

## Infrastructure Housing and Environment

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Dear Keeper

As part of our ongoing surveillance testing, we recently detected **highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI)** in the wild greylag geese **in St Ouen's Bay**. Several dead geese have been reported to us from this flock over the past month and we've had to euthanise two geese for welfare reasons because of advanced stages of the disease.

Our surveillance programme shows HPAI is still circulating in our wild birds, and you must now **take every precaution** you can to prevent wild birds from coming in contact with your captive birds because **the disease will kill your birds if you don't**.

### How avian influenza spreads

The virus is spread when infected wild birds mingle with domestic poultry and the virus is shed in faeces, saliva, or mucus discharges. Poultry become infected by eating or inhaling the virus at close contact, the virus then spreads rapidly throughout the flock, and other wild birds in close contact with the poultry can then pick up and spread the virus elsewhere. The virus can also be spread by inanimate objects such as people's clothing and boots, bedding brought in that has not been covered and has been contaminated, farming equipment and vehicles.

### Biosecurity

This is why good biosecurity (measures taken to minimise the risk of infectious diseases) is very important because it is the first defence to prevent infection. Applying good biosecurity, no matter how large or how small your flock is, helps contain the potential spread of avian flu, prevents severe bird losses and suffering, the unpleasant task of culling all captive birds on an infected premises, and prevents lengthy and ongoing housing requirements.

Biosecurity should be practiced at all times and not just during a disease outbreak because it will also help keep out other poultry diseases such as Newcastle Disease and salmonella, improves overall flock health, cuts costs of disease treatment, protects your neighbours, public health, and the countryside.

Biosecurity measures include:

- Store any food items and bedding away from wild bird access and feed and water your birds indoors or undercover because the virus will spread if wild birds have access to these
- Make your areas surrounding your bird enclosures unattractive to wild birds by hanging strips of tin foil, shiny party streamers or Cd's
- Remove any spilled feed, litter and standing water to avoid attracting wild birds and vermin and poultry houses should be in a good state of repair to prevent their entry

- Place foot dips at poultry and other captive bird housing entrances and exits and regularly refill and correctly dilute these with [disinfectants approved for use in England, Scotland and Wales on DEFRA](#) to kill the virus. Place a boot brush into the foot dip to clean the soles and crevices of mucky boots first so that the disinfectant will be effective in killing the virus from the surface of boots. Soiled foot dips must be regularly replenished. A separate pair of clean boots at the entrance of your enclosure for use only inside your bird's housing can also be used. For further advice watch [how to not walk avian influenza into your poultry coop on YouTube](#)
- Unauthorised visitors to the flock should be kept to a minimum with staff, vehicle and equipment movements between housing also minimised. If vehicles must have access close to your enclosures, make sure they are clean, and if equipment is shared, make sure it is cleansed and disinfected before and after use
- Dedicated protective clothing and washable boots should be provided for those in contact with the birds or their housing and visitors should wash their hands with an effective preparation prior to visiting the birds
- Maintain a cleaning and disinfecting routine for your bird housing, cages, feed store and pathways leading to and from bird areas because many diseases, not only avian influenza are spread by direct bird to bird contact through secretions and faeces, and indirectly through contaminated feed, water, equipment, boots
- When housing and movement restrictions are not in place, be vigilant when purchasing new stock
- When housing requirements are in place, your birds' enclosures and runs must be completely covered with a solid or impermeable roof so that wild bird faeces cannot enter. Please check regularly for any roof leaks which can introduce infection from wild birds - this is the highest risk for housed poultry. The sides of the enclosure must be made of mesh, netting or a solid material so that wild birds cannot enter
- Perches, nesting boxes, dust baths, jungle gyms (e.g., ladders, bridges, swings), and food enrichment (hanging vegetables, treat balls, puzzle feeders) are also important for the welfare of your birds when housing is required

## Housing measures in England

England recently implemented a national housing order on 7 November 2022, and they are expecting the number of cases to continue to rise considerably over the coming months as migratory birds return to the UK, bringing with them further risk of disease that can spread into kept flocks. Last year Jersey's first case of bird flu in a captive bird was several months after the UK's, so sadly further outbreaks in domestic flocks are probable.

## Wild bird surveillance

We have a new online form to report wild birds that have died suddenly and without an obvious explanation on our webpage [Avian flu \(birds\) \(gov.je\)](#) to help with our surveillance program for avian influenza. This allows the user to pinpoint exact locations of a sighting and give details of species and numbers. We are only interested in 3 or more dead wild seabirds, swans, geese, ducks, and 1 or more bird of prey.

For the wild bird surveillance program, we do not need reports of pigeons or garden birds as these are much less susceptible to avian influenza. Like most feral pigeons, our wild pigeon population is currently affected with pigeon paramyxovirus where signs of the disease are twisted necks, diarrhoea, and lethargy together with high mortality rates.

The online reports will be triaged on whether the species are suitable for testing and once a wild bird species has been confirmed as having been infected in a specific location, no further testing of that species at the same location is carried out for several weeks. Both Jersey and the UK's surveillance programs are not designed to assess prevalence, levels of infection and total numbers of diseased wild birds in Jersey, but rather to allow better evaluation of the risk to poultry populations.

Our Natural Environment team will remain on hand to take reports from those without internet access, on [+44 \(0\) 1534 441600](tel:+4401534441600).

### **Reporting sick poultry**

Poultry keepers must immediately report any suspicious symptoms in their flocks to Natural Environment.

If you notice any sick captive birds or poultry suspected to have bird flu call [+44 \(0\) 1534 441600](tel:+4401534441600).

Yours sincerely  
Caroline Terburgh  
Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer