



Patch Allotments - Rules on keeping chickens

1. Permission

Tenants must obtain the written permission of the Patch Allotments Association (PAA) prior to bringing chickens onto the site. The PAA can be contacted for application details.

A maximum of six chickens per plot is permitted, as this is considered sufficient egg laying capacity for a family. Further permission must be sought from the PAA if a tenant requires to keep more than six chickens. A minimum of two chickens must be kept for companionship purposes.

2. The tenant must comply with all applicable rules, regulations and law in relation to the keeping of chickens. In particular, the applicant MUST provide proof that the chickens are registered in accordance with the latest rules issued by DEFRA. Rules for registration are available from DEFRA here, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/poultry-including-game-birds-registration-rules-and-forms>.

Any specifications stated here or elsewhere by the Patch Allotment Association are in addition to this.

3. The Hen House or Coop must

3.1. allow sufficient space for exercise, a minimum of 0.5 square metres per chicken.

3.2. be dry, well ventilated but draft proof.

3.3. contain perches sufficient to hold all the chickens, at least 15 centimetres per chicken and with sufficient space between and above perches to allow the chickens to get up and down without injury.

3.4. contain nesting boxes with wood shavings for egg laying, at least one box per six chickens.

3.5. have entrance to allow chickens to pass through without difficulty and without having to crouch down. Providing more than one entrance can help to avoid bullying and encourage all chickens to go in and out.

3.6. have floor covered with dry material e.g. wood shavings or straw allowing chickens to forage, dust bathe and preen whenever they can't use dry soil outside.

3.7. be cleaned out and fresh dry material provided at least once a week and disinfected to control parasites.

3.8. not use a deep litter method as this is prohibited.

4. Chicken run must

4.1. have at least 0.8 square metres per chicken.

4.2. have a minimum 2 metres high fence made of chicken wire having maximum mesh size of 2.6cm. Lower fences are permitted if used with a roof of the same mesh or for the outer run used in daytime only.

4.3. have wooden boards fixed to the bottom of the fence as additional protection against foxes, except in that part of the outer run used in daytime only.



4.4. have straw available to put down when ground conditions warrant it e.g. mud after heavy rain.

5. Feeding and care

Tenants are responsible for the welfare of their animals and must ensure that any feeding and care regime is appropriate. In addition to this:

5.1 Clean water for drinking must be replaced on a daily basis.

5.2 Storage facilities for feed, bedding etc. must be kept dry and rat proof. Metal bins must be used for any feed that is stored on site.

5.3 Feeders must be designed to be rat-proof. e.g. by suspending the feeder such that rats cannot reach the mechanism that operates the nozzle to the feed.

5.4 It is recommended that spray or powder red mite control is used.

5.5 Chickens must have access to grit for digestion purposes.

5.6 A daily check must be made on the chicken's welfare by a competent person. The PAA reserves the right to check on the welfare of the chickens at any time and to arrange veterinary treatment if it believes there to be a welfare issue. The cost of any treatment will be charged to the tenant.

5.7 It is recommended that the chickens be shut in the coop at night as extra protection from predators.

5.8 The PAA must be informed of any serious, long term or contagious health problem and steps taken to counteract the problem.

6. Introduction and Removal of chickens

6.1 Records must be kept relating to the health and welfare of the chickens. The Allotment team 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 any vet visit
- Details of treatments applied
- Mortality – date and cause

6.2 Only pre-sexed chickens can be introduced. A letter from the supplier of any young chicks stating that the chicks are all hens will be required.

6.3 No cockerels are allowed and the breeding of chickens or knowingly collecting fertilised eggs is also prohibited.

7. The tenant must ensure the chickens do not cause a nuisance to local residents or other tenants.

8. The tenant will be responsible for the removal from the allotment site and disposal of any dead chickens in accordance with current legislation.