

New prevention zone to stop spread of avian influenza

From 8pm on 21 November 2021, a new avian influenza prevention zone will be declared in parts of North Yorkshire in England, namely the districts of Harrogate, Hambleton and Richmondshire, which means that it is a legal requirement for all bird keepers in that area to keep their birds indoors and to follow strict biosecurity measures in order to limit the spread of and eradicate the disease.

Following a risk assessment, a localised avian influenza prevention zone with additional housing measures has been declared in these districts to help minimise the risk from wild birds and other sources. Housing is however only one part of disease prevention and control and it is essential that all bird keepers implement the highest standards of biosecurity both at the perimeter of their properties and within the premises to prevent disease being spread between different houses.

The Government Chief Veterinary Officer is urging bird keepers to act immediately in response to the new housing localised measures, including taking steps to safeguard animal welfare, consult their vet and where necessary put up additional housing.

The Chief Veterinary Officer, Christine Middlemiss, said:

We have taken swift action to limit the risk from wild birds and have introduced a legal requirement for all poultry and captive bird keepers three districts in North Yorkshire to keep their birds housed and to implement enhanced biosecurity.

Whether you keep just a few birds or thousands, from 8PM today onwards you will be legally required to keep your birds indoors. We have not taken this decision lightly, but it is the best way to protect your birds from this highly infectious disease.

I urge all bird keepers to be vigilant and take all necessary steps to implement the highest standards of biosecurity.

Public health advice is that the risk to human health from the virus is very low and food standards bodies advise that avian influenza pose a very low food safety risk for UK consumers, and it does not affect the consumption of poultry products including eggs.

For more advice and regular updates on the latest situation, visit the Government's [avian flu page \(England\)](#).

Poultry and captive bird keepers should report suspicion of disease to APHA in England on 03000 200 301, Wales on 0300 3038268 and in Scotland through

the [Local Field Service Office](#).

Further information

- 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 if the premises contains a large numbers of birds.
- Biosecurity advice can be found [here](#)
- Avian influenza is in no way connected to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and is not carried in poultry.
- For more advice and regular updates on the latest situation, visit Governments' avian flu pages: in England, Scotland, Wales and NI.
- Food safety advice for cooking poultry and eggs remains unchanged. See NHS advice on safe cooking of eggs and poultry.
- We publish a report (updated regularly) on findings of highly pathogenic avian influenza (bird flu) in wild birds in Great Britain available [here](#), and further information on avian influenza findings in wild birds in GB and Europe can be found in our [outbreak assessments](#).