

Huish Episcopi Parish Council

POLICY FOR KEEPING HENS ON ALLOTMENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

Allotment Tenants may keep hens on allotments, but not cockerels as under the Allotment Act 1950 s.12(1). This is on the condition that they are not *“kept in such a place or in such a manner as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance.”*

2. REGISTRATION & INSPECTION

2.1 Tenants are required to make an application to Huish Episcopi Parish Council (HEPC), in writing, to keep hens on their allotment plot. An application will not be considered for placement on a half size plot, as a half plot is too small. Details of the number of hens and the size and location of hen house and outdoor run must be given. Personal contact details must be provided as well as those of others who will be caring for your chickens during holidays etc so that we may contact them if there is a problem. The tenant must keep this contact list up to date with the Parish Clerk

2.2 Tenants are responsible for the hen’s welfare and must ensure they do not cause a nuisance to others (Please see allotment rule 2b).

2.3 The granting of permission is dependent on HEPC conditions being met and guidelines followed.

2.4 Representatives of HEPC have the right to inspect the hens at any time. If the Council has cause to investigate complaints of maltreatment, any costs incurred will be passed to the tenant for payment.

2.5 The tenants Allotment Tenancy agreement will be terminated in the instance of failure to adhere to these guidelines and thus breaching their tenancy agreement.

3. ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

3.1 Housing

3.1.1 Housing is important in ensuring the welfare of hens and should allow expression of natural behaviours.

3.1.2 Both the hen house and outdoor run must be regularly maintained to a good, tidy standard and free from obvious faults that may cause injury.

3.1.3 The structures must be sited a minimum of 3 metres from adjacent allotment boundaries to minimise potential nuisance.

3.1.4 Hen House

3.1.4.1 A fully enclosed shelter providing a minimum size of 12 sq ft

3.1.4.2 The fully enclosed shelter must provide the following:

3.1.4.3 Protection from predators

3.1.4.4 Clean dry bedding to absorb moisture and odour (e.g. wood shavings or straw)

3.1.4.5 Warmth during the colder months or shade during the summer. As a general guide the aim should be to achieve an internal temperature range of 10°C - 20°C.

3.1.4.6 Be draught free but have adequate ventilation

3.1.4.7 Perches for sleeping - The perch for regular-size chickens should be **about 2 inches** across. Allow **8 inches** of perching space for each chicken, **10 inches** for the larger breeds.

3.1.4.8 Nest boxes for laying eggs.

3.1.5 Outdoor Run

3.1.5.1 Fully enclosed outdoor run must be at least 24 sq ft, and provide the hens with plenty of space to dig, dust themselves and flap their wings.

3.1.5.2 There should be an additional means of overhead protection e.g. shrubs or partial covering to provide hens with protection from direct sunlight, strong wind and driving rain.

3.1.5.3 The structure must be allowed periods of rest by repositioning to allow the ground to recover.

3.1.5.4 The total area of the hen house and run must not exceed 12ft by 16ft. (192 sq ft)

3.2 **Food and Water**

3.2.1 Hens should have a continuous and plentiful access to cool, clean fresh water, feed appropriate to the age and species of hen, and in sufficient quantities as well as an insoluble grit to aid digestion.

3.2.2 Food stuffs must be stored so they are kept clean, tidy, and properly protected from rodents and other pests.

3.3 **Health**

3.3.1 Welfare

3.3.1.1 The allotment tenant is responsible for ensuring that their hens are free from distress, pain, injury and disease.

3.3.2 Preventative and/or veterinary treatment

3.3.2.1. Hens must be vaccinated prior to arrival or at 6 weeks old.

3.3.2.2 Hens need regular worming (twice a year) and clipping of claws to maintain them in a good healthy condition.

3.3.2.3 Hens must be checked regularly for lice and the houses treated for Red Mite.

3.3.2.4 Any serious, longstanding or contagious health problems must be reported to the HEPC clerk immediately, as well as details on the treatment being used and notification when the problem has cleared.

3.3.3 Sanitation

3.3.3.1 The henhouse and run should be cleaned as necessary to maintain good hygiene.

3.3.3.2 Tenants are responsible for dealing with all waste from the hens. Soiled bedding may be taken away or composted on the Tenant's or other tenants plot by agreement.

It must not be piled elsewhere on the allotment field, causing a nuisance. (See allotment rules 2b).

3.3.4 Number of hens

3.3.4.1 Poultry need companionship and should be kept in groups of two.

3.3.4.2 The maximum number of hens permitted per allotment tenant is 6.

4. Nuisance to Neighbours and Cleanliness

4.1 Provided the above guidelines on housing, food, water and health are followed, hens should not become a nuisance to others (see allotment rules 2b).

5. Breeding and Profit

5.1 Allotment tenants are not permitted to breed hens on the allotment site, nor profit from the sale of produce.