

# Bees



## Knowsley Council Pest Control Service

### Bees

Bees are not classified as pests as they are essential for the pollination of many wildflowers, crops and vegetation - and honey bees for the production of honey.

Bee numbers are dropping nationally and the population of some species has fallen by 50%. As a result we will never undertake a treatment unless the bees pose a direct threat to humans.

### Signs to look for around your home

**Honey bees** have dark brown and black stripes. Honey bees swarm (usually in May or June) when groups of worker bees travel to form a new colony with a queen. The swarm may land on tree branches or fences in your garden before finding a permanent home. Honey bees are usually non aggressive when swarming and will only react if they believe the swarm is under threat. Knowsley Council is committed to saving swarms and re-homing them in safe locations. If you find a swarm contact us on **443 2400** for advice or visit The British Bee Keeper's Association website [www.bbka.org.uk](http://www.bbka.org.uk)

**Masonry and mining bees** nest in sand, earth, lawns and soft mortar. They are a non-aggressive, solitary bee - smaller than honey bees and fatter than wasps. They are no threat to humans as their sting cannot penetrate the skin. They lay their eggs (between March and June) in sandy soil or by making holes in the soft mortar of walls and seal the holes ready for new bees to emerge the following year.

Re-pointing or turning the soil once the eggs have hatched can prevent them laying more eggs.

**Bumble bees** are non aggressive and rarely sting. They are larger and more colourful than honey bees with rounded abdomens. Their nests last one summer and are usually covered in moss and built on the ground or under wood piles or sheds. They usually die off by the end of September. Nests should not be moved as they pose no threat to humans. For more advice visit [www.bumblebeeconservation.org.uk](http://www.bumblebeeconservation.org.uk)

### How to prevent bees

You can prevent bee infestations by:

- Repairing or filling gaps around pipes or cables entering the house and sealing gaps around doors and windows
- Re-pointing loose or missing mortar in brickwork
- Covering air vents or air bricks with fine zinc gauze, fixed securely

### Treating and controlling bees

Knowsley Council Pest Control Service does not treat bees, but we can provide reassurance and identify a bee infestation. We will charge if called out to visit your property - even if no treatment is made.

### For further help and guidance

For further information ring **0151 443 2400** or visit [www.knowsley.gov.uk/residents/bins-waste-and-environment/book-pest-control-appointment](http://www.knowsley.gov.uk/residents/bins-waste-and-environment/book-pest-control-appointment)

