

Croydon Council Beekeeping Rules



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Beekeeping Conditions

Any person keeping bees on allotment land must be an allotment tenant and is bound by the Allotment Tenancy Agreement, the general rules for keeping livestock on allotments and the special rules for beekeeping below.

The Council reserves the right to review these conditions as required. The Council will give beekeepers notice before any changes to these conditions are made. The Allotment Tenancy Agreement and the general rules for keeping livestock on allotments can be found online, on [Croydon Council's allotment pages](#). To request a print copy contact allotments@croydon.gov.uk

Beekeeping on Croydon Council allotments is encouraged. However not all sites have suitable locations for hives.

Beekeepers must also take into consideration that allotments, are used by people who may know little of bees or beekeeping.

1.a An allotment tenant must obtain permission to keep bees on an allotment from Croydon Council's allotment service.

Please contact the allotment service by email allotments@croydon.gov.uk to find out if a plot is available and then complete and return the form below.

1.b Bees can be only be kept on Council owned allotment sites where there are designated beekeeping plots.

1.c Beekeepers should not use allotments as storage space for equipment that does not contain bees. No wax comb should be left exposed in an apiary; it should be stored in a bee proof way.

2 Beekeeper

The beekeeper must have current registration and membership of a beekeepers' association affiliated to the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA).

2.a 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 permission to keep bees on the allotment can be given. See section 17 below.

2b If being mentored at the time of application, the beekeeper must pass their assessment within 24 months of signing their lease agreement.

3. Siting of Hives

On Council owned allotment sites hives can be only be kept on designated beekeeping plots.

3.a Hives must be a suitable distance from any public road or path, or jointly use road or path within the allotment site.

3.b A notice should be put in place to discourage members of the public from approaching the beehives. See section 7

3.c 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.

3.d The number of hives on the site in total will be monitored and restricted to prevent Over population of any one site. No more than 2 hives and 1 nucleus may be located on one designated plot.

3.e 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.

4 **The Bees**

The beekeeper must ensure that gentle strains of bees are kept, and if the bees become aggressive or exhibit excessive "following" tendency, he or she will arrange to re-queen the colony (or remove the colony until its undesirable traits have been resolved).

- 4.a Management and manipulations must be timed, as far as possible, to minimise disturbance to other plot holders, and the beekeeper is encouraged to liaise with neighbouring plot holders about planned actions.

5 **Consultation**

The Council will carry out consultation with other plot holders on the site before plots are designated for beekeeping.

6. **Risk Assessment**

There is a standard risk assessment for each site. Beekeepers must sign that they have read this and alert the council and committee if anything further should be added (medical conditions, allergies etc.)

A risk assessment will include, but is not limited to:

- Bee swarm in public areas.
- Bee sting first aid advice.
- Accidental or intentional intrusion by animals or humans
- Arrangements in times of temporary absence by the plot holder (See section 8 below)
- Provision and use of protective equipment.
- Management of smokers - must be extinguished after use.
- Preventing overpopulation of bees
- Preventing disease
- Vandalism
- Highlight any other risks (please specify)

7 **Duty of Care**

The beekeeper owes a duty of care to:

- The public in the vicinity of the hives
- Other allotment gardeners working nearby
- Intruders (even though it is clear that their intention was to disturb the colony)

The beekeeper must display a sign on their designated apiary area, stating honey bees are located there.

8 **Stand-By Arrangements**

- 8.a The beekeeper must provide the Croydon Council Allotment Service and the site Allotment Committee with details (name, telephone number and mobile telephone number) of stand-by arrangements to deal with emergencies such as swarming during any absence or unavailability of the beekeeper.

- 8.b The back-up beekeeper must have passed the assessment and provide certificate evidence.

9 **Notice On Display**

A notice giving contact details of the Beekeeper and a back-up 24H contact in case of absence should be displayed clearly on the hive for use by Council Inspectors, the emergency services, Beebase or RSPCA. The notice should state.

Name of plot holder (Beekeeper)

Phone number

In case beekeeper is not available

Name of the back-up keeper.
Phone number

The plot holder is solely responsible for the welfare of livestock at all times including when livestock is under the supervision of a back-up keeper.

