

## Avian Influenza (bird flu) Prevention Zones

# Controls in England from 28 February 2017

24 February 2017

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## Introduction

Since September 2016, highly pathogenic H5N8 avian influenza has been circulating in Europe. H5N8 is a particularly aggressive strain of bird flu, with high mortality in poultry which means that if birds become infected, there is a strong chance they will die.

To reduce the risk of H5N8, in late 2016, Defra put in place a series of measures to protect poultry and captive birds. This included increased wild bird surveillance, an indefinite ban on poultry gatherings, and from 6 December 2016, an Avian Influenza Prevention Zone.

This zone covered all of England (Wales and Scotland governments declared similar zones in their territories) and amongst other measures, required all keepers to house or otherwise separate poultry and captive birds from wild birds. The housing requirement was intended as a transitional measure to give keepers time to put in place other heightened biosecurity arrangements. The current AI Prevention Zone will expire on 28 February 2017 after 12 weeks and will now be replaced with a new zone with updated measures.

## The need for continued controls

Since mid-December 2016, there have been confirmed cases of H5N8 in poultry and wild birds throughout the UK. When a case of this disease is confirmed in poultry, it is devastating for the poultry keepers and their businesses, as well as being costly to the UK taxpayer and the wider poultry industry.

These recent outbreaks of highly pathogenic avian influenza show that risk of H5N8 within wild birds remains high across the whole of England. As a result, it remains vital that all keepers continue to observe strict biosecurity standards aimed at maintaining separation of their poultry and other captive birds from wild birds.

This document represents biosecurity guidance that is published in accordance with section 6A of the Animal Health Act 1981. The guidance provides more detail on the new requirements contained in the replacement Avian Influenza Prevention Zone that will be in force from 28 February 2017, and applies to all keepers of poultry and captive birds from that date until 30 April 2017 unless the Secretary of State is of the view that it can be amended before then.

**H5N8 is a notifiable avian disease. It remains the case that anyone who suspects their birds of having avian influenza should discuss this as a matter of urgency with a private veterinarian. If suspicion of AI cannot be ruled out then it must be reported to Defra/APHA.**

## New measures required from 28 February 2017

No-one wants to see birds compulsorily kept inside in the long term. We have looked carefully at the risks posed by H5N8. From 28 February 2017 we will be moving to a more targeted approach. This will require high levels of biosecurity throughout England, but only mandate housing or full netting of outdoor areas in locations where we assess the risk to be unacceptably high. These will be called 'Higher Risk Areas'.

The rationale for 'Higher Risk Areas' ('HRA') is set out in Annex 1. We have published a detailed [interactive map](#) that will enable individual keepers to see if their poultry premises or place where they keep captive birds falls within such an HRA.

From 28 February 2017, a new AI Prevention Zone covering the whole of England will legally require the following:

- **All poultry and captive bird keepers in England must** comply with a set of minimum biosecurity standards whether you are in the new HRAs or outside them, regardless of flock size. These are summarised at Annex 2.
- **All poultry keepers in England with more than 500 birds must** comply with additional biosecurity measures regardless of whether you are inside or outside the HRA. These are set out in Annex 3.
- **Outside the HRA**, keepers have the option to allow poultry and other captive birds to have managed access to fenced outdoor areas. If you plan to let your birds outdoors, there are additional biosecurity measures you must put in place. These apply regardless of the size of your flock, whether you have a commercial holding, a backyard flock or keep your birds as pets. Before birds are let outside, you must take all reasonable steps to remove and minimise the risk of existing faecal contamination from wild birds.
- **Outside the HRA**, housing birds or fully enclosing the fenced outdoor areas with netting is optional. All keepers must consider very carefully whether the measures you are taking sufficiently reduce the risk of contact between your birds and wild birds, particularly wild waterfowl. If you consider this remains a risk, you should keep your birds housed or in fully netted areas.
- **Outside the HRA**, if birds are to be let outside, keepers must take all reasonable steps to where possible remove and minimise the risk of existing faecal contamination from wild birds. This is set out at Annex 5.
- **Within the HRA**, all poultry and captive birds, regardless of flock size, must either be housed or kept within completely netted outside areas/ranges, pens, cages or aviaries. More details on housing and range netting are set out in Annex 4 (Options B or C). The only exemption is for certain species of birds kept in zoos (see Annex 7).

