

## Warwickshire County Council Trading Standards Service

### Keeping Cattle Guidance Note

Whether you are a farmer, smallholder or just a pet cow keeper you should be aware that there are certain legal obligations that you need to fulfil in order to comply with the law.

Remember that laws surrounding your animals have been created to protect their health and welfare but also to prevent and control the spread of animal-borne diseases.

The following guidance is only a short reference to the most important areas of legislation surrounding keeping cattle.

For full advice please visit our website:  
<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/animalhealthadvice>

#### Registration

Before you bring the animal to your premises you need to apply for a County Parish Holding Number (CPH) by contacting the Rural Payments Agency (RPA).

Once you have your CPH you can bring your cattle to the premise but please be aware that there are regulations surrounding movement and transportation of livestock animals – you will find relevant information in following sections.

As soon as you bring the animals on your premise you need to register them with Animal Health Agency and Veterinary Laboratory Agency (AHVLA). You will be asked for your CPH and once the registration is completed you will be given a herdmark - a unique number used for identification of bovines from your herd.

You will also need to inform the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) of your intention to keep cattle and they will register your details on the Cattle Tracing System (CTS).

#### Identification

All cattle born after 1 January 1998 must have a Defra approved eartag in each ear (double tagging), each showing the same unique number. Tags must be fitted at the same time, within 20 days of birth, with the exception of dairy animals, which must have at least one of the tags fitted within 36 hours of birth.

All cattle must be tagged before they leave the holding of birth. Since 1 January 2000, ear tags must have a specific numeric format. They contain the crown logo, country code, herdmark, individual animal number and check digit.

Remember to replace lost or illegible tags as soon as possible, but no later than 28 days after you notice the loss or illegibility.

#### Passports

Cattle born in or imported into Great Britain since 1 July 1996 must have a cattle passport. This forms the base of all identification and movement records, and must remain with them throughout their lives.

Passports are issued by the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) and all applications must be made within 7 days of tagging. For more detailed rules contact Staffordshire County Council's Animal Health Team.

## **Movements**

Every movement of cattle on or off your premise should be reported to the BCMS within 3 days of the movement taking place; you can do it online, by post or over the phone.

Each movement of cattle onto the premise triggers a movement standstill which means that no livestock kept at that premise can be moved for the minimum period of full 6 days. There are exemptions from that rule (please contact Warwickshire County Council's Animal Health Team for further information).

Please be aware that your cattle may be required to undergo a pre-movement Tb test before moving off the premise – contact your local AHVLA for more information.

## **Records**

If you keep cattle you will need to maintain a herd register, recording the details of every birth, movement on and off the holding, and deaths. The register may be paper or computer based. You must keep these records for 10 years from the end of the calendar year in which the last entry was made.

For more details on what must be recorded, and deadlines for recording of information, see part IV of the Cattle Identification Regulations. A herd register can be obtained from Warwickshire County Council Trading Standards Animal Health team.

## **Health & Welfare**

Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, you have a duty to care for your animals and to ensure that all their needs are being met.

The basic set of needs for every animal includes the need for:

- Suitable living and housing environment
- Suitable diet
- Exhibition of normal behaviour patterns
- Protection from any type of suffering including fear, pain, injury and disease

You should inspect your animals on a regular basis and watch for any signs of distress or ill-health like: lethargy, lameness, swollen joints, mastitis, loss of appetite, etc.

Bovines are in particular susceptible to endemic and notifiable diseases, including: foot and mouth disease, bovine tuberculosis, brucellosis, bluetongue, BSE, Johne's disease.

You should also be aware that there is a legal requirement for cattle to be tested for bovine tuberculosis on a programmed basis and before movement.

## Housing

An ideal accommodation involves warm, dry and straw-bedded housing in cold temperatures and a shelter from the sun in hot weather. You need to ensure that materials used for construction of accommodation are not harmful to the animal and are designed to be thoroughly cleaned and disinfected.

For detailed information please refer to the Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock – Cattle available from the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency (AHVLA) website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/ahvla-en/> (see contacts section).

## Feed

Your animals shall be fed a wholesome diet which is appropriate to their age and species and which is fed to them in sufficient quantity to maintain them in good health and to satisfy their nutritional needs and to promote a positive state of well-being.

The appropriate feed can be purchased from your local agricultural merchants. Once you purchased the feed you must ensure that it is appropriately stored in a clean & dry environment, where no pests or wild birds have access to it; if there is more than one type of feed in the area it needs to be segregated so the feeds don't mix.

If you intend to send your animals to slaughter for human consumption you will also have register under the Feed Hygiene Regulations with Warwickshire County Council's Animal Health.

## Biosecurity

Cattle as farm animals' species can carry high risk of diseases that may be harmful not only for the welfare of the infected animal but the entire herd, neighbouring herds and even the entire industry.

