



## Bees in the Orchard! *Thanks to Ian Bark for this report*

"Just after I arrived home ready for a cup of tea and a spot of lunch, my phone rang to inform me that the bees in the Community Orchard had swarmed. So I gathered my bee swarm catching gear and set off for the orchard.

On arrival, I asked several people who were sitting in the orchard where the swarm was and was met with a combination of blank expressions and a look of terror. I quickly located the swarm on the cordon apple trees which meant it was reasonably accessible. Tucked up safely in my bee suit and with my gloves on, I coaxed the swarm into the box I had placed below them and waited to see if the remainder would join the main body. Success! I must have managed to get the queen bee into the box and those remaining in the tree gradually made their way there too. Later that evening, I returned to find all except 6 bees in the box, so I closed it up and sealed it ready to transfer them to their new home the next day.

Sunday was a pretty damp day and the weather forecast was for a respite from the rain and some sun in the late afternoon. Before I could re-home the swarm, I had to clean their new home. The hive had failed over the winter and the old comb needed to be removed and the whole thing gone over with a blowtorch to kill any remaining pathogens. Once that was completed I was able, with the help of my sister in law Jane, to shake the swarm from the box into the hive and tuck them up safely in their new home."