

# Watnall Allotments and Gardens Association

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## Beekeeping Policy

Watnall Allotment and Gardens Association encourages responsible beekeeping. For the safety and enjoyment of all members, and the welfare of the bees, the following policy has been agreed and must be adhered to.

1. SITING: All hives are to be sited in the designated area on plot 85 only.
2. NUMBER OF HIVES: There are to be a maximum of 10 hives kept in the designated area.
3. PLOT HOLDERS' BEE HIVES. Every beekeeper must either have a plot or be a helper member on a plot. They must be a member of the Watnall Allotments Association and must provide full contact details to the Secretary.
4. MAIN BEEKEEPER An experienced Beekeeper is to be designated as the main Beekeeper.
5. FURTHER BEEKEEPERS
  - a. Beginners may only keep colonies of bees on the designated area if they are supervised by an experienced beekeeper.
  - b. A person wishing to keep bees on the designated area on plot 85 must have the agreement of the Committee and must abide by any rules. They must show either that they are competent or that they will be properly supervised. One option for beginners is to attend a bee-keeping training course while under supervision. The beekeeper must show that he/she has made adequate arrangements to ensure that any problems caused by their bees in their absence will be resolved.
6. SAFETY
  - a. Where possible, beekeepers will **not** handle or work with the bees when plot holders are gardening in that area. There may be exceptional circumstances beyond the beekeepers' control when work with the bees has to take place; if this is necessary, the beekeepers will alert surrounding plot holders by placing a notice at the front of plot 85.
  - b. Beekeepers will try to work on the hives only when the bees are very active, so that fewer remain inside the hive.
  - c. The take-off flight line is to be restricted to at least six feet. The use of hedging, fencing or mesh around the apiary will encourage the bees to fly up high as they leave, rather than crossing other plots.
7. INSURANCE. Any person keeping bees on the designated area on plot 85 must have insurance against public liability claims; beekeeping associations usually arrange insurance against claims for up to £10 million through the British Beekeepers Association (<https://www.bbka.org.uk/>). The main beekeeper should be a member of the local

Beekeepers Association. Beekeepers under supervision should be encouraged to also join such an association.

## 8. MANAGEMENT

- a. The committee are responsible for ensuring that the policy is adhered to and will seek to resolve any disputes. Nottinghamshire Beekeepers Association (<http://www.nottsbees.org.uk/>) may have members available to offer advice if required but cannot be responsible for any action by individuals or plot holders keeping bees on allotments.
- b. The main beekeeper will report to the committee annually at the end of the beekeeping season.

## 9. UNATTENDED HIVES

- a. Empty/Unattended hives will be removed/put out of action/sealed so that they cannot be re-entered by a swarm at the discretion of the main beekeeper.
- b. In the event of termination of the plot of one of the beekeepers, that beekeeper will give up their hive and the hive space will be reallocated by the committee in consultation with the main beekeeper subject to demand. That beekeeper will clear their hives within the same period they clear their plot.
- c. Hives left after the departure of a beekeeper will be managed by the main beekeeper. If there is no main beekeeper, then the local beekeeping association will be contacted for advice and/or help.

## 10. ADVICE TO MEMBERS IF THEY SEE SWARMING BEES.

- a. When do Bees Swarm?
  - i. Most swarms often occur on warm sunny days in May to the end of July, between 11am – 4pm
  - ii. Often there is a peak on a fine day after poor weather when temperatures approach high teens.
  - iii. A real honeybee swarm can be dramatic, involving many thousands of bees in a large noisy cloud, however they normally settle into a cluster within 15 minutes.
- b. Are Bee swarms dangerous for people?
  - i. Swarming bees are on their way to find a new home. If you are not a beekeeper who wants to catch the swarm, you should **keep a natural distance and avoid threatening the bees**. If they feel threatened, they sting, and you probably don't want that to happen.
- c. Action if you see a swarm at the Allotments
  - i. **Contact the Main Beekeeper as soon as possible**. Contact details of the beekeepers are on the allotment noticeboards.
  - ii. Even if the swarm has settled in an inconvenient interim location, **do not try to move or destroy the swarm**, as this move could have serious consequences.

## 11. NHS GUIDANCE: WHAT TO DO IF YOU'VE BEEN BITTEN OR STUNG

For the latest advice from the NHS on how to treat insect bites or stings, and when to seek medical advice, please check the following web page:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/insect-bites-and-stings/>