

GUIDELINES FOR KEEPING HENS ON ALLOTMENTS.

INTRODUCTION

Allotment holders have a statutory right to keep Hens or Rabbits on allotments but not Cockerels under the Allotments Act 1950. For the purposes of the guidelines Ducks, Geese and other birds will not be permitted as part of this policy

The Tenant will be responsible for the removal of all arisings or waste from the allotment site.

The Tenant must make their own provision for water between October and March when water to site is turned off (tenants should not attempt to turn the water on).

Allotment Tenants are not permitted to profit from the sale of produce from the allotment as described by the statutory Allotment Act.

The purpose of these guidelines is to determine a common approach for the allotment community

REGISTRATION & INSPECTION

Allotment tenants are required to register livestock with the LA/Assoc.

Failure to register hens and to meet the minimum standards in these guidelines may result in the termination of an allotment tenancy. A requirement of registration will be that the Hens should be vaccinated.

If Tenants choose to keep Hens on their allotment they must check on them daily, provide competent care and management and have the knowledge and skills to ensure the well being of the Hens. In addition Tenants are expected to keep them under proper control to avoid disturbance to others.

Representatives of the LA/Assoc have the right to inspect the hens at any time. If the Council has cause to investigate complaints of maltreatment, costs of vets or other official inspections will be passed to the Tenant for payment.

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Number of Hens;

The maximum number of Hens permitted per allotment tenant should be 5 and the minimum number 2.

Hens need companionship and should be kept in groups of two or more up to a maximum of 5. The limit of 5 is set in accordance with our requirements for housing and containment of the Hens.

Housing :

In addition to effective containment, housing is also key in ensuring the welfare of the Hens and should allow expression of natural behaviours.

Henhouse – A fully enclosed henhouse 15 inches above the ground that provides a minimum size of 2 square feet (0.2m²) per Hen is required. The optimum permitted size will be 4 feet x 3 feet.

The fully enclosed henhouse should provide

Protection from predators,

A Clean, dry bedding material to absorb moisture and odour (suitable choices are wood shavings or straw),

Warmth during the colder months and shade during the summer,

Adequate ventilation but draught free,

Perches for sleeping, approximately 3-5cms wide with rounded corners to enable them to grip

Nest boxes for laying eggs

In line with the existing restrictions on Allotments the maximum permitted size of building structure on an allotment is 6ft x 8ft and only one structure is permitted per allotment plot.

An Outdoor Run – A fully enclosed caged run that provides a minimum size of 4 square feet (0.4m²) per Hen is required and it should provide the Hens with plenty of space to dig, dust themselves and flap their wings. The optimum size will be 6ft x 8ft.

The total area of the Henhouse and Run should not exceed more than 10% of the total allotment plot area although the maximum permitted size will be 10ft x 12ft.

Both the Henhouse and Outdoor Run should be regularly maintained to a good, tidy standard and free from obvious faults that may cause injury.

To minimise potential nuisance to neighbours the henhouse and Outdoor Run should be sited a minimum of 3 metres from adjacent boundaries abutting residential properties.

Hens must be locked up at dusk each evening and no release before 7 .00a.m.

Feed :

Hens should have continuous and plentiful access to

Cool, clean and fresh water

Provision of feed of a type appropriate to the age and species of Hen, fed in sufficient quantities, and sufficiently frequently, to maintain them in good health and satisfy their nutritional need.

Insoluble grit to aid digestion

Foodstuffs should be stored such that it is kept clean, tidy and properly protected

From rodents and other pests. It is not permitted for foodstuffs to be scattered and an animal control feeding station is advised as an example of good practice.

Green leaves should be hung up to provide fresh green food and exercise for hens . Any green stuff on the ground must be removed each evening.

Feed receptacles and fresh water must be closed within the henhouse when closing for the night.

Health

The Allotment Tenant will be held responsible for ensuring that their hens are free from distress, pain, injury and disease. Appropriate preventative and/or veterinary treatment should be available at all times. The Tenant should ensure that the Hens

are vaccinated prior to arrival or at 6 weeks old. The Hens will need regular worming (twice a year) and clipping of claw nails to maintain them in a good healthy condition. They should be checked regularly for lice and the houses treated for Red Mite.

Sanitation

In order to maintain healthy Hens and reduce odour problems, the henhouse and run should be cleaned a minimum of once a week or more frequently as necessary. Poultry kept on the same ground for more than a month will need regular worming.

Nuisance to Neighbours & Cleanliness

Provided the Hens are kept healthy and in clean conditions and food stuffs are stored such that it is kept clean, tidy and properly protected from rodents and other pests the keeping of Hens should not become a nuisance to others.

Allotment Tenants have a duty as part of the Allotment Tenancy Conditions not to cause a nuisance to others. In the keeping of Hens on an allotment plot Tenants should take all reasonable measures to minimise potential nuisances.

Breeding and Hens for Profit

Allotment Tenants are not permitted to breed Hens on the allotment site. Tenants are not permitted to profit from the sale of produce from the allotment as described by the statutory Allotment Act.