



# Gainsborough

## TOWN COUNCIL

### **Keeping Bees On Our Allotments**

Tenants wishing to keep bees must first apply in writing to the Town Council for permission. The letter should include sketches of where the proposed bee-hive would be placed, the location of the water supply for the bees and the location and height of screening, which should be a minimum of 1.52m (5ft) high.

Tenants must have at least one year experience of bee-keeping and must have taken the British Beekeepers Association (BBA) basic exam. All BBA members are covered by insurance that protects the council against any claim for liability. We will require proof of this insurance and the BBA examination certificate.

All beekeepers must register with the National Bee Unit. The local bee inspector will make a free inspection visit. The National Bee Unit also gives access to useful web resources and other up to date information.

In general

- Hives must not be placed in positions where bee flight paths impinge on other allotment users or pathways. Bees must not be a nuisance to anyone.
- The tenant must erect a sign on the gates to the allotments and on the plot to advise other gardeners that bees are present. A phone number must be on the sign for contact in case of bee emergency.
- When handling bees, always ensure there is someone else on site in case of emergency.
- Do not handle bees when other people are gardening in the immediate vicinity.
- Handling bees should be done at times when there are fewer in the hive.
- Colonies must not be allowed to increase to swarming strength in an unmanaged way.
- The beekeeper must be competent to recognise signs of swarming and carry out regular inspections for this.

Bees are susceptible to a number of serious infectious diseases, some of which must be reported to DEFRA. Regional bee inspectors have the right to access hives to deal with disease and to survey the extent of the spread to or from other colonies. The beekeeper must co-operate as fully as possible with 'Standstill' or 'Destruction' notices.

The deliberate introduction of aggressive strains of bees will constitute a breach of your tenancy agreement and could result in the termination of your tenancy and /or a ban on keeping livestock.