

Roehampton Garden Society and Wandsworth Allotments Service
Keeping bees in hives on allotments sites

Preamble

Bees provide an invaluable service in pollinating crops and have traditionally been a good friend to farmers and fruit growers. There is a long association of bee keeping in the allotment tradition. Honeybees are under threat worldwide because of virulent viruses against which they have no natural defence. Nearly all colonies in the wild have died out and, without beekeepers to care for them, honeybees could disappear within a few years. The longer term future of many crops and plants that depend on bees for pollination is threatened. Other types of bees, mason bees, solitary bees, or even bumblebees, cannot replace the honeybee for numbers and volume of activity.

Not everybody welcomes bees, however, and the Allotments Service would wish that everyone who wants to cultivate their allotment can do so without fear, however well or unfounded. The beekeeper owes a duty of care to the public in the vicinity of the hives, including residents and passers by.

The apiary should be located in an area where the bees will not be unduly disturbed, and where other allotment holders may continue to cultivate their plots without feeling uncomfortable at the presence of bees. Beekeepers should be aware of this when choosing a time for handling the bees.

Our allotments sites are densely packed with small sized plots, the primary purpose of which is to grow mainly vegetables and fruit, mainly for home consumption. Where it is possible to accommodate an apiary, it should be separate from the growing area and may contain several hives belonging to various plot holder bee keepers.

Beekeeping is a specialist area and requires a level of competency in maintaining hives. This is important in terms of the health and productivity of the colony. Evidence of training and current membership of a beekeeping association are required before placing the hive on an allotment site. It will be useful to the beekeeper to arrange for back-up/emergency support.

Allotment legislation precludes commercial activity on allotment land. Produce may not be sold for profit as a primary purpose of the use of the land. No produce from the hive should be advertised for sale at the allotments site.

This agreement states the conditions which must be met and the information required by the Roehampton Garden Society and the Allotments Service before a hive is placed on an allotments site; useful contact details in connection with beekeeping; and a signature of agreement.

The bee keep must supply the following information:

Name of bee keeper	
Allotment site	
Plot number	
Phone	
Mobile	
Landline	
Email	
Member of which beekeeping	
Arrangements in the event of bee keeper's absence – what needs to	
Back-up beekeeper	
Phone Mobile	
Landline	
Email	
Number of hives in apiary	
Advice on dealing with a bee sting in an emergency:	
Procedure that the applicant will follow in the event of the colony swarming	
Arrangements for the hives and colonies on termination of allotment letting agreement by either side	

Roehampton Garden Society and the Allotments Service requires the following conditions to be met at all times:

- 1 The bee keeper must be a current Wandsworth allotment holder.
- 2 A maximum limit of hives per site will be set by the Allotments Service.
- 3 A mesh fence at least 6 foot high should surround the apiary to ensure the bees are diverted upward before dispersing in flight. The fence will protect other plot holders from bees congregating in large numbers and protect the hives from inadvertent visitors.
- 4 Honey or other hive products shall not be advertised for sale on the allotments site.
- 5 A report should be returned to the Allotments Officer following an annual check of the bees and colony for disease.
- 6 The Roehampton Garden Society and the Allotments Service may require the bees and hives to be removed from the site at short notice.

7 Checklist

The beekeeper must:	Evidence, Date
i) provide a reference from local beekeeping association to confirm that applicant is trained in apiculture	
ii) provide confirmation of continuing membership of a beekeeping association with insurance cover	
iii) have endorsement from the site manager and the site association to maintain bee hives on site	
iv) seek support from local residents if the proposed location of hives is near residential properties	
v) provide a plan or map of the site indicating the proposed location of hives agreed with the site	

- 1 This agreement is valid for one season only and will be renewed annually unless there is reason on either side not to do so.
- 2 The Allotments Service will withdraw the permission giving one month's notice to remove the hives if:
 - the beekeeper contravenes any condition set out above
 - the beekeeper contravenes any condition of the Allotment Tenancy Agreement
 - substantiated information is received that requires a review of the arrangements

Any cost resulting from withdrawal of consent shall be borne by the allotment holder.

Signatures

I hereby accept and agree to abide by the additional Conditions of Tenancy laid down by the Council for keeping bees.

Signed:

Date:

The RGS on behalf of the Council hereby accepts the above signatory, as beekeeper, upon the Conditions set out. Signed:

Designation:

Date:



Useful bee information

- **Bee Swarm Helpline** 07922 147379
- **Regional Bee Inspector** Alan Byham 01306 611016
- **Wimbledon Beekeepers Association** <http://www.wimbledonbeekeepers.co.uk/>
Chairman Toby Chapman-Dawe, chairman@wimbledonbeekeepers.co.uk 020 7193 7733
- **London Beekeepers Association** <http://www.lbka.org.uk/>
Secretary Nikki Vane, 07909 964986, sec@lbka.org.uk
- **Twickenham and Thames Valley Beekeepers Association** <http://www.twickenham-bees.org.uk/>
- **BeeBase**, the National Bee Unit website supporting Defra and the [Healthy Bees Plan](#), to protect and sustain our valuable national bee stocks
<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/index.cfm>
- **British Beekeepers Association**, National Agricultural Association, Stoneleigh, Kenilworth, Warwickshire, CV8 2LZ. Telephone 02476 696679. www.britishbee.org.uk

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