

CALVERTON PARISH COUNCIL

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR KEEPING HENS ON THE ALLOTMENT

This Code of Practice applies to the designated allotment holder (referred to as “you” throughout)

1. Risk Assessment

- 1.1 When registering your intention to keep hens on your Allotment you must complete a designated Risk Assessment (appendix A below) and obtain Council approval that your proposed risk management measures are adequate before erecting structures or placing hens on your allotment.
- 1.2 You will be liable to repay any costs incurred by the Council in addressing any failure on your part to adhere to the requirements of this Code of Practice.

2. Keeping Hens on Your Allotment

- 2.1 You must not keep any cockerels on the Allotment.
- 2.2 You may only keep sufficient hens on the Allotment for the purpose of providing eggs for personal consumption for yourself and your immediate family. The Council considers that a maximum of 6 hens will ordinarily meet this purpose. Should you wish to keep more than 6 hens you should apply to the Council stating your reasons why you feel a greater number is reasonable in the circumstances.
- 2.3 You are not allowed to keep hens on the Allotment for the purpose of carrying on any trade or business (whether by providing eggs for sale, barter or distribution).
- 2.4 You must register your hens with the Council by notifying the Council in writing of the number of birds being kept on the Allotment.
- 2.5 You must comply with the provisions of the Animal Welfare Act 2006.
- 2.6 If you slaughter any hen for consumption this must be undertaken in line with current relevant legislation.
- 2.7 You must ensure that you have the necessary knowledge and skills to ensure the well-being of your hens.

3. Accommodation for your Hens

- 3.1 You must provide a fully enclosed Hen House to accommodate your hens. This must provide year round shelter from adverse weather and provide adequate shade and ventilation.

3.2 Your Hen House must provide:-

- 3.2.1 a minimum of 0.25 square metres (approximately 388 square inches) floor area for each hen,
- 3.2.2 a perch for each hen to stand on while they sleep (approximately 3cms to 5cms wide) with rounded edges to enable them to grip, and
- 3.2.3 a nesting box filled with wood shavings or other suitable material for each hen to lay eggs.

3.3 You must provide an Outdoor Run for your hens. This should be a fully enclosed outdoor caged exercise space that provides a minimum of 0.4 square metres (approximately 620 square inches) for each hen. There should be plenty of space for your hens to dig, dust themselves and flap their wings.

3.4 The total area of your allotment given over to keeping your hens must not exceed the lesser of 20% of your Allotment or 25 square metres.

3.5 You must ensure that your chicken coop is predator proof.

3.6 You must use appropriate and suitable materials in the construction of your Hen House and Outdoor Run.

3.7 You must maintain the Hen House and Outdoor Run in good state of repair and in a safe condition for your hens.

3.8 You must regularly check the Hen House and Outdoor Run to make sure they are secure.

4. Care for your Hens

4.1 You must provide dry clean bedding material for your hens to absorb moisture and odour (for example wood shavings or straw).

4.2 You must clean the Hen House and Outdoor Run at least once every week and put out fresh bedding.

4.3 You must ensure that your hens at all times have a continuous and plentiful supply of clean and fresh water. This must be provided in a container which your hens cannot step in or knock over. You must ensure you are able to comply with this requirement when any water supply to the Allotment site is turned off and in freezing conditions.

4.4 You must provide your hens with a regular supply of feed, appropriate to the age and species of hen and sufficient for their nutritional needs supplied to your hens from a suitable feeder (see section 6.2 below).

4.5 You must provide the hens with a regular supply of grit to aid digestion, sufficient for their needs.

4.6 You must not feed chickens with waste from your kitchen (including vegetable scraps). This is illegal.

4.7 You must ensure that your hens are checked at least once each day and must provide competent care and management of your hens at all times.

5. Health

5.1 You must ensure the welfare of your hens, including arranging for your hens to have all necessary treatments for their health and well-being.

5.2 You must ensure that all hens kept on the Allotment are appropriately vaccinated.

5.3 You must remove all sick or injured hens from the Allotment and seek veterinary treatment for them without delay.

5.4 Any dead carcasses must be removed immediately and disposed of in accordance with appropriate regulations. This will normally be via a veterinary service. Under no circumstances are carcasses to be disposed of on the Allotment site.

6. Avoiding Problems

6.1 You must store all feed so that it is kept clean, tidy and protected from pests. You must store all feed in vermin proof containers.

6.2 To minimise vermin problems, you must ensure that all feeders are sufficiently raised above the ground level and you must not scatter foodstuffs. To avoid creating vermin runs, you must avoid storing piles of materials on the Allotment such as stacked timber.

6.3 If you lay vermin traps, you must ensure that these are regularly checked and maintained and are of a recognised standard to avoid trapping any other animal or bird.

6.4 To minimise the potential for cross contamination, you must undertake regular personal and equipment washing / cleaning with appropriate products

6.5 You must take all reasonable measures necessary to avoid causing any nuisance arising from the keeping of your hens on the Allotment.

6.6 You must keep records on the health and welfare of hens. The Council may on occasion ask to see these records. The records should include the following:

- Date of introduction of new birds
- Date, purpose and outcome of vet visit
- Details of treatments applied
- Mortality – date and cause

Appendix A

RISK ASSESSMENT

The Allotment holder wishing to keep hens must complete an assessment of risks and how to deal with them in the designated format below.

Area of Risk	Proposed Risk Control Measure(s)
Protection against vermin	
Protection against foxes and cats	
Contact with wild birds	
Disposal of dead carcasses	
Arrangements in times of temporary absence by the prime hen keeper	

When Allotment water supply is turned off – access to drinking water and water for cleaning	
Feed storage and feeding arrangements	
Access to drinking water in freezing weather	
Escaped chickens	
Disease, illness, notifiable diseases	
Vandalism	

Disposal of hens and property when the Allotment holder no longer holds the Allotment	
Other risks (please specify)	

The risk assessment forms part of the permission process to keep hens on the Allotment.

Allotment Holder	
Allotment Site / Plot No.	
Date	
Signature	