equivalent.

SITING OF THE HIVES

Hives will be sited where the well-being of the bees takes priority. In addition consideration will be given to minimizing any possibility to the bees causing problems to those living and working on land adjacent to the hives.

Information signs will be displayed at any access points to the hives so people are aware of their location and can learn more about the lives of bees.

CONSULTATION

In considering the siting of hives and following advice provided by the Education Officer of Harrogate and Ripon Beekeepers Association, it is recommended that people living or working within a 30 foot radius should be consulted. Beyond this radius bees will have dispersed sufficiently to be barely noticeable.

SWARMING

Swarming is a natural process that bees undertake. It is reproduction by colony division. Every beekeeper will do their best to prevent a colony swarming because:

- Swarms can appear alarming to anyone who hasn't kept bees even though bees in a swarm are at their most docile and if reasonably accessible can easily be collected.
- swarming significantly reduces the number of foraging bees in a colony that in turn reduces the amount of honey that the hive will produce in a year. At worst it will threaten the ability for the hive to survive through the winter because of a lack of food.

SWARM MANAGEMENT

- The nominated beekeeper(s) will inspect the hives every 6-8 days through the swarming season (April to August) and take action as required.
- When a hive is identified as preparing to swarm appropriate action will be taken to prevent a swarm leaving the hive.
- In managing potential swarming:
 - Beforehand
 - Information notices will be displayed at allotment entrances clearly stating who to call in the event of a swarm being seen.
 - The nominated beekeeper(s) will have made preparations for dealing with a swarm well in advance of a swarm occurring. This will include having available the appropriate equipment to collect and house a swarm.
 - Afterwards
 - The swarm when collected will be re-located appropriately and this may or may not be on the Allotment.

INSURANCE

All nominated beekeepers will have taken out Public Liability Insurance provided by the British Beekeepers Association. This will be accessed through membership of the Harrogate and Ripon Beekeepers Association. See details of the Insurance in Appendix 1.

APPENDIX

1. Insurance

BRITISH BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION POLICY.

Public Liability

Full and Partner members of the Harrogate and Ripon Beekeepers Association are indemnified under public liability insurance against claims from other people up to a maximum of £10 million. This extends only to other people and not to the beekeeper or to his/own equipment. There is an excess of £250 per claim for material damage.

Bee Disease Insurance

The Association pays a premium to Bee Diseases Insurance Ltd (regulated by the FCA). Members are automatically covered for **three colonies** of their bees against their destruction under the Bees Diseases Control Order 1982, or any similar order in force at the time, made by the Bee Inspector appointed by the APHA. Insurance for additional colonies may be taken out – additional 2 colonies would be £2.00.

Bee Keeping Equipment

This is not covered by the BBKA Policy or HRBKA membership. Additional Insurance can be taken out by contacting Towergate Insurance (tel: 0344 892 6210) which covers loss of, or damage to beekeeping equipment and also bees, where the hives are damaged by an insured peril, which includes storm, wind, flood, vandalism etc.