



Practice News

Staff Update



We recently welcomed Lauren Stowe RVN to our nursing team. Lauren initially worked with us as a locum but we are delighted that she has decided to stay on as a permanent member of the team.

Travelling with Your Pet

At the time of going to print Brexit negotiations are still undecided. Depending on the final outcome the rules for travelling abroad with your pet are likely to change. Please go to the Defra website for up to date information before making any plans. www.gov.uk/guidance/pet-travel-to-europe-after-brexit

Mobility Clinics

Our nurses will soon be offering patient mobility clinics. These will enable our experienced nurses to give tailored advice and practical tips for pets who are having trouble with mobility. Pets will normally be referred to a mobility clinic by a vet who has performed a physical examination and thoroughly assessed the patient's condition.

Topics in this issue:

- *Charity Cycle Ride for Thinking of Oscar*
- *Getting off to the best start!*
- *Dental Alert!*
- *Guinea pigs are great!*
- *Handling the heat – a summer survival guide!*

Charity Cycle Ride for Thinking of Oscar



Oscar Cole sadly passed away after a brief illness in 2014; he was only 16 months old. Out of this terrible tragedy a wonderful charity was born, which to date has raised over £200,000 to support children & their families whilst in hospital.

On 12th June, Jason and his wife Catie will be cycling 100miles from Oxford to Stafford as part of a huge fundraising event called the Thinking of Oscar 500 (#TOO500). Between them, they are aiming to raise £1000 for the charity. They would be really thrilled if

you would like to contribute to this amazing charity and at the same time, encourage Jason & Catie to push their "fifty something" year old bodies to the finish line of this gruelling event.

For more information on the event search for TOO500 on the web. Any donation you would like to make would be hugely appreciated. Donations can be made at the practice or directly on our Just Giving page: justgiving.com/Jason-and-Caties-big-bike-ride

Thank you in advance for your generosity.



Thinking of Oscar

Getting off to the best start!

Welcoming a new puppy or kitten into your family is a super exciting time! To give your new family member the best start, it is important that they have their vaccinations, a microchip and are regularly treated against internal and external parasites.

Vaccinations: Both kittens and puppies need a course of vaccines to ensure they are protected against infectious diseases. Our team will be able to talk you through the exact schedule. Pets will, in addition, receive a full health check, plus we can answer any questions you may have.



Microchipping is now a legal requirement in dogs over eight weeks of age. We also recommend microchipping cats and rabbits, hopefully ensuring that if they become lost or injured, a veterinary practice, the police or an animal sanctuary can scan your pet and identify you as the owner. Without a microchip, it can often be very difficult to reunite pets and their owners.

Parasites: There is a very high prevalence of roundworm infections in puppies and kittens. As they mature, they are susceptible to infection with both **roundworms** and **tapeworms** and will require regular worming treatment. Additionally, **lungworm** is posing an increasing threat for many dogs. We are also happy to advise you on **flea and ectoparasite treatment** for your pets.

Neutering: All cats should be neutered by the age of six months and certainly before you start letting them out! The situation for dogs is more complex and the timing of neutering, and whether it is required, is very dependent on your dog and situation. Our team will be very happy to discuss this with you.

Other things to consider are **diets** and **pet insurance**. We are here to help, so please don't hesitate to ask us for further information on any aspect of caring for your pets.



More about vaccinations

As soon as you collect your puppy or kitten, we would recommend you contact us regarding their vaccination requirements. They will need a course of vaccines as a puppy/kitten and then we will advise you regarding their individual requirements thereafter (usually the next set is one year after the initial vaccination course).

Dogs are vaccinated against a range of infectious diseases: parvovirus, leptospirosis, hepatitis and distemper.

Cats are usually vaccinated against cat flu, panleukopenia, and feline leukemia virus.

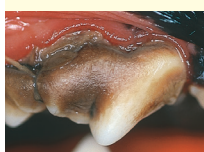
Dental Alert!



Did you know that by the age of just three years old, the vast majority of our pets are suffering with dental disease?

Poor dental health is painful, causes tooth loss, and infections can spread throughout the body – potentially causing significant organ damage. So, it is important for us to regularly check your pet's mouth and instigate a care regime at home to ensure their teeth and gums stay in good condition.

A healthy mouth typically has bright white teeth and pink (or pigmented) gums. However, over time, accumulation of plaque bacteria on the surface of the teeth leads to *inflammation* of the gums – a condition called **gingivitis** (also called gum disease). If the condition is allowed to continue unchecked, bacteria will penetrate below the gum line, destroying the underlying bone – a painful condition called **periodontitis**. As well as very bad breath, if left untreated, this will lead to tooth loss.



Periodontitis with very inflamed gums

Cats may also be affected by gingivitis, but as well as this they may also suffer from one or more **tooth resorptive lesions**. Here

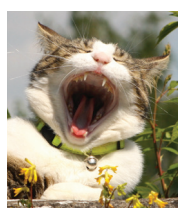
the tooth is progressively destroyed, leading to exposure of the nerve.

The good news is that if gum problems are identified at an *early* stage, a combination of a Scale and Polish and ongoing Home Care can make a real difference to your pet's oral health. Please contact us today for a check-up!

Handling the heat – a summer survival guide!

Finally, the summer is here, but it brings with it its own particular set of challenges and potential problems. Here are a few tips to keep your pet fit and well at this time of year:

Keeping cool! It is vital to ensure your pet keeps cool in hot weather. Dogs should be walked early or late in the day to avoid heat stroke. Paddling pools may help keep dogs cool and they should have free access to water at all times. Heat stroke is a common, and serious, problem and over-weight or heavily coated dogs are most at risk. Sometimes even minimal exercise can trigger it, so take care, even in the mornings and evenings. Finally, remember – dogs rapidly overheat in cars, and should never, ever, be left unattended.



Sunburn: Thinly haired or white coated pets are at risk of sunburn, especially if they are dedicated sun worshippers! White cats are particularly vulnerable to developing skin cancers on their ears and noses, so pay close attention to these areas. Problems tend to start as scabs or sores that don't heal and can progress to cancerous changes. To protect your pet, you can apply high factor sun lotion specifically designed for pets.

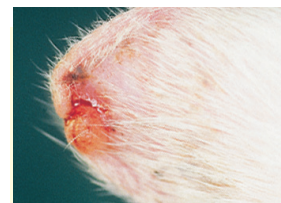
Grass awns are another summer problem – the grass awns of the meadow grasses are easily trapped in the coats of pets, especially dogs. They then migrate and become lodged in a variety of places including the ears and between the toes. It is always a good idea to groom your pets regularly, and especially after walks, to keep a close eye out for grass awns.

Stick to dog toys! Long walks with the dog are great, but please don't throw sticks! It is really tempting but we see some horrible head and throat injuries from them being speared. There is no reason not to play fetch (although it is best avoided if it is very hot) but use specific dog toys!

Insect alert! Bees and wasps are tempting to play with for both cats and dogs but will deliver a nasty sting if provoked! These are painful and can cause sudden swellings on faces or paws. Most stings will benefit from prompt veterinary attention.

Flystrike occurs when bunnies become dirty around their back-ends and flies lay eggs in the mess. These quickly hatch into flesh eating maggots, which cause horrible damage. Protect your bunnies by cleaning them out regularly, checking their back-ends twice daily and using anti-fly medications to stop any egg laying. Additionally, remember that pets in outside runs need a *shaded area* to get away from the sun.

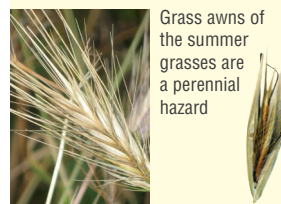
So – enjoy the summer months, have fun and keep your pets safe. We are here to help, so if you would like any further information on summer hazards, please just ask a member of staff.



Ear tip of a cat showing cancerous changes – note the reddening of the skin. If your pet is showing signs of skin changes on their nose or ears, please call us.



Paddling pools are a great way for dogs to stay cool in the summer!



Grass awns of the summer grasses are a perennial hazard



Guinea pigs are great!

Guinea Pigs are sociable, very lovable and make great pets. To keep them healthy and happy, here are a few tips:

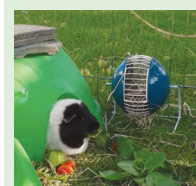
Guinea pigs require a specialist guinea pig diet with adequate amounts of Vitamin C and free access to water. A special diet will

make sure they don't develop diarrhoea or scurvy. They have continually growing teeth, so to keep their teeth healthy they need free access to hay and gnawing blocks to chew on.

Guinea pigs should never live alone, they are sociable animals and listening to the chirps they make to each other is really fun! A same sex pair or group will live together happily, but boys and girls can live together, as long as they are neutered.

Some pets may be prone to respiratory conditions or eye infections if the incorrect bedding is used. Guinea pigs are also susceptible to mite infestation and symptoms include hair loss and intense itchiness and scratching. Guinea pigs instinctively hide any signs of pain and illness, therefore it is important to check them at least once a day.

We are here to help, so if you have any questions regarding your guinea pigs, give us a call!



Guinea pigs can live indoors or outside, but it is important they have enough space to run and play. A run should be at least a metre square and any outside hutches need to be well insulated.

It is ideal to keep them in pairs, or small groups in a large cage, preferably with access to a grassy area. Guinea Pigs need daily cleaning to make sure they don't get sore feet or skin conditions. Make sure the cage is weatherproof and away from any predators. Guinea pigs are grazers and will thrive with a lawn to nibble on. They should also have great quality hay available all the time and have a small amount of fresh food and guinea pig pellets every day.