

Standards (must do)

General standards in Part A also apply to minimise risk to the welfare of pigeons.

SB11.1	A person in charge must ensure every effort is made to avoid aggression towards both hen birds and immature nestlings by the appropriate selection of breeding stock coupled with appropriate housing.
SB11.2	A person must not lift or carry pigeons by the head, legs, neck, wings, feathers or tail feathers unless otherwise supported by the breast.
SB11.3	A person in charge must ensure pigeons are not weaned before they are capable of feeding and drinking independently of their parents.
SB11.4	A person in charge must ensure that at all times there are more perches, either box or V-shaped, available in the loft than resident pigeons.
Racing	
SB11.5	A person in charge must ensure racing pigeons are not released away from the home loft for racing into extreme weather conditions or heavy lingering fog in any portion of the return journey.

Guidelines

General guidelines are also recommended in Part A to minimise the risk to the welfare of pigeons.

Housing

- GB11.1 Stock bird lofts should be roofed to maintain dry nesting areas.
- GB11.2 Perches should be provided at several height levels.
- GB11.3 Nest boxes should have provision for two sections in the event of the hen needing to seek refuge from the cock bird.
- GB11.4 Nest bowls should be lined with a non-slip material or nesting material supplied.
- GB11.5 Wherever possible mated pairs should be housed in a nest box.

Space allowances

- GB11.6 **The minimum space available in the breeding loft shall be calculated as two & half times the allowance of the race loft as a minimum space per pigeon, i.e. 0.23m³ per pigeon (excluding nesting areas).
- GB11.7 *The minimum space available to each bird in the racing loft should be 0.092m³ or 450mm x 450mm x 450mm.
- GB11.8 If wire floors are used, mesh should be of not less than 18 gauge and 25 mm x 25 mm or its equivalent.

Racing pigeons

- GB11.9 With the exception of birds housed in rural and semi-rural areas or, returning from racing and training, free flight exercise should be in accordance with a plan, and for at least 30 minutes duration per day and not exceeding 180 minutes per day during both pre-training and the race programme.
- GB11.10 Other than for planned free flight and non-flight times, all racing pigeons should be confined within their home loft.
- GB11.11 During the months of June to August pigeons should be released from race/training points as follows:
- under clear sky conditions – release a minimum of 15 minutes after gazetted sunrise for the area
 - under over-cast sky conditions – release a minimum of 30 minutes after gazetted sunrise for the area.
- During the months of September and October pigeons should be released from race/training points as follows:
- under clear sky conditions – release at the discretion of the person responsible for the birds
 - under over-cast sky conditions – release a minimum of 30 minutes after gazetted sunrise for the area.
- GB11.12 All off the ground lofts should have a minimum clearance height from the ground to floor level of 200 mm, allowing for a free flow of air under floor.
- GB11.13 Off the ground loft flooring should be either;
- Trafficable mesh grating floor, allowing droppings to pass through for collection below floor level
 - Trafficable timber floor with moisture absorptive qualities and for regular ease of scrape cleaning e.g. chip board, or ply-wood.
- GB11.14 All on ground lofts should have a concrete slab floor and have a heavy duty plastic moisture barrier laid underneath at pouring. Adequate floor level ventilation should be provided.
- GB11.15 External open aviaries and or sun yards which are exposed to the elements should be off the ground otherwise well drained, sanitary and vermin proof.
- GB11.16 All metal housing roofs should be insulated.
- GB11.17 Lofts should be lined with insulating materials e.g. plywood or chipboard.
- GB11.18 Pigeons should be fed after exercise.

*For a race loft section of 1.8m width x 2.1m length x 1.8m height there is a space of 6.804m³. Divide this by 0.92m³ (the space for each bird) and the outcome is that the loft has the capacity for 74 pigeons.

**Therefore a stock loft 1.8m width x 2.1m length x 1.8m height would be capable of holding 30 stock birds (6.804 divided by 0.23 equals 29.5)