



Addison Gardens Allotment Association

Chicken Keeping Minimum Requirements and Agreement

These minimum requirements have been drawn up with a clear focus on Animal welfare and the fact that the hens will mostly be on their own during the day. A plot holder engaging in the keeping of Hens on AGAA sites commits to a duty of care to the hens and is responsible for their wellbeing.

In addition to the AGAA guidelines the plot holder will have obtained a copy of the Code of Recommendation for the Welfare of Domestic Fowls from the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). In all cases this document has priority in any conflicting areas except for explicit legal requirements.

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/food-farm/animals/welfare/on-farm/poultry-welfare/>

If plot holders choose to keep hens on their plot they must check on them twice daily, provide competent care and management and have the knowledge and skills to ensure the well being of the hens. In addition plot holders are expected to keep the hens under proper control to avoid disturbance to others.

Number of Hens

A maximum of four hens per Named Plot Holder. If a plot is in joint names, including associate members, then a maximum of four hens for the plot will be allowed. If a plot holder has multiple plots then hens may only be kept on one plot, to a maximum of four hens in total. Hens are a social animal and need companionship and must be kept in groups. The minimum size group is two.

Please be aware that the average life of a hen can be eight years and that the active egg laying period is generally only for two to three years with the production of eggs reducing in the third year. The plot holder should therefore consider what they intend to do with the hens once the hens are no longer productive.

AGAA will charge directly to the Plot holder any costs incurred if the Plot Holder fails to look after the Hens appropriately or Abandons them. Such costs will include the compensation of time taken to deal with such problems.

The keeping of Cockerels is not permitted.

Failure to adhere to the AGAA Minimum Requirements may result in a breach of the tenancy agreement.



Housing Requirements:

In addition to effective containment, housing is also key in ensuring the welfare of the hens and should allow expression of natural behaviours.

Both a Henhouse and Outside run must be provided.

Henhouse

A fully enclosed shelter that provides a minimum size of 2 square feet (0.2m²) per Hen is required and must provide complete protection from predators.

A Clean dry bedding material to absorb moisture and odour must be used, suitable choices are;

- Wood shavings
- Straw
- EcoBed
- Aubiose

The henhouse must provide warmth during the colder months and shade during the summer. It must have adequate ventilation but be draught free.

Perches for sleeping must be provided, approximately 3-5cms wide with rounded corners to enable them to grip comfortably.

A nest box for laying eggs must be available.

In line with the existing restrictions on Allotments the maximum permitted size of building structure on an allotment is 6ft x 8ft and only one structure is permitted per allotment plot (green house is not included).

Outdoor Run

A fully enclosed caged run that provides a Minimum size of 0.75 m² per hen is required and it should provide the hens with plenty of space to dig, dust themselves and flap their wings.

The max total area of the Henhouse and Outdoor Run should not exceed 6 m².

Both the Henhouse and Outdoor Run must be regularly maintained to a good, tidy standard and free from obvious faults that may cause injury or health issues.



To minimise potential nuisance to neighbours the henhouse and outdoor run should be sited a minimum of 3 metres from adjacent boundaries abutting residential properties.

To prevent hens becoming too bored, perches, platforms and other items should be placed in the run. Happy hens lay more eggs.

Feed :

Hens should have continuous and plentiful access to cool, clean and fresh water. The provision of feed of a type appropriate to the age and species of hen, fed in sufficient quantities, and sufficiently frequently, to maintain them in good health and satisfy their nutritional need.

Insoluble grit to aid digestion must be provided.

Foodstuff should be stored such that it is kept clean, tidy and properly protected from rodents and other pests. It is not permitted for foodstuff to be scattered and an animal control feeding station is advised as an example of good practice.

Health

Hens must be visited at least twice daily.

The plot holder will be held responsible for ensuring that their hens are free from distress, pain, injury and disease. Appropriate preventative and/or veterinary treatment should be available at all times. The plot holder should ensure that the hens are vaccinated prior to arrival or at 6 weeks old. The Hens will need regular worming (twice a year) and clipping of claw nails to maintain them in a good healthy condition.

The hens must be registered with a local vet and the name and contact details of the vet provide to the AGAA Committee.

The hens must be checked regularly for lice and the houses treated for Red Mite.

The plot holder will allow a member of the AGAA to inspect the hens at any time. If the AGAA Committee deems necessary then the plot holder will comply to any requests for a hen, or hens, to be inspected by a Vet at the plot holders expense.



Any sick or injured birds must be removed immediately and treatment provided. The cause of any disease or injury will be identified and remedial action taken. Any national disease prevention and/or control programmes must be adhered to. Dead birds must be disposed of in accordance with the applicable provisions of the Animal By-Products Regulations 2003. It is not permitted for the burial or burning of hens on the site.

Land on which birds are kept may become 'fowl-sick'. The time this may take will depend on stocking rates, soil type and drainage. Muddy conditions lead to ill health and discomfort. It is therefore important that outdoor run is moved from time to time if floor of the run is not replaced regularly.

Sanitation

In order to maintain healthy Hens and reduce odour problems, the henhouse and run should be cleaned a minimum of once a week or more frequently as necessary. The waste will be removed from site or composted in a way that does not annoy others.

Poultry kept on the same ground for more than a month will need regular worming.

Nuisance to Neighbours & Cleanliness

Provided the hens are kept healthy and in clean conditions and food stuffs are stored such that they are kept clean, tidy and properly protected from rodents and other pests the keeping of Hens should not become a nuisance to others. Plot holders have a duty as part of the Allotment Tenancy Conditions not to cause a nuisance to others. In the keeping of hens on an allotment plot holder should take all reasonable measures to minimise potential nuisances.

The plot holder will be responsible for any damage to other plots should they escape. The value of the damage will be assessed by the AGAA Committee



Breeding

Plot holders are not permitted to breed hens on the allotment site.

References and more information on hen keeping can be found at;

<http://www.poultry.allotment.org.uk/>

<http://www.omlet.co.uk>

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Agreement to keep Hens (not cockerels)

Name of plot holder _____

Plot number _____

Emergency contact details: _____

Second contact: _____

Area of hen accommodation: _____

Number of hens to be kept: _____

Registered Veterinary Surgeon _____

Phone Number _____

Address _____

I agree to abide by the conditions as stated in this document.

Signed _____ plot holder

Date _____

Signed _____ on behalf of the Committee

Date _____