Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Declaration of Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (England) – mandatory biosecurity measures

1. The Secretary of State has carried out a risk assessment under article 6(1) of the Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) (No 2) Order 2006[1] as amended ("the Order").
2. To reduce the risk of the transmission of avian influenza to poultry and other captive birds from wild birds or any other source, the Secretary of State considers it necessary to declare, and hereby declares, the area described in **Schedule 7** to this declaration to be an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone.
3. **All keepers** of poultry and other captive birds, including pet birds, in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone **must comply** with the minimum biosecurity measures in **Schedule 1** to this declaration (subject to paragraphs 9 and 10 below).
4. **All keepers who keep 500 or more** poultry or other captive birds in premises in any part of the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone must comply with the measures in **Schedule 1 and in addition comply with the measures in Schedule 2** to this declaration (subject to paragraph 5)**.** The requirements in Schedule 2 do not apply in relation to premises licensed under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.
5. The additional biosecurity measures in **Schedule 3** to this declaration apply in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone to game bird farmers, game bird keepers and anyone involved in rearing, releasing or shooting game birds.
6. The provisions in **Schedule 4** to this declaration apply in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone to all poultry or other captive birds in premises licensed under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981.
7. The provisions in **Schedule 5** to this declaration apply in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone to all keepers of racing pigeons, doves or other Columbiformes.
8. The provisions of **Schedule 6** to this declaration apply in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone to all keepers of birds of prey or other birds trained to fly from hand or under close control in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone**.**
9. The measures in this declaration:
   i. apply from 09.00 on 11 November 2026; and
   ii. shall remain in force until it is amended or revoked by further declaration.
10. This declaration is made under article 6(1)(a) of the Order.

Signed:

Gordon Hickman

22.30 on 10 November 2026

Authorised by the Secretary of State

Copies of this Declaration and of the Order are available via https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu and from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2nd floor, Seacole Block, 2 Marsham Street, SW1P 4DF.

Failure to comply with this Declaration may be an offence under section 73 of the Animal Health Act 1981.

[1] S.I. 2006/2702 (as amended)

Notes:

(1) Where avian influenza is confirmed in poultry or other captive birds at an individual premises, Protection and Surveillance Zones are declared to prevent the spread of disease beyond the area around the infected farm. Keepers of poultry or other captive birds kept within a Protection Zone or Surveillance Zone (or temporary control zones or other low pathogenic restricted zones) must comply with the biosecurity requirements declared specifically for such zones. This does not remove the obligation to comply with the additional biosecurity measures required by this Declaration, including enhanced biosecurity measures in Schedule 2 of this declaration if the premises contains 500 or more poultry or other captive birds

(2) “other captive bird” means a bird kept in captivity which is not poultry and includes a pet bird and a bird kept for shows, races, exhibitions, competitions, breeding or for sale;

(3) “poultry” means a bird reared or kept in captivity for purposes of—

(i) the production of meat or eggs for consumption or other poultry products;

(ii) restocking supplies of game; or

(iii) any breeding programme for the production of such categories of birds or products specified in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii);

but does not include any bird that is kept for the purposes of a single household, where the bird and its keeper have no direct or indirect contact with other poultry or poultry facilities, and the bird and products of the bird are used exclusively within, or for the purposes of the same household.

(4) “keeper” for the purpose of this Declaration means any person who is responsible for poultry or other captive birds, whether on a permanent or temporary basis but does not include a person responsible for them solely because he is transporting them

(5) “premises” for the purpose of this Declaration means any house, shed, aviary, range, coop, netted area, yard or open area which is used to keep poultry or other captive birds and includes contiguous ancillary areas such as bird feed bins, and storage of bird manure.

(6) “under cover” means an area where feed and water are placed which must be covered to prevent it being accessed or contaminated by wild birds. Placing feed on the ground or in uncovered troughs to which wild birds can gain access is not permitted.

(7) “zoo” means a zoo/aquarium or premises within the meaning of section 1(2) of the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 which is operated under the authority of a licence under that Act or is subject to a dispensation, in a direction under section 14(1) of the Act, to the effect that the Act shall not apply to that zoo.

(8) “anseriformes” refers to an order of birds including ducks, geese and swans.

