

WELCOME TO the latest edition of our newsletter, designed to keep you up to date with your veterinary practice.

Practice Facilities

- Completely refurbished and extended practice
- Friendly professional service
- Orthopaedic referral service
- Annual health checks
- Nurse clinics
- Full dental facilities
- Puppy parties
- Weight checks
- Separate cat and dog wards
- Convenient surgery hours
- Senior Pet Healthcare programme, for dogs over 8 and cats over 10 years old

Consulting Times by appointment

Monday - Friday:

9.00 am - 6.30 pm

Saturday:

9.00 am - 12.00 noon

Insurance – is your pet covered?

DID YOU know that insurance is available for dogs, cats and rabbits, at very little cost, and with easy monthly payments?

Each year, on average one pet in three will require veterinary treatment for illness or accidents. As treatments become more complex and sophisticated, costs inevitably rise and on many occasions may become a limiting factor.

We naturally tend to think of traumatic *surgical* events – such as accidents involving broken bones – as the main reason for pet insurance. However, in addition, many *medical* conditions, such as deep seated skin or ear infections, arthritis and diabetes (to name but a few!), can often be equally costly to treat in the longer term.

With pet insurance, you have the **peace of mind** that should your much loved pet become ill, he or she can have the treatment they require, without compromise, and without *you* having to worry about the cost of the treatment.

An additional benefit of pet insurance is **third party cover**. Should your dog stray and cause a road traffic accident, *you* could be held liable. In this situation, pet insurance should cover both the treatment of your pet *and* any third party claims.

If you would like further information on the benefits of insuring your pet, please ask any member of our practice staff.



Cartoon: Gareth Davies

Should I have my rabbit neutered?

NEUTERING IS an operation carried out under a general anaesthetic and can be performed from about four months of age onwards. Female rabbits (does) are "spayed" – an operation that involves the removal of both ovaries and the uterus. Male rabbits are castrated – an operation that involves the removal of both testicles.



Apart from preventing unwanted pregnancies, there are several other benefits to having your rabbit neutered. Neutered rabbits are usually calmer, less prone to destructive or aggressive behaviour, and can be kept in social groups without fighting. Finally, since neutering removes the reproductive organs, they are protected from cancer of these organs. Please ask us for further details!

Photo: Jane Burton

Does my pet have a heart problem?



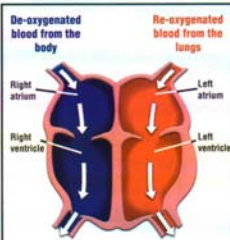
- Reluctance to exercise
- Tiring more easily
- Coughing
- Laboured breathing
- Pale or blueish gums
- Fainting or collapse

Although there are many possible causes of heart disease, the two commonest causes are either due

THE HEART is a muscular organ whose sole function is to pump blood around the body – supplying the tissues of the body with oxygen and nutrients.

The heart receives de-oxygenated blood from the tissues of the body and pumps it to the lungs where it is re-oxygenated. The oxygen rich blood then returns to the heart where it is then pumped back to the tissues of the body.

Heart disease – which can be gradual or sudden in onset – is the *loss* of the normal pumping action of the heart, leading to a range of symptoms including:



Schematic diagram of the heart
De-oxygenated blood is pumped to the lungs where it is re-oxygenated. Re-oxygenated blood is then pumped to the tissues of the body.

to **heart valve** problems, or due to a problem with the **heart muscle** itself.

Heart disease is generally more common in older

dogs, however in certain breeds it is more prevalent at an early age. In cats, heart disease is quite commonly associated with thyroid gland disease.

If you are concerned that your pet is showing any of the previously described signs, please come and see us for a check-up.

The good news however is that with new and effective forms of diagnosis and treatment, the outlook for this condition has never been better.

If you would like any further information or a check-up for your pet, please don't hesitate to ask!



How to avoid getting caught on the hop!



WE TRADITIONALLY tend to think of the warmer Summer months as the "flea season". However with modern central heating, fleas can be an all year round problem!

If your pet was unfortunate enough to attract a few unwelcome "guests" last Summer, you will hopefully have the situation well under control and may be tempted to stop treatment.

However, take a look at the picture below – these are flea eggs at 10x magnification. Adult female fleas can lay in excess of 50 eggs per day – thus a brief infestation can result in thousands of flea eggs being produced.



Flea eggs at 10x magnification

These fall off your pet and are deposited around the house in carpets and bedding, where they can lie dormant for many months before developing, via larval stages, into adult fleas.

Thus for optimum flea control – and peace of mind – treatment should ideally be all year round! We are happy to advise you on the most suitable form of flea control for your **pet and your home!**

Arthritis: new life for affected pets

MANY OF our pets lead very active lives in their early years. As they get older they may suffer from a degree of arthritis – with stiffness and pain, mostly as a result of long term wear and tear on their joints. In other cases, arthritis may be secondary to joint trauma or joint malformation (for example hip dysplasia).

The signs of arthritic change are usually fairly obvious – difficulty in getting to their feet after rest, problems



getting in and out of cars, and possibly a reluctance to go on walks. For many pets, the onset of colder damper Winter weather

greatly worsens the pain of arthritic joints, often making their lives a misery.

If you are concerned that your pet is showing signs of stiffness and joint pain please arrange for us to examine your pet.

Having made a diagnosis of arthritis, managing your pet's **weight** together with a suitable level of **exercise** and modern **medications** can make a huge difference to your pet's mobility and quality of life.