

BLISWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

RISK ASSESSMENT: ALLOTMENTS Bee-Keeping

Hazards Identified	Associated risks	Actions and controls	Risk/ Impact LMH
Risk of bee stings in areas near apiary	Neighbours, those working or playing nearby Beekeeper and standby beekeeper	Ensure hives are properly sited away from work or play areas. A source of water should be easily accessible to the bees and be in place before the bees are established. Otherwise bees may congregate around taps or any open water. Ensure flight path is not over a footpath, access route or neighbouring garden. Make sure bees are encouraged to fly up and over a hedge or fence. Refer to local beekeepers' association to obtain advice on siting and the plot must have simple screening, such as is used for windbreaks, of fine mesh netting, dust-screening, willow, hazel or maintained hedges of a minimum 2.0 metres height to encourage the bees to fly high over neighbouring plots and to protect the hive from wind. Clear warning signage placed near apiary.	L/M
Risk of bee stings during inspections or handling of bees.	Those involved in beekeeping activities.	Handling bees should be done at times when the bees are very active, thus leaving fewer in the hive. PPE to be worn correctly and checked by lead beekeeper before inspection commences. Ensure approach route to hive is away from bee flight paths. Beekeepers to approach the hives calmly from the rear. First aid kit available. Bees are appropriately smoked before hive inspection.	L/M

Risk of Swarms	Everyone NB: Although to some an intimidating sight, swarms are not dangerous unless spectators behave recklessly. All swarm precautions will be taken. It must be noted that swarms do happen sometimes and may also come from other sources.	The number of hives on the site in total will be monitored and restricted to prevent overpopulation of any one site. No more than 2 hives and 1 nucleus may be located on one designated plot. Do not allow the strength of colonies to increase to swarming strength in an unmanaged way. The number of hives on one plot may increase due to splitting in order to control swarming. This should be temporary if it makes more than two hives on the plot. Hives must be reduced to the permitted number by the end of summer at the latest. In the event of a bees swarm, remain calm, stay at a safe distance, and avoid disturbing them. Contact the bee keeper, standby beekeeper or find a local Swarm Collector using The British Beekeepers Association website. Notice with information clearly displayed of contact details of bee-keeper. Stand-by bee-keeper and local BKA.	L/M
Lack of beekeeping knowledge or experience.	Everyone Bees	The beekeeper and standby beekeeper must have current registration and membership of a beekeepers' association affiliated to the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) before any hives can be placed on the allotment. Each year at plot renewal the beekeeper and standby beekeeper must provide Blisworth Parish Council with a copy of their renewed proof of current membership with BBKA. The beekeeper must have a BBKA Basic Assessment certificate or must be mentored by a beekeeper who has passed the basic assessment while working towards their own assessment. The certificate or a letter of support must be presented to the Council before hives can be placed on the allotment. If being mentored at the time of application, the beekeeper must pass their assessment within 24 months of placing hives on the allotment.	L/M

Risk of anaphylactic shock following bee sting.	Persons with known propensity Persons with unknown propensity.	Tenants and beekeeper(s) aware of risk. Emergency procedure to be displayed clearly in a prominent place; including exact location of Apiary. Location of emergency procedure notice and first aid kit to be made clear to all tenants and new tenants. Precise location and access information to be available for relay to emergency services to facilitate rapid access. Mobile phone or other communications to be available to call Ambulance Service via 999. Council to notify tenants of bees. Tenants with history of anaphylactic shock/allergies must carry appropriate medication at all times.	L/H
Risk of fall or injury if collecting swarm from a height or difficult location	Lead beekeeper Stand-by beekeeper	Assess situation carefully before starting collection. Assemble appropriate equipment. Do not work at height alone. Ensure any ladder is securely placed safely and ensure an assistant is holding the ladder. Have means of contacting emergency services to hand. Check phone signal.	L/H
Risk of colony collapse or health of bees declining	Bee colonies, other bees in the immediate area.	A source of water should be easily accessible to the bees and be in place before the bees are established. Otherwise bees may congregate around taps or any open water. In the early stages of beekeeping, know what a healthy colony looks like; if anything (however trivial) seems amiss, contact your BKA mentor or local bee inspector at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bee-health. The national bee unit also provides excellent free information. The beekeeper must use an integrated pest management system to control Varroa or other pests and diseases. Unused equipment should not be left around as it could spread disease.	M/H