The infection can be easily spread by contaminated surfaces (like clothing, hands, equipment) or by direct contact with fallen stock or with other infected animals.

Biosecurity measures can minimise the risk of an outbreak and spread of the disease.

The main measures you can take to protect your cattle and cattle belonging to others are:

- Clean and disinfect all surfaces that came into contact with the animals or their by-products – clothing, footwear, equipment, and vehicles
- Always use Defra approved disinfectant (further details available on request)
- Ensure that every person who is handling the animals and they products or animal by-products follows personal hygiene routine

- Restrict any movements of people, vehicles and equipment into areas where your cattle are kept

## **Transport**

When transporting your animals ensure that they are not at risk of injury or unnecessary suffering. You need to ensure that the animals are fit to travel before transporting.

The transport vehicle should be designed and constructed to ensure the safety of animals during the journey. You will need to thoroughly cleanse and disinfect your vehicle with Defra approved disinfectant within 24 hours of the movement and before transporting other animals.

Remember that if you are transporting cattle as a part of commercial activity which aims at achieving direct or indirect financial gain and your income source exceeds expenses of hobby you will have to comply with the EU Regulations introduced on 5th of January 2007.

## **Disposal of Fallen Stock**

Cattle that die from natural causes or disease or have been killed on premise for reasons other than human consumption are classified as fallen stock and need to be disposed of in appropriate manner using an approved processor (Your local AHVLA will provide you with a list)

Remember – burying or burning carcasses or animal-by-products is illegal. The collection of fallen stock should be arranged within 24 hours. Whilst waiting for the collectors ensure that no other animal has got access to the carcass – remove it to a safe location and cover it with a sheet of tarpaulin or similar material.

If your animal has a sudden unexpected death or you suspect that your bovine has died of a notifiable disease immediately contact your Local Animal Health Office.

## **Residential Nuisance & Waste Disposal**

Farm animals may produce noise, odours, troublesome animal waste and may cause pest infestations.

If you live in a residential area you should ensure that your animals will not cause a nuisance to other residents.

The following questions should be answered before you decide to keep livestock:

- Is your property suitable for keeping farm animals? (Have you got sufficient space to house the animals and deal with waste and manure?)
- If you rent a property do you need permission from your Housing Association or landlord?
- Do you need permission from your Planning Department for building or utilising any farming structures?
- Have you discussed keeping farm animals with your neighbours to address any concerns?

Good husbandry techniques may minimise residential nuisance:

- Regular disposal of the used bedding and manure can eliminate some of the odour
- Keeping feed locked away preventing access of wild animals and pests and disposal of unused, stale feed and feed spillage may help in help you to protect the flock and your premise from vermin

Your Local Authority's Environmental Health Department will deal with any complaints about odour, noise pollution or pest infestations.

Contact them with any concerns or if you need advice and guidance on minimising the risk of nuisance.

Remember that some animal waste may be classified as animal-by-products and may need to be disposed of in an appropriate manner – on animal waste disposal contact your Warwickshire County Council's Animal Health Team.

## Useful Contacts

### Advice

For free and impartial advice on animal health and welfare and relevant legislation, free leaflets, movement documents, record books, or to report animal health & welfare complaints contact:

Email: [tslicensing@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:tslicensing@warwickshire.gov.uk)

Website: <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/animalhealthadvice>

For Advice on pest infestations, animal related residential nuisance complaints and for approval of egg packing and grading centres contact the Environmental Health Department of your local Borough or District Council area.

## Registration / Movement Reporting

Rural Payments Agency (RPA)

Telephone: 0845 6037777

Website: [www.rpa.gov.uk](http://www.rpa.gov.uk)

(CPH numbers, single payment scheme)

Animal Health & Veterinary Laboratory Agency (AHVLA)

Telephone: 01785 231900

Website: <http://animalhealth.defra.gov.uk>

(Registering livestock, egg marketing, special licences, exports)

British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) — Curwen Road, Workington, CA14 2DD

Telephone: 08450 501234

Email: [bcms-enquiries@bcms.rpa.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:bcms-enquiries@bcms.rpa.gsi.gov.uk)

*This leaflet is a brief summary of the law. It is not an authoritative document on the law and is only intended for guidance. For further advice, please contact Warwickshire Trading Standards.*

*Publication Date: July 2017*

**Contact us:**

*Warwickshire County Council Trading Standards Service, Old Budbrooke Road,  
Warwick, CV35 7DP*

*Telephone (reception): 01926 414040*

*Email: [tradingstandards@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:tradingstandards@warwickshire.gov.uk)*

*Web: [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/tradingstandards)*

*Twitter: [www.twitter.com/warkstss](http://www.twitter.com/warkstss)*

*With thanks to Staffordshire County Council Trading Standards Service for the production of this leaflet.*