

Bushy Park Allotments – Advice Note 9

BEES

We are fortunate to have established bee-keepers at the allotments. They are members of the Twickenham and Thames Valley Bee-keepers' Association.

Both honey bees and bumble bees are common at the allotments. Together they are one of the main pollinators for our plants and their presence is essential for the success of many of our crops. Other insects also help in pollination, particularly hover flies and some other fly species.



Bee swarm

Safety

The bee hives are installed behind fence or plant barriers to ensure that the bee's flight path is above head height as they leave and return to the hive.

- **Do not approach the hives and make sure that children and dogs do not stray near them, both are naturally inquisitive!**

Stinging often occurs when people wave their arms or make sudden movements so if bees are around you move slowly and avoid them, moving away from the area usually works.

Swarms

Bees swarm as a normal part of their life and are unlikely to be aggressive if left undisturbed. After a while they will settle down and cluster around their mother, the Queen Bee. If there are many bees flying around and/or collecting near your plot then quietly avoid them.

- **Leave the bees alone. Don't disturb them.**

The Twickenham and Thames Valley Bee-keepers Association operates a Swarm Collection service to the local community, to put you in touch with a local beekeeper who may be able to remove the swarm safely. Should your "bees" turn out not to be honey bees, they may not be able to help further. Please therefore be able to confirm that they are honey bees before contacting the following: -

- **Graham Copland-Cale on 07582 552 917 or e-mail 2012 swarm co-ordinator --please put "SWARM" on the subject line.**
- **Don't try to deal with the bees yourself. Wait for the Beekeeper. Listen to what he, or she, has to say.**

Please remember that many bee-keepers also have full time jobs and families and so may be unable to come to you straight away.

Bee Stings

In the unlikely event of a bee sting, scrape out the sting straight away to minimise any effects.

Some people are allergic to bee stings. If you are aware of an allergy please take relevant medical advice and precautions.

BPAA Committee – 23/12/13