

Raptor Welfare Code

The Female Falconers Club cultivates responsible Falconry and raptor management by promoting high welfare standards and best practice at all times.

Members should uphold the highest level of raptor management whilst observing UK law and should support and promote the survival and welfare of all raptors in the wild state. Members must not engage in any activity which would bring disturbance, distress or harm to raptors in the wild, including intrusive photography.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 is the principal UK law relating to animal welfare and describes five key requirements for owners and keepers:

- **Suitable environment and place to live**
- **Suitable diet**
- **Exhibit normal behaviour patterns**
- **Housed with, or apart from, other animals (if applicable)**
- **Protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease**



Welfare Requirement	Good Welfare Indicators	Good Practice
<p>Suitable environment and place to live</p>	<p>Accommodation (tethered or free-lofted) should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the bird from adverse weather • Allow for observation • Provide privacy to the bird • Allow access to sunlight • Maintain comfortable temperatures • Be of an appropriate size to promote natural behaviour and good condition • Baths should be of an appropriate design and size • Be secure with a double door system to prevent loss 	<p>Accommodation should be regularly cleaned and hygiene maintained.</p> <p>Feather condition should be monitored as poor condition can be indicative of a husbandry issue.</p>
<p>Suitable diet</p>	<p>Diet should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be mixed, whole carcass to reduce the risk of nutritional deficiencies • Include constant access to clean, fresh water • Quantity should match metabolic requirements 	<p>Water may be temporarily removed before flying or during freezing weather, to ensure birds are dry.</p> <p>Food should be sourced from and stored in hygienic conditions.</p> <p>Ensure delivery allows monitoring of intake.</p>
<p>Allow natural behaviour and maintain health & well being</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Birds should only be tethered whilst being trained, flown on a regular basis or undergoing veterinary care • Birds should be flown regularly when appropriate to foster good physical and mental health 	<p>When tethered, suitable action should be undertaken to ensure the safety and security of birds e.g. enclosed weathering, safe furniture, appropriate perches of high quality.</p>
<p>Protected from pain, injury, suffering and disease</p>	<p>Good health can be evidenced in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feet and legs • Cere • Beak • Skin • Wing tips • Joints • Eyes • Nares/mouth • Faeces • Feather condition 	<p>Ensure regular health checks are undertaken.</p> <p>Register with an appropriate Vet Surgery.</p> <p>Seek prompt veterinary attention in the event of sickness or injury.</p>
<p>Furniture</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Furniture should be of suitable design for the species • Good fitting hoods can be appropriate to reduce stress and prevent damage to a bird 	<p>Furniture should be regularly inspected and action taken where there is evidence of wear or potential injury to the bird.</p>
<p>Flight</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food should not be withheld for prolonged periods and birds should be encouraged to eat as soon as possible • Positive reinforcement methods should be used • All steps should be taken to ensure return from free flight. Telemetry or GPS should always be worn • Birds undergoing transport must be safe and secure in ventilated travel boxes or hooded on a cage 	<p>The environment should be assessed for risks to safety and welfare, and be managed to reduce stressors.</p> <p>Free flight should be undertaken only in spaces where the landowner has given permission and should avoid the general public.</p> <p>Acquisition of third-party liability insurance is recommended.</p> <p>Ensure compliance with all aspects of law appropriate to falconry activities</p>