



**COLNE TOWN COUNCIL  
ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE**  
**Livestock Consents Policy**  
(12<sup>th</sup> March 2019)

## **1. Introduction**

The Council manages twenty-one allotment sites totalling over 140 individual plots in various locations around the town. Historically a number of plots have been used to keep livestock and whilst the Allotment Agreement requires plot holders to obtain consent to keep livestock on their plots, this has not always been requested or documented.

The Council has a duty under the Welfare of Animals Act 2006 to take steps to ensure that plot holders provide appropriate care of animals or livestock on its allotment sites. This requires a knowledge of what livestock is being kept, the conditions under which it is kept and who is responsible for their care. It may also be called upon by the Department of Food and Fisheries to take action to assist in limiting the spread of disease.

In add the Council has a responsibility to adjacent plot holders, local residents and businesses to ensure plots are responsibly managed and adequate steps are taken to ensure the safety of the public and deter nuisance. Consequently, it may need to respond to livestock escaping their pens, rodent infestations and any welfare concerns. Consents for livestock introduce additional responsibilities, risk factors and work which the Committee must manage.

## **2. Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this policy is to establish a framework by which the keeping of animals and livestock (including bees) on allotments can be effectively managed through the consent process.

This policy recognises the Councils and plot holders responsibilities in the management of livestock and attempts to address the added risk and resource requirements that result. It also intended to provide transparency to the consent process and additional conditions that plot holders may need to satisfy.

The objective of the policy is to ensure that there is a working system of consents where the current range and numbers of livestock kept on allotments are reduced whilst giving the opportunity for individually approved plot holders to keep up to 6 hens where appropriate.

## **3. General Background**

The Allotment Agreement requires that plot holders apply for consent for the keeping animals and livestock on plots.

Prior to April 2017 records of consents being granted were limited and did not accurately reflect the number of plots on which animals and livestock were being kept.

As part of the annual inspections, plots were visually surveyed where possible and a record made of animals and livestock (including bees) being kept on plots at that time. In the absence of formal records to the contrary, it may be presumed that consent was implied due to the length of time animals had likely been on these plots.

The record was used to draft the initial “**Register of Consents (Livestock)**” and is included as Appendix I.

On the 24th January 2018, the Committee agreed that:

*“that no further consents would be given in respect of keeping of animals on allotment sites and that all new and prospective plot holders should be advised as such. Information provided to applicants and on the Councils website should be updated accordingly”.*

(Item 6a - Pest Control)

Consequently, plot holders entering agreements after the 24<sup>th</sup> January 2018 have been advised of the Committee's decision that no additional consents would be granted for the keeping animals and livestock on plots.

In April 2018 all plot holders were advised, via newsletter, that no further consents would be given and existing plot holders who had animals and livestock on their plots were given notice that any existing consents (implied or otherwise) would come to an end on the 1st January 2023.

At a meeting of the Allotments Committee the Committee on the 6<sup>th</sup> June in response to a plot holders enquiry, the Committee clarified that:

*“the Committee minute related only to a restriction on new applications for consents. It was the view of the committee that existing consent holders would need reapply for consent to keep animals, showing compliance with the RSPCA guidelines. Existing consent holders would be asked to apply to renew their consents later this year”.*

At the Allotment Committee meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> December as a consequence of requests for further clarification, this policy was drafted for consideration by the committee at its meeting of the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019.

## **4. Application and Registration of Requests for Consent**

In compliance with the Allotment Agreement, plot holders are required to request written consent from the Council to keep animals or livestock of any kind on a Colne Town Council allotment plot.

It should not be presumed that the granting of consent would be a formality as in future, only a limited number of plots are likely to be approved for consent within a given time period. In addition, those plot holders will need to demonstrate that the highest standards of animal

husbandry and welfare can be met and maintained to the satisfaction of the Committee for the period over which consent is being sought.

**Plot holders are given notice that all existing consents for livestock will come to an end on the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2023 unless a new application for consent is received and approved by the Committee in accordance with this policy.**

All consents are to be detailed on the Councils *Register of Livestock Consents* and which will be a matter of public record and available for inspection.

