

Poultry Gatherings Guidance

Guidance

A bird gathering is an occasion at which poultry and/or other captive birds are brought together from different locations (for any purpose) and afterwards moving to destination premises (may be original location or new). This includes, typically, an auction or show, but can also be a display, a rehoming or internet sale organiser, and even describe birds in transit, when travelling from multiple sites.

Before embarking on a poultry gathering, organisers must first notify the Animal Plant Health Agency (APHA) at least seven days before the gathering, informing them of:

- The date, or dates the bird gathering(s) will be taking place
- The address (and CPH number if applicable) of the gathering
- Details of the licensee (full postal address and CPH number if applicable)
- Anticipated numbers and type(s) of birds entered
- Purpose of the gathering (e.g. show/sale/display)
- Any changes to the above in the build-up should be notified to APHA.

Regular events (e.g sales) should have the site registered with APHA, notifying them at least annually of the anticipated frequency and volumes of such gatherings.

Organisers must take all reasonable steps to prevent the spread of notifiable avian disease, including the provision of biosecurity advice to participants (see the PCGB's guide: *Biosecurity Information for Poultry Gatherings Participants*).

Organisers must notify a local veterinary surgery of the gathering and request a veterinary surgeon be available to attend at short notice.

A Welfare Officer (a poultry expert) must be appointed who will be responsible for overseeing the health and welfare of all birds throughout the gathering and to notify the licensee of potential issues - such as notifiable avian disease.

The aforementioned poultry expert must visually examine all birds before permitting entry to the gathering. No person, container or bird should be permitted, that is visibly contaminated with faecal material, and birds displaying any signs of disease should not be permitted (see the PCGB's guide:

About Avian Influenza. Birds should be visually inspected periodically throughout the duration of the gathering.

Thorough cleaning and disinfection of hard surfaces should be carried out as soon as is practical after the gathering concludes.

The organisers/licensee must:

- Not permit any birds without first receiving a signed declaration¹ from the participant, confirming they have met the conditions of the licence (See PCGB's: *Participant Declaration Form*)
- Ensure a veterinary surgeon is informed and can attend at short notice
- Ensure all birds remain isolated until after passing a visual health check
- Provide an area of isolation for any birds that fail the health inspection
- Notify APHA immediately if notifiable avian disease is suspected
- Ensure all waste material is disposed of by a licensed waste disposal operator, or disinfected to remove the risk of disease transmission
- Ensure all birds, waste and carriers are removed after the gathering
- Provide cleaning facilities, including (but not limited to) hand washing, foot dips/mats, and do not permit entry to anyone that is visibly contaminated with faecal material
- Retain records of all participants' entries for a minimum of three months specifically for the purpose of preventing notifiable avian diseases and in-line with the Organiser's own data protection policy (the required information is within PCGB's *Participant Declaration Form*)
- Have in place, and make available a contingency plan, should notifiable avian disease be suspected (see PCGB's template: *Contingency Plan*).

Organisers should also notify any third-party suppliers of venue, staging and penning of the risks associated with an outbreak of notifiable disease, as per their contingency plan (see PCGB's template: *Contingency Plan*).

For further information:

PCGB - About Avian Influenza Guidance

PCGB - Biosecurity Information for Poultry Gatherings Participants

PCGB - Poultry Gathering Declaration Form

¹ Declaration forms are mandatory in England and Wales, but not required by the General Licence in Scotland. Organisers of bird gatherings in Scotland may voluntarily require participants/competitors to complete a declaration form.

PCGB - Poultry Gatherings Contingency Plan

Visit the websites below for more information on bird gatherings:

England <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-gatherings-licences#notify-apha>

DEFRA Rural Services Helpline: 03000 200 301

Wales <http://gov.wales/topics/environmentcountryside/ahw/disease/avianflu/?lang=en>

Scotland www.gov.scot/avianinfluenza