Risk of bee diseases from other apiaries infecting colonies. Resultant loss of bees and equipment	Bee colonies	Join Beebase at http://www.nationalbeeunit.com to receive updates and notifications directly from DEFRA. This also gives access to local bee inspector. Insurance against loss caused by disease included in membership of local BKA or directly by BBKA.	M/H
Aggressive bees. Increased risk of stings.	Those involved in beekeeping activity or using noisy equipment (lawn mower, hedge cutter etc.) nearby.	Gentle bee varieties used. Bees confined to the hive if weather or other factors make them irritable. Hives worked on only when conditions are right for beekeeping. Any persistently aggressive colony to be re-queened. Bees are appropriately smoked before hive inspection. Lead beekeeper is always in attendance when hive is opened.	M/M
Using hammers, nails and other hand tools to build or repair hives. Risk of injury.	Anyone involved in building or maintaining equipment	Tools and equipment regularly checked to ensure good condition. First Aid kit available.	M/M
Risk of injury during honey processing.	Anyone involved in activity.	Keep surfaces and floor clear and clean during activity to reduce risk of sticky or slippery surfaces. Ensure uncapping knives or forks or any electrical equipment is used safely. Electrical equipment to be regularly tested. Ensure heavy equipment is lifted safely according to correct manual handling procedures.	M/M

Risk of vandalism to bee hives leading to bee stings and swarming	Everyone, vandals	Warning signs to be displayed near apiary. Bee hives correctly located in quiet location away from public footpaths. Seek advice from local BKA Gates to allotments to be locked at all times.	M/H
Slips, trips and falls	Everyone entering	Deliver safety briefing before entering apiary. Keep areas around hives clear of obstructions. Where appropriate footwear.	M/M
Misuse of chemicals (bee disease treatments if used) etc. Use of chemicals (bee disease treatments)	Beekeepers	Chemicals to be stored securely as per COSHH guidance. Instructions to be followed. PPE to be worn when using chemicals – gloves, mask, goggles. Disposal of used chemicals and treatments to be done so safely and as per instructions All chemical to be washed off from skin if contact is made.	H/L
Cleaning and maintaining equipment. Using blow-torches or similar equipment. Using sharp tools. Using chemicals (i.e., wood stain / protector).	Persons involved in activity.	Equipment must be safety tested and properly maintained. Only responsible adult(s) to use blow-torches or similar equipment. Protective gloves and safety equipment to be worn. Use chemicals in accordance with manufacturer's instructions.	H/M

Wax melting, candle or soap making. Risk of injury, burns and scolding Risk of fire	Those involved in activity	DO NOT WORK ALONE Check signal. Ensure emergency services can be quickly contacted. All those involved must wear safety glasses and aprons. Consider gloves. Only appropriate equipment to be used and in accordance with instructions. Ensure wax does not reach its flashpoint (254C). Beeswax melts safely at 150C. Ensure appropriate fire extinguishers are to hand (type yellow or blue, similar to cooking fat fires). Ensure first aid is available.	H/M
Risk of fire, lighting and using smoker Lighting the Smoker Risk of burns or smoke inhalation	Beekeepers, property and others	Exercise care when using a lighted smoker particularly during long dry spells. Place smoker on a hard level surface when not in use. Ensure smoker is properly extinguished and emptied safely after use. Ensure water for use in an emergency is available on site First aid equipment/treatment available on site	H/M
Risk of burns or fire from blow-torch during hive maintenance.	Beekeeper	Safety equipment to be worn by beekeeper. Great care to be taken. No lone working and emergency assistance readily available. First Aid kit available.	H/H

Version	Details of any revision	Approved at	Date	Review Date
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