

Pembury Parish Council

Working for Pembury People



Bee-keeping policy

Adopted 03/12/2018

Version:	Date Approved:	Review Date:
1.0	03/12/2018	01/10/2021

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Bees shall not be kept on any allotment plot unless the plot holder has submitted a written request to and has received written consent from, the Council. Plot holders do not have a statutory right to keep bees on allotments
- 1.2. A maximum of one bee hive may be permitted per allotment for personal use only.
- 1.3. Bee hives must not be located on allotment plots but in the designated area provided by the Council.
- 1.4. Only allotment tenants may keep bees on the site, once approved.

2. Conditions

- 2.1. The beekeeper must be a member of the British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA), or a member of a group affiliated with BBKA, and must be covered by the Association's £5m public liability insurance cover. Membership and insurance cover must be maintained whilst keeping bees on the allotment. Evidence of membership (including valid insurance cover) must be produced prior to permission being granted and annually thereafter.
- 2.2. Beekeepers must ensure that they provide competent care and management and have the knowledge and skills to ensure the wellbeing of the bees. Management and manipulations must, as far as possible, be carried out at appropriate times in order to minimise disturbance to other plot holders. The BBKA operates a well-established national system of assessments and examinations for beekeeping skills at a number of levels and it is expected that a beekeeper should, as a minimum, have passed the BBKA's Basic Assessment in Beekeeping. Evidence of passing the basic assessment will be provided to the Council prior to written permission being granted.
- 2.3. The beekeeper has a duty of care to other allotment gardeners working nearby, and to all members of the public, including those who have no lawful reason to be on the allotment. To this end, s/he must ensure that only gentle strains of bees are kept. If the bees become aggressive or exhibit excessive 'following' tendency, the beekeeper shall arrange to re-queen the colony, or remove the colony altogether until its undesirable traits have been resolved at the tenant's expense.
- 2.4. Signs (as many as are reasonably needed) "Beekeeper at work" should be placed prominently while the beekeeper is working, and for around half an hour after, to ensure that no one accidentally walks too near.
- 2.5. Tenants must accept full responsibility in writing for the hive. Should a swarm occur, the tenant is responsible for ensuring that the bees are removed by a suitably qualified bee keeper at the tenant's expense

2.6. All hive equipment is to carry a suitable mark identifying its owner.

3. Management of Bees and Hives

3.1. Hives should be located in the designated area of the allotment site. Permission will not be granted to locate a hive on an individual's allotment plot.

3.2. Bees are to be encouraged to fly at a good height (i.e. above head height) by surrounding the hives with a 2-metre high fence or similar boundary; (bird netting, trellis covered with plants, or tall plants can be adequate). The position and construction of this fence/barrier is to be agreed with the Council prior to its installation.

3.3. The beekeeper must ensure that there is a water supply for the bees close to the hives, so the bees do not fly to taps or any open water.

3.4. Handling bees should be done at times when the bees are very active, thus leaving fewer in the hive. When opening hives every care should be taken to ensure that it is not a busy time (i.e. busy weekend afternoons), and that the weather conditions are favourable (not raining, windy or thundery.)

3.5. Always ensure there is someone else on site in case of emergency when handling bees.

3.6. Protective beekeeping clothing must be worn.

3.7. Beekeepers should not use the designated allotment area as storage space for keeping equipment that does not contain bees. No wax comb should be left exposed in an apiary, it must be stored in a bee proof way. Allotment tenants have a duty as part of the Allotment Tenancy Conditions not to cause a nuisance to others. In the keeping of bees on an allotment site, tenants should take all reasonable measures to minimise potential nuisances.

3.8. The beekeeper shall inspect the hives weekly from April to July in accordance with BBKA guidelines.

3.9. Defra officials, the Regional Bee Inspectors, have statutory powers to access hives to deal with disease. The Council will co-operate fully with them in this regard.

4. Stand-by arrangements

4.1. The beekeeper must provide the Council with contact details (name, address, email and telephone numbers) of a person of sufficient competence to deal with emergencies such as swarming during any such period that the beekeeper is absent or unavailable. These details must also be prominently displayed by the beekeeper at or near the entrance to the allotment at all times.

5. Complaints and Withdrawal of Consent

5.1. The Council may issue a notice requiring the removal of the hives within 14 days if:

5.1.1. The beekeeper contravenes any of the conditions stated in this policy;

5.1.2. A complaint that the bees have caused nuisance or danger to other plot holders or members of the public is upheld; or

5.1.3. Substantive information is received that requires a review of the arrangements.

5.2. If the Council has cause to investigate complaints of nuisance, costs of official inspections will be passed to the tenant for payment.

To Pembury Parish Council

I hereby accept and agree to abide by the additional conditions of tenancy laid down by Pembury Parish Council in their policy for beekeeping on the allotment site.

Signed: _____

Allotment plot number: _____

Date: _____