(9) “ratites” refers to a group of birds including ostriches, emus and rheas.

(10) “galliformes” refers to an order of birds including turkeys, chickens, quail, partridges and pheasants

(11) “game bird” means any pheasant, partridge, grouse (or moor game), black (or heath) game or ptarmigan or ducks bred for shooting

(12) “private veterinarian” includes a zoo veterinarian

(13) Nothing in this Declaration removes obligations on keepers of poultry or other captive birds to comply with existing animal welfare requirements. Private veterinary advice should be sought by a keeper who is concerned about the suitability of housing conditions.

(14) Guidance on biosecurity measures for poultry and kept birds may be found in Animal Health Act biosecurity guidance at https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-flu-avian-influenza-how-to-prevent-it-and-stop-it-spreading and https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-flu-avian-influenza-housing-your-birds-safely .

(15) Anyone who keeps poultry or other captive birds must keep a close watch on them for any signs of disease and must seek prompt advice from their vet if they have any concerns. For details of how to report suspicion of disease see www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu.

Schedule 1 - Minimum biosecurity measures applying to all keepers

(1) Any keeper of poultry (including game birds and pet birds) or other captive birds, irrespective of how they are kept, must take appropriate and practicable steps to ensure that–

(a) precautions are taken to avoid the direct or indirect transfer of virus contamination onto and between premises, including cleansing and disinfection of equipment, vehicles, and footwear;

(b) all bird keepers must place foot dip containing Defra-approved poultry disinfectant at the correct dilution rate at strategic points including at the entry and exit of all houses or outdoor areas where birds are kept, and footwear must be cleaned using the dips on entry and exit or alternatively disposable over-shoes or footwear should be changed when moving between bird and non-bird areas;

(c) feed, water and bedding are stored under cover, and steps are taken to prevent access by wild birds and to minimise the risk of virus contamination. Any straw used for bedding must be covered and access to it by wild birds and rodents prevented;

(d) there is no direct contact with poultry or other captive birds on neighbouring premises;

(e) effective vermin control is carried out in any part of the premises where poultry or other captive birds are kept;

(f) birds of prey are not fed anything that may have been exposed to virus, including wild waterfowl;

(g) the movement of people (other than in a zoo), vehicles or equipment to and from the part of the premises where poultry are kept is reduced to only essential movements for looking after their welfare, collecting eggs and feeding or movements for official or inspection visits;

(h) records are kept (other than in a zoo) of all vehicles that enter any part of the premises where poultry are kept and of all people who come into any direct contact with the poultry

(2) Any keeper of poultry (including game birds and pet birds) or other captive birds, irrespective of how they are kept, must keep records of poultry, captive birds and egg movements and make them available to an inspector or veterinary inspector on demand. Records should include:

(a) the quantity and description (including species of bird or type of egg) transported or marketed;

(b) the date of the movement off the premises;

(c) the premises of destination (if known);

(d) the name and address of the person to whom ownership or possession is being or has been transferred;

(e) the name and address of the person to whom eggs or other poultry products have been sold or gifted

(3) Records of all poultry and other captive bird deaths and disposal must be kept and made available to an inspector on demand. Records must include:

- date of death and any clinical signs;
- date of disposal and location of relevant animal by-product disposal facility

(4) Any keeper of poultry (including game birds and pet birds) or other captive birds, irrespective of how they are kept, must take appropriate and practicable steps, that can be demonstrated to an inspector on request, to ensure that–

(a) buildings that house the birds are maintained and any defects that allow water ingress or other contamination to enter the building are rectified without undue delay.

(b) anseriformes including ducks and geese are not kept in the same pen or building as other bird species (other than in a zoo);

(5) Bird keepers must immediately report to the Animal and Plant Health Agency any increased morbidity (illness) or mortality (deaths) or significant drop in egg production or, where relevant, feed or water intake, or other relevant information relating to the production of eggs on the premises.

(6) Wild game birds "caught up" during the open season (under the Game Act 1831) must not be moved until a minimum of 21 days from the date of catching-up has elapsed, unless the movement is—

(a) direct and licensed by a veterinary inspector or by an inspector under the direction of a veterinary inspector and which may be subject to conditions; or

(b) within the same premises.