- **All keepers** must continue to follow existing [animal welfare rules](#), and private veterinary advice should be sought if keepers have concerns about the suitability of housing conditions.<sup>1</sup>

|   | Minimum biosecurity requirements<br>Annex 2 | Additional biosecurity requirements<br>Annex 3 | Housing or fully netted range /aviaries<br>Annex 4 | Range preparation requirements<br>Annex 5                      |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| Flocks with less than 500 birds outside the Higher Risk areas | Mandatory                                   | Recommended but optional                       | Optional   | Mandatory if birds are to be allowed outside                   |
| Flocks with more than 500 birds outside the Higher Risk areas | Mandatory                                   | Mandatory                                      | Optional   | Mandatory if birds are to be allowed outside                   |
| Flocks with less than 500 birds inside the Higher Risk areas  | Mandatory                                   | Recommended but optional                       | Mandatory  | Mandatory if birds are to be allowed into outside netted areas |
| Flocks with more than 500 birds inside the Higher Risk areas  | Mandatory                                   | Mandatory                                      | Mandatory  | Mandatory if birds are to be allowed into outside netted areas |

- These measures will be put in place in the first instance until **30 April 2017**, but will be kept under constant review with the aim of lifting the targeted measures within Higher Risk Areas as soon as risk levels allow it.

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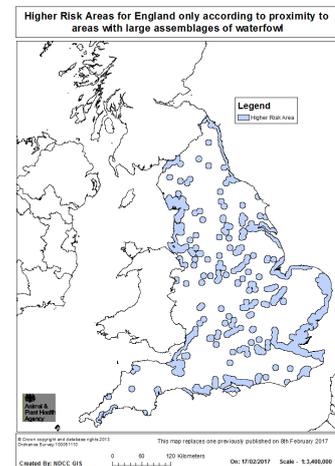
<sup>1</sup> In all cases, the keeper should ensure they meet their obligations under the Animal Welfare Act 2006 and it's 'duty of care' to protect the welfare of any housed or isolated poultry or other captive birds."

## Annex 1: Higher Risk Areas (HRAs)

The HRAs are shown in the map below and on our [interactive map](#) which you can search using a postcode, place name or grid reference (recommended).

We have also published the more detailed scientific [rationale](#) for these HRAs and the reasons why we are targeting specific requirements if you keep poultry or other captive birds in the HRA.

In summary, our analysis of the H5N8 outbreaks across the UK and Europe confirms that the risk across the whole of England remains heightened, but that areas of the country close to substantial inland or coastal bodies of water (where significant numbers of wild birds collect) are at an even higher risk, with duck species having the greatest risk of carrying the H5N8 infection.



The closer a poultry premises is to such bodies of water, the greater the risk that disease will be carried into it by foraging wild birds, especially ducks. The level of risk to premises reduces, as the distance increases, and the likelihood of foraging wild birds being present declines. Therefore, while enhanced biosecurity must remain across all areas, we have concluded that in England, biosecurity preventative measures alone will not provide sufficient protection to poultry in these **Higher Risk Areas** (HRAs). Therefore, in these areas, from 28 February 2017, poultry and captive birds must continue to be housed or kept in fully netted enclosures, to help reduce the risk of further outbreaks.

You will only be considered to be in an HRA if the whole of your 'premises'<sup>2</sup> falls within this area. If any part of the 'premises' is outside the HRA, the whole of the premises will be considered to be outside the HRA.

There is no administrative appeal mechanism for challenging the demarcation of the boundaries of the Higher Risk Areas.

