

23 January 2025

Abbots Walk (Reading Ltd)  
10 Abbots Walk  
Reading  
RG1 3HW

**Survey for the live removal of a honeybee colony from within a chimney at the property**

Dear Andrew,

**OVERVIEW**

You have confirmed that the building is Grade II listed, therefore before any works can be undertaken written consent must be gained for the proposed works from the local authority (LA). This will be undertaken by the Customer, in some cases the LA may require full planning permission, however this is not normally the case.

The survey was carried out on 25 April 2024, it was overcast, the temperature was 11 degrees centigrade, there were flying bees from the chimney.

The bees are within a chimney stack to the side of the property, adjacent to the abbey ruins, it has been established that the bees are in a redundant flue. Thermal imaging was undertaken during the survey; however, no imaging was achievable. I believe this is due to the construction of the stack; the brickwork is almost certainly double skinned (nine inches thick) therefore the heat signature of the bees has not transferred through the brickwork.

**PROPOSAL**

It would be my recommendation to carry out a cut-out, the live removal of the bees for the following reasons:

It is not illegal to kill honeybees, however bees are deemed as livestock as cattle and sheep are, there are however requirements that must be met if you consider killing them, all entry points MUST be sealed up to prevent access to scout bees and robbing bees that could enter the colony and take the insecticide back to their respective colonies therefore killing further bees and potentially contaminating honey which may enter the food chain.

This colony could be killed, and the entry points could be sealed up, however due to the size of the colony and the possibility of a large amount of stores (honey) it would undoubtedly cause further problems further down the line. The dead bees, honey and decaying brood will start to decompose, this will attract further pest species and will no doubt provide an unpleasant smell within the property and more importantly the potential of stored honey seeping down the flue into the room below, in addition to this the comb will still be in situ and should scout bees find another way in, there will always be the potential of a new swarm taking up residence.

The owner of the flat, which has the bees in has had to seal up the air vent of the redundant flue within his home due to the noise the bees are making. Also, chimneys need to breathe, even if they won't be used anymore. Most problems with chimneys are related to moisture, and that's the issue as regards to ventilation. If there is no air flow in the chimney, moisture gets trapped, and deterioration of the chimney structure will be accelerated. With the air vent closed off at the bottom and the bees preventing adequate ventilation at the top of the stack it could lead to further problems if not addressed. In addition to the above, the owner of the said flat would potentially have difficulties in selling his home should he wish to do so with the bees in residence.

This quotation covers the scaffolding to enable the safe removal of the bees at height (See Note 1 below), the live removal of the honeybees and the comb, the reinstatement of the chimney once the removal has been completed and the set-up and after care of the bees in a quarantine apiary in Old Alresford, Hampshire, the removal of all waste attributed to the bees and the sterilisation of all equipment used to prevent the transfer of disease to other colonies of bees.

In addition to this the area from which the bees have been removed will be sprayed with a strong detergent to mask the pheromones produced by the bees.

To gain access to the bees, windows of brickwork on the stack will be removed, not exceeding two bricks wide by four courses high to allow their safe removal. At least six courses of brickwork will be retained vertically between windows to ensure the structural integrity of the stack. In addition to this the flaunching at the top of the stack will need to be removed to allow the removal of the pot, it may also be necessary to take the stack down from the flaunching, this would be undertaken brick by brick (only on the flue with the bees in), should we need to undertake works outside of the agreed method, works will stop, and we will take appropriate advice.

C-cap's will be fitted to all redundant flues on this stack, these have an insect mesh to prevent further bee ingress whilst maintaining airflow to the flue.

All building waste from the cut-out will be removed and dealt with via the appropriate waste streams.

We would require access to a power supply and water for the duration of the works.

Note 1: The scaffolding will be erected on land not in the ownership of Abbots Walk (Reading Ltd), the Customer will be required to gain written consent for the erecting the scaffolding within the grounds of the ruined abbey, in addition to this we must consider the safety of the public and those who may be affected by our works. Therefore, we should also look at the possibilities of closing the footpath whilst the bee removal is undertaken as there will be thousands of flying bees and there is the potential of persons being stung. I also believe there is an adjacent nursery with an outdoor play area, we would need to make them aware of the works with clear guidance to keep the children indoors throughout the removal.

## **TIMING OF WORK**

As we move through autumn into winter the daytime temperatures drop, bee removals are still possible however they should be avoided, bees generally do not fly below 10 degrees centigrade, they cluster up around the brood (baby bees) to maintain the temperature at approximately 35 degrees centigrade, ensuring the welfare of the colony.

The colder the weather becomes the less likely the bees will survive the removal from their current position, in addition to this should the queen not survive the removal the chances of the workers producing a new queen is almost impossible due to their being no drones to mate with should a virgin queen be raised, the colony would collapse and not survive.

I would suggest that the bees are removed in March/April of 2025.

## **LEGAL AND HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

As previously stated, honeybees are not a protected species, however when we look to remove them from buildings and places of inconvenience, we must consider the legislation that requires us to keep ourselves safe and those affected by our works.

This will include but is not limited to:

Health and Safety Act 1974

The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

The Work at Height Regulations 2005

The Food and Environment Protection Act 1985

The Building Regulations 2010

The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012

## ASBESTOS

Asbestos can be found in many materials in our homes and businesses, Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM's) are found in many forms and cannot be visually detected, therefore testing is a must. Any building built or refurbished before the year 2000 may contain ACM's unless there is strong evidence to indicate otherwise, this would be in the form of an asbestos survey and subsequent register. The HSE has reported that in the UK, around 5,000 people die each year from asbestos related diseases and is still the biggest cause of work-related deaths in the country.

Should we find anything that appears to resemble an ACM during the removal, works will stop until it has been confirmed by testing that it is safe to proceed.

Should there be a requirement to stop work due to a Health and Safety consideration, for example a requirement for an asbestos survey or concerns for the structural integrity of the property, any additional costs will be discussed with the Customer before proceeding.

**Cost £8660.00 plus VAT**

Please note that the findings of this survey and any supporting documentation i.e. thermal imaging should not be shared with any competitor to 'The Hampshire Bee Company Ltd' who may also be providing a comparative quotation.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

This quotation is valid for 30 days from the date above.

Yours sincerely



Mr Daren George  
Director