



Regulations for keeping chickens on allotment plots

1 INTRODUCTION

Under the Allotments Act 1950, Allotment Tenants may keep hens (but not cockerels) on allotments, 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

Tenants are required to make an application to Reepham Town Council to keep hens on their allotment plot. Details of the number of hens and 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 problem.

Tenants are responsible for the hen's welfare and must ensure they do not cause a nuisance to others. Please refer to the Allotment Tenancy Agreement.

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

Representative of Reepham Town Council 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.

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

ANIMAL HUSBANDRY

Housing

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

A fully enclosed shelter providing a minimum size of 2 square feet (0.2m²) per hen is required and only one structure per allotment plot. The fully enclosed shelter must provide protection from predators.

The housing must provide;

- Warmth during colder months or shade during summer. As a general guide the aim should be to achieve a temperature range of 10°C - 20°C.
- Be draught free but have adequate ventilation. Clean dry bedding material to absorb moisture and odour (e.g. wood shavings or straw).
- Provide perches for sleeping, approximately 305cm wide with rounded corners to enable them to grip.
- Nest boxes for laying eggs.

Outdoor Run

A fully enclosed caged run that provides a minimum size of 4 square feet (0.4m²) per Hen, providing the hens with plenty of space to dig, dust themselves and flap their wings must be provided.

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

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

The total area of the hen house and run should not exceed more than 10% of the total allotment plot.

Food & Water

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

Food stuffs must be stored so they are kept clean, tidy, and properly protected from rodents and other pests (see guide to preventing rats on the allotment)

Health & Welfare

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

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

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

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

Any health serious or longstanding or contagious problems must be reported to Reepham Town Council immediately as well as details on the treatment being received and notification when the problem has cleared.

Tenants must adhere to any rules /restrictions imposed by Government Chief Veterinary Officers such as those imposed following Avian Flu outbreak and are responsible for checking and implementing any regulations.

Sanitation

The henhouse and run should be cleaned a minimum of once a week or more frequently as necessary.

Tenants are responsible for the removal of all arisings from the site. Soiled bedding must not be composted anywhere on the allotment site.

Number of Hens

The maximum number of hens permitted per allotment tenant should be 5.

Nuisance to Neighbours & Cleanliness

Provided the above guidelines on housing, food and water and health are followed, hens should not become a nuisance to others.

Breeding & Profit

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