



# AlphaPet News

NEWSLETTER Winter 2016

# RCVS

# ACCREDITED PRACTICE

SMALL ANIMAL HOSPITAL

## AlphaPet Achieves Hospital Status

Earlier this year, AlphaPet achieved Small Animal Veterinary Hospital Accreditation under the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons Practice Standards Scheme. We are the only practice in the Chichester and Bognor Regis areas to have achieved this. What this means for our clients is that we have been inspected by an independent veterinary surgeon and have demonstrated that we have achieved the very exacting standards required of an RCVS Veterinary Hospital in regard to patient and client care, including 24/7 in-patient care. Not all practices are the same. Standards of care for patients do vary, but this gives AlphaPet clients the assurance that their pets really are getting the very best attention both in the consulting room and behind the scenes in the hospital.

## Vaccination - separating fact from fiction

Following media reports earlier this year about alleged side effects resulting from vaccinating dogs against leptospirosis, Health for Animals has produced a "myth-busting" factsheet to address misconceptions about vaccination.

It is available at <http://tinyurl.com/zmnsslr>

We continue to hear a lot of misinformation being fed to clients, so this is a welcome attempt to correct some of the myths surrounding vaccination and why we continue to recommend vaccinations for our pets.

### Vaccination Myths

Filling the void between vaccination fact and fiction!



**1 MYTH: Vaccination does not work**

**The facts**

Vaccination has resulted in human survival rates rising dramatically in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, surpassed in impact only by the increased availability of clean drinking water!

Vaccination led to the global eradication of Smallpox in 1982 and Polio in 2011. Polio (Poliovirus) is a deadly virus that is so prevalent around the world that thanks to widespread vaccination, less than 1% of healthy children in the world have never had it.

Furthermore, vaccination actually helps to protect against salmonella from some of the number of human cases in the EU reduce by nearly 50% since 2004.

**2 MYTH: Vaccination is an unnecessary intervention that interferes with nature**

**A misconception**

Animal vaccination plays a vital role in global health and preventing zoonoses, diseases which pass between humans and animals.

An increasingly 'smaller' world due to globalization means that humans are at a greater risk to diseases spreading across international borders, through travel and trade. Vaccines play an essential role in preventing these health risks, protecting animal health, food safety and public health.

We also have a moral obligation towards animals in our care, to prevent disease rather than waiting until the animals get sick, suffer and require treatment.

Vaccination protects our pets from a range of potentially fatal diseases, from feline parvovirus, the leading viral cause of death, to equine influenza, a major respiratory disease in horses.

**4 MYTH: Vaccination has negative side effects which outweigh the potential benefits**



## Dog show results

It was another hugely successful AlphaPet Fun Day and Dog Show on August 14th with Catastrophes Cat rescue and Guide Dogs sharing the £2780 raised on the day!

### Did you know .....



Since AlphaPet started in September 1993, we have treated over 80,000 pets belonging to over 24,000 owners!

In the year to December 2016, we have registered 1090 new clients!



## Seasonal awareness



### Marley's story

#### Marley is one very fortunate dog!

Marley is just over a year old. She presented to us as an emergency with life-threatening peritonitis. Her owner understandably wanted everything done to try and save her, but she wasn't insured and she needed complicated and expensive surgery. We were assured this wouldn't be a problem, so we went ahead.

Marley made it through the surgery, but there were complications and soon the bill had reached over £1900. The owner then became difficult to contact and eventually admitted that he didn't have the money to pay for this.

We decided to try and get Marley signed over to us so we could rehome her, but the owner simply stopped replying to our phone calls.

Legally, we had to wait until 2nd December before we were allowed to remove her. In that time, she has become a firm staff favourite, going home with staff at weekends and sharing treats in the staffroom at lunchtimes!

But the great news is that after a weekend trial one of our nurses has managed to persuade her parents that she can go and live with them and their other dog! A great happy ending, or should that be a happy beginning?

We may be £2000 out of pocket, but Marley has found her forever home and you can't put a price on that!

Christmas is a time of increased risk for our pets.

We usually see a higher incidence of foreign body ingestion in both dogs and cats. Turkey bones, bits of childrens toys, pieces of tinsel, and small balls are commonly swallowed and frequently end up having to be removed surgically.

Additionally, toxic food items such as raisins (in Christmas pudding/cake and mince pies), chocolate, onion gravy and macadamia nuts are more commonly accessed and eaten by dogs at this time of the year. Leaving wrapped presents containing toxic foods under the Christmas tree is a common mistake when a dog's sense of smell is many times better than ours.