Plot holders wishing to apply for consent must submit a signed *Livestock Consent Request* form to the allotment officer for consideration.

No livestock should be introduced onto the plot prior to the determination of the application for consent by the Allotments Committee.

On receipt of a signed *Livestock Consent Request* form, the Allotment Officer will arrange with the allotment holder to inspect the plot and prepare a pre-assessment report for the Committee. The pre-assessment report will give consideration to:

- a) the suitability for keeping livestock given its size and location of the plot,
- b) the existing and proposed provisions for livestock on the plot and the general level of cultivation,
- c) the history of compliance with allotment conditions, and
- d) the numbers of livestock current being kept on the site, and any local consultations undertaken.

They will also arrange for an appropriate *Public Consultation Notice* to be posted on the allotment site.

The committee may then determine whether consent is to be granted and the conditions that will be applied.

Where approved by the Committee, the plot holders details will be added to the *Register of Livestock Consents* along with any conditions which must be complied with and the date that the consent will expire. A letter detailing the conditions and the process of review will be issued to the plot holder.

## **5. Standard Conditions for Consent**

The Committee has set out a list of standard conditions to which consent will be subject. They may also determine additional conditions where appropriate.

As part of the standard conditions the plot holder must agree:

- a) To comply fully with all the terms of their Allotment Agreement,
- b) To maintain the plot and the internal/livestock fencing in good order,
- c) To ensure a minimum of 75% of the surface area of the plot is utilised for the growing of fruit and vegetables and no more than 25% is used for sheds and livestock,
- d) To ensure that no nuisance is caused or observed to other plot holders or residents as a consequence of keeping livestock on the plot or through its general use and condition,
- e) To comply with guidance issued by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) and to complete and return a self-assessment questionnaire evidencing compliance on a yearly basis.

- f) To obtain and put to use a suitable treadle feeder for feeding fowl kept on the plot
- g) To ensure the plot does not directly or indirectly contribute to a rodent infestation of the site and where treatment becomes necessary to the plot or any adjacent area, the plot holder agrees to cover all or the proportion of the costs incurred that are in the view of the Allotments Committee attributable to the plot,
- h) To indemnify the Council for any claim for loss or damages which may arise as a direct or indirect consequence of livestock being kept on the plot.
- i) To consent may only be given for a period of up to five years at any one time and will be subject to a satisfactory yearly review. This may require the completion and return of a self-assessment questionnaire.
  - a) To reapply for consent six months prior to the expiry date of any consent given, should they wish to continue to keep livestock after that date.
  - b) That consents are not transferable, either to other plots or to subsequent plot holders.
  - c) That the council is entitled at any time to withdraw consent at any time by giving the plot holder 12 months' notice of such in writing.
  - d) That where, in the opinion of the Allotment Committee, the plot holder has breached the terms of the Allotment Agreement or the Consent Agreement, the Committee may withdraw their consent to keep livestock with immediate effect and without compensation by posting notice of the same to the plot holder last known address and/or by displaying a notice of such on the allotment site.

## 6. General Restrictions and Exemptions

### Bees

Plot holders wishing to apply for consent to keep of bees will be required to provide evidence of undertaking appropriate training, current members of a recognized professional body and registration with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (*DEFRA*). They will also need to detail what consultation has taken place with other plot holders on the site and residents prior to making their application.

**The application may be made by submitting a completed Livestock Consent Request Form to the Allotment Officer who will then arrange to visit the plot and prepare a pre-assessment report for consideration by the Allotments Committee.**

**No hive may be introduced to the site prior to the Committee's full consideration of the application for consent.**

### Hens

It should not be presumed that the granting of consent is a formality as only a limited number of plots are likely to be approved for consent within any one-time period. Those plot holders seeking consent will need to demonstrate that they can meet and maintain the highest standards of animal husbandry and welfare to the satisfaction of the Committee. Any consents granted will also be:

- a) limited to a maximum number of six hens and no other livestock,
- b) for a period of no more than five years,
- c) subject to additional conditions and obligations as set out in the consent agreement, and
- d) subject to a successful annual review.

