

Pet talk

In association with



Pet gadget

Dyson V8 Animal cordless vacuum cleaner
 £469 from ao.com
 Designed for tackling ground-in dirt and hair. Its filters also suck up airborne allergens.



CELEB PET of the week

Who is it? Scottish Fold cat Waffle.
Owned by: TV presenter Caroline

Flack, 37.

Loves:

Posing, watching TV, sitting upright and cuddles.

Hates:

Fish, sad songs, men with dark hair and purring.



Watch out for toxic choc

Pet owners are being reminded to keep chocolate eggs well out of reach as the treat can prove fatal to animals.

A substance in the chocolate can be highly dangerous for pets, despite being harmless to

us. Yet a PDSA report found 188,000 dogs in the UK are regularly given it, while many more get it by accident.

Warning signs include excessive thirst, vomiting and diarrhoea, fast breathing and tremors.



CRAMPED Some firms still use caged hens' eggs

Free range still the egg-ception

EXCLUSIVE BY EMMA DONNAN

Easter may be a cracking good time for most, but as you tuck into your afternoon sponge cake spare a thought for the egg-laying chickens that are confined inside cramped cages.

The British Hen Welfare Trust is urging people to think who they buy their treats from – as some of Britain's favourite bakery brands are still not free range.

McVitie's and Millies Cookies are among the firms still using cage-laid eggs, while Mr Kipling uses barn eggs. Barn-raised hens often have no outdoor access, but are protected by EU rules on space.

Jane Howorth MBE, founder of BHWT, said: "Hen welfare took a huge leap in the right direction in 2016 with supermarkets pledging to become 'cage free' by 2025.

"But our work isn't done until all laying hens are in small free range flocks. The public back hen welfare and we'll work to ensure more enjoy a free range lifestyle."

The charity is encouraging people to avoid products which do not use free range eggs – and to check labels to ensure free range is clearly stated on the packet, indicating higher animal welfare. McVitie's owner pladis said: "We take hen

welfare seriously. Products are either sourced from enriched cage or free range egg laying systems. We require eggs to be produced in accordance with enhanced EU welfare standards introduced in 2012."

Millies said: "All our eggs meet or exceed the British Egg Industry Council's Lion Code, covering both animal welfare and food safety. We're working to increase the proportion of cage free eggs we use."

Mr Kipling switched to free range in 2011, with a multi-million pound advertising campaign – then reverted to barn eggs four years later, angering consumers.

Their website insists they care about animal welfare and only use eggs from barn hens that can "roam, scratch and spread their wings".

Jane established BHWT in 2005 as Britain's first registered charity for re-homing laying hens. They have so far rescued more than 500,000 destined for slaughter.

The charity is publishing an online list of brands, restaurants, hotels and supermarkets so consumers can check their egg policies. Last year, more than 60 food firms vowed to switch to free range, including McDonald's, Burger King, Lidl, Aldi, Tesco and Morrisons.



Q&A The Yorkshire Vet Peter Wright

Peter Wright, from James Herriot's Skeldale Veterinary Centre, is one of the stars of TV's The Yorkshire Vet. He has more than 30 years' experience treating all creatures great and small - and is now here to help you with your pet problems.

Q My dog was scratching a lot so I took him to the vet. The vet diagnosed him with fleas, he put a "Spot On" the back of his neck. Why did he give me a spray to spray my house as well? Surely what the vet put on the dog will kill the fleas?

A You're quite right. The application that your vet put on your dog will kill fleas on his body. However, female fleas will have also jumped off your dog to lay eggs. The vet has given you the spray to use in the house to kill those larvae to stop them developing back into adult fleas to re-infest your dog. I would be surprised if your vet has not given you a series of "spot-on" applications to apply every 4-6 weeks to break the flea life cycle.

■ The Yorkshire Vet starts on Channel 5, Tuesday, 8pm

pets@sundaymirror.co.uk



The FREE and fun way to learn all about pets

Throughout the school holidays, our pet workshops help children learn how to look after pets responsibly. Kids can make new furry or finned friends, do loads of great activities and learn how to keep animals happy and healthy. Most of all, they'll have fun – and it'll keep them occupied for half an hour...

Book your child's FREE place at petsathome.com/workshops



Small Furries workshop, Ashton store

pets at home