

NORTH DORSET BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Policy No. 5

Health and Safety Policy

Introduction

The North Dorset Beekeepers' Association (NDBKA) is a registered charity. The Association has no paid employees and the events and apiary are run totally by volunteers.

The Management Committee of NDBKA is committed to ensuring that its activities are safe and it will do whatever it can to provide for the health, safety and welfare of all volunteers, members and visitors, and to ensuring that risks to volunteers, members and visitors are minimised at all times. It has overall responsibility for health and safety through this Association Policy but it recognises that it is the duty of all members to help uphold the Policy and maintain a duty of care to prevent harm to themselves and others. A member of the Management Committee will be appointed as Health and Safety Officer (HSO).

This policy does not apply to the action of members whilst practising their beekeeping as independent individuals in a range of settings including their own apiaries or whilst selling honey to the public.

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Management Committee.

Managing Risk

At each event organised or attended by NDBKA the representative on site who is responsible, on behalf of the association, for the supervision of the event shall be responsible for Health and Safety during the event.

The supervisor shall be responsible for :

- Carrying out a Risk Assessment if an event or location is being used for the first time and assessing the risk to the health and safety of volunteers, members and visitors.
- If an event is taking place in the Association's apiary or where there will be live bees:
 - Ensuring that clear instructions are given to all attendees in advance as to the type and suitability of the clothing that they are responsible for supplying - for example, bee suits, gloves, footwear.
 - Send advice to attendees in advance of the course about the potential risks from an allergic reaction to bee stings and the possibility of anaphylaxis. Request that any attendee advise the supervisor of any known allergic reaction to bee stings and whether, for whatever reason, they carry an auto-injector.
 - Require all attendees who are prescribed auto-injectors to carry it with them at all times and on arrival inform the supervisor exactly where the medication is and who (if anyone) has their permission to administer it.
 - Checking the suitability of all attendees protection before entering the apiary area. Any attendee not in approved safety clothing shall be refused entry.
 - Ensuring that all equipment (apiary and safety equipment) is safe and well maintained.
 - Providing a clear briefing to all attendees on site safety, particularly when opening hives, and safe working methods and procedures as applicable.
 - Establishing emergency procedures as required.

Reducing Risk

NDBKA is committed to the anticipation, identification and elimination of hazards, in order to reduce the risk of accidents or incidents associated with its activities. This will be achieved through the following actions:

NORTH DORSET BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Health and Safety Policy (ctd)

- Education and training programmes focussed on working safely with honeybees for volunteers working in the apiary or at events, people considering taking up beekeeping and refresher training for more experienced members.
- Demonstrations of best practice provided to all novices and members using the Association Apiary.
- Supervision of all Association apiary activities by a suitably qualified and experienced beekeeper
- Risk assessments for the teaching apiary and any events organised for members of the public.
- Compliance with statutory obligations to safeguard children and vulnerable adults – (see NDBKA Policy No 4 Safeguarding)
- Extraction, storage and bottling of honey in compliance with food safety regulations.

Some specific hazards in and around the apiary:

- Bee stings (swelling to eyes or throat particularly; anaphylaxis).
- Access to Apiary, in particular if access via public roads.
- Siting of Apiary.
- Manual handling (lifting heavy hive parts/equipment).
- Working at height or in unusual situations (collection of swarms).
- Working in public places, e.g. when taking swarms.
- Travel, including transport of live bees.
- Working alone in the apiary.
- Storage, use and disposal of chemicals (oxalic acid etc).
- Extracting and processing honey ensuring hygiene.
- Fire (such as when lighting, using or extinguishing a smoker).
- Other areas for consideration – disabilities: physical (sight loss, hearing loss, mobility issues, heart problems, diabetes, epilepsy etc.) or psychological mental health issue, dementia
- Members or visitors under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Contagious diseases and the need to obey current regulations.
- Safe use and storage of gas bottles (heating water and flaming equipment)

Apiary Induction

All members working in the Association Apiary must attend an induction session. This includes:

- Managing risk through the correct use of personal protection equipment
- Safe handling of bees
- Safe lifting of brood boxes and supers
- Lighting and extinguishing a smoker
- How to safely flame equipment using a gas torch
- First Aid treatment of stings and the local emergency procedures for more serious conditions such as anaphylactic shock
- The safe use of chemicals used in the treatment of bees (such as oxalic acid)

Notices and information

The following should be displayed in a prominent location within the Association Apiary:

- Key information related to the nearest hospital, contacting emergency services and the precise location of the Apiary (using What3Words location identifier) is on display in the apiary .

NORTH DORSET BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

Health and Safety Policy (ctd)

- Instructions for dealing with stings and anaphylaxis.

Members' personal responsibility for their own health

It is expected that a member attending any live bee activity organised by NDBKA should:

- Follow the NDBKA Health and Safety Policy and best practice as directed by the experienced beekeeper in charge. This includes: protective clothing, handling bees and equipment.
- Carry with them any medication for insect stings that have been prescribed to them (including an adrenaline auto-injector) and on arrival inform the organiser exactly where the medication is and who (if anyone) has their permission to administer it.
- Inform the organiser of any other relevant medical condition that might affect them during beekeeping.

Monitoring, reporting and review

Any accidents and relevant health issues at the Association apiaries will be brought to the attention of the event supervisor, recorded on an Accident Form and submitted to the HSO. A report by HSO will be made at each Management Committee meeting.

APPROVED BY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

15th July 2025

APPENDIX 1

NORTH DORSET BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION

An accident is an unplanned event that results in an injury or could have resulted in an injury or results in damage to equipment or property OR harm to the environment. Anyone can complete an accident/incident report form.

ACCIDENT REPORT FORM

A SEPERATE FORM SHOULD BE COMPLETED FOR EACH PERSON INVOLVED IN THE ACCIDENT

Details about the person who had the accident.

Name:

Address:

Member of NDBKA/Other (please delete as appropriate)

Telephone:

Email:

About the Accident:

Nature of Accident and details of injury (if applicable):

How the Accident took place, if known:

Was the injured party taken to hospital? Y/N

If Y, which hospital.

If N, was treatment required to be given injured party? Y/N

If Y, what treatment was given?

Date of Accident:

Time of Accident:

Where the Accident took place:

Details of the Person completing this Record:

Name:

Address:

Position:

Telephone:

Email:

Upon completion, this form should be submitted to the NDBKA Health & Safety Officer

For internal use only – By NDBKA H&SO

Accident/Incident investigated?

Was a safe procedure used?

Was a Risk Assessment for this activity conducted / recorded?

Was any required Personal Protective Equipment available for use and used?

Had conditions changed to make the normal procedure unsafe?

Further action to be taken?