The keeper must keep a record of the date of catching up and the number of birds caught up each day. The 21-day standstill applies from the date the last bird was caught up or the date the last bird arrives at the premises where they are to be kept.

A licence may not be granted unless a veterinary inspector has considered:

(i) the risk of the possible spread of avian influenza if the licence were granted;

(ii) the effectiveness of biosecurity at the destination to prevent contact between the birds moved and other birds; and

(iii) any precautionary measures which should be taken before commencing, during or after the movement.

"caught up" in the context of this paragraph refers to the practice of gathering together wild game birds to be held in captivity for the purpose of restocking supplies of game or any breeding programme for the production of such birds.

Schedule 2 – Enhanced biosecurity measures for premises with 500 or more poultry or other captive birds

(1) Any keeper of 500 or more poultry or other captive birds must, in addition to the minimum measures set out in Schedule 1, apply the measures in paragraphs (2)-(4) of this Schedule in the following parts of the kept bird premises–

(a) a poultry/captive bird (live-bird) part (for example, in the Lion code this area is referred to as the 'Specific' area; and in Red Tractor as 'bird biosecure areas');

(b) a private (ancillary use) part (for example, in the Lion code this area is referred to as the 'General' area; and in Red Tractor as 'general biosecure areas'); and

(c) a restricted access (bio-secure barrier) part.

(2) The following measures apply to a poultry/captive bird (live-bird) part of the premises–

(a) access must be restricted to essential authorised personnel only;

(b) keepers must operate effective barrier hygiene, including changing clothing and footwear, before entering and on exit from the live-bird part;

(c) only essential equipment and vehicles are permitted to enter the live-bird part;

(d) the exterior of any vehicles, including fork-lifts and pallet trolleys (particularly wheels and wheel arches) and equipment which enter or leave the live-bird part of the premises must be cleansed and disinfected on both entry and exit;

(e) thorough cleansing and disinfecting (based on industry best practice) of housing and equipment must be undertaken at the end of a production cycle and before new birds are introduced; and

(f) records must be kept of vehicles and personnel entering and leaving the live-bird part.

(3) The following measures apply to a private (ancillary use) part of the premises–

(a) access must be limited to essential personnel only, and full biosecurity practices should be adopted on entry and exit to the part of the premises;

(b) this part of the premises should be fully separated from the live-bird part with a clear demarcation;

(c) waste and fallen stock must be held in appropriately biosecure facilities in this part of the premises with clear separation between both the live-bird part and the restricted access bio-secure barrier part; and

(d) the exterior of any vehicles (focusing on wheels and wheel arches) which enters or leaves the part must be cleansed and disinfected on both entry and exit.

(e) egg producers should ensure the packing, handling and storage of second quality eggs / farm seconds is managed in a biosecure manner. Plastic egg trays must be cleansed and disinfected before use and records maintained as detailed in Schedule 1 (2).

(4) The following measures apply to the restricted access (bio-secure barrier) part of the premises–

(a) access by the public must be controlled and only essential workers or contractors should enter this bio-secure barrier part; and

(b) non-essential vehicles must not enter this bio-secure barrier part.

(c) Keepers must regularly inspect the fabric and structural integrity of any building used to house poultry for holes and leaks, with particular emphasis on roofs, gutters and

downpipes. Any holes and leaks must be repaired without undue delay as many recent cases of avian influenza have been linked to water ingress and flooding.

(d) wild game birds must not be fed within 500m of the restricted access part of the premises where this area is under the control of the keeper.

Schedule 3 – Enhanced biosecurity measures for game bird premises

(1) Any game bird farmers, game bird keepers or managers of shoots must ensure that they and anyone under their direction involved in the rearing or releasing of game birds, in addition to the measures set out in Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 (where applicable), apply the measures in this Schedule.

(2) Birds must not be put in a release pen if they show any signs suggestive of notifiable avian disease.

(3) All individuals entering a rearing or release pen must ensure that their clothing is clean when entering the pen.

(4) To minimise the spread of avian influenza between release pens and release areas, all individuals must do one or other of the following when entering and exiting each release pen:

(a) use a foot dip containing Defra-approved poultry disinfectant at the correct dilution rate. The disinfectant should be at least ankle deep and under cover to avoid dilution by rain or exposure to UV light. Disinfectant should be regularly replenished. Prior to using the foot dip, use a brush to remove any soil or organic matter from their footwear and pay particular attention to the soles and tread. The foot dip should be placed as close to the entrance as possible.

(b) use dedicated footwear when inside the release pen – leave general footwear outside the release pen and do not walk on ground outside the release pen in the dedicated footwear.

(5) Prior to entry to a premises where birds are kept, the exterior of any vehicles must be cleansed and disinfected. The exterior of vehicles that are in regular use on holdings or sites that have several release pens or premises, must be cleansed and disinfected each time they re-enter the site after leaving.

(6) The following measures apply to feeding and watering stations:

(a) there must be at least one feeding station per 60 released gamebirds to reduce gamebird density per station. For pheasants, feeders should be placed in areas they like to feed but where less attractive to wild birds;

(b) feeding and watering stations must be inspected daily and cleaned as appropriate to remove soiling with faecal matter and feathers;

(c) feeding stations must be under cover to avoid contamination from wild bird droppings. Where possible drinkers should also be covered;

(d) consider moving feeding and watering stations regularly (and at least once a week) to avoid accumulation of faecal matter and feathers;

(e) any spilled feed that could attract wild birds must be removed daily;

(f) pheasants kept in release pens should not be fed within 50 metres of a water body regularly frequented by ducks and other waterfowl;

(g) gamebirds kept in release pens should not be fed within 500 metres of any other poultry or kept birds;

(h) effective vermin control is carried out in release pens.

(7) Game birds kept in release pens must be checked daily for signs of avian influenza. Any birds showing clinical signs that are suggestive of avian influenza must receive immediate and appropriate attention, including discussing the clinical signs with a veterinary surgeon. Any suspicion of avian influenza must be reported to the Animal and Plant Health Agency immediately. Further information on game bird welfare is available in the: Code of practice for the welfare of gamebirds reared for sporting purposes - GOV.UK

(8) Keepers of game birds must conduct a daily search of the area within and up to a 50 metre radius surrounding the perimeter of release pen(s) (whilst in use) or where birds are being fed and watered, for carcases of dead game birds and/or dead wild birds.

(9) Any keeper of game birds, irrespective of how they are kept, must keep records of the number of birds put in release pens, visitors and details of bird morbidity and mortalities, and movements on and off the premises, and make them available to an inspector or veterinary inspector on demand. Records should include:

(a) date (s) and number of birds put in release pens or release areas

(b) date and number of bird mortalities, including those euthanized through human dispatch

(c) date of onset of any clinical signs suggestive of avian influenza

(d) date and name of visitors to and purpose of visit (including staff) to the premises

(e) date and details of deliveries, collections and live bird movements to or from the premises (and contact details including name and phone number).

(10) Any dead wild game birds (where cause of death is unknown), gulls, waterfowl or birds of prey found on game bird premises or within 50 metres of the premises or any feeding stations should be reported to Defra using the online reporting service for dead wild birds. Alternatively, dead wild birds can be reported by phone: 03459 33 55 77 (find out about call charges). Individuals should record the unique reference number as evidence that the incident has been reported. The report will be triaged and the carcasses may be collected for testing. If it is not collected within 96 hours it can be assumed it is not required for Avian Influenza testing, and the carcasses must be appropriately disposed of. For information on disposal of carcasses, please see: Removing and disposing of dead wild birds - GOV.UK.

Schedule 4 – Zoos/Aquariums

(1) A keeper of poultry or other captive birds kept at a premises licensed under the Zoo Licensing Act 1981 does not need to comply with the measures set out in Schedule 2 in relation to those birds if they take reasonable and practicable steps to prevent the risk of the spread of avian influenza at those premises. These must include–

(a) assessing the risk of public access to indoor kept bird enclosures;

(b) controlling entry to outdoor kept bird enclosures, including by limiting such entry to essential staff. Where appropriate, access may be provided to visitors, with measures in place to minimise any disease spread, but only where thorough and regularly reviewed risk assessment made in consultation with a private veterinarian produces robust justification;

