



MACCLESFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

BEE KEEPING POLICY

Document Version Control

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ALLOTMENT BEEKEEPING POLICY

1. Purpose of the Policy

1.1 This policy sets out the conditions under which honey bees may be kept on allotment gardens managed by the Association or Council.

1.2 The policy is intended to ensure that beekeeping is carried out:

- safely and responsibly;
 - without nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring residents; and
 - in accordance with relevant legislation and recognised best practice.
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2. Permission to Keep Bees

2.1 **Bees may only be kept with the prior written permission of the Association.**

2.2 Permission may be refused or withdrawn at the Association or Council's discretion, including where:

- the site or plot is unsuitable;
- there are concerns about safety, nuisance, or welfare; or
- the beekeeper fails to comply with this policy or the tenancy agreement.

2.3 Permission is personal to the plot holder and may not be transferred.

3. Eligibility and Experience

3.1 Plot holders wishing to keep bees must demonstrate that they have:

- adequate beekeeping knowledge and experience; or
- completed, or are actively undertaking, a recognised beekeeping course.

3.2 The Association or Council may require evidence of training or membership of a recognised beekeeping organisation.

4. Number and Type of Hives

4.1 The number of hives permitted will be determined by the Association/Council, taking into account:

- the size and layout of the site;
- proximity to paths, neighbouring plots, and residential property; and
- local forage availability.

4.2 Only manageable and non-aggressive strains of honey bees may be kept.

4.3 Nucleus colonies or additional hives may not be introduced without further written consent.

5. Siting and Management of Hives

5.1 Hives must be positioned:

- away from site entrances, public paths, and frequently used areas;
- so that flight paths are directed upwards and away from neighbouring plots (for example, by the use of fencing or screening); and
- in locations approved by the Association.

5.2 A permanent source of fresh water must be provided within the plot to reduce nuisance to others.

5.3 The beekeeper must manage bees to minimise swarming and nuisance.

6. Safety and Conduct

6.1 Beekeeping activities must be carried out with due regard to the safety of others using the Allotment Site.

6.2 Protective clothing must be worn when handling bees.

6.3 The beekeeper must ensure that hives are secure and clearly marked.

6.4 Bees must not be allowed to become aggressive or pose a risk to others. Persistent aggression will require remedial action or removal of hives.

7. Health and Disease Control

7.1 The beekeeper must comply with all statutory requirements relating to bee health, disease control, and movement of bees.

7.2 All colonies must be registered with the **National Bee Unit (BeeBase)** where required.

7.3 Any notifiable disease or serious health issue must be reported immediately to the relevant authority and to the Association.

8. Insurance and Liability

8.1 Plot holders keeping bees must maintain **adequate individual public liability insurance** covering beekeeping activities.

8.2 Evidence of insurance must be provided to the Association/Council on request.

8.3 The Association and the landowner accept no responsibility for:

- injury, stings, allergic reactions, or death;
 - loss or damage to hives or bees; or
 - claims arising from beekeeping activities.
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9. Nuisance and Complaints

9.1 The Association will investigate complaints relating to beekeeping.

9.2 Where complaints are upheld, the beekeeper must take immediate remedial action, which may include:

- re-siting hives;
 - reducing hive numbers;
 - re-queening with a gentler strain; or
 - removing bees from the site.
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10. Withdrawal of Permission

10.1 The Association/Council reserves the right to withdraw permission to keep bees at any time where:

- this policy is breached;
- safety or nuisance concerns arise; or
- continued beekeeping is no longer considered appropriate for the site.

10.2 Where permission is withdrawn, all bees and equipment must be removed from the Allotment Site within a timescale specified by the Association.

11. Review of Policy

11.1 This policy will be reviewed periodically and may be amended by the Association.

11.2 The current version of this policy will be made available to plot holders on request.
