

Keeping livestock on your allotment

Under Section 12 of the Allotment Act 1950, subject to certain conditions, the keeping of rabbits and/or hens (but not cockerels) is allowed on an allotment. Anyone keeping these animals must comply with animal welfare guidelines.

Under the terms of the lease between Brundall Parish Council and Norfolk County Council (the land owner) each allotment holder is allowed a maximum of 5 chickens (hens only). **Allotment tenants must complete a Livestock Registration Form and request permission from Brundall Parish Council before adding any livestock to their plot.**

Chickens

Any structure to house chickens (hens only), such as a henhouse and/or run, must comply with the terms of the allotment rules, and in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act.

The RSPCA recommend a floor space of 0.4m² per bird. The allotment rules allow the keeping of 5 hens. The minimum floor space for 5 hens would therefore be 2.0m². [RSPCA Guidance](#).

Access to clean water must be provided at all times. All food must be stored in sealed containers.

Please check the allotment rules first to ensure that any structure to house the hens meets with the correct size and position required.

Rabbits

Any structure to house rabbits, such as a hutch and/or run, must comply with the terms of the allotment rules, and in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act.

Rabbits need companionship and normally prefer to be with other rabbits. They are also athletic and need plenty of exercise. [RSPCA Guidance](#).

Access to clean water must be provided at all times, and the housing cleaned regularly. All food must be stored in sealed containers.

Please check the allotment rules first to ensure that any structure to house the rabbits meets with the correct size and position required.

Other legislation

Section 9 of the [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#) makes owners and keepers legally responsible for making sure that the welfare needs of their animals are met. Failure to comply with the Act may result in criminal prosecution leading or a fine of up to £5,000 or imprisonment.¹

Allotment plot holders should make sure they are aware of the Animal Welfare Act and keep up to date with any changes.

¹ Correct at time of publication.

The basic requirements of the Act are to ensure that livestock has:

- A suitable place to live
- A suitable diet

And the animals are:

- Able to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- Housed with, or apart from, other animals as applicable
- Protected from pain, injury, suffering, and disease

Any allotment plot holder who fails to comply with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 may be asked to remove the livestock. The Parish Council reserves the right to remove and dispose of the animals themselves if a plot holder fails to comply with the legislation and requests to improve the conditions the animals are living in.

Failure to care adequately for any animals on an allotment plot may also result in termination of the tenancy.

Housing and runs for Chickens and Rabbits

Please check the allotment rules first to ensure that your structure meets with the maximum size allowed (8ft x 6ft), and also the minimum size required for that particular livestock. Please also ensure the position of the structure meets the requirements of the allotment rules.

The allotment site in Brundall is close to the river and railway line. In order to minimise the number of rats on the allotment site, when either chickens or rabbits are kept, the plot holder must have at least 2 rat traps, which are baited/set and regularly checked.

Information from your Tenancy Agreement

Schedule 1, item 7 Livestock

7.1 Except with the prior written consent of the Council the Tenant shall not keep any animals or livestock on the Plot save rabbits and hens (no cockerels) to the extent permitted by Section 12 of the Allotment Act 1950. Such animals are not to be kept for trade or business purposes. A maximum of 5 hens and 2 rabbits is allowed.

7.2 Tenants with livestock shall:

- Comply with all animal welfare legislation
- Ensure that they have adequate housing, diet and water
- Arrange for them to be checked at least once a day
- Ensure that they are not prejudicial to health or a nuisance
- Comply with any restrictions or regulations imposed by the relevant government department or agency
- Store all food in sealed containers