



## **East Dorset Beekeeping Association (EDBKA) Environmental Policy version 26 August 2025**

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### **Introduction**

At the East Dorset Beekeeping Association (EDBKA), we recognise that bees and the wider natural environment are inseparable. As custodians of honeybees, we have a duty not only to care for our colonies but also to protect and enhance the habitats that sustain them. Our apiary at West Moors, sits within a landscape of woodland, farmland, and heath, reminding us daily that our activities have both local and global consequences.

This Environmental Policy sets out our commitment to minimising our environmental footprint and promoting sustainable practices across all areas of our association. It reflects the guidance of the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) and aligns with the values of the wider beekeeping community. We want to lead by example, fostering a culture of respect for nature, education, and stewardship.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure that the EDBKA operates in ways that conserve and enhance the natural environment.
- Encourage members to adopt sustainable and responsible practices in their beekeeping and daily lives.
- Support the BBKA's aim to protect pollinators and raise awareness of the vital role bees play in ecosystems.
- Inspire future generations to take up beekeeping with an environmental conscience.

### **Education and Awareness**

Education lies at the heart of our mission. By sharing knowledge, we aim to create a ripple effect of positive change. To achieve this:

- We provide training courses and mentoring that highlight the link between honey bee health and wider biodiversity.
- We encourage members to plant forage-rich flowers, trees, and hedgerows that benefit all pollinators, not just honey bees.
- Through talks, open days, and newsletters, we raise awareness of environmental challenges such as climate change, pesticide use, and habitat loss.

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- We support local schools and community groups with resources and visits, showing how small actions can create big environmental benefits.

## **Recycling and Resource Efficiency**

We strive to reduce waste and encourage members to follow the principle of “reduce, reuse, recycle.” This includes:

- Using recyclable or biodegradable materials wherever possible, such as glass jars for honey and paper-based packaging.
- Encouraging the repair and reuse of beekeeping equipment to reduce unnecessary consumption.
- Composting green waste from our apiary and minimising single-use plastics at meetings and events.
- Collecting and recycling wax cappings, turning them into new foundation sheets or products rather than discarding them.
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## **Sustainability in Beekeeping Practice**

As an association, we are mindful that how we keep bees matters for the environment:

- We promote responsible colony management, ensuring that honeybees thrive without unnecessary intervention or over-reliance on chemical treatments.
- We support natural, localised beekeeping practices and encourage sourcing nucs, queens, and equipment from ethical, sustainable suppliers.
- We believe breeding our own queens to keep strong genetics as good practice.
- We discourage intensive practices that may compromise bee welfare or place strain on local forage resources.
- We monitor and adapt our apiary practices to minimise disturbance to wildlife and to work in harmony with the surrounding farm and community.

## **Energy and Carbon Footprint**

We aim to reduce energy use and limit greenhouse gas emissions:

- Meetings and training sessions make use of shared transport where possible, with members encouraged to carpool or cycle if local.
- We seek digital solutions to reduce paper use, such as sharing documents electronically or through ER2.
- We continue to review our apiary and association operations for ways to minimise energy use and lower our carbon footprint.

## **Community and Partnerships**

Our association values collaboration. We believe that working together can amplify our environmental impact:

- We maintain close links with our farming landowners and support their ethos of sustainability and community farming.
- We engage with local councils, schools, libraries and conservation groups to promote pollinator-friendly practices in Dorset.

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- We encourage members to advocate for pollinator-friendly policies in their own communities, such as reduced pesticide use and wildflower planting.

## **Continuous Improvement**

We recognise that caring for the environment is a journey, not a one-off action. Therefore, we will:

- Regularly review and update this policy in line with BBKA guidance and evolving environmental best practice.
- Set achievable annual goals for improving our environmental performance.
- Welcome feedback from members and the wider community to help us grow in our commitment.

## **The last word**

Our bees remind us daily of the delicate balance of nature. Every flower they visit, every drop of nectar they gather, and every colony they sustain is a symbol of resilience and cooperation. As beekeepers, we share in that responsibility.

Through this Environmental Policy, the East Dorset Beekeeping Association pledges to act thoughtfully, teach with purpose, and lead by example. Together, with our members and community, we can nurture an environment where bees, wildlife, and people thrive side by side.

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