



Andover Town Council

Item No.

To **review** a beekeeping request, **decide** on action to be taken and **instruct** Officers how to proceed.

Produced for: Allotments Committee

By: Cllr Reynolds/Allotment Officer

Date of Report: 21st September 2025

Background:

Bee hives have been present on the Drove Allotment Site for several years, located in the corner of the car park. The current keeper describes them as natural hives, left largely unmanaged, which unfortunately results in frequent losses—likely due to cold weather.

There have been ongoing discussions between the keeper and ATC regarding the bees and the condition of the hives, with some gradual improvements over time.

There are now a number of new bee keepers who have been trained and are looking for suitable sites to continue with the hobby.

There is one allotment at Barlow's Lane with a bee hive that complies with the relevant rules, and the plot is well maintained. **The plot holder has requested a transfer to The Drove site due to living nearby**
While there is a waiting list for The Drove, this request raises the question of whether this should be considered a valid reason for prioritisation.

The Drove has a tenant who is qualified to keep bees and wishes to keep bees on his plot. The area is well secluded, surrounded with fruit trees and is an ideal site for the inclusion of a bee hive.

These requests are relevant as nature needs a helping hand at the best of times, even more so with change in climate, use of pesticides and human behaviour.

A wasp nest if discovered is destroyed without knowing the consequences to nature, however, wasps are a natural predator but can be a problem when they pitch up in inconvenient places and harmful to residents.

Should this Committee decide to encourage more bees onto allotments on a size related system to help and protect the environment?

The Drove, Barlow's Lane, Vigo Road and Old Winton Road are large sites and could easily accommodate more than one hive as Ox Drove for example would have to be managed but could still allow more than one if sited correctly.

Should ATC consider this proposal, I would stress that any new hives would have to have separate owners so that one "natural" keeper is not allowed to increase with other hives around the Allotments.

I personally do not have a problem with the proposed suggestion and it will have to be managed to keep numbers in proportion to the site in question. Keep saying no against being more realistic and bringing up to date and helping the environment can only be a good thing. The Drove Allotment Committee are in favour.

Ted Reynolds. Deputy Chair of ATC Allotment Committee.

Email request received from Tenant at the Drove to Officers:

I would like to apply for permission to keep bees on my allotment plot 73B at Drove site.

Me and my husband are members of Andover Bee Association and we went to beekeeping course 4 years ago. We keep bees at other location but we would like to have a one hive on our allotment plot to help with pollination and we would look after it professionally and we would make sure the hive will be positioned appropriately and not cause any problems.

Thank you. I will look forward for your response.

Clarification:

- There is already an agreed bee hive at The Drove
- There has been a request to approve a further bee hive at The Drove by a current tenant at the Drove.
- There is also a beekeeper at Barlows Lane, who had previously requested a plot and permission to have a beehive at The Drove, which was denied at the time, under the current Beekeeping Policy.

This Committee is being asked to consider allowing more than one beehive per allotment site (allotment site size allowing), to help and promote healthy and thriving sites and environment. Officers will need to take advice from experts to ensure Health and Safety concerns are met if this is agreed.

Current beekeeping policy:

“ 3. Siting of Hives

On Council owned allotment sites hives can 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.”

Consideration:

To **review** a beekeeping request, **decide** on action to be taken and **instruct** Officers how to proceed.