Spring clean your hen house

Plus get ready for next year's London Marathon to support rescued hens

Supporters are vital to ensuring a hen's future

We've welcomed the arrival of spring, and our hens are enjoying longer, lighter days in the back garden or paddock which brings us much joy and means it's the perfect time to give your hen house a deep clean.

So grab your Marigolds, throw on some scruffy clothes and prepare to get stuck in. The tools we'd recommend are a robust dustpan and brush, small scrubbing brush, paint scraper, bucket of hot water and a chicken-specific cleaning product.

Start, on a dry day, by removing everything from the hen house including all dirty bedding and perches if they are removable. Brush all the ceilings and walls to get rid of dust, dander and cobwebs (we'd recommend wearing a facemask during this bit!).

Your paint scraper is the next essential tool for getting right into the far corners and removing stubborn bits of bedding and poop, and you'll then want to scrub perches and every inch of your hen house with the hot water and cleaner. Then spray everything with a disinfectant and allow the whole house to completely dry before refilling with fresh bedding. A ground and bedding sanitiser will really set your hens up for spring and make everything feel fresh and clean.

If you have a plastic house this makes the whole process somewhat easier as it can be pressure washed but will still benefit from a disinfectant treatment.

Feeders and drinks will benefit from a soak in hot water and disinfectant but please remember to rinse them well and let them fully dry out before re-using.

Finally, this is a great time to check for any damage to your hen house which needs repairing and, if you're feeling adventurous, why not give wooden houses a lick of paint?!

You can find most of the products you need for a spring clean on our one-stop chicken shop at shop.bhwt.org.uk and, best of all, proceeds from all sales are put towards saving more hens from slaughter.

CREATE YOUR LEGACY OF HOPE FOR HENS

Over one million hens have found homes since the charity's inception in 2005 and, as we celebrate our 20th birthday on 15th April this year, we are asking for help in saving even more of our feathered friends from slaughter.

We can only achieve our lifesaving work through kind donations, as we receive no Government support, and so are asking hen lovers to set up their own legacy of hope for hens with a monthly donation to us. The money raised buys fuel for our vans, feed for our hens on rehoming days and helps cover any necessary vet bills which may arise. Knowing we have such funds coming in gives us the confidence to carry on rehoming tens of thousands of hens each year and we are indebted to the almost 1,000-strong network of regular givers already donating in this way.

To date, they have collectively raised just shy of £700,000 – funds which have sent thousands of hens off to a free-range retirement where they can feel the grass under their feet and the sun on their backs, and enjoy being called by name, rather than existing as a number.

Run the London Marathon for hens

Every year millions of hens leave commercial cages with nowhere to go. The ones we rehome are the lucky ones. We know we can never save them all, and while rehoming one hen won't change the world, it will transform the life of that hen forever.

So please, if you can, consider setting up a monthly donation of any amount to the British Hen Welfare Trust so that we can transform the lives of as many hens as possible each year. Establishing your legacy of hope now could mean the difference for hundreds of hens in the future, and for that we are truly grateful.

Visit **bhwt.org.uk/donate/birthday-2025** to set up your donation today.

Whatever the construction, hen houses will benefit from a good spring clean but adjust according to the materials

SECURE A PLACE IN THE LONDON MARATHON AND HELP HENS

If you sat watching this year's London Marathon in awe, and with a little bit of jealousy, wishing you were there, then we've got great news. If you happen to be a hen lover, the news gets even better, because we have secured two charity places in this iconic race starting in 2026.

By signing up to run for the British Hen Welfare Trust you get an extra incentive to lace up and get out the door to train because not only are benefitting yourself physically and mentally, but you are also raising funds to help ex-commercial hens wing they way to a better life.

So, whether you're a seasoned marathon runner or looking to run your very first 26.2-mile race, we'd love to hear from you if you want to combine running and your love of hens. Next year's London Marathon takes place on Sunday, 26th April through the capital city's historic streets and, as always, will be a must on any marathon lovers race calendar.

In order to take up one our coveted spots in the event, we're asking you to raise a minimum of £2,000 which will benefit hens through our rehoming work and our efforts to improve pet hen health, educate the next generation of hens keepers and ensure better welfare conditions for the hens we cannot reach.

If you're interested, please email fundraise@bhwt.org.uk to find out more, and good cluck!

Hens kept in a safe and clean environment when the owner is out

BHWT

The British Hen Welfare Trust (BHWT) was established in 2005 by Jane Howorth MBE. We are Britain's first registered charity concerned with rehoming laying hens while improving hen welfare across commercial and domestic sectors. We believe that pet hens matter; everything we do is to improve the welfare of our feathered friends and introduce more people to the joys of hen-keeping.

- **Every year, with support from over 1,400 volunteers at 48 pop-up sites, we rehome over 50,000 hens saved from slaughter. To date we've rehomed over one million hens.**
- **We educate consumers to help them make informed choices when shopping. For example, about caged eggs hidden in processed foods and the problem of using large eggs, rather than small or mixed weight.**
- **We work closely with government agencies and veterinary institutions to develop programmes and practices to improve hen welfare in both the commercial and domestic sectors.**
- **We offer a wealth of information and guidance online and offer a 'Hen Helpline' service to all hen keepers needing advice on caring for sick chickens.**
- **We have also developed an educational programme providing resources to schools to help pupils explore the connections between food, farming, and animal welfare.**
- **We work with academic researchers to facilitate ground-breaking studies into pet hens and provide grants to vets and veterinary students to conduct research into chickens to build evidence-based data about how best to care for pet hens.**

There are many ways to get involved with the British Hen Welfare Trust's work. From rehoming to fundraising, volunteering and donating, every single gesture helps – the smallest of things can have a huge impact.