**ANDOVER TOWN COUNCIL**

**ALLOTMENT CHICKEN POLICY – 2022**

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1. Policy Statement

The aim of this Policy is to set out the procedure for keeping chickens on Andover Town Council Allotments.

1.1 Keeping Chickens

General Conditions

Andover Town Council will allow tenants to keep chickens as livestock on their allotment plot. Livestock kept on allotments are for the tenants own use and not for business or profit.

Any person keeping livestock on allotment land must be an allotment tenant and is bound by the Allotment Tenancy Agreement in addition to the general rules for keeping livestock on allotments below.

There are additional rules and application process for beekeeping. See Andover Town Council Beekeeping Policy.

The Council reserves the right to review these conditions as required. The Council will give livestock keepers notice before any changes to these conditions are made.

All livestock are subject to strict welfare codes enforced by the RSPCA and DEFRA covered by the Animal Welfare Act 2006. The act states that all animals have basic needs that must be fulfilled by their owner or keeper.

Permission to keep livestock on a plot is dependent on these conditions being met and the rules and guidelines being followed.

Keeping livestock does not count as cultivation. The plot holder must guarantee that a minimum ¾ (or 75%) of the remaining allotment plot is left free to cultivate when making the application.

The total area of the hen house and run should not exceed more than 10% of the total allotment plot area. The maximum permitted size will be 10ft x 12ft.

“Chickens” excludes cockerels or roosters as under the Allotments Act 1950.

The keeping of other poultry (ducks, geese, turkeys, etc.) is prohibited.

Only the registered plot holder is permitted to keep livestock on their allotments plot.

When a plot holder ends the tenancy, they must have arrangements be in place to remove the livestock and any associated structures at their own cost.

2. Registration & Inspection

Tenants must make an application to Andover Town Council to keep livestock (chickens) on their allotment plot.

Details of the number of hens and size and location of the hen house and outdoor run must be given. Personal contact details must be provided including details of who will care for your livestock or deal with emergencies if you are absent.

See section 4 below and the attached livestock application form.

2.1 Tenants are responsible for the welfare of livestock (chickens) and must ensure they do not cause a nuisance to others.

2.2 Representatives of Andover Town Council have the right to inspect the livestock at any time. If the Council has cause to investigate complaints of mistreatment, any costs incurred will be passed to the tenant for payment.

2.3 Andover Town Council has the right to issue a notice if the plot holder does not comply with the Allotment Tenancy Agreement or the rules in this document, including nuisance to neighbours.

The procedure will be the same as a “Notice to Cultivate” with a 40 day notice period. The notice may be served any time that concerns are raised about the management of livestock. If there is no improvement Andover Council will serve a “Notice to Quit” as per the Rules and Regulations.

3. Risk Assessment

A risk assessment must be completed by the plot holder outlining how they intend to manage the livestock. This must include the following considerations:

* Protection against vermin
* Foxes and cats
* Disposal of dead carcasses
* Arrangements in times of temporary absence by the plot holder (See section 4 below)
* When the allotment water supply is turned off - access to drinking water
* When the allotment water supply is turned off - access to water for cleaning
* Access to drinking water in freezing weather
* Management of pesticides, ensuring livestock does not ingest.
* Preventing escaped livestock
* Preventing disease
* Vandalism
* Arrangements for removal of livestock and property when the plot holder ends their
* tenancy.

Highlight any other risks (please specify)

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

4. Stand-By Arrangements

The plot holder must provide Andover Town Council Allotment Officers/Committee, with details (name, address, telephone number and mobile telephone number) of a person who will take responsibility to deal with the care of livestock and emergencies if the plot holder is not available (the back-up keeper).

4.1 Notice on Display

A notice giving contact details of the livestock keeper and a back-up 24H contact in case of absence should be displayed clearly on the chicken coop for use by Council Officers, the emergency services or RSPCA.

The notice will include:

* Name of plot holder (livestock keeper)
* Phone number
* In case the plot holder is not available
* Name of the back-up keeper
* Phone number

4.2 The plot holder is responsible for the welfare of livestock at all times including when livestock is under the supervision of a back-up keeper.

5. Keeping Hens

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](http://www.bhwt.org.uk)

5.1 The Henhouse

A fully enclosed shelter meeting BHWT guidance is required. Note: The maximum permitted size of a structure on an allotment is 6ft x 8ft. See temporary structure rules for further information.

5.1.1 The fully enclosed shelter must provide the following:

* Protection from predators.
* Clean dry bedding material to absorb moisture and odour (e.g. wood shavings or straw).
* Warmth during colder months and shade during summer.
* Be draught free but have adequate ventilation.
* Perches for sleeping.
* Nest boxes for laying eggs.

5.2 Outdoor Run

A fully enclosed caged run must be provided that meets the BHWT guidance

5.2.2 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.

5.2.3 All fences or enclosures must comply with Andover Town Council Rules and Regulations regarding structures on Allotment sites.

5.3 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.

5.3.1 Food storage must be kept clean, tidy, and secure to prevent the risk of attracting rodents and other pests.

5.3.2 To aid the prevention of rodents and other pests the plot holder should use specific food dispensers and ensure all dispensers are cleaned regularly and any spillage cleared up as quickly as possible. There should be minimal loose grain and pellets on the ground.

5.4 Health & Welfare

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

5.4.1 Regular inspection by the plot holder must be carried out to check that all birds are behaving normally and are free of disease.

5.4.2 Preventative and/or veterinary inspections must be carried out at the first sign of disease to prevent a widespread outbreak.

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

5.5 Sanitation

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

5.5.1

Plot holders are responsible for removing all waste from the site. Soiled bedding must not be composted anywhere on the allotment site.

Any waste must be removed according to Andover Town Councils Rules and Regulations on waste disposal.

When the allotment water supply is turned off the plot holder must ensure there is access to water for cleaning

5.6 Number of Hens

Poultry require companionship and ideally two or more should be kept.

The maximum number of hens permitted per plot holder is 4.

5.7 Breeding & Profit

Plot holders are not permitted to breed hens on the allotment site nor profit from the sale of produce, please refer to Andover Town Council’s Rules and Regulations.

5.8 Record Keeping

The plot holder must keep records on the health and welfare of all livestock. Andover Town Council’s Allotments Committee reserves the right to request a copy of these records.

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.

6. Withdrawal of Consent

Andover Town 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:

* The permit holder contravenes any of the above rules.
* The permit holder contravenes any rules within the Allotment Tenancy Agreement or
* any separate Allotment Association or Council tenancy rules.
* 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.

7. Useful Resources

Please find below some useful links with livestock information.

British Bee Keepers Association (BBKA) www.bbka.org.uk

DEFRA - www.defra.gov.uk

RSPCA – RSPCA

British Hen Welfare Trust - www.bhwt.org.uk

8. Document Information

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9.Document Control

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| Date | Version | Description | Sections Affected | Approved by |
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*A printed version may not be the current version.*

*A current version may be obtained in the required format from the Town Clerk’s Office at Andover Town Council.*