Founder and CEO of the British Hen Welfare Trust Jane Howorth with Henrietta

Steve Ryan/WPA Pix

King adopts the millionth hen saved by chicken charity

THE King has adopted the British Hen Welfare Trust's one millionth hen – and named the bird Henrietta, the charity said.

The hen was rehomed at Highgrove Gardens, which surrounds the private residence of Charles and the Queen in Gloucestershire, along with 30 other birds on August 17.

Henrietta travelled there in a hand-crafted carrier created by award-winning British fashion designer Lulu Guinness, British Hen Welfare Trust (BHWT) said.

The charity works to rehome commercial laying hens and has done so in schools, community areas, prisons and back gardens across the country. "Inspiring the British public to see hens as much-loved pets".

According to BHWT, commercial laying hens are typically replaced with younger birds once they reach 18 months old to maintain maximum egg production at which point the older animals are slaughtered.

Founder and CEO of the charity Jane Howorth said: "We're thrilled that one million hens have been adopted and extremely pleased that Henrietta and her 30 feathered friends are heading to Highgrove Gardens.

"Helping a lorry-load of 4,000 was my original target and we've exceeded my expectations by some margin.

"To think that so many hens have had a happy retirement gives me a great deal of pleasure as I'm sure it has for all the kind-hearted British supporters who've taken these deserving little creatures into their homes and hearts."

Public urged to 'leave no trace' over Bank Holiday

THE National Trust is urging the British public to "leave no trace" when visiting top nature spots over this bank holiday weekend.

In an appeal ahead of the August bank holiday, the charity said its rangers were reporting considerable increases in illegal camping and littering at countryside and coastal locations over recent months.

This had been affecting the trust's conservation work as well as wildlife, grazing animals and farm tenants, it said.

The warning came as thousands of people were expected to travel to some of the country's favourite countryside sites, such as the Lake District and Eryri (Snowdonia) in the next few days.

Those planning to do so are asked to follow guidelines from the Countryside Code such as appropriately disposing of litter, using designated campsites, not lighting fires and leaving barbecues at home.

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The National Trust said the Lake District, Snowdonia, the Peak District and Dunstable Downs in the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty were among the areas cared for by the charity that had seen growing impacts from visitors, putting additional strain on countryside teams, taking conservationists away from vital work, and placing popular sites and nature at risk.

Concerns were particularly growing over the rise in illegal fly camping, where people camp without the landowner's permission and leave debris behind.

Ben McCarthy, the National Trust's head of nature conservation and restoration ecology, said: "It's infuriating when a small minority of thoughtless people leave their rubbish behind that impacts both our wildlife and other visitors who have come to enjoy the nature and the outdoors.

"During the summer months, our rangers have really important work to do – restoring and managing habitats, such as wildflower meadows or peatlands, supporting visitors to enjoy our wonderful countryside by fixing footpaths for example – not having to spend time clearing up after people. It really isn't acceptable.

"We call on everyone to simply 'leave no trace' when out in the countryside so everyone can enjoy it and without damaging the very nature they sought out in the first place."

The National Trust said anti social fly camping was damaging lake shores in the Lake District, with campers discarding entire tents and chairs, lighting fires that scorched the ground, leaving litter and even cutting down trees.

Similarly, in the Peak District, rangers and volunteers were regularly hauling out abandoned tents and bags full of litter from hot spots such as the flanks and woodlands near Kinder Scout and the Upper Derwent Valley.

Meanwhile, at Cwm Idwal nature reserve in Eryri, highly protected habitats were being harmed by almost-nightly fly camping, barbecues and scattered litter, the National Trust said. The bear from a recent campfire broke apart a 450-million-year old glacier carved rock – a protected feature of the upland location, which is famed for its rock formations and rare fragile plant life, the charity added.

Local teams at Dunstable Downs in the East of England said the level of anti-social behaviour and litter had reached a point where the trust was struggling to keep the popular location clean and tidy for visitors and wildlife.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Former bank to become a bar

A FORMER bank in the Dorset town of Bridport is to become a bar.

The Bridport Dagger has just achieved the final permission needed to convert the former HSBC in East Street.

Dorset Council has granted planning consent for a change of use for the building, which closed more than a year ago.

Several neighbours had objected to the proposal to change the use of the building, telling Dorset Council they feared their peace and quiet would be disturbed.

Bridport Town Council had supported the application, subject to noise monitoring being in place, after an initial objection.

Homes scheme for old school site

A FORMER Somerset primary school could be demolished and replaced with low-cost homes.

King Ina Church of England Academy was originally split over two sites in Somerton – the infants' site on Estome Terrace and the juniors' site on Kirkham Street.

Both sites closed down when the academy moved to its new site on Northfield, with plans to convert the Kirkham Street site into two residential properties.

The Stonewater housing association has now submitted plans to redevelop the Estome Terrace site into 16 affordable homes, with Somerset Council expected to make a ruling on the matter by the end of the year.

Coffee shop at town retail park

A DRIVE-THRU coffee shop will be built at a major Swindon retail destination by Starbucks.

However, it does come at the cost of more than 60 parking spaces, which has caused some concern at Swindon Borough Council.

The council's plainness have given the green light for the proposal put forward by the owners of Greenbridge retail and entertainment park M&G UK Property.

Advertising board to go electronic

A TRADITIONAL advertising board on the side of a house in Dorchester Road, Weymouth, is to be replaced with an electronic, digital display.

The board will be replaced with a board of similar size which can be controlled remotely and changed without the need for someone to climb a ladder and paste on the wall.