

ROEHAMPTON GARDEN SOCIETY

KEEPING BEES ON ALLOTMENTS

in conjunction with Enable Leisure and Culture on behalf of Wandsworth Allotments Service

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 long-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 RGS 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 area near the hives, including residents and passersby.

The apiary should be positioned 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 vegetables and fruit, for home consumption.

Beekeeping is a specialist area and requires a level of competence 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 before a hive is placed on an allotments site; useful contact details in connection with beekeeping; and a signature of agreement

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

- 1 The bee keeper must be a current Roehampton Garden Society plot holder.
- 2 A maximum limit of hives per site will be set by the RGS.
- 3 A mesh fence at least 6 feet 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 The RGS Structures Policy must be followed (see Structures Policy).
- 5 Honey or other hive products shall not be advertised for sale on the allotments site.
- 6 A report should be returned to the RGS following an annual check of the bees and colony for disease.
- 7 The Roehampton Garden Society may require the bees and hives to be removed from the site at short notice.
- 8 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 secretary to maintain bee hives on site	
iv) seek support from neighbours 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 and their size and construction agreed with the site secretary.	

This agreement is valid for one season only and will be renewed annually unless there is reason on either side not to do so.

The RGS 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.

The bee keeper must supply the following information:

Name of bee keeper	
Allotment site	
Plot number	
Phone	
Mobile	
Landline	
Email	
Member of which beekeeping association	
In the event of bee keeper's absence – what needs to happen to maintain the bees?	
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	

Signatures

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

Beekeeper's signature:

Date:

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

Signed:

Designation (Site Secretary or RGS Chair):

Date:



Useful bee information

Wimbledon Beekeepers Association <http://www.wimbledonbeekeepers.co.uk/>

London Beekeepers Association <http://www.lbka.org.uk/>

Twickenham and Thames Valley Beekeepers Association <http://www.twickenham-bees.org.uk/>

<https://secure.fera.defra.gov.uk/beebase/index.cfm>

British Beekeepers Association www.britishbee.org.uk