



## PRESS RELEASE

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\*\*\*\*\*For immediate release\*\*\*\*\*

### **LUCKY EASTER CHICK 'PRINCESS KATE' HELPS CHARITY CELEBRATE 250,000 HENS!**

Cheers could be heard at the British Hen Welfare Trust as it reached a major milestone – the re-homing of its 250,000<sup>th</sup> ex-battery hen. The lucky hen was named 'Kate' - in honour of Kate Middleton - to mark the historic event! She was re-homed to the Dawson family from Middle Marston near Barnstaple, North Devon. Ian and Sally Dawson and their two children, Ben, 12, and James, 10, came along to a re-homing day at British Hen Welfare Trust's headquarters in Chumleigh, Devon, and were thrilled to be presented with 250,000<sup>th</sup> hen Kate and a limited edition Eglu Chicken House, donated specially by Omlet for the occasion - a new home fit for a 'princess'!

The Dawson family are first-time hen keepers, although Mum, Sally, kept hens as a child. Even as a young girl she showed her entrepreneurial spirit by buying the hens' feed with her pocket money and selling the eggs, at a profit, to her Mum and neighbours! Following in his Mum's footsteps, youngest son James, 10, will be responsible for the three ex-battery hens they have re-homed (named 'Kate', 'Lizzy' and 'Feathers'). James has been swotting up on caring for hens by reading library books, and has been helping Dad, Ian, build a new chicken run in their back garden for the girls.

Ten year old James said: *'We really liked the idea of re-homing chickens so we can give them a good life after they've spent a year in a cage laying eggs'*.

The family likes to buy ethically produced food wherever possible, and keeping their own hens felt like a logical next step. Dad, Ian, is passionate about keeping fit, so consumes large numbers of eggs – sometimes eating a hearty breakfast of five poached eggs after training! He's really looking forward to collecting eggs fresh from their own hens, while Sally believes that cakes she's made with free-range eggs from her neighbours' hens turn out better and swears that *'the cakes come out higher and have a better colour!'*

Sally added: *'You can go and buy hens anywhere, or get some really fancy breeds, but for us, it was the appeal of giving some ex-battery hens a good home and nice life after the life they've had'.*

Jane Howorth, Founder of the British Hen Welfare Trust, which re-homes commercial laying hens, educates the public about how they can make a difference to hen welfare, and encourages support for the British egg industry, presented the 250,000th hen to the Dawsons. Jane said: *'I'm over the moon that the charity has grown so much over the last six years; the support of the British public has been phenomenal. It just goes to show how much we, as a nation, care about welfare and about how the food we eat is produced. The challenge now is to spread the word so that people actively choose free-range eggs when doing their grocery shopping – not only by buying free-range shell eggs, but also by searching for free-range eggs in processed food, like ice-cream, quiche, ready meals and cakes. Reading food labels and only choosing free range can make a big difference to the quality of life for hens like Kate.'*

Patron of the British Hen Welfare Trust, and passionate hen-keeper Julia Kendell, of BBC1's 'DIY SOS' and ITV's '60 Minute Makeover' fame, sent a message of congratulations to the charity, saying: *'What an incredible achievement! A massive well done to Jane Howorth and her team at the British Hen Welfare Trust for giving 250,000 lucky hens the chance to live a happy life, loved and cared for. Here's to 500,000!!'*

Under the Dawson family's loving care, Kate is now happily settled in to her new retirement home, enjoying her new found freedom and basking in the lovely Easter sunshine. A very lucky princess indeed!!

*The British Hen Welfare Trust is a national charity that re-homes commercial laying hens, educates the public about how they can make a difference to hen welfare, and encourages support for the British egg industry. Its ultimate aim is to see consumers and food manufacturers buying only UK produced free range eggs, resulting in a strong British egg industry where all commercial laying hens enjoy a good quality life.*

**To find out more or to support the work of the British Hen Welfare Trust please email [info@bhwt.org.uk](mailto:info@bhwt.org.uk) , log on to [www.bhwt.org.uk](http://www.bhwt.org.uk) or tel: 01769 580310**



Left to right: Dawson family: Ben, Sally, James with lucky hen 'Kate', Ian, and British Hen Welfare Trust Founder, Jane Howorth.

\*\*\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\*\*\*

**Notes to Editors:**

The re-homing took place on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April.

For jpegs of photos and to arrange interviews:

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