



Livestock (Chickens) Policy

Strategy / Guidelines Number	Version	Owner	Date published	Review date	Review Committee / Team
ENV/PO/004	1	ESM	09/12/2025	As required	Environment

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This policy establishes Salisbury City Council's responsibilities and approach to the management of livestock (chickens) on Council-owned allotments.
- 1.2 It sets out the principles guiding animal welfare, biosecurity, risk management, and community relations.
- 1.3 The aim is to ensure that chickens are kept in a safe, responsible, and welfare-friendly manner, contributing positively to the sustainability of allotment sites.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 Salisbury City Council supports the responsible keeping of hens (no cockerels) on allotments, recognising their contribution to sustainable living and local food production.
- 2.2 The Council will ensure that animal welfare standards are met, that livestock does not create nuisance or risk to others, and that all statutory obligations are observed.
- 2.3 Written consent must be obtained from Council Officers before any chickens are kept on allotment land.
- 2.4 All livestock activities must comply with relevant national legislation, including:
 - The **Animal Welfare Act 2006**;
 - The **Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007**;
 - The **Animal Health Act 1981**.
- 2.5 Mandatory registration with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) within one month of keeping any poultry or captive birds, as required by law since 1 October 2024.
- 2.6 Permission may be withdrawn if welfare standards are not maintained, or if livestock causes nuisance, health risks, or breaches tenancy conditions.

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 The Council has a duty of care under health, safety, and animal welfare legislation to ensure that activities on its land do not create unreasonable risk or suffering.
- 3.2 The Council's Allotments Service is responsible for granting, monitoring, and if necessary, withdrawing permissions for livestock keeping.
- 3.3 Tenants are responsible for:
 - The care and welfare of their chickens;
 - Maintaining hygienic, safe, and secure accommodation;
 - Preventing nuisance, odour, or vermin;
 - Complying with all national and local requirements.
- 3.4 Tenants must register their birds with APHA and provide proof of registration to the Council upon request.

- 3.5 All permissions will be subject to ongoing review, and the Council reserves the right to inspect any site where livestock is kept.

4. Conditions of Keeping Chickens

- 4.1 A tenant may keep a maximum of six (6) hens with the Council's written consent. Cockerels are not permitted.
- 4.2 Chickens must be kept solely for the tenant's personal use and not for commercial breeding or sale.
- 4.3 Hens must be provided with:
- A secure and weatherproof henhouse, offering at least 1 sq. metre per bird of indoor space;
 - An enclosed outdoor run, providing at least 1 sq. metre per bird of external space;
 - Perches and nest boxes;
 - Access to clean water, food, and shade at all times.
- 4.4 Feed must be stored in sealed containers to prevent attracting vermin.
- 4.5 The henhouse and run must be cleaned regularly to prevent odour, pests, or disease.
- 4.6 Livestock must not be allowed to roam freely on allotment sites or adjoining plots.

5. Animal Welfare & Biosecurity

- 5.1 Tenants must ensure the health and welfare of their chickens at all times in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006, including the Five Freedoms:
- Freedom from hunger and thirst;
 - Freedom from discomfort;
 - Freedom from pain, injury, or disease;
 - Freedom to express normal behaviour;
 - Freedom from fear and distress.
- 5.2 If disease is suspected or confirmed (including Avian Influenza), the tenant must:
- Immediately notify the Council; and
 - Follow all Government and DEFRA guidance for containment and reporting.
- 5.3 Any deceased birds must be disposed of safely and legally, not on-site.
- 5.4 Registration with APHA helps monitor and prevent avian influenza and other diseases.

6. Hygiene, Safety & Nuisance Prevention

- 6.1 The keeping of chickens must not be prejudicial to health or a nuisance to other tenants or nearby residents.
- 6.2 The tenant must:
- Maintain the coop and surrounding area in a clean, sanitary condition;

- Manage waste to prevent odour and contamination;
- Store feed in sealed vermin-proof containers;
- Take steps to deter rats, foxes, and pests.

6.3 The Council may require removal of chickens or structures if hygiene or nuisance issues arise.

7. Livestock Clause

7.1 Except with the prior written consent of the Council, the Tenant shall not keep any animals or livestock on the Allotment Garden. If the Council consents, following a period of six (6) months, a maximum of six (6) chickens (no cockerels) can be kept on an allotment. Chickens must be kept so that they are not prejudicial to health or nuisance.

7.2 This clause applies in conjunction with all other requirements set out in this policy.

7.3 Permission to keep livestock may be reviewed or withdrawn by the Council if conditions are not maintained.

8. Structures & Equipment

8.1 Chicken houses and runs must be of solid, safe construction, positioned within the plot, and approved by the Council prior to installation.

8.2 All structures must comply with allotment size and aesthetic guidelines and be maintained in good condition.

8.3 Portable or moveable runs are encouraged where practicable to avoid ground contamination.

9. Insurance & Risk

9.1 Tenants are encouraged to hold Public Liability Insurance that covers livestock keeping.

9.2 The Council accepts no responsibility for loss, injury, or damage to livestock caused by disease, theft, or predators.

10. Withdrawal of Consent

10.1 The Council may withdraw permission to keep chickens, giving at least 40 days' notice, if:

- Welfare or hygiene standards are not maintained;
- Livestock causes nuisance or health issues;
- The tenant breaches any conditions of this policy or tenancy agreement.

10.2 All costs associated with removal of livestock or structures are the tenant's responsibility.

11. Review

- 11.1 This policy will be reviewed every three years, or sooner if required by legislative or welfare changes.
- 11.2 Consultation with tenants and local animal welfare advisors will form part of any review.