



## NDCC Avian Influenza Update 4 of 2026

### 1. Housing Order to be lifted on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2026

- [S.I. No. 532/2025 - Avian Influenza \(Precautionary Confinement of Birds and Restriction on Assembly of Live Birds\) Regulations 2025](#) (Housing Order) which were introduced on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 to protect poultry and captive birds during the higher risk period of avian influenza, are to be **lifted on 05<sup>th</sup> May 2026**.
- No cases of avian influenza have been detected in Ireland in poultry this year to date and no further cases of positive wild birds have been confirmed since March, this, together with the rising of temperatures that reduce the survival of the virus in the environment and the departure of migratory birds, decreases the risk of avian influenza allowing the housing orders to be lifted.
- Although the risk has reduced, it has not disappeared, so the **biosecurity measures remain mandatory** for all poultry and captive bird keepers. Biosecurity remains the #1 method in preventing and controlling the spread of disease.

### 2. Measures to protect against Avian Influenza in place in Ireland

No outbreaks of HPAI in poultry have been detected in Ireland in 2026 to date.

**Strict biosecurity is a mandatory requirement on all poultry and captive bird holdings.**

**Contact with wild birds and environmental contamination remain major risks for HPAI incursions.**

The following measures remain in place:

#### ***Biosecurity Measures Regulations 2025***

- 'Best practice' biosecurity measures as usually advised by the Department of Agriculture Food and the Marine, are mandatory for all poultry and captive bird keepers effective from 1<sup>st</sup> November.
- These are precautionary measures to reduce the risk of an incursion of avian influenza to poultry in Ireland.
- Biosecurity is a set of preventative measures designed to reduce the risk of transmission of infectious diseases, the objective being that 'prevention is better than cure'.
- It is a comprehensive approach, encompassing different methods of prevention and containment with responsibility spread across the food chain, from the primary producer in the first instance, to transporters, food producers, slaughterhouses, veterinarians and others involved in animal production and trade.



- All poultry owners and keepers must implement very high levels of biosecurity on their holdings to help protect their flocks.
- General biosecurity information is provided on the DAFM Animal Health & Welfare Biosecurity page [here](#).
- A guidance document on the measures which must be taken by poultry and captive bird keepers has been developed and is available at [www.gov.ie/birdflu](http://www.gov.ie/birdflu)

**\*Biosecurity continues to remain the #1 method in disease prevention and control\***

**Strict Biosecurity measures are ESSENTIAL to help prevent HPAI outbreaks**

### 3. Current Avian Influenza situation in wild birds in Ireland

- No changes from previous update – 2 cases of **HPAI avian influenza (H5N1)** have been confirmed in 2026 to date: a raptor in Co. Limerick and a swan in Co. Cork, where an increased number of deaths in swans have been reported to DAFM.
- Figure 1 shows HPAI detected in wild birds in Ireland since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026. The live map showing the exact locations and details of all wild birds tested, can be accessed [here](#).



Figure 1: Location of wild birds that have tested positive to H5N1 HPAI since January 2026. Access live map [here](#).

#### **How to report sightings of sick or dead wild birds:**

- Dead wild birds should be reported to DAFM using the [Avian Influenza Wild Bird reporting App \(AvianCheck\)](#).



- Even where birds are not collected, reports of dead wild birds are important and useful to understand the disease situation in wild bird populations and to inform stakeholders of avian influenza risks.
- An analysis of the data submitted by the public in recent years via the app can be found at [www.gov.ie/birdflu](http://www.gov.ie/birdflu).

## 4. Advice for members of the public regarding wild birds

1.	<b>Do not touch sick or dead wild birds.</b>
2.	Do not touch wild bird feathers or droppings.
3.	Avoid contact with surfaces contaminated with wild bird droppings.
4.	Maintain good hand hygiene practices.
5.	If you are travelling from an area known or suspected to be affected with avian influenza or where wild birds have been found dead, do not make contact with poultry or captive birds without prior cleaning and disinfection of clothing and footwear and do not bring sick wild birds' home, particularly if you own or work with poultry or other captive birds.
6.	Where handling sick or dead wild birds is unavoidable, you must wear gloves. Dispose of your gloves appropriately. If you do not have immediate access to a bin they should be placed inside a plastic bag and brought with you. Wash your hands and arms with hot soapy water afterwards.
7.	Keep pet dogs on a leash in areas where there are sick or dead wild birds.

