



## NDCC Avian Influenza Update 3 of 2026

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

- A case of **HPAI avian influenza (H5N1)** was confirmed on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2026 by the Central Veterinary Research Laboratory, in a swan which had been found dead in Co. Cork, where an increased number of deaths in swans have been reported to DAFM.
- Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025, highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) has been confirmed in 69 wild birds.
- Figure 1 shows HPAI detected in wild birds in Ireland since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2025. The live map showing the exact locations and details of all wild birds tested, both positive and negative, can be accessed [here](#).



Figure 1: Location of wild birds that have tested positive to H5N1 HPAI since January 2025. 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).



## 2. 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.*

## 3. HPAI outbreak in Northern Ireland

- **HPAI H5N1** was detected in a commercial poultry premises near Omagh in Co. Tyrone on 04<sup>th</sup> March 2026.
- A 3km Protection Zone (PZ) and a 10km Surveillance Zone (SZ) have been established around the infected premises. A small area in Urney West, Co. Donegal falls in the SZ. No commercial poultry premises are located in this area.
- The Avian Influenza Prevention Zone (AIPZ) (similar to the Biosecurity Measures Regulations and the housing order that are in place in Ireland) and the ban on poultry gatherings for the whole of NI remains in place.
- Further information: [Avian Influenza \(AI\) | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)

## 4. 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.**

**There remains a significant risk of further outbreaks of HPAI in Ireland**

**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:



## ***Housing Order: Avian Influenza (Precautionary Confinement of Birds and Restriction on Assembly of Live Birds) Regulations 2025***

- The Avian Influenza (Precautionary Confinement of Birds and Restriction on Assembly of Live Birds) Regulations 2025) came into force on Monday, 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025.
- Flock keepers are required to confine all poultry and captive birds in their possession or under their control in a secure building.
- It is not permitted to organise or take part in events which involve the assembly of live birds from different premises e.g. shows, fairs, markets or sales, in order to protect the birds themselves from the risk of becoming infected.
- These regulations aim to help protect Irish poultry and captive birds against avian influenza (bird flu).
- **Housing of poultry and captive birds alone will not protect birds from the threat of avian influenza.**

### ***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**

## **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:

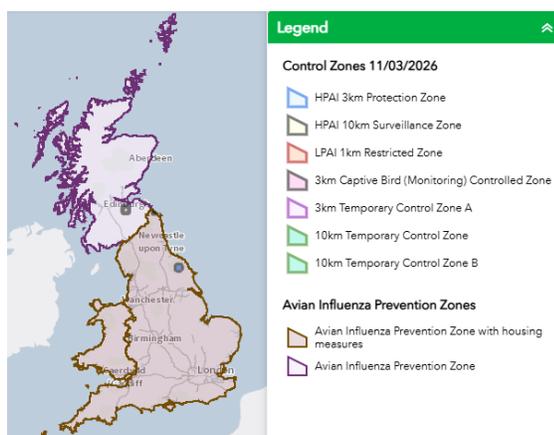


Figure 2: Current HPAI control zones and cases of HPAI in GB (as of 12/03/2026)

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.

❖ Wales and England are also under mandatory housing measures.

❖ 91 cases of HPAI have been reported across Great Britain during the 2025-2026 season.

→ Since the 1<sup>st</sup> of January, 15 outbreaks have been confirmed in Great Britain.

→ Figure 2 shows measures in place as of 12/03/2026

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



### Situation update across Europe:

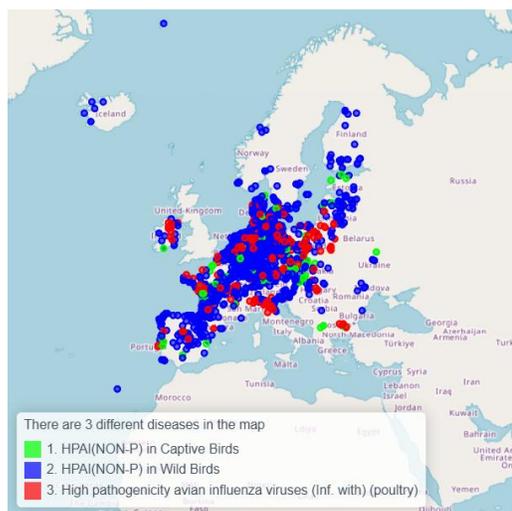


Figure 3: HPAI outbreaks in captive birds, wild birds and poultry flocks across Europe (01/10/2025-12/03/2026)

- ❖ Since the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2025, there has been a significant number of HPAI outbreaks in the European Union reaching a total of **6173** (01/10/2025-12/03/2026).
- 642 outbreaks in poultry
- 5342 outbreaks in wild birds
- 189 outbreaks in captive birds

## 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  
13<sup>th</sup> March 2026