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EAST BOLDRE ALLOTMENTS POULTRY KEEPING RULES AND AGREEMENT

Updated 9 April 2024

In accordance with the 1950 Allotment Act, the keeping of hens is permitted on allotments, so long as they are for the tenant's own use and not for business or profit. This agreement sets out the minimum requirements for keeping hens on East Boldre allotments. Any person wishing to keep poultry on allotment land must be an allotment tenant and is bound by the allotment tenancy agreement in addition to this poultry keeping agreement.

Only hens or other egg laying poultry are permitted at East Boldre allotments.

No poultry is permitted on East Boldre Allotments without the prior written agreement of East Boldre Parish Council.

Tenants with permission to keep poultry prior to 1 April 2024 are permitted a period of transition to meet those requirements relating to size of runs/housing, maximum numbers and hens/egg laying poultry no later than 31 January 2026.

Animal welfare

All livestock is subject to strict welfare codes enforced by the RSPCA and DEFRA and covered by the Animal Welfare Act 2006. Under the Act it is a criminal offence to cause unnecessary suffering to an animal. The Act states that all animals have basic needs that must be fulfilled by their owner or keeper.

- For a suitable environment (place to live).
- For a suitable diet.

- To exhibit normal behaviour patterns.
- To be housed with, or apart from, other animals (if applicable).
- To be protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease.

If any animal on an allotment is deemed a nuisance, health hazard or their well-being is affected then they can be removed, detailed guidance about care for a variety of animals can be found on www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare

The Tenant is required to always comply with these rules. The Department for the Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) requires that ALL poultry keepers register their birds. DEFRA also produce the 'code of practice for the welfare of laying hens and pullets' which is regularly updated and available on the DEFRA website. Further guidance is also available on the RSPCA and National Allotment Association websites.

In addition to the rules below, further information on keeping hens, including mixing breeds, the ideal size of perch, house and scratching land, can be found at the British Hen Welfare Trust www.bhwt.org.uk

In order to ensure that these provisos are complied with, and that best practice is followed, East Boldre Parish Council will apply the following conditions.

General

1. The tenant must sign this agreement before bringing poultry on site.
2. 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.
3. Tenants must read and be guided by DEFRA codes of practice for 'laying hens'. EBPC will provide tenants with a copy of these codes.
4. The maximum number of birds permitted, over the average of a year, is 6 for any allotment holder applying for a permit after 9 April 2024, and 10 for holders with an active permit prior to 9 April 2024. The minimum number is 2.
5. The tenant must keep their poultry under proper control to avoid disturbance or nuisance to others within and without the allotments.
6. The tenant will at all times comply with additional guidance from DEFRA and similar statutory bodies in relation to matters such as bird flu.
7. A notice giving a contact phone number of the poultry keeper, along with separate contact details for a backup keeper should be displayed clearly on the chicken coop.

Accommodation

1. A fully enclosed henhouse must be provided of an adequate size to accommodate all poultry, no bigger than 8ft x 6ft (2.44m x 1.89m).
2. A fully enclosed outdoor caged run must be provided, allowing at least 2 square metres per bird.
3. The total combined area of henhouse and run must not exceed 30 square metres.

4. The henhouse must be predator proof and must be provided with clean dry bedding material.
5. The henhouse must provide year-round shelter from wind and rain and provide adequate shade and ventilation. It must be cleaned regularly.
6. The henhouse must provide perches for sleeping and nest boxes sufficient to accommodate the needs of all poultry.
7. 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.

Health and welfare

1. 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.
2. The tenant must arrange to have the poultry checked at least once daily and provide competent care and management for the poultry.
3. The tenant must provide the poultry with continuous and plentiful access to cool, clean and fresh water.
4. The tenant must provide the poultry with a regular supply of feed and grit appropriate to their age and species.
5. 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 recognised standard to avoid trapping any other animal or bird.
6. Tenants must remove sick or injured poultry. They must not be left and treated at the allotments.
7. Poultry must not be killed on the allotments except in an extreme emergency where animal suffering is a possibility.

Compliance

Keeping livestock does not count as cultivation. The plot holder must guarantee that a minimum $\frac{3}{4}$ (or 75%) of the remaining allotment plot is left free to cultivate when making the application.

The Council and the Allotment Association Committee have the right to inspect poultry, henhouses, and runs at any time.

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.

East Boldre Parish Council may withdraw the permission to keep livestock at any time by giving 40 days' notice to remove livestock and all associated structures and equipment if:

1. The permit holder contravenes any of the above rules.

2. The permit holder contravenes any rules within the Allotment Tenancy Agreement or any separate Allotment Association or Council tenancy rules.
3. Substantiated information is received that requires a review of the arrangements.

Any costs resulting from the withdrawal of consent shall be borne by the tenant.

Agreement

I have read and understood the rules to keep poultry on my allotment plot.

I hereby agree to comply with the above rules and regulations.

I understand that I am solely responsible for the livestock kept on my allotment plot. I will arrange for the removal of the poultry, henhouse and run should this agreement terminate. I understand that if I fail to do so, I shall be liable for costs incurred by the Parish Council to carry this out.

I agree to pay for any damages caused to other property or plots caused by my livestock.

I..... as a tenant of East Boldre Allotments apply for permission to keep poultry on plot number.....

Name:

Date: