

POLICY ON BEE KEEPING

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**1. THE SITE**

- A designated site will be provided by the Parish Council to minimise inconvenience to residents, allotment plot holders and passers-by.
- The site will be screened to a level not less than 2 metres high to encourage bees to fly above this height.
- The site will have access to a shallow pond/water source for the bees.
- Hives must be kept on the designated site provided by the Parish Council and may not be placed on individual allotment plots.
- The number of hives will be restricted to a maximum of 3 hives per beekeeper with a total initially of 15 hives permitted on the site. Once this number has been reached the Parish Council may refuse further applications.
- A communal sign will be displayed on the site with contact numbers of each bee-keeper together with emergency contact information.
- The Parish Council reserves the right to request the immediate removal of any hives if a nuisance is caused.
- The Parish Council will co-operate fully with Defra and Regional Bee Inspectors regarding access to hives in the event of disease.
- Priority will be given to existing Old Basing Allotment & Garden Society (OBAGS) members and allotment holders who fulfil the Bee-keeper criteria in item 3 below.

**2. THE HIVES**

- All hives should carry a suitable mark identifying the owner.
- Hives should not be used for storage of equipment not containing bees.

**3. THE BEE-KEEPER**

- The bee-keeper must be a paid up member of a local beekeeping association affiliated to the British Bee Keepers Association. This membership carries public liability insurance of up to £5m should there be loss or damage as a consequence of the bee-keeping.
- The bee-keeper must demonstrate experience in the handling of bees and will not be permitted to keep bees on the site during his first year of bee-keeping.
- The bee-keeper must demonstrate that he/she has obtained, or is studying for, a formal qualification in bee-keeping (such as the BBA “Basic Assessment” examination or equivalent) which demonstrates competence in management and manipulation of bees.

**4. BEE-KEEPING**

- The bee-keeper should only introduce “docile” bees and not bring on to the site colonies that are known to be aggressive. If a colony is unnecessarily aggressive, it should be re-queened with a queen from a reputable supplier of “docile strains”.
- The bee-keeper must practice effective methods of swarm control and carry out regular inspections (at least once a week during the swarming season) for signs of swarming. The bee-keeper should provide cover for this if he/she is away or sick.

- The bee-keeper should take all steps to minimise inconvenience to others and should ensure that any “manipulations” are not carried out when there are others nearby or when the bees are disturbed.
- The bee-keeper should ensure that the Parish Council and the Chairman of Old Basing Allotment & Garden Society (OBAGS) knows how to contact him if there is a problem with one of the hives.
- The bee-keeper should arrange for cover when he/she is not available.
- Bee-keepers should always be prepared to discuss the bees with anyone interested and may wish to consider displaying an observation hive at pre-arranged times to enable others to view the bees at work. In such an instance, spare veils must be provided for closer inspection of a hive.