

## **Bexley Beekeeping Agreement**

### **Conditions for Keeping Bees on Allotments in Bexley**

#### **1. Consent**

Any person wishing to keep bees on an Allotment site in Bexley must first seek written agreement from Bexley's Parks and Open Spaces Department. No bees shall be kept on any Allotment site until this agreement has been signed and permission given in writing. The Council's Parks and Open Spaces Department reserves the right to issue 14 days notice for the removal of hives.

#### **2. Duty of Care**

The beekeeper owes a duty of care to:-

- the public in the vicinity of the hives
- other visitors to the Open Space
- intruders even if it is clear that their intention was to disturb the colony

#### **3. Consultation**

People will be more accepting of a perceived risk if they understand it and are clear about the benefits it can bring.

It is the responsibility of the beekeeper to inform, in advance, adjoining allotment tenants in the vicinity of the proposed hives, of the intention to site hives and to allay any concerns /answer any queries that they may have. The beekeeper should prominently display a notice for a minimum period of 28 days in the growing season and 56 days outside the growing season, indicating that a request to keep bees has been submitted. This notice will be supplied by the Council for you to erect.

Should an objection be made it must be effectively addressed. If the objection is on allergy or medical grounds and the Council's Parks and Open Spaces Department is satisfied that it is substantiated, permission may be refused to keep bees on site.

#### **3. Training**

Beekeeping requires a level of competency in maintaining hives to ensure the health and productivity of the colony. Evidence of training from a recognised body such as the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) must be provided.

#### **4. Insurance / Membership**

The named beekeeper must be a member of a Beekeepers Association affiliated to the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) which provides third party insurance as well as up-to-date valuable advice and training opportunities.

Insurance cover must be maintained throughout the duration of keeping the bees on the Allotment site which provides specifically for beekeeping risks and includes five (5) million pounds Public Liability Insurance cover. A copy of the insurance must be submitted annually to the Allotment Help Desk at the London Borough of Bexley.

The Council accepts no responsibility for the hives including but not limited to their damage, destruction or theft and the beekeeper shall be responsible for insuring the hives.

#### **5. Hives / Location**

No more than 2 hives and 1 nucleus may be located in any specified location.

Hives should be sited as far as possible from any public road or path or jointly used road or paths within the Public Open Space.

Entrances should preferably have a southerly aspect and away from any prevailing winds and overhanging shrubbery that may cause damp conditions.

**Screening** around the hives must be provided to ensure that bees are encouraged to rise in excess of 2 metres before leaving the plot. Screening is to both provide protection for the bees from intrusion/vandals and to create an effective barrier ensuring the flight path of the bees does not go directly across other plots and forces them to fly quickly upwards to their natural flight height when foraging. Screening material could be natural hedging, wooden screening such as bamboo on a roll or fine plastic/wire mesh.

Bees need access to **water** and provision of areas of shallow water/damp margins provided where they are less likely to drown. Water can be made available in the form of bird baths and pond margins.

#### **6. Beekeeper responsibilities and handling of bees**

Beekeepers should not put colonies of bees known to be of an aggressive temperament onto Allotment sites. If this does occur then the beekeeper will be asked to remedy the situation.

**Inspections** - Hives need to be inspected weekly from April to July in accordance with BBKA guidelines.

When carrying out inspections bee keepers must be mindful of adjoining gardeners and inform them that they will be carrying out an inspection and

preferably carry out such inspections at quieter times and in calm, dry weather.

**Swarming** - The beekeeper must carry out such management and manipulations of the colonies as are necessary to minimise the issue of swarms. Visitors to the Open Space must be made aware that bees may swarm, an essential part of reproduction, and in the event of this happening an experienced bee keeper must deal with this.

**Contact Details / Standby** - In the event of an emergency, such as swarming, the beekeeper must ensure that name and contact details for him/herself are displayed in the area of the hives or, if available, on a notice board where it is clearly visible to all users of the site.

If the official named beekeeper is away a standby contact competent to deal with inspection duties and any emergency related to the hives, such as potential swarming, must be available.

The contact details of the standby must be made available during the absence of the beekeeper, in the manner described above.

Full contact details for both parties must be given to the contact in the Parks and Open Spaces department prior to siting the hives.

**Vandalism** – Please try and ensure that long objects, are not available near the hives as these may be used to push over hives from a safe distance.

**Diseases** – Beekeepers have a legal responsibility to notify the National Bee Unit (NBU) of certain pests and diseases. The beekeeper must register hives with the National Bee Unit 'Beebase' (part of Defra) –

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

Email: [nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:nbu@fera.gsi.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01904 462510

Once registered, beekeepers are entitled to free advisory visits from bee inspectors, up-to-date information about local outbreaks and free access to pest and disease information.

## **7. Withdrawal of Consent**

The Council reserves the right to issue 14 days notice for the removal of the hives if:

- The bee keeper contravenes any of the above conditions
- Substantiated information is received that requires a review of the arrangements

The beekeeper must supply the following information:

<b>Name of bee keeper</b>		
Site Name		
Plot Number		
Phone		Mobile
		Daytime
		Home
Email		
Evidence of training		
Evidence of Beekeeping Association membership (including Public Liability Insurance)		
Number of hives and a plan or map of the site indicating the proposed location of the hives		
Procedure that the bee keeper will follow in the event of the colony swarming		
Arrangements for the hives and colonies on the termination of this agreement by either party		
<b>Name of Standby Beekeeper</b>		
Phone		Mobile
		Daytime
		Home
Email		

I hereby accept and agree to abide by the conditions of this agreement -

Signed .....

Dated .....

The Council hereby accepts the above signatory, as a beekeeper , upon adherence to the conditions set out above

Allotment site

Council Officer/Contact .....

Signed .....

Date .....