

The Welsh **Beekeepers'** Association

The protection of children when undertaking training by a local Welsh **Beekeepers'** Association - Draft Guidance

1. Introduction

When individuals take roles within our associations we usually have a presumption of trust and confidence in them to acquit themselves with fairness, honesty and that they are doing it for the good of their community and beekeeping in general. Unfortunately experience in other fields has necessitated central government reappraising the legislation and guidance around the protection of children and vulnerable adults. They have also changed the organisation which provides support and guidance to the legislation on the safety of children. Associations in Wales have found the legislation and the guidance to it as it would apply to their activities rather difficult to interpret. The following is intended as simple guide to the requirements and any exemptions which may apply.

The current legislation which would cover the protection of children and vulnerable adults, while being trained by members of a local beekeeping association, would be the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006. The organisation which provides some of the guidance to the legislation and from whom you would seek information on who may be barred **from** "regulated activity" with children and under what circumstances is the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS).

2. Definitions

- a) A child is defined as someone under the age of 18.
- b) "Regulated Activity, in summary, as it would apply to the activities of a beekeeping association, would include:
 - i) Unsupervised activities of teaching, training, instruction, care or supervision of children or driving a vehicle only for children
 - ii) Work with or for a limited range of establishments with opportunity for contact with children e.g. schools, **youth clubs**, children's homes or childcare premises.

3. Application

Most of the activities involving our member associations would be covered by Para 2b)i) above, but we are aware that associations may work with schools in teaching children how to keep bees.

Under normal circumstances a person who undertakes unsupervised "regulated activities" with children would have undergone a DBS Criminal Record check which, **if failed, would** mean that they were barred **from** such activity.

4. Exemptions

There are approved exemptions to the above, which would apply to the requirements on beekeeping associations, which include:

- a) An activity is not a "regulated activity" in the meaning of the Act if it is carried out by the same person only once per week or less, or on 4 or less days in a 30 day period thus

beekeeping associations are not legally required to request a DBS check for their training officers and their assistants who train or instruct children provided:

- i) Training sessions are not undertaken by the same officer of the same children more than once per week or on less than 4 days in a 30 day period **or**
- ii) Unchecked training officers are supervised by someone who has successfully undergone a DBS check **or**
- iii) A parent of each of the children trained is present at each session **or**
- v) Where the training is undertaken formally on behalf of a school, it is the duty of the school to approve the trainers or provide approved supervision of the regulated activity

5. **Good Practice**

Children are the future of beekeeping and we should not use the complexity of legislation to bar us from teaching those who want to be taught the **craft**. It is better to learn from the experts rather than from a book but in a safe environment.

It is unfortunate that today we do need to "think the unthinkable" but in order to ensure protection for all Association members as well as the children or vulnerable adults, we may need to go beyond the basic legal requirements and develop codes of practice which suit our own associations and their activities.

In practice it may be necessary to have 4 or more trainers/ mentors when children are present. This would allow two to accompany a child who is injured or frightened and for a minimum of two to be left with the remainder of the class.

As an association you may wish to apply and pay for a criminal record check on at least one of your training officers, who would then act as supervisor although it is possible that due to volume of work the DBS may refuse to provide such a check if the exemptions noted would apply.