



Rural Life Centre Apiary Procedures, Management and Rules

Visitors & new members

Please ask to be introduced to the meeting host. He or she will allocate you to an experienced beekeeper (an Inspection Leader) and equip you with appropriate protective clothing, subject to availability and a white name badge.

Please advise the Meeting Host and Inspection Leader if you suffer from any relevant medical conditions, particularly if you may be susceptible to a serious allergic reaction to a sting (anaphylactic shock) and if you carry an EpiPen.

All visitors to the Apiary do so at their own risk. Visitors are requested to read this document.

Personal protection equipment (PPE)

Bee suits and veils

- Ensure that zips are done up and wrists and ankles are covered (cuffs & boots).
- Ensure that your bee suit is regularly laundered to minimise the transfer of bee diseases.

Members

On arrival, please get into your personal protective equipment and wear a red name badge.

If you are uncertain which hive/group to join for the session, please ask a person with a green badge.

Bees & teas

After the practical session there will be the opportunity to have tea and squash from the Rural Life Centre cafeteria. This gives opportunity for general discussion, asking advice and to update all on the progress of each hive.

Gloves

- Gloves must be new or washed before use and washed thoroughly in washing soda after each visit.
- If you are at risk from severe adverse reaction to bee stings, you may need to bring thicker gloves e.g. Marigolds.
- Do not bring leather gloves into the Apiary as they cannot be effectively sterilised.

Apiary designated personnel

Apiary meeting host

- Ensures all new members and visitors receive a copy of the Apiary Procedures, Management and Rules.
- Ensures all visitors are appropriately dressed before entering the hive area.
- 'Pairs' visitors with more experienced beekeepers.
- Ensures one member is in charge of each hive (Inspection Leader).
- Maintains a record of any children or vulnerable people present and ensures they are correctly supervised.

Inspection leaders

- Ensures the PPE of members of the group is secure.
- Supervises and advises on the conduct of practical work.
- Ensures safety of members and visitors in the vicinity of the hive.
- Ensures hive record is updated.
- Ensures vicinity of hive and walkways are clean and tidy.
- Ensures that no equipment is left after the inspection.

Apiary equipment – preparation, use, cleaning and tidying

Smoker

- Prepare a fire bucket, containing water, ahead of smoker lighting.
- Light the smokers away from the hives.
- Only use a match or a cigarette lighter, not a gas blow torch.
- Do not wear a veil when lighting the smoker - veils are easily damaged by heat/flames.
- If you are uncertain about the lighting technique, please ask a more experienced member.
- If you are unsure about the use of a smoker please ask the Inspection Leader.

Washing Soda

- Prepare buckets of washing soda to clean hive tools during and after use.
- The FERA recommended mixture is 1 part washing soda to 5 parts water.

Hive inspection kit

- A tool box is provided for each group.
- Only use FBKA tools – to prevent the spread of disease.
- Clean tools with washing soda after each session.
- Return kit boxes and tools to the shed.

Health and safety

General

- Individuals are responsible for their own safety and care must be taken at all times.
- In the event of someone having a severe and uncontrollable reaction by a hive, immediately close it down, warn other people around and retire to safety to allow more experienced beekeepers to deal with the situation.
- If in any doubt seek urgent advice.

Slips, trips and bumps

- The Apiary is uneven in places, with raised manholes, tree roots and holes caused by foraging wildlife.
- Some trees have low boughs.
- Take care when walking in the Apiary, particularly when carrying equipment.

First Aid Kit

- A limited first aid kit is located inside the shed on the shelves to the left of the door.
- The Accident Book is in the hut and must be completed for accidents that require either medical assistance by either a qualified medical person or at hospital.

Hive equipment

- Hive components should not be removed from the shed or returned without reference to the Inspection Leader.
- Cleaning equipment prior to storage is an essential function of beekeeping.
- Members are expected to assist in carrying this out prior to equipment being returned to the shed.