The application may be made by submitting a completed *Livestock Consent Request* form to the Allotment Officer along with a self-assessment questionnaire. They will then arrange to visit the plot with the plot holder and prepare a pre-assessment report for consideration by the Allotments Committee.

**No livestock may be introduced to the site prior to the Committee's full consideration of the application for consent.**

### **Other Livestock**

The Committee is aware that a number of plot holders have historically kept a wider selection of livestock on plots including ducks, ferrates, geese and pigeons etc. The Committee will no longer give consent for livestock other than bees and a limited number of hens. All other livestock will need to be removed from allotment plots unless covered by the exemptions detailed below.

### **Exemptions from Livestock Restrictions**

Bunkers Hill and the Stable at Alkincoates have historically have been used to keep a broader range of livestock. Approval for horses and other livestock will continue to be considered by the committee for these locations for the duration of the existing occupancies.

## **7. Assessment of Requests for Consent**

Plot holders requesting consent must complete a Livestock Consent Request Form. When requesting to keep hens a Self Assessment Questionnaire will also need to be completed by the plot holder and submitted to the Councils Allotment Officer. When submitting the Livestock Consent Request Form, the applicant is required to sign the form indicating their agreement to the standard conditions on which consent may be granted.

In considering the request the Council may add or alter these conditions if it so chooses. Any consent granted will be subject to the applicant signing an agreement confirming their acceptance of the additional or altered conditions.

In the first instance, the request will be assessed by the Allotment Officer who will determine if the application complies with the terms of this policy and is able to compile a pre-assessment report for consideration by the Allotments Committee.

## **8. Related Documents**

Appendix I	Register of Livestock Consents
Appendix II	Livestock Consent Request Form
Appendix III	Self-Assessment Questionnaire and Current RSPCB Guidance
Appendix IV	Public Consultation Notice

FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Eugene Dennison

# Allotment Committee

## Register of Livestock Consents

Allotment Site	Plot Number	Animal/Livestock	Quantity
Alkincoates Allotments	Stables	Horses	
Alkincoates Allotments	15	Chickens	
Alkincoates Allotments	18 & 19	Bees	
Alkincoates Allotment	28	Chickens	
Alkincoates West Of		Bees	
Bunkers Hill		Chickens & Horses etc	
Carr Road		Birds	
Carry Lane	4	Chickens	
Carry Lane Allotments	4b	Bees & Chickens	
Carry Lane Allotments	5 & 8	Chickens	
Carry Lane Allotments	11	Chickens	
Intake Allotments	5, 6 & 7	Geese & Pigeons	
Montague Street Allotments	1&3	Birds, Chickens & Geese	
Temple Street Allotments	1	Chickens	
Temple Street Allotments	3a	Chickens	
River Street Allotments	1	Chickens	



Livestock  
Consent Request  
Colne Town Council Allotments Committee

Name

Address

I, as the above-mentioned plot holder and in accordance with the terms of my Allotment Agreement, request consent from The Colne Town Council Allotment Committee to keep the following livestock upon the plot:

In requesting consent, I agree:

