

ALTON TOWN COUNCIL FLYGRAZING POLICY 2016



Unauthorised grazing has occurred on two Town Council owned sites in the recent past. As a result Alton Town Council now takes a zero tolerance approach. Unauthorised (or Fly-grazing as it is commonly known) of any animal is not permitted on land owned or managed by Alton Town Council, whether tethered or turned away loose and signage will be placed prominently across sites which may be susceptible and a byelaw created to reinforce this policy.

The Town Council does not issue licences or grant permission for grazing of horses on its land; therefore any horses seen on site will be there illegally.

The Town Council would ask that residents/visitors to Town Council open spaces report any fly grazing to the Town Hall so that action can be taken.

In the event of authorised grazing without permission, the following procedure will be carried out:

1) Under the Control of Horses Act 2015 which updates the legislation found in the Animals Act 1971, Alton Town Council as landowner has two options in the first instance:

a) Remove horses that are left on the land immediately, and take them to a place of safety if they are at risk of endangering themselves or other people. The Town Council must notify the local police within 24 hours of doing so, and if the owners of the animals can be identified the Town Council must also notify them if this course of action is pursued.

b) Issue a Removal Notice which is erected in prominent locations across the site, giving the owner 96 hours to remove the horses from the site. As a minimum requirement for welfare, horses should be checked by their owner at least once a day so there is plenty of opportunity to see the signs and take action before the time period expires.

During this time Town Council staff will contact the Police, The Animal Welfare Officer at East Hampshire District Council and the RSPCA / World Horse Welfare to alert them to the presence of the horses and ensure that their welfare is monitored during this time.

2) After the 96 hour time period expires, the horses pass into the legal ownership of the Town Council who will then decide what to do with the horses. Dependent upon the number of horse involved and determined on a case by case basis one of two options will be pursued.

a) Engage Hampshire County Council (HCC) green livery service, currently managed by the Gypsy Liaison Officer who will arrange the collection of the horse/s within 72 hours, transporting them to a "Green Livery" field where livery and supplemental feed as well as veterinary / farrier services are arranged as required. HCC will identify the most appropriate and efficient rehoming/sale option which will then be pursued.

b) Engage an Equine Bailiff who will undertake a health and safety assessment pending removal of the horses from site. They will then be transported to an undisclosed safe and secure location. The horses will then be checked by a vet and through liaison with the Town Council will determine whether the horses should be rehomed or euthanised. Only Equine Bailiffs approved by the RSPCA/ World Horse Welfare will be used to ensure the well-being of the horses and ensure they are transported legally.

Whichever option is pursued, the Town Council will seek to recover the full cost to the public purse from the original owner of the horse/s where the owner/s have been identified.