

# **WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL**

## **Policy for the keeping of Bees on**

### **The Glebe and Simons Cross Allotment Sites, Wickham Market, Suffolk**

This policy is based on good practice advice and guidance provided by the National Allotment Society (NSALG) and takes into account the findings of a risk assessment.

The Parish Council encourages responsible beekeeping on both the Glebe & Simons Cross allotment sites, providing certain conditions are met. If you are interested in keeping bees on your allotment, please read the following before you apply by completing the 'Application for Permission to Keep Bees on Allotments'.

1. Nobody has the absolute right to keep bees on plot/s on an allotment site and written permission must therefore be obtained from Wickham Market Parish Council.
2. All beekeepers on either site must have current, full membership of the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) via a local association (e.g. Suffolk Beekeepers). Evidence of membership must be made available on request.
3. Beginner/novice beekeepers wishing to keep bees on either site must have undertaken a basic course in beekeeping. Wickham Market Parish Council will seek confirmation of this and will also ascertain the competence of experienced beekeepers. Beginners must be supported by an experienced beekeeper who will act as mentor.
4. No more than four active hives are allowed per plot, with the addition of a nucleus hive as and when required. When considering new requests, the Parish Council will take account of the number and location of existing hives on the allotment site concerned. Evidence suggests that there should be a maximum of three hives per acre. This will be taken into account when decisions are made regarding permission to keep bees.
5. When positioning beehives, precautions must be taken so that the flight line of the bees rises above neighbouring plots, paths and trackways. This can be achieved by locating hives adjacent to a fence, shed, fruit trees, trellis or a mesh screen. When positioning beehives on plots adjacent to other plots, the plotholders affected should be consulted before permission to keep bees is granted.
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 either site must maintain their colonies in good state – carrying out regular inspections, practising swarm control and disease prevention and management (e.g., regular treatment against varroa). National regulations regarding

notifiable diseases (e.g. European and American Foul Brood) apply. The number and location of hives must be registered with BeeBase: [www.nationalbeeunit.com/](http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/)

8. Before opening a hive, beekeepers should 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 will result in a request to remove hives from an allotment site.

### **How to apply**

Prospective beekeepers who are keen to keep bees on an allotment should complete an application form available from the Parish Clerk or Site Representative. The completed form should be returned to the Parish Clerk and the person making the request will be notified of the outcome within 2 months.

All allotment holders will be reminded that bee hives are located on some allotments and should therefore take due precautions, such as staying clear of hives, especially when the beekeeper is at work. Anyone at risk from bee venom is advised to carry necessary first aid items (e.g., antihistamine spray, EpiPen).

Policy updated and approved February 14<sup>th</sup> 2022