We are keeping the boundaries of the HRA under close review. Further outbreaks of H5N8 in either kept poultry or wild birds in particular may lead to new HRAs being defined, advertised in the vicinity and added to the interactive map.

## Annex 2: Minimum biosecurity requirements

All keepers of poultry and other captive birds (irrespective of the number of birds or how they are kept) **must** adopt these biosecurity measures at all times.

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<sup>2</sup> Being that part of any property used for the production of poultry, or where captive birds are kept. This includes any poultry house or shed, aviary, range, netted areas used to keep poultry or captive bird and contiguous ancillary areas such as poultry feed bins, poultry manure storage

Minimum biosecurity measures include:

- Reducing the movement of people, vehicles or equipment to and from areas where poultry are kept;
- Taking all reasonable precautions to avoid the transfer of contamination between premises, including cleansing and disinfection of equipment, vehicles and footwear;
- Keeping domestic ducks and geese separated from other species (for example by keeping them in separate runs or sheds);
- Ensuring feed, water and bedding has not been contaminated by or been in contact with wild birds and in particular gulls and waterfowl;
- Implementing effective vermin control where poultry or captive birds are kept; <sup>3</sup>
- Records must be kept of all vehicles and people that enter the part of a premises where poultry are kept; <sup>4</sup>
- Placing foot dips & boot brush containing a Defra-approved general poultry order disinfectant at the entry and exit of all houses and outdoor areas/range where birds are kept. <sup>5</sup>

## Requirement to report disease:

Any significant change in bird health (including increased mortality, decreased egg yield or growth rates; or changes in feed or water intake) should be discussed with a private veterinarian and if suspicion of AI cannot be ruled out then it must be reported to Defra/APHA.

**Note:** Keepers should be able to demonstrate on-request how they have implemented these minimum biosecurity standard to officials.

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<sup>3</sup> Keepers must ensure that all HSE guidance is followed. Best practice guidance is available from the Campaign for Responsible Rodenticide Use (CRRU).

<sup>4</sup> This is not a requirement for zoos or other facilities open to the public. This only applies to people that have had direct contact with birds and will enable us to trace any contact with other birds in the event of a disease outbreak. This is particularly important for anyone who is not an employee or a family member

<sup>5</sup> This is mandatory for all poultry keepers with more than 50 birds.

## **Annex 3: Additional biosecurity requirements - all poultry keepers with 500 birds or more**

The following measures must be implemented by all poultry keepers with more than 500 birds although it is highly recommended that all poultry and captive bird keepers implement these measures where practicable.

These measures apply to birds outside and inside the HRA and are in addition to those set out in Annex 2.

The premises should be organised to minimise access to live birds by identifying and managing 3 discrete areas on the holding as outlined below:

### **Poultry (live bird) area**

- Access is limited to essential authorised personnel only;
- Full biosecurity practices must be adopted on entry and exit to the zone;
- Keepers must operate effective barrier hygiene before entering a poultry house or the range (for example, coveralls and dedicated house boots);
- Only essential equipment and vehicles are permitted to be taken into the zone;
- The exterior of any vehicles (focussing on wheels and wheel arches) and equipment which enter or leave the area must be cleansed and disinfected on both entry and exit;
- Where possible use dedicated equipment/vehicles that only operate in this area;
- Thorough cleansing and disinfecting (based on industry best practice) of housing and equipment must be undertaken at the end of a production cycle and before new birds are introduced;
- Records must be kept of vehicles and personnel entering and leaving this discrete area.

### **Private (ancillary use) area**

- Access is limited to essential personnel only and full biosecurity practices must be adopted on entry and exit to the area;
- This must be fully separated from the live bird area with a clear demarcation;
- Bedding and feed (if not stored in the live bird areas), must be stored in this area;
- The exterior of any vehicles (focussing on wheels and wheel arches) which enters or leaves the zone must be cleansed and disinfected on both entry and exit;

- Waste and fallen stock<sup>6</sup> must be held in appropriately biosecure facilities in this area with clear separation between both live bird and the public zones;
- Records must be kept of vehicles and personnel entering and leaving this area.

