



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

Don't get bugged by fleas!

DOGS and cats, in common with most mammals, are usually covered with hair. Whilst this is excellent at keeping them warm in cold weather, it also plays host to a number of rather pesky parasites – the most annoying of these being fleas!

Fleas are tiny wingless insects (just 3mm in length) and are reddish brown in colour. Adult fleas spend most of their time on our pets, feeding on blood and reproducing.



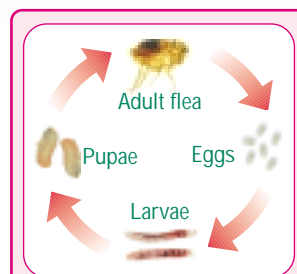
Photos: Jane Burton

It's a frightening thought, but female fleas can lay 25-50 eggs per day! These tiny white eggs fall off pets onto bedding and carpets.

Here the eggs develop into flea larvae, which in turn develop into pupae. Pupae can lie dormant for up to a year before hatching out into adult fleas, but in warm humid conditions the whole lifecycle can take just a few weeks, leading to a huge flea problem!

The key to flea control is breaking the flea lifecycle (see right). For optimum flea control and peace of mind, flea treatment should ideally be all year round.

Please ask us to advise you on the most suitable form of flea control for your **pet and your home!**



The flea lifecycle

Flea facts

- Fleas survive by feeding on your pet's blood, often causing severe skin irritations and occasionally anaemia.
- Fleas can also carry tapeworm larvae. Because our pets swallow fleas as they groom, they may become infected with tapeworms.
- Two fleas entering a home can become 1 million in just over 3 months!

Kennel Cough – is your dog vaccinated?

WHETHER you are just out and about this summer – on walks, at dog shows, training classes – or are planning a trip to a boarding kennel, kennel cough is a real hazard.

Kennel cough (more correctly called Infectious Bronchitis) is a highly infectious cough and can be picked up wherever dogs meet. Affected dogs typically develop a harsh, dry, honking cough which may last for several weeks, often requiring antibiotics to clear it up.

It is caused by a mixture of viruses and a bacterium – *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. Although annual vaccination offers some protection, **only** intranasal vaccines offer protection against *Bordetella*. Don't take the chance – contact us now to ensure your dog is fully vaccinated!



Photo: Ian West, CSF



Summer survival guide!

Does my pet have a heart problem?

FOR BOTH pets and their owners the warm summer weather is a great opportunity to get out and enjoy nature in full bloom! But summertime can be a dangerous time for our pets – here we look at a few of the hazards involved.

Ticks tend to be a problem in the warmer months and commonly live in areas of heathland, moorland and woodland, waiting to attach themselves to passing pets. Ticks feed on your pet's blood and can cause problems in two ways – firstly they can cause a tissue reaction at their site of attachment and secondly

they can transmit serious diseases such as Lyme disease. Please ask us to advise you on the best form of tick control for your pet.

Adders are the only venomous snakes native to the British Isles, and are found



in areas of heathland and woodland throughout the mainland. Adders are naturally shy, but may bite if accidentally disturbed by a dog or cat. Adder bites, whilst rarely fatal, result in a very painful swelling of the affected area, and prompt veterinary attention should always be sought. Adders are a legally protected species and should not be handled, or harmed in any way.



Adult tick (x 1)

Grass awns are especially a problem for dogs, working their way into paws, ears and eyes. In view of this, *thorough* inspection of the coat for grass awns is to be strongly recommended following walks.



Grass awn (x 1)

Fly strike is a very serious problem in rabbits during the summer months. Rabbit rear ends attract flies which lay their eggs there, hatching out into maggots, which literally eat the rabbit alive. Rabbits should be checked daily for eggs and maggots.

Skin cancer is a particular hazard for cats with white ear tips – see right and also white noses. The key to reducing this risk is blocking sunlight with high-factor sun block.



And finally, never leave a pet in a car on a hot day.

WHILST most pets take normal heart function for granted, heart disease is still a relatively common problem. The heart is the muscular pump responsible for supplying the tissues of your pet's body with oxygen and nutrients, allowing him to lead a normal active life.

Heart disease – which can be gradual or sudden – is the *loss* of the normal pumping action of the heart. In **dogs** it is generally more common in older pets, but in certain breeds it is more prevalent at an early age. In **cats**, heart disease is quite commonly linked with thyroid gland disease.

Heart disease is associated with a range of symptoms including:

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

If you are concerned that your pet is showing *any* of these signs, please come and see us for a full clinical examination.

The good news however, is that new methods of diagnosis and novel forms of treatment are now transforming the lives of many pets with heart disease. Please don't hesitate to ask us for further information!

Feline Leukaemia Virus – is your cat protected?

DID YOU know that viral infections caused by the Feline Leukaemia virus (FeLV) are now the commonest cause of premature death in cats in the British Isles?

The virus is found in the saliva of infected cats and is mainly transmitted by *direct contact* of one cat with another – especially by licking or biting.

Although the virus does on occasion cause true leukaemia, on many occasions the effects are more related to suppression of the cat's immune system, leaving it fatally exposed to infections which a healthy cat would usually recover from. FeLV infections may also be an underlying cause of anaemia and various forms of cancer in cats. The disease is however unrelated to any human condition and is quite specific to cats.

However the good news is that there are now very effective vaccines against the virus, and your cat can be vaccinated at the same time as the annual health check and other vaccinations. Please contact us for further information or an appointment.

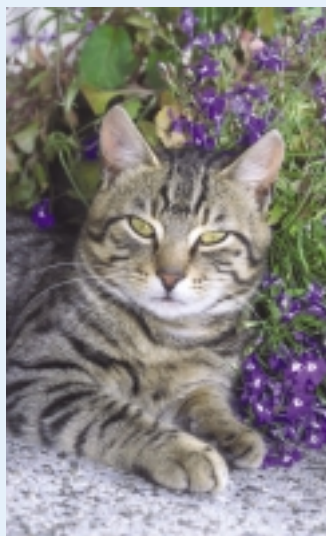


Photo: Keith Ringland, OSF

Photo: Jane Burton

Cartoon: Gareth Davies