Water spray

- Use a fine spray. Do not soak the bees!
- Can help keep the bees on a comb where smoke would drive them away.
- On hot days, after marking a queen, it may help to spray the bees with water to mask the smell of paint (and beekeeper!).
- Water spray may help persuade bees clustered on the front of a hive to move inside when wanting to shut them in before moving.

Solar wax melter

- Any wax removed during an inspection should be put in the melter or stored as directed by the Inspection Leader. See Note 5 under Rules section below.

Fire

- If it is safe to do so, use the metal bucket (or any appropriate container) to douse the fire with water from the tap.
- If it is not safe to do so, retire to the Car Park, alert the emergency services & the Rural Life Centre. Check the shed is empty.

Lifting

- Heavy lifting should be carried out by two people.
- Use stands to avoid bending to ground level with heavy equipment.

Lone working

- Members should not work alone in the Apiary. If this is unavoidable, please ensure that you take all of the appropriate safety precautions.

PPE

- Personal protective equipment should not be the first line of protection.
- Keeping good strains of bees and using proper handling are our first priorities.

Rules

- 1 Follow Rural Life Centre rules**

The FBKA is a guest of the Rural Life Centre. FBKA Members and visitors are required to abide by the RLC rules and regulations.
- 2 Keep people safe**

Check whether there are neighbours by the gaps in the next-door garden before commencing examination.

If operating in front of the netting, e.g. collecting a swarm, anyone looking over the hedge from the car park must be warned and asked to move to a safe distance.
- 3 Park in designated areas**

Members are required to follow the RLC rule that there should be no driving and parking on grassed areas that are taped or otherwise marked off.
- 4 Over 10s only**

Children under 10 years of age may not come into the Apiary.

Children 10 and over must be supervised at all times by a responsible adult. A parent or guardian should always be present.

There should be no 'one to one' working with children or vulnerable people.
- 5 Tidy and dispose of wax & frames**

Wax: To prevent the spread of disease and discourage vermin, never drop wax in the Apiary. Place in the melter or store in sealed container. All wax put through the melter belongs to the Apiary.

Frames: Old frames and foundation removed from the hives and not required must be put either straight into the solar extractor or into storage containers that are sealed & ready to go into the solar extractor. Old frames to be placed in clearly marked sealed green bag. Both are to be stored in the outside storage unit.
- 6 Release colonies to responsible beekeepers**

The Apiary Committee reserves the right to refuse to release a colony of bees to anyone if they have reason to believe they may not be managed responsibly.
- 7 Do not keep personal bees at Apiary**
- 8 Wear personal protection**

Everyone who comes into the Apiary hive area must be fully protected in a clean bee suit.
- 9 Work calmly – no 'bees in the air'**

Beekeeping should be kept as calm as possible; e.g. bees should be cleared from full supers with clearer boards, not shaken unless it is essential and safe to do so.

From clearer board, the supers should be removed next day.
- 10 Use standard inspection instructions**

Follow the standard inspection guidelines provided.

No hives to be opened unless an Inspection Leader is present and is aware that the hive will be opened.

Hives should be approached from the rear. Do not stand or walk in front of the hive entrance.
- 11 Clean used equipment on the day**

All equipment must be cleaned immediately, before being returned to the shed.

If it is not able to be cleaned due to weather or time constraints then it must be put in a secure place with the agreement of the Apiary Meeting Host.
- 12 Use smokers safely**

No naked flames inside the shed. Smokers must be lit outside.

Prepare a fire bucket, containing water, ahead of smoker lighting.

Only use a match or a cigarette lighter, not a gas blow torch. Do not wear a veil when lighting.

After use, extinguish the smoker by emptying the contents into the metal bucket filled with water.

The wet embers can then be disposed of. When the smoker has cooled, please place it back in the shed. Please be aware of fire risk.
- 13 Bad bees? Close up the hive**

If bees are bad tempered, close the hive immediately and consult the Apiary Meeting Host.
- 14 Nothing in, nothing out**

Nothing is to **be removed or borrowed** from the Apiary and no bee-related items, e.g. hive, combs, bees, tools and smokers, should be brought onto the site without prior permission.