## Restricted access (biosecure barrier) area

- Access to the public should be limited and only essential workers/contractors may enter this area subject to effective personal biosecurity;
- This area may include the farm office and areas of the premises used for general storage;
- Non-essential vehicles should not enter this zone.

## General

Keepers must be able to demonstrate how this 'discrete biosecurity system' works at a site level to auditors/inspectors. This should include a plan of the site and copies of written instructions to workers and contractors.

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<sup>6</sup> Waste and fallen stock must be disposed of in a bio-secure manner to avoid contact with kept birds and full records kept. You should keep copies of commercial documents and ask your fallen stock collector to keep good records of where they have been.

## Annex 4: Separation of poultry and captive birds from wild birds

From 28 February 2017, all poultry keepers must take active steps to separate their birds from wild birds, in particular from wild ducks, geese and gulls. The options are:

- a) Managed access to outdoor areas/range – only allowed outside HRAs;
- b) Housing; or
- c) Fully netted outside areas, pens, cages and aviaries – mandatory in the HRA and optional outside the HRA.<sup>7</sup>

### A) Managed access to the range – only allowed outside Higher Risk Areas

From 28 February 2017 it is a legal requirement to put these measures in place if you are outside the HRA and if you intend to let your birds have some outside access. This applies if your birds are a commercial flock, a backyard flock or are kept as pets.

Housing or full netting of the outdoor area used by birds is optional outside the HRA. All keepers should consider very carefully whether the minimum biosecurity measures they are taking are sufficient to reduce the risk of contact between their birds and wild birds, particularly wild ducks, geese and gulls. **If keepers think their birds' health is still at risk consider this to remain a risk, then birds should remain housed or within fully netted ranges.** If you are in doubt, talk to your private vet. See Annex 6 for a checklist of things to check.

The mandatory biosecurity and management measures, regardless of flock size, that must be undertaken are:

- Outdoor areas/ranges where birds are allowed temporary access must be fully fenced and birds must not be allowed to roam outside this area;
- Regularly check the range for the presence of wild birds and take active steps to remove or deter any you find. If you find dead wild birds remove (in a bio-secure manner<sup>8</sup>) the carcasses and report any ducks, geese or gulls to the Defra Helpline;

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<sup>7</sup> Birds which cannot easily be housed, for example ducks, geese and game birds, will need to be kept in fully netted areas, even if this means netting a smaller area than they currently occupy. The only exemption is for certain zoo birds (see Annex 7).

<sup>8</sup> Wear gloves, double bag carcasses and dispose in accordance with animal by-product regulations, <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/animal-by-product-categories-site-approval-hygiene-and-disposal> after first reporting them to the Defra helpline on 03459 335577

- Net/cover ponds and permanent standing water within the fenced area and fence off any wet or boggy areas and standing water, where this is not possible use an alternative paddock/range that doesn't have access to water;
- Take measures to discourage wild birds (in particular ducks, geese and gulls) from using range areas, for example use of visual bird-scarers<sup>9</sup>, scarecrows, decoy predators or other methods;
- Remove any feeders and water stations from the range, or ensure that they are covered to sufficiently restrict access by wild birds;
- Regularly clean and disinfect any concrete walkways and hard standing areas, where poultry or wild birds have access, or where these may have been contaminated.

### **Good Practice:**

- Consider increasing the number of shelters on the range area; it is advisable but not mandatory for foot dips containing a [Defra-approved disinfectant](#) together with a boot brush, to be used on entry and exit to houses and outdoor areas/range where the birds are kept.

### **Footpaths and rights of way:**

- If a footpath or other right of way crosses the range or other area that birds have direct access to, you should consider placing signs and foot dips where the path joins the range; and in the longer term, consider applying to your local authority for a permanent or temporary diversion. You must not block a right of way.