(c) requiring staff, keepers and volunteers to wear suitable personal protective equipment, in particular if they have direct contact with the birds;

(d) installing disinfectant mats at all points of entry and exit to bird areas / houses that are for use by visiting members of the public, if members of the public are to be admitted to areas of the zoo in which poultry or other captive birds are kept,

(e) making handwashing facilities available to visiting members of the public if the public are to be admitted to areas of the zoo in which poultry or other captive birds are kept; and

(2) In all cases keepers must ensure they meet the needs of their birds in compliance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

Schedule 5 – Release of Racing Pigeons, Doves and other *Columbiformes*

(1) Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 (where applicable) to this declaration are subject to the following provisions, which apply to all keepers of racing pigeons, doves or other columbiformes in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone:

(a) Contact between racing pigeons, doves or other Columbiformes either directly or indirectly with wild birds must be minimised wherever possible.

(b) Pigeons from the same loft/pigeon house may be transported to a point some distance from the home loft/pigeon house and released/liberated and allowed to return to the loft/pigeon house as part of a training and conditioning programme. The vehicle used and baskets/boxes must be cleansed and disinfected using a government approved disinfectant.

(c) Provided the gathering is registered with APHA and the conditions of the "General licence to arrange a fair, market, show, exhibition or other gathering involving the collecting together of captive birds in England" are complied with, pigeon racing and multi-loft training are permitted whilst the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone is in force. Birds may be basketed, marked and transported to a liberation site and released to fly back to their home loft/pigeon house. The vehicle/transporter and baskets/boxes must be cleansed and disinfected using a government approved disinfectant.

(d) Pigeons, doves and other *Columbiformes* may be transported to another location and released to fly free at functions and events provided the birds are either gathered again and returned to their home premises as soon as practical or they fly to return to their home premises. Care should be taken to avoid locations where there are large numbers of wild birds or domestic poultry. An event where birds from more than one premises are present is a bird gathering and must be registered with APHA and meet the conditions of "General licence to arrange a fair, market, show, exhibition or other gathering involving the collecting together of captive birds in England".

Schedule 6 – Flying from hand or under close control of birds of prey and other species (excluding anseriformes and galliformes)

(1) Schedule 1 and Schedule 2 to this declaration are subject to the following provisions, which apply to all keepers of birds of prey or other species of bird trained to fly from hand or under close control in the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone:

(a) Contact between these birds either directly or indirectly with wild birds must be minimised wherever possible.

(b) A bird of prey used for pest control may be transported to another place some distance from the home premises, provided that place is not within a disease control zone declared under The Avian Influenza and Influenza of Avian Origin in Mammals (England) (No.2) Order (as amended), and flown from hand for the purposes of pest control. The vehicle used and baskets/boxes/transport must be cleansed and disinfected using a government approved disinfectant.

(c) Provided the gathering is registered with APHA and the conditions of the “General licence to arrange a fair, market, show, exhibition or other gathering involving the collecting together of captive birds in England” are complied with, gatherings of birds of prey or other species of bird trained to fly from hand or under close control, other than anseriformes and galliformes, are permitted whilst the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone is in force. The vehicle/transporter and baskets/boxes must be cleansed and disinfected using a Defra approved disinfectant.

(d) Birds of prey and other species (excluding anseriformes and galliformes) may be transported to another location and released to fly from hand or under close control at events provided the birds are gathered again and returned to their home premises as soon as practical. Care should be taken to avoid locations where there are large numbers of wild birds or domestic poultry. An event where birds from more than one premises are present is a bird gathering and must be registered with APHA and meet the conditions of the “General licence to arrange a fair, market, show, exhibition or other gathering involving the collecting together of captive birds in England”.

(e) If during any free-flying from hand or under close control, visual contact with the bird is lost for more than a minute, or the bird catches another wild bird, the bird must be isolated and closely monitored for a period of 14 days before being allowed to free-fly from hand or under close control again.

Schedule 7 - Avian Influenza Prevention Zone

The Avian Influenza Prevention Zone applies to the whole of England. The precise extent of the zone is as set out on the [APHA Interactive Disease Map]

Avian Influenza Prevention Zone with Mandatory Biosecurity
10 November 2026

