

Medway Beekeepers' Association

Swarm Liaison.

NEW GUIDELINES. PLEASE READ CAREFULLY.

Objective:

As Medway Council has pulled out of the arrangement that worked well for many years, MBKA Committee wishes to introduce a new system to deal with and remove honey bee swarms in the Medway area, this does not include building work and is carried out on a voluntary basis with no obligation.

This is a voluntary service by MBKA members, and we get no funding for carrying out this community activity. We are volunteers not employees or contractors. The only recompense that we can request is expenses to cover travelling costs etc. PLEASE make this clear to all callers.

Website, Phone Number, Member:

1. The Member's role is to record the information given by the callers and to either, deal with the call themselves or to pass it on to somebody nearer the location of the problem.
2. Your phone should be switched on during daylight hours Monday to Friday and at the weekend. However if you are doing something else that needs your phone being switched off, then the callers will have to try somebody else.
3. Take the callers details and then contact the person and ask for clarification but mainly to establish the contact information is accurate. It must concern Honey Bees, other requests may be dealt with over the phone. Make it very plain, that we are **VOLUNTEERS** and do not get paid for doing this community work.
4. You are not expected to respond to all calls in person, allot the work to the nearest beekeeper on the list. Request the member to report back to you, and log the results (just so that we can establish a record of how many calls we are getting during the season).

If the swarm cannot be collected advise the person, that a destruction order is the only way of dealing with the bees. Suggest that the person contacts a local pest control firm. The pest control contractor will organise a destruction date with the householder and advise about costs. Most Pest Control Firms will only destroy bees when a beekeeper has told them (you may have to contact them as well) that it is impossible to collect the swarm.

Member collecting the Swarm: (Must be a FULL MEMBER of the MBKA so that they are covered by insurance).

1. On receipt of the phone call the member will contact the person and arrange for a time to visit. Please keep suitable swarm collecting equipment to hand. If you need help, enlist another member. Keep spectators away and follow the BBKA guidelines.
2. Only safe methods of swarm collection should be used. Do not use tall ladders or climb trees. For high swarms use a swarm catcher. Take the swarm in a swarm box, nucleus or hive depending on the circumstances. Leave everything in situ until nightfall, then secure the box and remove it to an apiary. In this way there is no danger of leaving any flying bees.
3. Do not place yourself in danger from local hooligans, traffic, electricity cables etc – if you cannot collect the swarm. If you need help to keep the public away from the area or in closing the road, ask the for help from the council's Community Wardens to do this.

Do NOT put yourself in physical or financial danger as this will also involve the Association. You have the right to refuse to collect a swarm!

**Please follow these guidelines so as to avoid possible litigation
against both you or the Association.**