Outside, cats and dogs find antifreeze attractive to lick, but this is highly toxic and can prove fatal. Salt used to "grit" roads is often picked up while walking and can also cause serious problems for dogs paws.

And it's also worth remembering that while we may enjoy the extra noise and chaos that Christmas brings, this can be a very frightening and anxious time for many of our pets.

Ask us about the AlphaPet Pet Health Club  
It could save you £££££s!

**Pet Health**  
*Club*



Just because they can't speak doesn't mean they aren't in pain

Arthritis is treatable

Don't let them suffer in silence



## Staff News

The last few months have seen quite a few changes at AlphaPet and we are please to welcome some additional staff

Vet, Alex Avery, sadly returned to New Zealand in October, and vet Nicky Bird has left us temporarily on maternity leave. But ....

when she returns from maternity leave.

Student nurse Jade Weeks passed her Paper 1 nursing exams, while Nikki McWilliam and Kayleigh Galdes Giappone passed their Papers 2 and 3 respectively. Not only is this a credit to the students themselves but also to their AlphaPet Clinical Coaches, Natalie Pink and Megan Baker. Very well done to all.

### Three new vets

We are very pleased to welcome 3 new vets: Peter Lockwood & Jenny Buckham (who both graduated from the Royal Veterinary College in London) and Emma Cole (pictured with Marley) who graduated from Liverpool University. They will all be mainly seen at our Bognor Regis Veterinary Hospital.

We are also very pleased to report that nurse Aimme Dubben (nee Uren) gave birth to a healthy baby boy earlier in the summer.

All three have slotted into the vet team very quickly bringing a wealth of varied experience.

### Pagham Pram Race

This Boxing Day, AlphaPet will be taking part in the traditional Pagham Pram Race, so why not come along and give us some support. It's always a great opportunity to get some fresh air and counter the over-indulgences of Christmas!

### Exam successes

Vet, Nicky Bird, has passed her Small Animal Medicine Certificate adding a new level of expertise to the AlphaPet team which we are looking forward to her deploying

## Unnecessary suffering

Did you know:

Anyone owning or taking on a new pet (whether that be a dog, a cat, a rabbit or even a bird or reptile), has a duty, under the law to ensure they take steps to make sure they know how to look after that pet and ensure that they don't cause unnecessary suffering either directly or through neglect. Failure to do so can lead to prosecution under the Animal Welfare Act



## Xylitol - a hidden risk

This is Buster, a 10 year old miniature Schnauzer who recently had a near miss after he managed to get hold of a small bar of chocolate from his mum's bag. Now we all know that chocolate can be toxic to dogs, but that wasn't the worst of it. This particular bar of chocolate contained an artificial sweetener called Xylitol. In dogs, xylitol is highly toxic causing a profound drop in blood glucose (like a diabetic coma) and can also cause severe liver damage. Fortunately, with treatment, Buster has made a full recovery, but he was lucky. We have seen several similar cases in recent years and have been surprised at the sort of foods that xylitol is now used in. Foodstuffs such as mints, cakes, peanut butter, chewing gum and chocolate. So please be very careful and don't let your pet suffer a Buster incident.



## AlphaPet Online



Find us on  
**Facebook**

Did you know that AlphaPet has a lively Facebook page - always keeping you up to date with what's going on at AlphaPet and in the pet world generally.

We've had particular successes with pets that have gone missing and getting other people to look out for them. Why not like us and follow us?

Our website [www.alphapet.co.uk](http://www.alphapet.co.uk) too is packed with useful information to help you look after your pets and now, you can also request appointments, repeat prescriptions and register new pets, all online!

We also have an online symptom checker to help you decide if you really need to book an appointment or not.

Facebook: AlphaPetVets

## Christmas & New Year Opening



**Bognor Regis Hospital:** 01243 842832  
**AlphaPet Chichester (Kingley)** 01243 528899  
**AlphaPet Chichester (Birdham)** 01243 513514

Our Christmas and New Year services are as follows:

**Christmas Eve:** Bognor Regis West Meads Hospital: 8.30am to 4pm

**Christmas Day & Boxing Day:** CLOSED: 24/7 Emergency Service at Bognor Regis West Meads Hospital

**Tuesday 27th December:** Sunday hours surgeries at Bognor Regis West Meads Hospital

**New Year's Eve:** Bognor Regis West Meads Hospital only: 8.30am to 4pm

**New Year's Day:** CLOSED: 24/7 Emergency Service at Bognor Regis West Meads Hospital

**Monday 2nd January:** Sunday hours surgeries at Bognor Regis West Meads Hospital

**Tuesday 3rd January onwards:** Normal surgery hours at all surgeries

Website: [www.alphapet.co.uk](http://www.alphapet.co.uk)