



National Bee Unit

Bee Safaris

April 2023

What is a Bee Safari?

A bee safari is where associations, or groups of beekeeping friends arrange a day of colony inspections in a number of apiaries with a Bee Inspector.

What is expected of the association?

The association arranges a schedule of volunteer apiaries to maximise the number within the chosen area and time span of the event. A member or members of the association gives the Bee Inspector the schedule in advance to allow them to find the apiaries. A break for lunch should be included, especially if more than one team is involved so that everyone can meet up and discuss the learning so far.

Ensure that the group members all wear freshly laundered bee suits, sensible footwear e.g. wellington boots, maintain apiary hygiene and limit transfer of disease and disorders from one site to the next. Provision of disposable gloves is recommended for those attending. Please refer to the [Apiary Hygiene and Quarantine Fact sheet](#) for guidance.

What time should I allow in the schedule?

Each colony inspection of a standard hive with a commentary takes about fifteen to thirty minutes. On top of that it is necessary to add the travelling time between apiaries and necessary stops for comfort breaks. Generally not all colonies in the apiary will be looked at.

What will the Bee Inspectors do?

Bee Inspectors will examine colonies for signs of brood disease and *Varroa*. He/she will show those present how to examine colonies with this in mind. They will also make general observations about the colonies and type of equipment used. They will not criticise the beekeeper but may make suggestions on how to help improve their bee management

skills. A Bee safari is an educational experience and allows beekeepers to share best practice.

What happens if foulbrood disease is found?

The Bee Inspector will take a sample while talking through the procedures to be followed. An arrangement will be made with the beekeeper to inspect all of the colonies in the apiary straight away or in the next few days if that is not possible. He/she will advise those present on the hygiene methods that they should use to prevent spreading of disease. He/she will ask those present to respect confidentiality unless the beekeeper wishes to be open about the disease outbreak. The safari will be halted and beekeepers asked to go home and clean their personal protective wear.

How much will it cost?

There is no charge for the Bee Inspector's services. Transport for beekeepers between apiaries must be organised with your association as inspectors aren't insured to carry members of the public.

National Bee Unit

APHA, Room 11G03, York Biotech Campus,
Sand Hutton, York YO41 1LZ

Telephone: 03003030094 email: nbu@apha.gov.uk

Web site: www.nationalbeeunit.com

April 2023

© Crown copyright 2023

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence v.3. To view this licence visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3/ or email PSI@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk