

Cockerels:

Frequently Asked Questions

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Is it illegal for a cockerel to crow?

NO, but if you own a cockerel(s) you must ensure that the crowing does not cause a Statutory Nuisance to others.

What is a Statutory Nuisance?

A Statutory Nuisance is a “material interference with the comfort and enjoyment of another’s home.”

What does this mean in practice?

In practice, the crowing would have to be excessive and unreasonable in the circumstances and significantly interfere with the use and enjoyment of someone’s home. Examples could be: crowing for prolonged periods, frequent excessive crowing and crowing at unreasonable hours ie early morning or late at night.

How are such complaints investigated?

Standard letters would be sent to both parties, and the complainant would be required to complete diary sheets to record when the noise occurs. Thereafter visits may be made by officers to determine whether or not a Statutory Nuisance is occurring. We would try and offer advice and assistance to the owner of the animal of measures that could be taken to minimise the crowing.

What action could be taken under this Act?

If the Council is satisfied that the crowing is causing a Statutory Nuisance, a notice can be served under this Act which can reduce or stop the activity occurring.

Is there anything I can do?

The owner of the cockerel may be genuinely unaware that their animal may be causing a disturbance and therefore speaking to your neighbours may be the quickest and most effective means of resolving matters. Individuals may also take a private action through the courts under the Environmental protection Act 1990 regarding their concerns. As an owner of a cockerel you should carefully consider whether the area in which you live is suitable to have such livestock and also carefully consider how the bird is kept.

Please note that all South Norfolk Council fact sheets are available in large print, cassette form or alternative languages upon request.