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<sup>9</sup> Bird scarers can annoy and disturb the public so please use them in a considerate way. Good Practice Guidance can be found in the NFU Code of Practice

## **B) Housing – mandatory in the HRA and optional outside the HRA<sup>10</sup>**

- Eggs from poultry housed after 28 February 2017 cannot be marketed as free range. For poultrymeat, some birds may still be able to be marketed as free range.<sup>11</sup>
- If you decide to follow this option, all housing must be suitable for the purpose.
- All permanent openings must be covered with netting or mesh capable of keeping out wild birds the size of a dove or larger (a maximum 25 mm mesh is recommended).
- It is best practice to take steps to exclude smaller birds too.
- Bird welfare must be monitored and suitable steps taken to ensure that the environment is suitably enriched.
- Housing alone is not sufficient to ensure the safety of your birds from H5N8 because it must be coupled with all of the non-range related biosecurity measures. These measures are required both in and outside the Higher Risk Areas.

## **C) Netted areas, cages, pens and aviaries – mandatory in the HRA and optional outside the HRA**

You can also keep your poultry and other captive birds separate from wild birds by:

- i) keeping them in aviaries, cages, netted pens or runs; or by
- ii) fully covering outside areas or ranges with netting to prevent entry by wild birds

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<sup>10</sup> Separation of poultry and captive birds from ingress by wildbirds is mandatory in the HRA. This can be achieved by housing or keeping birds in fully netted outside areas, cages, pens or aviaries. This is optional outside the HRA.

<sup>11</sup> Under EU egg marketing regulations, keepers who are required by Government to house their birds to protect animal health can retain their free range status during the fixed 12-week grace period. Eggs laid after the grace period has expired on 28th February may no longer be marketed as free range.

Under EU poultrymeat marketing regulations, keepers who are required by Government to house their birds to protect animal health can retain their free range status during and after the fixed 12-week grace period so long as the birds have spent half of their lifetime deemed free range or factually free range.

“Traditional free-range” and “Free-range – total freedom” birds ordinarily must have continuous daytime access to open-air runs from a certain age depending on the species. In the case of chickens, it is six weeks of age. If an additional restriction period means that the chicken is kept indoors after it reaches the qualifying age of six weeks after the 12-week grace period expires, that chicken will lose its potential to acquire “Traditional free-range” or “Free-range – total freedom” status and can never attain it.

- The netting or mesh must be capable of keeping out wild birds the size of a pigeon or larger (due to the risk of damage from snow a larger mesh size may be appropriate but no greater than 50mm mesh).
- You must take particular care, when erecting new structures or moving portable structures, to avoid areas to which wild birds may previously have had access (see annex 5 for steps to reduce the risk of contamination).
- Housing must be coupled with all of the non-range related biosecurity measures required outside of the Higher Risk Area.
- Eggs and meat from poultry which have access to fully netted range areas and comply with all other requirements can be marketed as free range after 28 February 2017.

## Annex 5: Preparing and managing any outside areas / ranges

Regardless of flock size, before birds are allowed outside you must make sure that wild birds (particularly gulls, ducks and geese) are not attracted to, or have access to, the range or any other area that you intend to allow birds to access. And that you have taken all reasonable steps to remove any contamination that may be present.

### Make the range and outside areas unattractive to wild birds

- Drain wet patches and areas of standing water – drain wet or boggy patches and areas of temporary standing water. In the longer term and subject to obtaining the necessary consents and agreements, consider whether it is possible to fill in or draining any permanent ponds or areas of standing water.<sup>12</sup>
- Net/cover ponds – you must net/cover any ponds that are within the fenced outside/range area. You should also consider netting ponds or larger bodies of water within 100m of the perimeter of the outdoor area/range. If this is not possible you should take active steps to deter birds from accessing them.
- Fence off ponds, streams, standing water or wet or boggy areas – poultry should not have access to the areas around ponds, streams, canals or other wet areas as there is a much greater risk that these areas have been contaminated by the droppings of wild birds
- Remove any wild bird feed sources – check the range for any wild bird feed sources that might attract wild birds: these are most likely to be associated with wet areas but also include spilt grain, seeds and uncovered feed bins.

