

Dog grooming at Wilbury

We are delighted to introduce this new service at Wilbury Veterinary Surgery.

Ruth Grundy is a fully qualified dog groomer and she will be open for business in January 2006. The services that she can offer are: bathing, de-matting, clipping, scissoring, ear plucking, emptying anal glands and nail clips. She will tailor make the appointment for your requirements, from a basic bath to the 'full works'. The grooming room is a quiet, clean and safe environment for your pet.

Appointments can be made for *Tuesdays – Fridays:*

10am – 4pm

and *Saturdays:*

9am – 12noon

Please telephone Ruth on 07908 260361 for appointments, enquiries or quotes.

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Consulting Times by appointment

Monday - Friday:

9.00 am - 6.30 pm

Saturday:

9.00 am - 12.00 noon



Allergies in dogs and cats

gies is intensely itchy skin. Signs include face rubbing, paw chewing, recurrent ear problems, persistent licking and over grooming. Food allergies can present both with symptoms of diarrhoea and/or dermatitis (itchy skin).



Foot chewing in a dog

WE all know about allergies in people, but can our pets be similarly affected?

Allergies are immune reactions in which an animal responds *abnormally* to common, usually harmless substances; these substances are called *allergens*.

Our pets may come into contact with allergens in three main ways:

- **inhalation** – e.g. pollens and house dust
- **contact** – e.g. flea bites
- **ingestion** – e.g. foods

The main symptom of contact and inhalation aller-

Sadly, allergies cannot be cured; instead humans and pets either have to avoid contact with the allergen or they need medication to alleviate the symptoms. The best approach is to find out what the patient is allergic to, and with the advent of new diagnostic tests this

can be very helpful in devising a suitable treatment. The best form of treatment is to minimise the exposure of the pet to the allergen. Flea saliva allergies are greatly improved by effective flea control, whilst food allergies may be improved by a new diet that avoids the problem. Inhaled allergens are more difficult to control, but new forms of medication can be really helpful in reducing itching. If your pet gets itchy for no obvious reason or has a sensitive stomach, it could be an allergy. Let us give your pet a check-up; they may be eternally grateful!



Cartoons: Gareth Davies

Is your dog at risk from Kennel Cough?



DID you know that infectious bronchitis (commonly called "kennel cough") is a highly infectious cough that can be picked up wherever dogs meet – on walks, at training classes, dog shows and of course in boarding kennels.

Affected dogs typically start sneezing, usually progressing to a harsh dry hacking cough that can last for several weeks and often requires antibiotic treatment.

The disease is caused by a complex mixture of viruses and a bacterium – *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. Although regular booster vaccinations offer protection against many of the airborne viruses, it is only intranasal vaccines that can offer protection against *Bordetella*. Don't take any chances with kennel cough – contact us now to ensure your dog is adequately vaccinated!

Lost, stolen or strayed?



Microchip implant x1

NOW you see them, now you don't! Sadly it's all too easy for pets to go missing and if this happens it could mean days or weeks of worry for all involved. However the good news is that microchip implants now offer a far more reliable method of identifying your pet than the traditional collar and tag (which can all too easily become detached and lost). A range of pets can be microchipped, including dogs, cats, horses, small pets, birds and even fish! However the system is most commonly used by dog and cat owners.

The procedure involves implanting a tiny microchip (smaller than a grain of rice) under the skin, permanently identifying your pet. Each microchip carries a unique code which – together with details about your pet and your contact details – are held on a central computer database. Veterinary practices, the police and pet rescue organisations have special hand held scanners that can detect and “read” the information on the microchip – identifying your pet and your contact details. So should the unthinkable happen and your pet goes missing, you have the best chance of being reunited. Don't take the risk – for further information, or to have your pet microchipped, please contact us today!



Thyroid gland disease – is your cat affected?

DID YOU know that thyroid gland disease is surprisingly common in older cats?

The thyroid gland consists of two tiny lobes situated at the base of the neck. These lobes produce thyroid hormone which regulates the rate of your cat's metabolism – too much thyroid hormone speeds up the metabolism, whilst too little slows it down.

Excess production of thyroid hormone is termed **hyperthyroidism** and is a relatively common condition in cats over 8 years of age. Affected cats tend to burn up energy too rapidly and lose weight *despite* an often ravenous appetite. In addition, excess thyroid hormone usually increases the heart rate, potentially leading to abnormal thickening of the heart muscle and increased blood pressure. As well as the above, a variety of other signs may also be seen including hyperactivity, vomiting and diarrhoea.

However the good news is that in most cases, hyperthyroidism in cats can be very successfully treated. So if you are worried your cat is losing weight or showing any of the other signs described above, please arrange for us to examine him or her.

Goodbye My Pet



The 'Farewell Set'

Losing a beloved pet can be a traumatic and isolating experience. While the death of a relative, colleague or friend is usually marked by a familiar procedure including a funeral and a fond send-off, there are no formal conventions to reassure us when our animal companions pass away. Instead, pet owners have to navigate the bereavement process with little outside help, dealing with their loss as best they can. For children, especially those who have never been bereaved before, this can be a confusing and distressing time.

At the Wilbury Veterinary Surgery we understand how important it is to talk people through the options available to them in the unhappy event of their pet being terminally ill.



“Typically, I will spend a long time counselling the owners of terminally ill animals, either in person or on the phone, before asking whether they would like their pet put to sleep”, says Ann Greenwood. “Both adults and children can be extremely upset about the death of an animal. Adults especially may be unsure how to deal with their feelings, particularly if they

are uncomfortable about admitting how devastated they are at the prospect of losing their pet.”

One service the practice offers is to provide bereaved pet owners, particularly families, with a kit that enables them to conduct a home funeral ceremony. The kit, consisting of a ceremony book, a pet-sized biodegradable coffin and an aluminium grave marker, is called the Goodbye My Pet Farewell Set, and was created by Brighton-based graphic designer Debbie Orme to help people through the difficult bereavement process.

The ceremony book *Ceremony for a pet: how to create a special funeral*, which is available separately, is a beautifully illustrated 20-page booklet written in a non-denominational style by children's spirituality author Jane Bartlett, with suggested readings, songs, poems, and activities for children to perform.