10 Diseases

The beekeeper is required to register all hives with the National Bee Unit (NBU) 'Beebase'. Guidance is available from their website: <http://www.nationalbeeunit.com/>
The beekeeper is responsible for following the statutory guidelines and Bees Disease legislation in particular The Bees Act 1980.

- 10a The beekeeper must use an integrated pest management system to control Varroa or other pests and diseases.

11 Inspections

Hives shall be inspected weekly from April to July by the beekeeper in accordance with the BBKA guidelines and suitable records must be kept.

- 11.a Sites will be inspected annually by Croydon Council as part of the annual plot inspection.

- 11.b The bee keeper will give Council inspectors access to inspect hives if this is considered necessary.

12 Complaints

The council will investigate any complaints, in particular, those with health and nuisance elements. If necessary, permission to keep bees can be withdrawn by the issue of 40 days' notice to remove the hives.

13 Insurance

The beekeeper is required to hold a current **insurance policy** which provides specifically for beekeeping risks and includes **Public Liability Insurance** cover for a minimum of five million pounds (£5,000,000).

- 13.a We require potential beekeepers to become members of the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) which will include insurance cover for public liability and disease insurance.

- 13.b Each year at plot renewal (1 October) the beekeeper must provide Croydon Council Allotment Service with a copy of their renewed proof of current membership with BBKA.

14 Sale of Honey or other produce from beekeeping.

The beekeeper will not display notices that honey or other products are available for sale on the allotment site or plot.

15 Withdrawal of Consent

Croydon Council may withdraw the permission to keep bees at any time by giving 40 days' notice to remove hives if:

- a. The permit holder contravenes any of the above rules.
- b. The permit holder contravenes any rules within the Allotment Tenancy Agreement or any separate Allotment Association or Council tenancy rules.
- c. A new allotment tenant takes a nearby plot then provides medical evidence that they are allergic to honey bee stings. However, we would expect any new tenant to be made aware of the hives before they accept the tenancy of a plot. If necessary a plot may be offered on an alternative site that does not have beekeeping.

d. Any costs resulting from the withdrawal of consent shall be borne by the tenant.

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Application Procedure

Potential beekeepers must consult the local beekeeping association to gain an understanding of beekeeping before starting the application process.

Contact allotments@croymdon.gov.uk to find out if plots are available

Prepare a site plan for their plot or designated apiary. This must be approved by the local beekeeping association.

Provide a letter of support from local beekeeping association that you have passed the basic assessment

or

Are working towards an assessment and have an assessed beekeeper to mentor you.

Complete this application form and return with the evidence documents listed below To

allotments@croymdon.gov.uk

Or post to The Allotments Service

Croydon Council

Bernard Weatherill House, Floor 6 Zone D

8 Mint Walk

Croydon, CR0 1EA

Beekeeping Application Form

Allotment site	
Name:	
Contact phone number:	email address
Full Address	
Post Code	
Are you a Croydon Council plot holder? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
If Yes, please state Allotment site and plot number _____	
Allotment plot size _____	
Back-up Keeper's Contact details	
Name:	
Telephone Number:	
Risk Assessment Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Date
Notice on Display Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Hives Structure Description	Dimensions
I understand that I am solely responsible for the bees kept on my allotment plot. <input type="checkbox"/>	
I agree to pay any costs incurred for removal, relocation and disposal of the bees and bee hives at the end of my Lease agreement. I agree to pay for any damages caused to other property or plots caused by my beekeeping. <input type="checkbox"/>	
I have read and understood the rules to keep Livestock on my allotment plot. I hereby agree to comply with the above rules and regulations <input type="checkbox"/>	
Signature	
Date	

EVIDENCE REQUIRED	EVIDENCE ATTACHED
BBKA Membership number	
Letter of recommendation from local association	
Signed Risk assessment.	
copy of certificate after passing the BBKA Basic Beekeeping assessment or copy of mentor's BBKA Basic Beekeeping assessment.	
Contact details of stand-by arrangements of an alternative beekeeper who can be contacted in emergency – see section 8 above	
Site Location Plan	

Please return all completed application forms and evidence to: allotments@croydon.gov.uk

Or post to

The Allotment Service
Croydon Council
Bernard Weatherill House, Floor 6 Zone D
8 Mint Walk
Croydon, CR0 1EA