### Keep wild birds off the range

- There are several ways that you can deter wild birds (in particular gulls and wild waterfowl) from landing on and feeding on the range. These include regularly walking the area, using predator decoys and using wild bird visual bird scarers<sup>13</sup>.

### Decontamination/sanitisation of the range

Before allowing poultry to use a range after a period of housing where the range has not been used but may have been contaminated by wild bird faecal matter, it may be possible to reduce the level of contamination to safe levels.

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<sup>12</sup> Consult the relevant authorities before undertaking any permanent works that might impact on biodiversity

<sup>13</sup> Bird scarers can annoy and disturb the public so please use them in a considerate way. Good Practice Guidance can be found in the NFU Code of Practice.

The virus that causes H5N8 can still be infective in faeces/droppings and other contaminated material for at least 50 days in the winter (longer in wet conditions or in standing water). If wild birds have had access to your ranges and other outdoor areas, you must take steps to reduce the levels of contamination.

Options include:

- *Cleansing and disinfection of concrete and other impermeable areas* – use a [Defra approved disinfectant](#) at the recommended dilution rate. Appropriate pollution prevention measures must be followed.
- *Decontamination of the range* – it may be possible to reduce the level of H5N8 virus present in heavily contaminated areas by the use of some [Defra approved disinfectants](#) at the recommended dilution rate. Many approved disinfectants will quickly become inactivated when sprayed on organic material (such as soil) so are unlikely to be effective, so please consult the manufacturer for advice on whether the product you want to use is likely to be effective and follow appropriate pollution prevention measures.
- *Application of shavings/woodchip* – the resin in shavings and woodchips has some virucidal properties and may help reduce the virus load in wet areas. Please consult your private vet before considering this option as warm wet conditions can result in an increased risk of *aspergillosis* – a fungal disease that infects the respiratory tract of birds.

## **Reduce spread by people or objects**

- Limit the number of people who have access to the range and ensure that they have no contact with any other poultry or birds.
- For the people that have to enter the range, ensure they have dedicated footwear and outer clothing. For sites with over 50 birds foot dips should be used on entry and exit to houses and outdoor areas/range where the birds are kept. Remember to change or disinfect your footwear when accessing houses from the range.

## **Disinfectants: pollution prevention and control**

- You do not need to get prior approval from the Environment Agency before applying any disinfectants to concrete areas or the range area provided the volume and concentration of disinfectant applied is similar to that applied in routine cleansing and disinfection operations.
- Appropriate pollution prevention measures must be followed in all cases to stop excessive uncontrolled disinfectant run off. Disinfectants must not be applied close to drinking water supplies or surface water bodies.

## Annex 6: Checklist for keepers planning to allow managed access to outside areas or range (only applicable outside Higher Risk Areas in England)

This is a check list designed to help bird keepers (commercial or hobby) ensure they are compliant with the required measures of the Prevention Zone declared on 28 Feb 2017 should they intend to allow birds temporary access to outside areas or range.

|                                 |  |                          |  |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Name of Farm or Business:       |  |                          |  |
| Address:                        |  |                          |  |
| Contact Telephone / Mobile No.: |  | CPH ref. (if applicable) |  |
| Completed by:                   |  | Date:                    |  |