- a) To comply fully with all the terms of their Allotment Agreement,
- b) To maintain the plot and the internal/livestock fencing in good order,
- c) To ensure a minimum of 75% of the surface area of the plot is utilised for the growing of fruit and vegetables and no more than 25% is used for sheds and livestock,
- d) To ensure that no nuisance is caused or observed to other plot holders or residents as a consequence of keeping livestock on the plot or through its general use and condition,
- e) To comply with guidance issued by the Royal Society for the prevention of Cruelty to Birds (*RSPCB*) and to complete and return a self-assessment questionnaire evidencing compliance on a yearly basis.
- f) To obtain and put to use a suitable treadle feeder for feeding fowl kept on the plot
- g) To ensure the plot does not directly or indirectly contribute to a rodent infestation of the site and where treatment becomes necessary to the plot or any adjacent area, the plot holder agrees to cover all or that proportion of the costs incurred which, in the view of the Allotments Committee, are attributable to the plot,
- h) To indemnify the Council for any claim for loss or damages which may arise as a direct or indirect consequence of livestock being kept on the plot.
- i) That consent may only be given for a period of up to five years at any one time and will be subject to a satisfactory yearly review. This may require the completion and return of a self-assessment questionnaire.
- j) That the plot holder may reapply for consent should they wish to keep livestock after this date.
- k) That consents are not transferable, either to other plots or to subsequent plot holders.
- l) That the council is entitled at any time to withdraw consent at any time by giving the plot holder 12 months' notice of such in writing.
- m) That where, in the opinion of the Allotment Committee, the plot holder has breached the terms of the Allotment Agreement or the Consent Agreement, the Committee may withdraw their consent to keep livestock with immediate effect and without compensation by posting notice of the same to the plot holder last known address and/or by displaying a notice of such on the allotment site.

I understand that should I fail to keep to this agreement, the Council are entitled to withdraw any consents given with immediate effect and without compensation.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: / /20

**Note:** Please ensure you complete the emergency contact details on the reverse of this application. These will be used should we need to contact you in an emergency in relation to any animal welfare issues on the plot.

Contact Details

Plot Holders Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone No \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile Phone No \_\_\_\_\_  
Work Phone No \_\_\_\_\_  
email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Vets Phone No \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Emergency Contact *(for when the plot holder is on holiday etc)*

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Mobile Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Notes

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

For your application to be fully considered you are required to provide the contact details of someone not in your household, who has agreed to act on your behalf and is able to take responsibility for your animals in your absence (ie when you are on holiday or away on business)

# Allotment Livestock Questionnaire - Fowl

This questionnaire is based on a briefing document given by the RSPCA for the keeping of animals on allotments. You may find it useful to refer to their guidance for additional clarification of the requirements under the Welfare of Animals Act 2006.

Allotment Site	Plot No		
Plot Holder	Contact No		
Breed(s) of Hen	Number of Hens		
Breed(s) of Duck	Number of Ducks		
Breed(s) of Geese	Number of Geese		
Date of questionnaire	DEFRA Registered	Yes	No
Public Liability Insurer	Amount Insured		
Emergency Contact	Phone No		

## Food

Access to clean fresh drinking water	Yes	No	Cleaning frequency		
Feeding dispenser provided in a hut	Yes	No	Cleaning frequency		
Feeding dispenser in the open air	Yes	No	Cleaning frequency		
Treadle dispenser used	Yes	No	Spillages removed	Yes	No
Access to insoluble grit	Yes	No			
Access to mash or pellet feed, calcium supplement or oyster shells.				Yes	No

## Housing

Is the hut of sound construction and made from suitable materials?	Yes	No
Is it raised off the ground or on solid foundations?	Yes	No
Is it fox and vermin proofed?	Yes	No
Is the entrance wide/tall enough for the size of the bird?	Yes	No
Is the hut dry and warm?	Yes	No
Is the hut well ventilated?	Yes	No
Is the floor solid and easy to clean/maintain?	Yes	No
Is the floor covered with substrate? ( <i>straw or wood shavings</i> )	Yes	No
How often is the bedding changed?		
How often is the housing disinfected?		
Where is the spare bedding and feed stored?		
How do you dispose of the bedding?		
Are there individual nesting boxes for egg laying which are secluded, enclosed and draft free?	Yes	No
Are they lined with clean dry nesting materials? ( <i>straw or wood shavings</i> )	Yes	No
Are there sufficient suitable perches for hens? (Raised, perches 3-5cm with rounded edges 15cm of space per bird minimum)	Yes	No
Is there sufficient floor space for the number of birds?	Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hens &amp; Ducks a minimum 1m<sup>2</sup> per 2-3 birds</li> <li>• Geese a minimum 1m<sup>2</sup> per birds</li> </ul>		

