

# **RULES FOR KEEPING HENS/CHICKENS ON ALLOTMENTS**

## **INTERPRETATION OF TERMS:**

### **Section:**

Throughout these rules, the expression “the Council” means Hertford Town Council and includes any Committee of the Council. The Council will appoint such employees or others to carry out inspections or works at our sites as thought fit.

- 01 The Tenant of an Allotment Garden shall comply with the following conditions.
- 02 Strictly no cockerels. All birds must have internal housing and access to an external run.

### **Housing of hens/chickens - internal**

- 03 The minimum internal floor space per bird will be 4 sq ft, giving a floor area of 24sq ft. ie. A 4ft x 6ft shed will house 6 hens maximum and has a floor area of 24sq ft.

No permanent foundations shall be permitted.

Any shelter should permit a person to stand and inspect the birds therein. All poultry must be able to stand, turn around, stretch their wings, groom themselves and have sufficient space to perch or sit down without interference from other birds. Nest boxes, roosting area and perches should not be so high above floor level that birds have difficulty using them.

House conditions should at all times be adequate to provide sufficient fresh air by means of doors or other apertures. Birds should be protected from drafts in cold conditions and it is recommended that the accommodation entry points due south. During hot weather all birds must have outside access. In certain cases shading may be required.

Birds must have access to a minimum of 8 hours daylight during the day.

The accommodation must be kept clean and fresh bedding materials

supplied regularly. Cleansing and disinfection will be required and all litter etc. needs to be disposed of in secure containers or located well away from any shelter or run.

### **Housing of hens/chickens – external**

- 04 The minimum external floor space per bird will be 2sq ft giving a total floor area of 12sq ft.

Hens should have continuous daytime access to open air runs. These runs should be moved regularly to avoid 'fowl sick' or muddy conditions which could lead to ill health or discomfort of the birds.

Precaution should be taken to protect the birds from and avoid disturbances by foxes, rodents, other animals and vandals. Adequate wire fencing must be used and secured with good headroom.

### **Feeding and watering**

- 05 Birds must have access to food and water at all times. Feed should be kept in vermin proof containers. The risk of drinking water freezing during the winter months must be considered. All feeding equipment must be kept clean and in good order.

### **Health**

- 06 Birds kept under any system can be prone to stress, injury and disease if management and husbandry are not of a high standard.

All birds must be inspected at least twice daily. The tenant must allow the Council's Officer to inspect the poultry at any time.

Any sick or injured bird must be removed immediately and treatment provided. Any national disease prevention and/or control programmes must be adhered to. The name and address of the veterinary surgeon must be known to the allotment officer.

Dead birds must be disposed of in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Animal By-Products Regulations 2003.

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.

It will be the responsibility of the tenant to take measures to eradicate any increase in vermin on their plot as a result of keeping hens.

### **Transport**

- 07 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.

### **Fire**

- 08 Plans for dealing with fire should be made. All inflammable materials i.e. straw, waste litter and empty bags, must be stored well away from any poultry accommodation and exercise areas. A means of controlling any small fire should be available ( a container of water should be kept nearby for extinguishing purposes). In the event of damaged housing alternative accommodation must be made available.

The time of year around fireworks night will necessitate extra caution.

### **Other Points**

- 09 No poultry shall be kept for the purpose of fighting.

No poultry shall be kept for the purpose of supplying other persons other than the tenant and his or her immediate household.

No poultry shall be a nuisance to residents and others who seek enjoyment from the environment in which they live or work.

No poultry may be kept within 50m of a dwelling.

The Council does not accept responsibility for stolen items or vandalism, all incidents must be reported to the police and a crime number obtained, the tenants own insurance should cover these eventualities.

- 10 **Improvement notice:** Any Member or Officer of the Council shall be entitled at any time to enter and inspect for the purpose of managing or inspection. An improvement notice may be served on the tenant 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. In certain circumstances immediate rectification may be directed.
- 11 **Termination of keeping hens/chickens on an Allotment Garden Plot:** Notice to remove birds from site may be served by the Council when the welfare of any bird is neglected or where a nuisance is caused to residents or others, or any governing body deems it necessary.

**Serving of Notice:** Any notice may be served on a Tenant personally or by leaving it at the last known address, place or abode, or by registered letter addressed there or by fixing the same in a conspicuous manner on the Allotment Garden Plot involved.

**The above rules were revised and adopted by Hertford Town Council on:**

**10<sup>th</sup> November 2008**

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