

BARNSTAPLE TOWN COUNCIL

CONDITIONS OF GUIDELINES APPLICABLE TO THE KEEPING OF POULTRY ON ALLOTMENT SITES.

GENERAL

The term 'poultry' includes hens and chickens. The most important factor is the welfare of the animals themselves. In meeting the basic physiological and behavioural needs the following must be provided:

- Comfort and Shelter
- Readily accessible fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour
- freedom of movement
- the opportunity to exercise normal behavioural patterns
- light during the hours of daylight and a means of inspecting the birds at any other time
- the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of lice, injury, parasitic infection and disease
- emergency arrangements in the event of fire, flood, electrical failure

ALLOTMENT SITES

The following conditions apply:

1. THE PLOT HOLDER

This person will be experienced or knowledgeable in the overall keeping and management of poultry, particularly in respect of recognising distress or disease and taking appropriate remedial action. The plot holder will have obtained a copy of the Code of Recommendation for the Welfare of Domestic Fowls from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA).

2. ACCOMMODATION

This should provide proper shelter from the elements and, as appropriate, a means of exercise which may be extended by the provision of wire fenced runs. A means of access to the

shelter must be available to the poultry at all times, except where cleaning and disinfection etc is being carried out. Any shelter should permit the stockperson to stand and inspect the birds therein. The accommodation will require cleansing and disinfection and all litter etc needs to be composted in the communal composting area located on site. Nest boxes, roosting areas and perches must be properly located. Floors shall be provided of wooded construction. All exercise runs shall be escape and predator proof.

3. VENTILATION

Sufficient fresh air should be provided by means of doors or other apertures. Birds should be protected from draughts and it is recommended that the accommodation/shelter entry points due south. During hot weather, particularly warm humid conditions, all birds must have access to an exercise area. In certain cases shading may be required.

4. LIGHTING

A means of artificial lighting must be provided, which is adequate to inspect all birds on the site. Poultry must have access to a minimum of 8 hours daylight during the day.

5. FEEDING AND WATERING.

Water must be available at all times and all equipment kept clean and in good order. Feed should be kept in vermin proof containers. Any diet must be properly balanced for the type of bird and given in sufficient amounts to ensure the proper well being of the animals. The risk of drinking water freezing during water months must be considered.

6. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

Plans for dealing with the fire should be made. All inflammable materials i.e. straw, waste litter and empty bags, must be stored well away from poultry accommodation and exercise areas. A means of controlling any small fire should be available and the plot holder's emergency telephone number and

contact address should be held by the Town Council (landowner).

7. FREQUENCY OF INSPECTION

All birds must be inspected at least twice daily. The plot holder must allow the Town Council officers to inspect the poultry at any time.

8. DISEASE CONTROL

Any sick or injured birds must be removed immediately and treatment provided. The name and address of the Veterinary Surgeon must be known to the site Manager. The cause of any disease or injury will be identified and remedial action taken. Any national disease prevention and/or control programmes must be adhered to. Dead birds must be disposed of in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Animal By-Products Regulations 2003.

Avian Influenza (AI) is a disease of birds information regarding this disease can be obtained from the Defra website <http://www.defra.gov.uk/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/ai/index.htm>.

If you suspect that your birds have avian influenza you must report it to the Town Council immediately and contact your local Animal Health Officer whose details can be found on the Defra website.

9. CLEANSING AND DISINFECTION

The accommodation and associated equipment should be regularly cleaned and disinfected. It is advisable to destock sites and allow a minimum 7 days rest period. Only good quality litter originating from premises where poultry are not kept should be used.

10. TRANSPORT

Any container used to transport poultry should be clean, in good repair and of a type suitable for the type of bird to be moved. All birds must be handled with due care. The Welfare

of Animals (Transport) Order 1997 (as amended) lays down provisions with regard to the loading, transport and unloading of poultry.

11. SLAUGHTER

Poultry should not be kept for the purpose of supplying persons other than the tenant and his/her immediate household. The Welfare of Animals (Slaughter or Killing) Regulations 1995 (as amended) details the procedures to be followed when poultry are slaughtered. The Protection of Animal Act 1911 also requires that no animal shall be caused unnecessary suffering.

12. IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

Where it is deemed necessary, in the interest of the welfare of any bird kept, to effect improvements to the accommodation or overall management of a site, Notice will be served accordingly. In certain circumstances immediate rectification may be directed.

13. OTHER GENERAL POINTS

Land on which birds are kept may become 'fowl-sick'. The time this may take will depend on stocking rates, soil type and drainage. Muddy conditions lead to ill health and discomfort.

In addition:

- Precautions to protect against foxes, cats, rodents and other predators must be taken
- No poultry may be kept for the purpose of fighting
- No poultry may be kept within 50m of a dwelling
- No poultry shall be a nuisance to residents and others who seek enjoyment from the environment in which they live or work.