## Fencing and Pasture

Are the birds enclosed within a suitable pen?	Yes	No
Is the fencing adequate to keep the birds in and predators out?	Yes	No
Are birds liable to become trapped or injured?	Yes	No
Is the pasture divided into sections to allow for the ground & grass to recover?	Yes	No
What is the size of the grassed area available to the birds?		
Is the grass cut to prevent it from getting too long?	Yes	No
Do the birds have plenty of space to move & perform their natural behaviours?	Yes	No
Are there small bushes or trees present?	Yes	No
Are there any built shelters other than their hut?	Yes	No
Are there raised perches for hens?	Yes	No
Is there dry earth or a dust bath area?	Yes	No

## Open Water for Ducks and Geese

Do the ducks/geese have access to shallow water to stand in? (10cm deep)	Yes	No
Do the ducks/geese have access to deeper water to swim in? (20- 30cm deep)	Yes	No
How frequently are these water facilities cleaned?		
How do you dispose of fouled water?		
Can these water facilities be easily moved around the site?	Yes	No
Is the ground next to these water facilities dry and well drained?	Yes	No

## Health

Are the birds alert & interested in their environment?	Yes	No
Are there any stress indicators visible?		
• Erect feathers	Yes	No
• Reluctance to move	Yes	No
• Hiding behaviour	Yes	No
• Heads under their wings	Yes	No
• Feather pecking	Yes	No
Is there evidence of		
• red mites, or	Yes	No
• lice?	Yes	No
How frequently are the birds wormed?		
How frequently are the birds dusted to prevent mites and lice?		
Which veterinary service looks after your animals?		

## Additional Notes:

### CHICKENS

Anyone keeping 50 or more birds is required by DEFRA to register with the Great Britain Poultry Register, in order to help the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency get in touch in the event of any disease outbreaks. The RSPCA highly recommends that anyone with any number of birds, even two or three, registers in order to receive any disease alerts and guidance.

### Water

Chickens must have access to clean and fresh water at all times. In cold weather, care should be taken to prevent drinking water from icing-up. Should this occur, the ice should be broken manually; chemicals that prevent the build-up of ice or break it up once formed should never be used.

Drinkers should be cleaned regularly and water should not be allowed to remain in a contaminated or stale condition. Drinkers that prevent young chicks climbing in and drowning should be used. As the birds become older and require more water, alternative drinkers can be introduced and those drinkers used previously should be removed gradually over a number of days. If new chickens are introduced to the allotment, they must be provided with facilities to which they are already accustomed, as chickens do not like to drink from unfamiliar drinkers.

### Food

Chickens will spend much of their day scratching and foraging for small seeds, roots and insects. However, they will need additional food, which is suitable for their age and breed, to provide a balanced diet. If feed is provided outside, it should be sheltered to keep it clean and dry. Feed dispensers should be cleaned regularly and precautions taken to prevent infestation and contamination of the feed. Avoid attracting rodents and wild birds by, for example, cleaning up any spilt feed. Chickens must also always have access to insoluble grit (e.g. hard flint grit) to aid digestion. If the birds are kept on a grassed area, the grass should not be allowed to become too long, as, if eaten, long strands can become impacted in the crop, making it difficult for the birds to digest food.

### Laying Hens

As female birds (hens) mature they will begin to lay eggs and a layers' mash or pellet feed should be provided to ensure a balanced diet. Calcium supplements, such as oyster shell, can also be included in the diet. Hens will naturally prefer to find a quiet, secluded place to lay their eggs. Therefore, hens should be provided with individual, enclosed nest boxes. The boxes should be draught-free and lined with plenty of clean, dry and comfortable nesting material, such as straw or wood shavings.

### Housing

Chickens should be provided with warm, dry and well-ventilated housing. Adequate ventilation is very important, and while it is important to keep the birds warm, there must also be good air circulation inside the housing. The floor should be covered with a suitable substrate, such as wood shavings or straw, which must be kept dry and friable and therefore topped-up or replaced when necessary. Chickens like to dustbathe and preen their feathers, therefore a suitable material, such as wood shavings, should also be supplied for this activity. Food and water facilities should be provided within the house.

