

Hotwells and District Allotment Association

BEEKEEPING POLICY

This policy is based on a risk assessment and follows guidance provided by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.

1. Nobody has the absolute right to keep bees on an allotment. Any tenant wishing to locate hives on a HwDAA site must have written permission from the Association, which will need to be satisfied about the exact location of the hive/s and the competence level of the beekeeper. The tenant's plot(s) must already be well maintained.
2. All beekeepers on an HwDAA site must have full membership of the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) via a local association. Evidence of membership must be made available on request.
3. Beginner/novice beekeepers wishing to keep bees on an HwDAA site must have undertaken at least one season learning how to manage a colony of bees and have undertaken a basic course in beekeeping. HwDAA will seek confirmation of this and will also ascertain the competence of experienced beekeepers requesting permission to keep hives on HwDAA sites.
4. No more than four hives will be allowed per plot with the addition of a nucleus hive as and when required. When considering new requests, the Association will take account of the number and location of existing hives. Evidence suggests a maximum of three hives per acre is considered desirable.
5. When positioning beehives, precautions must be taken so that the flightline of the bees rises above neighbouring plots - placing hives adjacent to a fence, wall, shed, fruit trees, or employing a mesh screen.
6. New colonies of bees should be obtained from a source where the temperament of the parent colony is known to be gentle. If a colony becomes aggressive, the beekeeper must take appropriate action, either re-queening, or moving the colony to an alternative site away from the allotments.
7. All beekeepers on HwDAA sites must maintain their colonies in good state – carrying out regular inspections, practising swarm control and disease prevention and management (eg regular treatment against varroa). National regulations regarding notifiable diseases (eg European and

American Foul Brood) apply. It is recommended that beekeepers register with *BeeBase*, run by Defra's National Bee Unit and providing free access to the regional bee inspector and other resources.

8. Before opening a hive, beekeepers must assess the local situation and alert anyone in the vicinity, if necessary waiting for a more appropriate time. Beekeepers should always assess their own safety requirements and take appropriate measures, wearing protective clothing and suitable footwear.
9. Non-compliance with this policy may result in a request to remove hives from an allotment site.

All HwDAA members will be reminded via the Newsletter and website that bee hives are located on some allotments and should therefore take due precautions, such as staying clear of hives, especially when the bee keeper is at work. Anyone at risk from bee venom is advised to carry necessary first aid items (eg anti-histamine spray, Epipen).