

# ROEHAMPTON GARDEN SOCIETY

## KEEPING POULTRY ON ALLOTMENTS

*in conjunction with Enable Leisure and Culture on behalf of Wandsworth Allotments Service*

Wandsworth Council's allotments are governed by the provisions of the Allotments Acts 1908-1950. The tenant undertakes at all times during the tenancy to observe and comply fully with all enactments, local, parochial and other byelaws, orders or regulations affecting the plot.

### 1 Preamble

1.1 An allotment is defined in Section 22 of the 1922 Act as "... wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family..." As the landlord, Wandsworth Council sets out in this document the guidance that must be followed when keeping chickens on a Council-owned allotments site.

1.2 No person who is not a valid plot holder is permitted to keep chickens on the allotments site. If a plot holder ceases to hold an allotment, arrangements must be in place to remove the chickens and any associated structures.

1.3 This agreement applies only to chickens, bantams and hens for laying. The keeping of other poultry (ducks, geese, turkeys, etc) is prohibited. Roosters or cockerels are not permitted.

1.4 The RGS may require chickens and all related equipment to be removed, giving one calendar month's notice. Such notice will not be served unreasonably. An explanation will be provided.

1.5 Useful advice on keeping chickens can be found on the internet.

- For information about bird flu and biosecurity, phone 08459335577 or see [www.defra.gov.uk/food-farm/animals/welfare/on-farm/poultry-welfare/](http://www.defra.gov.uk/food-farm/animals/welfare/on-farm/poultry-welfare/)
- Plain English advice on poultry keeping – [www.gov.uk/poultry-welfare-guidance-on-the-farm](http://www.gov.uk/poultry-welfare-guidance-on-the-farm)
- RSPCA – [www.rspca.org.uk/allaboutanimals/pets/farmanimals/chickens](http://www.rspca.org.uk/allaboutanimals/pets/farmanimals/chickens)
- British Hen Welfare Trust – [www.bhwt.org.uk/](http://www.bhwt.org.uk/)
- We would encourage you to register your flock with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) as this allows them to contact you if there's a disease outbreak (such as bird flu) in your area: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/poultry-registration>

### 2 No trading on site

Advertising or trading produce is not permitted on any allotments site. The produce from keeping chickens would be eggs, chicken droppings, feathers, live chickens, or chickens for the pot.

### 3 Structures

3.1 The RGS "Allotments Letting Agreement and Rules" requires the tenant to seek written permission to erect any structure, see Section 3 Rule 23 and RGS "Structures Policy".

3.2 The plot holder will be required to remove any structure unless prior permission has been sought and granted by the RGS Site Secretary.

3.3 The footprint of the structure to house poultry plus the chicken run should not exceed one third of the size of the allotment. No more than 8 chickens should be kept per rod of land used for keeping chickens due to concerns about vermin on the allotments site.

3.4 The coop and chicken run must be well built, secure, weatherproof and robust for the job. Any structure must be placed entirely within the plot; it must not be on the border of a path or overhang a pathway. No structure should be located in such a way that it will overshadow or cause disadvantage to neighbouring plots. Any door must open onto the plot not onto shared pathways.

3.5 No chicken is permitted to roam free anywhere on the allotments site at any time.

## **4 Animal welfare**

4.1 Biosecurity involves good hygiene to minimise the risk of animal disease. The plot holder is responsible to ensure disease is controlled.

4.2 The plot holder should not allow wild birds to come into contact with the chickens. The use of small mesh for all enclosures will help prevent contact with other birds.

4.3 Food loose on the ground attracts vermin. The plot holder should use specific food dispensers and ensure all dispensers are cleaned regularly and any spillage cleared up as quickly as possible.

4.4 The chickens should not be exposed to temperature stress. They must be able to find adequate protection from sun in the coop.

4.5 The plot holder must keep the chickens' food and water free from contamination by wild birds and other animals.

4.6 It is not permitted to use communal water tanks to wash allotment tools or any equipment involved in keeping chickens. Water must be taken to the chicken coop/run to clean equipment. Soiled water should be returned to your own plot.

4.7 The plot holder should ensure own hands, clothes and footwear are clean both before and after contact with your birds.

4.8 It is important to know the normal behaviour of poultry and the flock must be watched closely for early signs of distress or disease. A daily inspection must be carried out to check that all birds are behaving normally. The plot holder should contact a vet if you suspect your birds are sick.

4.9 In the event of the death of a chicken the carcass should be removed from other birds as soon as possible, the cause of death determined, and its disposal must be off site.

4.10 The plot holder must keep records on the health and welfare of all livestock. The Council, or their representatives, may on occasion ask to see these records. The records should include the following:

- Date of introduction of new birds
- Date, purpose and outcome of vet visit
- Details of treatments applied
- Mortality – date and cause

## 5 Contact details:

Please give contact details. This notice must be displayed clearly on the chicken coop.

Name of poultry keeper	
Address	
Mobile phone	
Email	
Home phone	
Backup in case of absence – name	
Address	
Mobile phone	
Email	
Home phone	

\* \* \*

The plot holder should ask the allotments site committee to display a notice within the site to advise other plot holders and visitors not to interfere with the chickens for their own welfare and for that of the birds.

## 6 Risk assessment

The plot holder wishing to keep chickens must complete an assessment of risks and how to deal with them. This must include consideration of the following:

- a Protection against vermin
- b Foxes and cats
- c Disposal of dead carcasses
- d Arrangements in times of temporary absence by the prime chicken keeper
- e When allotment water supply is turned off – access to drinking water
- f When allotment water supply is turned off – access to water for cleaning
- g Access to drinking water in freezing weather
- h Escaped chickens
- i Disease, notifiable diseases
- j Vandalism

k Disposal of chickens and property when the plot holder no longer holds a plot

l Other risks (please specify)

The risk assessment forms part of the permit to keep chickens on the allotment.

## **AGREEMENT**

Maximum number of chickens kept at any one time \_\_\_\_\_

Name of plot holder \_\_\_\_\_

Plot holder's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Plot number and allotment site \_\_\_\_\_

Date of signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Site Secretary : \_\_\_\_\_

Site Secretary's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date of signature \_\_\_\_\_