Owners must ensure that there is plenty of space for the birds to move around easily and perform their natural behaviours within the house. This will depend on the size and number of chickens and the layout of facilities. It is important not to overstock birds as doing so may increase aggression and the potential for conflict.

Chickens will naturally seek a raised position to roost at dusk, which is an anti-predator behaviour. They should be provided with adequate perching facilities. Perches should be wooden and approximately 3-5cm in width with rounded edges, to enable the birds to grip them properly. They should provide enough perching space for all the chickens to roost at the same time. However, there must be enough space either side of the perch for hens to get up and down from them without injuring themselves. As a guide, chickens may require about 15cm of perching space each, but this will depend on the size of the birds.

The height of the perches will have to be adjusted according to the age, size and breed of birds being kept.

In smaller houses, a greater proportion of birds tend to go out onto the range area during the day, and only use the housing at night. The entrance to the housing should be wide enough to allow chickens to pass through without difficulty and high enough so that they do not have to crouch down. The accommodation should be cleaned out frequently and disinfected to ensure that there are no harmful parasites that could compromise the birds' health.

## Pasture

The outdoor area will require careful management and should be given periods of rest, to allow the ground and grass to recover. It is important that the area is sufficiently large enough to be divided (unless there are alternative grass areas nearby to use) in order to allow the chickens to roam on good pasture every day while other parts are allowed to recover. Again, the birds should have plenty of space to move around easily and perform their natural behaviours. This will depend on the size and number of chickens and the layout of facilities.

Overhead cover should be provided on the range area such as small trees, shrubs and purpose-built shelters, to provide the chickens with protection from the sun, bad weather and other animals. It will also help to encourage birds to utilise the full outside area. They should also have access to dry soil where they can dustbathe and forage. Where outside conditions and/or the vegetation is poor or limited, consideration should be given to providing alternative areas for enrichment. The provision of straw will keep birds occupied and encourage them to carry out food searching behaviours. Raised perches on the range area should be considered, as they provide a way for individuals to escape from one another, and birds often use them as a place to preen during the day.

## Fencing

Fences should be well maintained and provide appropriate protection against other animals. The design should ensure that the birds cannot escape or become trapped or injured.

## Company

We recommend that people keep at least three hens (female chickens) which get on well together. Cockerels (male chickens) should not be kept together unless they have grown up together and get on well.

## Introducing new stock to an existing flock

Mixing of chickens that are unfamiliar with each other should be done carefully. Avoid mixing breeds with substantially different body weights or individuals from the same breed of markedly different sizes as this may result in increased conflict and bullying of smaller birds.

## Health

Signs of poor health may include a hunched posture, erect feathers and a reluctance to move. Birds may also be found hiding, for example in corners or amongst housing equipment, and may tuck their head under their wing. Healthy birds appear alert and interested in their environment and look 'bright-eyed' and well hydrated.

Chickens can be susceptible to lice and red mites. Lice, which are 2-3mm in size, can be found all over the body with their eggs being deposited around the shaft of the feather. Red mites are smaller and are more likely to be found on the fixtures within the shed. However, where a more serious infestation exists, they may be seen on birds at the base of the feathers, particularly under the wing.

## Worming

Poultry need regular worming, particularly if they are kept on the same ground for a prolonged period (more than a month).

## Feather pecking

Feather pecking is where hens peck and pull at the feathers of other hens, sometimes leading to more serious injuries and even cannibalism. It can affect hens in any system, including commercial farming systems and hens kept as pets. Healthy hens, with plenty of space, dust-bathing facilities and opportunity to scratch and forage are less at risk but outbreaks can suddenly occur.

## DUCKS AND GEESE

Anyone keeping 50 or more birds is required by Defra to register with the Great Britain Poultry Register, in order to help the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency get in touch in the event of any disease outbreaks. The RSPCA highly recommends that anyone with any number of birds, even two or three, registers in order to receive any disease alerts and guidance.

Most of the provisions and management practices for chickens apply to ducks and geese too. Therefore, please read the relevant sections for chickens in conjunction with the more specific advice for ducks and geese below.

