

[Press release: Avian Flu measures to be relaxed in England from 15 May](#)

Measures currently in place to reduce the risk of Avian Influenza in England will be lifted from 15 May 2017 following the latest risk assessment from Defra, the UK Chief Veterinary Officer has announced.

The [Avian Influenza Prevention Zone \(AIPZ\)](#) currently in place will be lifted in England on 15 May 2017. From this date, keepers will no longer be required by law to follow specific disease prevention measures to reduce the risk of infection from wild birds. They should continue to follow industry standard best practice on biosecurity, including minimising movement in and out of bird enclosures, cleaning footwear, keeping areas where birds live clean and tidy and feeding birds indoors.

A [ban on poultry gatherings](#) has been in place since 20 December to reduce the risk of infected poultry passing the virus to other birds. This ban will be lifted in England on 15 May 2017, meaning bird gatherings can then resume, subject to some additional identity and health checks and biosecurity measures.

The Government continually reviews disease control measures in light of new scientific evidence and veterinary advice. The [latest assessment from Defra](#) is that the overall risk in England has fallen from 'medium' to 'low', comparable with risk levels in November 2016, and should continue to fall in warmer, drier spring weather conditions.

Based on this assessment, the decision has been taken to lift measures on 15 May, provided there are no further cases in poultry or findings of H5N8 in wild birds.

The most recent case of H5N8 in poultry in England was confirmed on 24 February 2017 and the last finding in wild birds was on 10 March 2017.

Further information

- Confidence that the risk has fallen sufficiently to lift the remaining statutory disease control measures will have increased further by 15 May if there are no more cases in domestic poultry, including those now returned to free range and thus at highest risk, or findings in wild birds. In parallel the risk from residual infection in the environment will continue to reduce as higher temperatures and light levels and drier conditions accelerate the inactivation of the virus. [Read the latest risk assessment](#).
- Members of the public should report dead wild birds – such as swans, geese, ducks, gulls or birds of prey – to the Defra helpline on 03459 33 55 77. Defra will then collect some of these birds and test them to help

us understand how the disease is distributed geographically and in different types of bird.

- Public Health England advises the risk to public health is very low and the Food Standards Agency has said there is no food safety risk for UK consumers.
- [Find out more about avian flu.](#)