

Avian influenza – lifting of Protection Zone around two infected premises near Banff, Aberdeenshire, and the infected premise in Forres, Moray.

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To: Undisclosed recipients::

Dear Colleague

Subject: Avian influenza – lifting of Protection Zone around two infected premises near Banff, Aberdeenshire, and the infected premise in Forres, Moray.

Following the completion of preliminary cleansing and disinfection, and all mandatory surveillance requirements and investigations, Scottish Ministers have declared the lifting of the **3km Protection Zone (PZ)**, which had been applied around two highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) H5N1 infected premises, near Banff, Aberdeenshire, and around one HPAI H5N1 infected premises, in Forres, Moray.

HPAI H5N1 was confirmed at the two locations near Banff, Aberdeenshire by Scotland's Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), Sheila Voas, on 18 November 2022 and 7 December 2022 respectively. HPAI H5N1 was confirmed at the location in Forres, Moray by Scotland's Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO), Sheila Voas, on 14 December 2022. A 3 km PZ and 10 km Surveillance Zone (SZ) were applied around these locations on the same dates. This meant that movement restrictions were applied within these zones to prevent any further spread of disease.

Following completion of preliminary cleansing and disinfection and mandatory surveillance requirements, Scottish Ministers declared end of the three PZs on Friday 17 February 2023. **The area which formed the PZ has now become part of the SZ, which remains in place.**

Further information can be found in the declarations:

- [First premises near Banff, Aberdeenshire](#)
- [Second premises near Banff, Aberdeenshire](#)
- [In Forres, Moray](#)

Advice for Keepers – Poultry and Other Captive Birds

Following an increase in avian influenza detections in wild birds and poultry and other captive birds, the Chief Veterinary Officers from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland declared an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) across the whole of the United Kingdom to mitigate the risk of the disease spreading amongst poultry and other captive birds.

Therefore, from Monday 17th October, it became a legal requirement for all bird keepers in the UK to follow strict biosecurity measures to help protect their flocks from the threat of avian flu.

These measures mean it is a mandatory requirement for keepers to:

- cleanse and disinfect clothing, footwear, equipment and vehicles before and after contact with poultry or other captive birds – if practical, use disposable protective clothing
- reduce the movement of people, vehicles or equipment to and from areas where poultry and other captive birds are kept, to minimise contamination from manure, slurry and other products, and use effective vermin control
- thoroughly cleanse and disinfect housing on a continuous basis
- keep fresh disinfectant at the right concentration at all farm and poultry housing entry and exit points

- minimise direct and indirect contact between poultry and captive birds with wild birds, including making sure all feed and water is not accessible to wild birds

These measures **did not include mandatory housing**, but Defra and Republic of Ireland have since introduced a mandatory requirement to house all captive birds in **England and the Republic of Ireland only**, effective from 07 November 2022. DAERA and the Welsh Government have introduced mandatory housing measures from Monday 28 November and 02 December respectively in Northern Ireland and Wales.

Scottish Government's veterinary advice does not believe the current risk from avian influenza justifies mandatory housing in Scotland. However, the current situation is under considerable scrutiny.

- All poultry gatherings that are currently banned remain prohibited. This includes local shows.
- The public in Great Britain are being advised that if they find:
 - a **single** dead bird of prey, gull, swan, goose or duck, or
 - **five or more** dead wild birds of any other species
 - at the same time, you should report them to: [Report dead wild birds – GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk) (www.gov.uk)
 - Alternatively, you can phone the GB phone helpline: 03459 33 55 77.
 - If you wish to submit a report without providing contact details, then the telephone helpline should be used. You must be 18 or over to use this service to report dead wild birds.
 - **It is advisable that you do not touch these birds.**
- Sick or injured wild birds should be reported to the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SSPCA) in Scotland by telephone (03000 999 999).
- However, currently, sick wild birds of high-risk species cannot be taken to SSPCA animal rescue and rehoming centres.

Public Health

The risk to the general public's health from avian influenza is still very low. However, the risk to people with intensive exposure to infected birds is considered to be low.

Food Standards Scotland advise that avian influenzas pose a very low food safety risk for consumers, and it does not affect the consumption of poultry products, including eggs.

Biosecurity guidance has been published by the Scottish Government, Defra (England), the Welsh Government and DAERA (Northern Ireland). This document includes details of biosecurity best practice and further guidance on measures that bird keepers must take in the AIPZ.

Avian influenza is a notifiable animal disease. If you suspect any type of avian influenza in poultry or other captive birds you must report it immediately by contacting your local Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) Field Services Office. Failure to do so is an offence.

GB Poultry Register

In GB, you are legally required to register your birds if you keep more than 50. Keepers with less than 50 birds are strongly encouraged to register. It is also a legal requirement to notify APHA of any significant changes in the average number of birds kept.


Further advice for bird keepers can be found at www.gov.scot/avianinfluenza.

Kind regards
Eilidh

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