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Tick if apply |  |
|               | <p><b>Decontaminate outside areas</b></p> <p>Take all reasonable steps to remove contamination. You can do this by removing contaminated material, applying certain approved disinfectant products or fencing off contaminated areas.</p>  |
|               | <p><b>Actively discourage wild birds from landing on the range area</b></p> <p>This can be done with nets, cages, decoy predators; foot patrols etc. and should be started well in advance of letting your birds out onto the range.</p>   |
|               | <p><b>Net or cover ponds and drain waterlogged areas of the range</b></p> <p>If this is not possible, then you can fence the area off from your birds or use an alternative field. Long term, it may be beneficial to fill in ponds on your range, as they are very attractive to wild birds but you must consult with the Environment Agency and Natural England first.</p> |
|               | <p><b>Remove any feeders and water stations from the range</b></p> <p>Feeding and watering must take place in covered areas which will not attract wild birds under cover and steps taken to prevent wild birds from gaining access.</p>   |
|               | <p><b>Regularly inspect your housing/netted run/cages for signs of wild bird or rodent access and prevent access by them</b></p> <p>Ensure rodent controls are effective and ensure that the housing, feed storage and provision areas are not accessible by wild birds or rodents.</p>  |
|               | <p><b>If you keep a variety of bird types, keep domestic waterfowl (ducks, geese etc.) and poultry separate</b></p> <p>This can be done with cages, or fencing and must feature good biosecurity between the areas – no shared feed or water, boot dips used at entry points</p>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p><b>Use dedicated footwear when accessing bird areas and install boot dips with a suitable disinfectant at entrances to bird areas</b></p> <p>Place disinfection footbaths at farm entrances and bird area entrances.</p>  |
|  | <p><b>Reduce movements of people, vehicles or equipment into or out of bird areas and prevent unnecessary access</b></p> <p>This helps to minimise contamination from manure, slurry and other products. Identify which areas should be restricted to essential visitors only.</p> |
|  | <p><b>Cleanse and disinfect equipment and vehicles prior to entry onto or exit from premises</b></p> <p>Reasonable precautions must be taken to avoid transfer of contamination on and off site.</p>   |
|  | <p><b>Routinely cleanse and disinfect equipment used in bird areas</b></p> <p>Housing and equipment should be thoroughly cleaned at the end of any production cycle.</p>   |
|  | <p><b>Disinfectant</b></p> <p>Refer to the list of approved disinfectants and select a product approved under Poultry Orders. Check and replace regularly.</p>   |

## Annex 7: Derogation for zoos in HRAs

It is recognised that licensed zoos house a wide range of bird species, often of high conservation value, and that it is not always possible to ensure the basic welfare requirements of particular species can be met by housing or full netting. It has therefore been agreed that subject to agreement with APHA and BIAZA, zoos<sup>14</sup> within Higher Risk Areas do not need to fully net outside enclosures.

Unless there is a justifiable welfare concern, zoos must adhere to the biosecurity requirements set out in the AIPZ declaration. Deviation from these requirements will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances. The zoo, in consultation with their vet, will be expected to produce robust justification for any deviation and demonstrate they have measures in place to minimise any disease spread from these un-netted outdoor enclosures.

Zoos may choose to manage their operations as a single unit or split their site into multiple units. The unit should contain the area in which the birds are kept and keeper areas (changing area, area to keep PPE and equipment used in the enclosure, cleaning and disinfection facilities, storage of waste pending appropriate disposal). Each unit can then be treated as if it were a separate premises and the biosecurity measures outlined on the GOV.UK website applied to each in turn.

If the site is split into multiple units, zoos must demonstrate that these are epidemiologically distinct, that is, there is no transfer of birds, food, equipment or personnel between the different units without them having undergone suitable disinfection, decontamination /isolation/ quarantine etc. Zoos should consult their veterinary surgeon about how they can split their site into epidemiological units and what measures they need to put in place to keep these units separate.

### **Draft Risk Assessment/Management Template for Zoos & Aquariums**

All zoos should have a written, site specific, disease contingency plan produced in consultation with their vet. A template for such a document is provided at:

<http://www.biaza.org.uk/uploads/Diseases/Contingency%20Planning%20Guidance%20Document%202013.pdf>

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<sup>14</sup> A zoo/aquarium licensed under the zoo licensing act.