Bishop Auckland Town Council
Pigeon Keeping Policy

1. Purpose and Scope
This policy outlines the conditions under which tenants may keep pigeons on allotment sites managed by Bishop Auckland Town Council. It applies to all allotment tenants and is designed to ensure responsible pigeon keeping, safeguard animal welfare, and prevent nuisance.

2. Permitted Conditions
- Tenants must apply for written permission before keeping pigeons.
- Only domestic pigeons (e.g. racing or fancy breeds) are permitted.
- No breeding or commercial activity is allowed.
- Pigeons must be kept in a secure structure, such as a loft or aviary (A Structure Application form is required).
- The Tenant is responsible for any such structure to keep pigeons; this includes the materials, construction and any repairs or associated maintenance required.
- The Tenant is responsible for the dismantling and removal of all structures and materials at the end of their tenancy.

3. Welfare Standards
Tenants must comply with the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and ensure the Five Freedoms:
1. Freedom from hunger and thirst
2. Freedom from discomfort
3. Freedom from pain, injury or disease
4. Freedom to express normal behavior
5. Freedom from fear and distress

Lofts must be weatherproof, ventilated, and cleaned regularly. Pigeons must have access to clean water and appropriate feed.

4. Application Process
- Tenants must submit a written application to the Council.
- The Allotments Officer will inspect the site before approval.
- Approved tenants will receive written confirmation and conditions.
- Permission is subject to annual review.

5. Nuisance Management
Tenants must ensure pigeons do not cause nuisance to other allotment users or nearby residents. This includes:
- Noise control
- Odor management
- Vermin prevention
- Waste disposal

Complaints will be investigated and may result in revocation of permission.

6. Enforcement Procedures
- The Council reserves the right to inspect pigeon facilities at any time.
- Breaches of this policy may result in written warnings, removal of pigeons, or termination of tenancy.
- Tenants may appeal enforcement decisions in writing to the Town Clerk.

(Continued overleaf)

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)

In addition to this Council Policy, the Tenant must also register their poultry with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

The Tenant is responsible for ensuring they meet all Central Government **legal requirements** for registering any poultry or other captive birds with the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) **within one month** of keeping poultry or other captive birds at any premises in England or Wales.

This includes any birds you keep as pets.

Once registered, APHA will provide you with a County Parish Holding (CPH) Number.

The Tenant must follow all advice and guidance, including alerts, notices, or housing orders and must implement any actions that are required by APHA.

The Tenant must implement all required actions set by APHA.

Further information is available on the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) website.

Important: This is a legal requirement and you will be **breaking the law** if you do not register with APHA.

GOV.UK Information sources:

Keeper of less than 50 poultry or other captive birds:
www.gov.uk/guidance/register-as-a-keeper-of-less-than-50-poultry-or-other-captive-birds#how-to-register

Keeper of 50 or more poultry or other captive birds:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/poultry-including-game-birds-registration-rules-and-forms

Bird flu (avian influenza): latest situation in England:
www.gov.uk/guidance/bird-flu-avian-influenza-latest-situation-in-england