

## **WICKHAM MARKET PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Policy for the keeping of Poultry on The Glebe and Simons Cross Allotment Sites, Wickham Market, Suffolk**

As from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2016, updated February 2022, the following rules will apply to the keeping of poultry on both the Glebe and Simons Cross Allotment Sites. This includes the maximum numbers of birds to be kept, their welfare and husbandry.

- Up to 4 birds will be allowed on a half plot taking up no more than 25% of the plot area.
- Up to 6 birds will be allowed on a full plot taking up no more than 25% of the plot area.
- The number of birds allowed is based on the Tenant and not on how many plots a tenant has, e.g. - if a tenant has one or more half plots they are still only allowed 4 birds. If a tenant has one or more full plots, they are still only allowed 6 birds.

### **NO COCKERELS ARE ALLOWED ON THE SITE AT ANY TIME**

#### **Housing**

- Housing should be warm, dry with no draughts but with good airflow.
- Plenty of bedding should be provided especially in nest boxes. This can be straw or wood shavings.
- The whole hen house should be cleaned weekly. With concentrated poop areas more frequently.
- Fresh water should be in a lidded container to avoid contamination and to be available at all times
- If ducks are kept, an open container of water, deep enough for the birds to submerge their heads, must be supplied at all times.
- Rat-proof feeders are mandatory. Extra feed kept on the site must also be kept in a rat proof container. This is also mandatory.
- Feeders should be removed from the feeding position and placed in a rat proof container overnight. A metal dustbin with a clip-on lid is ideal as this will also hold extra feed if it is kept on site. Plastic, bins or wheelie bins or any other plastic container are not acceptable as they do not deter rats.
- Grit must always be supplied. This aids digestion of the food in the bird's crop.
- Dust baths should be available under cover. These help the birds with their preening and helps to keep mites and other parasites at bay.

## **The outside run**

- The outside run should be fully enclosed and covered by wire netting or wire mesh. This should be sunk into the ground at an angle and directed outwards to a depth of 12 inches where possible. It should have ideally a mesh floor. This helps to deter vermin (rats and foxes). The top of the run must be covered by netting or mesh to prevent wild birds getting into the run (to protect against avian flu).
- The run should ideally be divided into two. This is so the birds can be run on grass on one side and when the grass needs to regrow the birds can be switched to the other side and so on.
- Green stuff should be made available at all times, more especially in the winter when the grass will take longer to recover and regrow.
- If the run becomes very muddy or waterlogged due to poor weather conditions, straw or wood shavings should be put down for the birds. It is appreciated that this entails more work for the plot holder but the bird's welfare has to come first.
- Some shelter over part of the run will help keep birds dry and perches across the corner of the run will also help to keep them off wet or muddy ground.
- The recommended maximum mesh size of the netted enclosure should be 25mm.

All poultry keepers must regularly review and obey the government rules regarding avian influenza. Please follow this link <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu>

Site Reps will inspect poultry and their husbandry once a month and check the plot holder's compliance against this policy and tenancy agreement in general.

Any tenants who wish to keep poultry on either allotment site must first speak to the Site Representative before doing so.

### **Advice and information taken from:-**

The National Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Association  
RSPCA (Welfare of Animals Kept on Allotments)  
DEFRA  
The Poultry Guide

Updated and approved February 14<sup>th</sup> 2022