



EAST BOLDRE PARISH COUNCIL

Allotments - rules for keeping poultry and bees

EBPC currently permits tenants to keep poultry and bees on the allotments. No other livestock is permitted

POULTRY

1. There are three statutory provisos attached to the keeping of hens on an allotment, namely that hens are not kept in such a manner as to be prejudicial to health, do not create a nuisance to others and do not affect the operation of any other law e.g. animal welfare legislation.
2. Section 12(1) of the *Allotments Act 1950* abolishes any contractual restriction on keeping hens (and rabbits) on an allotment. The Act does not refer to cockerels but to hens only.-
3. Section 12(1) provides that hens (and rabbits) should not be kept by way of trade or business i.e. eggs or meat from the allotments cannot be sold.
4. Under the *Animal Welfare Act 2006* it is an offence to cause any unnecessary suffering to any animal and the Act also contains a duty of care to animals where anyone responsible for an animal must take reasonable steps to make sure that the animal's welfare needs are met. This is regardless of whether they are classed as pets or farm animals. *The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007* sets minimum standards for all farm animals and these are made under the *Animal Welfare Act 2006* as above. DEFRA produces codes of practice and EBPC will apply these codes to all poultry kept on their allotments with tenants being given a copy of these documents.
5. In order to ensure that these provisos are complied with and that best practice is followed, Council will apply the following conditions.

GENERAL

- (a) Tenants occupying less than a ¼ plot will not be permitted to keep poultry.
- (b) Tenants must have written permission from the Council to keep poultry and sign the form of agreement to abide by the conditions. Permission will be viewed on a case by case basis.
- (c) Tenants must read and be guided by DEFRA codes of practice for 'meat and breeding chickens' and 'laying hens'. EBPC will provide tenants with a copy of these codes.
- (d) The maximum number of birds permitted, over the average of a year, is 20 and minimum is more than 1.
- (e) The total combined area of henhouse and run must not exceed 25% of the allotment plot.
- (f) The tenant must keep their poultry under proper control to avoid disturbance or nuisance to others within and without the allotments.

ACCOMMODATION

- (g) A fully enclosed henhouse must be provided to an adequate size to accommodate all poultry.

- (h) The henhouse must be predator proof and must be provided with clean dry bedding material e.g. straw to absorb moisture and odour.
- (i) The henhouse must provide year round shelter from wind and rain and also provide adequate shade and ventilation. It must be cleaned at least once a week.
- (j) The henhouse must provide perches for sleeping and nest boxes sufficient to accommodate the needs of all poultry.
- (k) A fully enclosed outdoor caged run must be provided.
- (l) Both henhouse and run must be regularly maintained to a good, tidy standard and free from faults which may cause injury to a person or any poultry.

ADVISORY NOTE

In order to give ground time to recover, it is advisable to move the run and/ or the chickens from time to time.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

- (m) The tenant must have the knowledge and skills, or access to these, to ensure the physical and mental well-being of the poultry e.g. be able to carry out essential care such as worming, nail and wing clipping, lice and mite treatment.
- (n) The tenant must arrange to have the poultry checked at least once daily and provide competent care and management for the poultry.
- (o) The tenant must provide the poultry with continuous and plentiful access to cool, clean and fresh water.
- (p) The tenant must provide the poultry with a regular supply of feed /grit appropriate to their age and species.
- (q) To minimize rat problems, feeders must be raised above ground level. Food must be stored in rat-proof containers. If rat traps are laid they must be regularly maintained and of a recognized standard to avoid trapping any other animal or bird.
- (r) Tenants must remove sick or injured poultry. They must not be left and treated at the allotments.
- (s) Poultry must not be killed on the allotments except in an extreme emergency where animal suffering is a possibility.

ADVISORY NOTES

It is advisable that all poultry brought on site should be vaccinated.

INSPECTION

- (t) The council and the allotment association committee have the right to inspect poultry, henhouses, and runs at any time. A named person from the allotment association will act as adviser/point of contact and liaise with tenants and Council. All tenants will be provided with this contact number.
- (u) Any allegations of maltreatment will be firstly raised with the tenant but, if the Council has cause for an investigation, the costs of inspection and/or treatment by vets or other experts in animal welfare shall be the sole responsibility of the tenant.

Contact details for help with chickens especially for concerns over health
– Parish Clerk 07562 985631.

BEES

1. There are no specific rules over welfare of bees but The Food and Environment Research Agency (FERA) is responsible for the bee health policy through its National Bee Unit (NBU). The basic rules of this are that diseases which may be endemic must be notified – if in doubt advice can be sought from the NBU who can arrange free inspections.
2. The NBU has a database of beekeepers called Beebase and tenants are encouraged to join this.
3. Records must be kept of any chemicals used for bee hives.
4. Hives must not be sited where the bees can overfly the neighbouring plots as bees get upset if their flight lines are interrupted. The ideal spot is close to a hedge so as to make the bees rise to fly over it.
5. Swarming, which takes place normally during May, June and July, can also be a problem as it is possible to get up to 50,000 bees in a swarm. This can be avoided if the contents of the hive are regularly checked and the Queen cells are destroyed
6. As with poultry, the tenant must have written permission from the Council to keep bees and sign a form of agreement to abide by the conditions.

I..... as a tenant of East Boldre Allotments apply for permission to keep poultry/bees (delete as appropriate) on plot number(s).....

I agree to abide by the rules as laid down by East Boldre Parish Council.

Signed..... Date.....

Print Name.....

Tenant

I confirm that the above tenant is authorized to keep poultry/bees (delete as appropriate) as defined above. I also confirm that they have been given a copy of the rules as laid down by East Boldre Parish Council together with copies of DEFRA codes of practice for 'meat and breeding chickens' and 'laying hens'.

Signed.....Date.....

Print Name.....

Parish Clerk

Review date 1	10/03/15
Review date 2	16/04/18