To consider the long term welfare of the geese (7)
14 03 2023

09 03 2023

Following a telephone call with A senior veterinary inspector from the Western region of Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) suggested:

- Avian flu can mutate and transmit but would not be sustainable in a human as a single virus. The risk when only going in and out for short periods of time to feed the geese is very low; you must always ensure good hand hygiene at all times.
- The reason for such an extended housing order is due to the circulation in wild birds being higher than in previous year; the virus comes in through migratory birds from around October each year. The samples from wild birds, however small, have shown a greater number of birds in a wider area with the virus this season. The migratory birds would usually have left in February/March and this is when typically the virus would subside (confirmed by more testing) however the climate change is effecting this.
- A goose with a black bottom may not indicate any welfare concern it could be the bird has loose stools; if the bottom were to be green then concern should be raised.
- If an area of green were covered with clear plastic sheeting for a period of 56 days then it would be safe to move the current pen to the new site as the plastic sheet would expose the grass to UV light therefore killing any vireus whilst preventing access by birds.
- If the birds are eating, drinking and behaving as usual there should be no concern for their welfare. If there are concerns contact a large animal vet. I have contacted two local vets and am waiting to hear from them a. if they would come out and look at the geese if the Council asked and b. what would the cost be.
- If anyone has any concern as to the reason for the geese being housed in this way they should be asked to read the bio security pages on the government website.
- If the geese were to be rehomed it would be an idea to contact a community farm or small holding; animal rescues wouldn't usually take a flock of geese.