



MACCLESFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

LIVESTOCK POLICY

Document Version Control

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ALLOTMENT LIVESTOCK POLICY

(Rabbits and Chickens Only – No Cockerels)

1. Purpose of the Policy

1.1 This policy sets out the conditions under which livestock may be kept on allotment gardens managed by the Council/Association.

1.2 The policy is intended to ensure that livestock is kept:

- responsibly and humanely;
 - without risk to health or safety;
 - without nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring residents; and
 - in compliance with relevant legislation.
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2. Permitted Livestock

2.1 Subject to compliance with this policy, the Council/Association permits the keeping of the following livestock **only**:

- a) **Rabbits**; and
- b) **Chickens (hens only)**.
- c) **Bees** (subject to the beekeeping policy)

2.2 **Cockerels are strictly prohibited** under all circumstances due to noise nuisance.

3. Prior Permission

3.1 Plot holders must obtain **written permission** from the Council/Association **before** introducing any rabbits or chickens onto their plot. This will involve completing an application form.

3.2 Permission may be refused or withdrawn where the Council/Association considers that:

- the plot is unsuitable;
 - the number of animals is excessive;
 - previous compliance has been unsatisfactory; or
 - complaints or welfare concerns arise.
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4. Numbers and Welfare

4.1 Livestock must be kept **only in reasonable numbers**, appropriate to the size of the plot and accommodation provided. Remember that 75% of the plot should be cultivated as an allotment plot.

4.2 Animals must be:

- housed in secure, weatherproof, and well-ventilated accommodation;
- provided with adequate food, clean water, and shelter at all times; and
- kept in a clean and hygienic condition.

4.3 Livestock must not be kept for **trade or business purposes** and are permitted for personal use only (e.g. eggs for household consumption).

4.4 Anyone keeping hens will need to register them with DEFRA.

5. Health, Nuisance, and Cleanliness

5.1 Livestock must be managed so as **not to cause nuisance**, including (but not limited to):

- noise, smell, flies, or vermin;
- risk to public health; or
- distress to other plot holders or neighbouring residents.

5.2 Any signs of disease must be dealt with promptly and appropriately.

5.3 Feed must be stored securely so as not to attract rats or other vermin.

5.4 Any waste arising from livestock must be disposed of responsibly and must not be allowed to accumulate.

6. Inspection and Compliance

6.1 Authorised representatives of the Council/Association may inspect livestock accommodation and welfare arrangements at reasonable times and by prior arrangement (except in emergencies).

6.2 Failure to comply with this policy, or with reasonable instructions issued by the Association, may result in:

- withdrawal of permission to keep livestock; and/or
- enforcement action under the plot holder's tenancy agreement.
- Anyone keeping hens will need to register them with DEFRA and evidence may be requested of this.

7. Insurance and Liability

7.1 Plot holders keeping livestock must hold **adequate individual insurance**, including **public liability insurance**, covering injury or damage arising from the keeping of animals.

7.2 The Council/Association and the landowner accept **no responsibility** for loss, damage, illness, or injury to livestock, or for any claims arising from them.

8. Withdrawal of Permission

8.1 The Council/Association reserves the right to withdraw permission to keep livestock at any time where:

- this policy is breached;
- nuisance or welfare issues arise; or
- the keeping of livestock is no longer considered appropriate.

8.2 Where permission is withdrawn, livestock must be removed from the Allotment Site within a reasonable timescale specified by the Council/Association.

9. Keeping of rabbits

Rabbits may be kept on allotment gardens only for companionship or show purposes.

Rabbits **must not be kept for meat production**, breeding for meat, or any commercial purpose.

The slaughter of rabbits **is not permitted on the allotment site under any circumstances.**

Any plot holder found to be keeping rabbits for meat, or in breach of this policy, may have permission to keep livestock withdrawn and may be subject to enforcement action under their tenancy agreement.

10. Review of Policy

9.1 This policy may be reviewed and amended by the Council/Association from time to time.

9.2 The current version of this policy will be made available to all plot holders on request.