*\*The HSE-HPSC has advised that the risk to public health from the strain of avian influenza currently circulating (Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza subtype H5N1) is considered very low for the public, and low to medium for occupationally exposed people.*

## 5. Advice for poultry keepers

### **BE VIGILANT FOR THE CLINICAL SIGNS OF AVIAN INFLUENZA IN YOUR FLOCK**

**Biosecurity is the single most effective way to prevent the virus spreading from wild birds into poultry, or between poultry flocks. The ongoing risk posed by avian influenza and is a reminder to all who keep poultry, whether commercial holdings or those who have some backyard hens, to stay aware and take precautions to prevent contact with or contamination from wild birds.**

It is extremely important at this time that high **biosecurity standards** are followed and that all poultry holdings are [registered with DAFM](#), whether commercial farms or those who have one or two backyard hens. Apart from being a legal requirement, it is also essential to help protect poultry flocks and farmers' livelihoods from the impacts which an outbreak of this disease would bring.

## 6. Reporting a suspect HPAI outbreak in poultry



Report a suspect to your [Regional Veterinary Office](#) during normal office hours or the National Disease Emergency Hotline at 01 4928026 (outside of normal office hours) without delay.

## 7. HPAI situation in Great Britain and Europe

### Situation update in Great Britain:

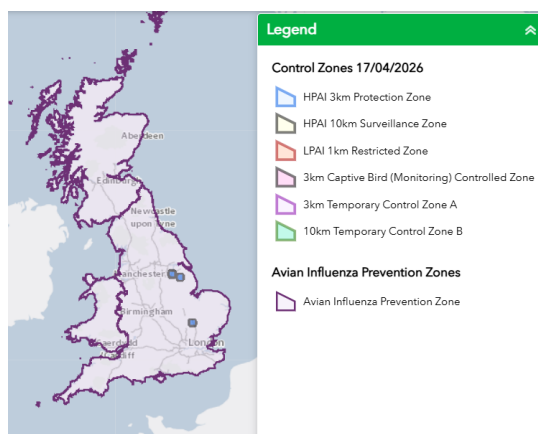


Figure 2: Current HPAI control zones and cases of HPAI in GB (as of 29/04/2026)

Source: [APHA Interactive Avian Influenza Disease Map](#)

- ❖ All of Great Britain is under an Avian Influenza Protection Zone (AIPZ) with mandatory biosecurity measures in place.

- ❖ Housing measures were lifted on 9<sup>th</sup> April 2026.

- ❖ 95 cases of HPAI have been reported across Great Britain during the 2025-2026 season. And 5 in Northern Ireland.

→ Since the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 19 outbreaks have been confirmed in Great Britain (4 after housing measures were lifted).

Further information: [Bird flu \(avian influenza\): latest situation in England – GOV.UK](#)

### Situation update across Europe:

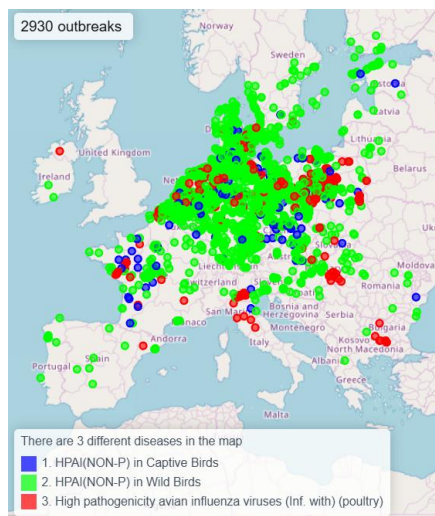


Figure 3: HPAI outbreaks in captive birds, wild birds and poultry flocks across Europe (01/01/2026-29/04/2026).



- ❖ Since the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2026, there has been a significant number of HPAI outbreaks in the European Union reaching a total of **2930** (01/01/2026-29/04/2026).

- 266 outbreaks in poultry
- 2553 outbreaks in wild birds
- 111 outbreaks in captive birds



29<sup>th</sup> April 2026

## 8. Further information

-  Further information on Avian Influenza and biosecurity guidance [here](#)
-  [Regional Veterinary Office](#) / National Disease Emergency Hotline on 01-492-802

*This update is designed to keep you informed and help protect Ireland's bird populations and livelihoods. Cooperation among all stakeholders is crucial in the protection of the health and welfare of Irish poultry flocks.*

**National Disease Control Centre**  
29<sup>th</sup> April 2026