## Water

It is important that ducks and geese have a separate supply of clean, fresh drinking water available at all times. Often this is forgotten about when the birds have access to water for other reasons, such as preening and bathing, but this water can become dirty very quickly.

## Open water facilities

Both ducks and geese are waterfowl and, in the wild, spend a certain amount of their time in and around water. Both ducks and geese will spend time during the day performing water-related activities, such as preening.

Shallow water facilities, such as troughs, should be provided for the first couple of weeks of the duck's life, as young ducks could drown in deep water until they have developed sufficient waterproofing on their feathers. After this time, facilities that provide the ducks with full body access to deeper water should be

provided. Ducks like to be able to stand in water to perform certain behaviours, so a shallower area (about 10cm deep) whereby the birds can stand and fully immerse their heads in water, is important. A deeper area (about 20 - 30cm deep) enables the birds to perform other water-related behaviours, such as swimming.

Water facilities need to be cleaned at least twice every day before refilling with clean water. The area immediately around the water facility needs to be managed well to prevent the area from becoming excessively wet. Water facilities should be placed over an area with good drainage that is effective at removing excess water from around the facility. If this is not possible, water facilities should be moved regularly to a new, dry location. Keeping the area around the water facility in good condition is particularly important as ducks like to spend time near, as well as in, water, and will spend time using the water from around the outside of the facility.

## Food

Ducks will spend much of their time feeding in and around water, whereas geese will spend far more time grazing and need to be provided with plenty of grass for this reason. However, both ducks and geese should be provided with feed that is suitable for the breed and age of the birds being kept. Feed dispensers should be clean and cleaned out regularly.

## Housing

Although ducks and geese like water, they will seek protection and shelter from adverse weather, such as driving rain, direct sunshine and strong winds. Suitable housing should be provided. The RSPCA recommends allowing at least 1m<sup>2</sup> of floor area in the house for every two/three ducks. Geese should be provided with at least 1m<sup>2</sup> of floor area per bird. Owners must ensure that there is plenty of room for the birds to move around easily, exercise, stretch their wings and carry out normal behaviours. Ample straw to cover the floor should be provided and replenished as necessary to maintain a clean and dry bedded area.

## Nest boxes

Female ducks and geese may seek an isolated position to lay their eggs and prefer somewhere safe and secluded, such as individual nest boxes. Nest boxes should be draught-free and lined with clean, dry, comfortable nesting material (e.g. straw or wood shavings).

## Pasture

It is very important that the outdoor area is well managed, especially around the water facilities where the ground can become very wet and dirty. This can be reduced by moving the water facilities on a regular basis to allow the surrounding area to recover, or by placing the water facilities over a well-drained area, such as a bed of shingle, which helps drain away any excess water.

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More information can be found in the 'Laying hen feather cover advice guide' which can be downloaded from the RSPCA website at:

<http://www.rspca.org.uk/ImageLocator/LocateAsset?asset=document&assetId=1232730923154&mode=prd>

A full version of the briefing document is available from:

<http://politicalanimal.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Welfare-of-animals-on-allotments.pdf>

# Public Notice

## Application to Keep Livestock

AL001 / 2019

*In respect of*

Plot 1 Another Allotment Site

A request has been received to keep livestock on the allotment plot which is managed by Colne Town Council. The Plot Holder has requested consent to keep up to and no more than:

**6 Hens**

This matter is due to be considered by the Colne Town Council Allotment Committee in accordance with its Livestock Consents Policy. This policy also sets out the minimum conditions which the plot holder must satisfy for their application to be considered and the process by which it will be assessed. A copy of the policy is available from the Councils website.

Where consent is granted it is normally for a period of up to five years subject to the plot holder keeping to any conditions attached to the consent agreement and successful annual review.

Any persons wishing to raise concerns or objections in this matter should address them to the Allotments Officer at Colne Town Hall.

Telephone Number: **(01282) 332037**

Email: **Allotments@colnetowncouncil.org.uk**

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