



AlphaPet News

NEWSLETTER Summer 2017

DON'T COOK YOUR DOG!



DOGS DIE EVERY SUMMER
even with windows down,
in minutes cars turn into coffins

Fun Day & Dog Show

Our 8th Annual AlphaPet Family Fun Day & Dog Show will be taking place on Sunday 20th August on Queens Field just next to our Bognor Regis Hospital. There will be all the usual attractions with the Dog Show taking centre stage but lots of other things to see and do including a bouncy castle for the kids, pets corner, and some more unusual pets such as owls, Alpacas, miniature Shetland ponies & goats.

This year, our nominated charities are Hearing Dogs (providing specially trained dogs to assist deaf people) and Search Dogs Sussex (providing search dog teams to support the emergency services looking for vulnerable people).

We look forward to seeing you there!

Dogs Die In Hot Cars

Every year we try to remind owners that dogs die in hot cars but every year we see the results of owners forgetting that message.

Already this year we have seen one very sad fatality.

Cars heat up so quickly, even with the windows down and even if they are not in direct sunshine. Dogs have fur coats and they can't sweat like humans so they literally cook from the inside.

And even if they do reach us alive, frequently other irreversible processes have already been triggered meaning that despite all our efforts, we may be unable to save the patient.

PLEASE, don't leave pets in cars unattended at any time of the year but especially during the summer months - it may be their death sentence.



Babesia - the new threat to dogs?

Babesia canis is spread by ticks and the first outbreak in the UK was recorded in Harlow, Essex, last year. It is likely to spread further this year. We advise all clients to assess the risk to their dogs and provide protection accordingly. Please ask us if you are unsure.

Pet First Aid Courses

Many clients ask us what they should do in an emergency involving their pet, so we intend to run two pet First Aid courses at our West Meads Hospital for clients on Sunday 10th September and Sunday 29th October.

These will be free for Pet health Club members and £10 for other clients. Places will be limited so please book your places quickly. You can request a ticket via info@alphapet247.vet or on our website.



Dangers of Dr Google



Trooper's story

A truly heartwarming story

Trooper was brought in to us by a member of the public. We believed him to be a Jack Russell cross Chihuahua and was just a few weeks old. It looked as if he had been abandoned. He was cold and dehydrated with skin infections and eye ulcers. He was a very sick puppy when he arrived and we didn't think he was going to survive.

But no one gave up on him - he was a fighter and very quickly earned the name "Trooper". We put his story and picture up on our Facebook page to see if we could trace his owner - could he really have just been abandoned to die?

Very sadly, but perhaps not surprisingly, given the condition he was in originally, no one came forward to claim him, but his story went viral and reached over 100,000 people. He touched people's hearts and we were posting daily "pupdates" to keep everyone informed about how he was doing.

It took several weeks, but eventually, he made a good recovery.

By that time, we had received over 200 offers of homes for him so it was no easy task to pick someone to be his forever home.

Very happily, he is now very settled in his new home - we are still closely in touch with him and are delighted to be able to report that in spite of everything he went through, he is now more or less a normal puppy, apparently none the worse for his ordeals!



The internet is a wonderful resource, one that many clients consult first when their pet is showing signs of something being wrong. A Google search can be quicker and less expensive than a trip to the vets surely?

The problem is that Dr Google can also be dangerous to your pet's health!

If you aren't able to properly identify symptoms or you miss some of the signs your pet is exhibiting, the answers you may get from an online search could be misleading.

For example, if you see your cat straining in the litter box but nothing coming out. We have lost count of the number of times clients have eventually come in thinking their cat is constipated when in fact they have a life-threatening blocked bladder.

How do you guarantee that the information you read comes from a reliable source? There are still sites on the internet that recommend aspirin and paracetamol for use in cats. Both can be fatal! Garlic is often touted as being useful to get rid of fleas but is toxic to dogs.

Self-diagnosing your pet's problems using the internet can also lead to needless worry.

The proper solution is to consult a professional. Your pet's health is just too important to risk delaying good treatment with misleading advice

Update your pet's microchip details It's the law!

Have you moved or changed your phone number since your pet was microchipped? When was the last time you checked your pet's details against your chip? Did you know that not only is it a legal requirement for all dogs to be microchipped, but it is also a legal requirement to ensure that your details are kept up to date on the microchip database.

You can check at: <http://www.check-a-chip.co.uk/>



Vet Continuity

Please help us to help you!
 Enabling our clients to see the same vet at each visit is something that we always aim to achieve.
 Obviously, our vets can't work all the time - they need time off occasionally! Whilst all our vets will have access to your pet's clinical notes, nothing is quite as good as having seen a patient before.
 We want to do everything we can to maintain continuity of patient care. You can help achieve this by making a note of the vet you see and asking to see the same vet when you book your next appointment.

Technology for pets



Did you know that you can now buy fitness trackers for pets as well as wearable cameras and GPS trackers for pets? Attempts to develop pet emotion sensors and pet-human translators have also been made! Where will it all end?



BBQ danger

Over the last few years, we have seen increasing numbers of dogs eating corn on the cob segments from barbecues.
 Unfortunately, they don't seem to chew them and end up swallowing them whole.
 They are just small enough to pass into the small intestine, but often slightly too large to pass through the whole gut so they get stuck resulting in major and expensive surgery to remove them.
 Please beware!

Staff News

In March, Sarah Eglan retired as Practice Manager after over 20 years of service in order to move down to the New Forest. However, she hasn't left AlphaPet entirely and is now working more behind the scenes as Accounts Manager.

Although not technically employed by AlphaPet, Sarah's partner, Gordon Hackshaw, AlphaPet's builder-in-chief and general handyman is also going to make the journey back to continue working for us!

New Practice Manager

A very warm welcome to Gayle Bardgett, AlphaPet's new Practice Manager.

Gayle joins us having previously managed armed security details on tankers in the Gulf, so she's no stranger to stressful roles!

So far, she's not taken any nonsense from us but I don't think we'd dare give her any trouble!

Gayle is taking on a very demanding role, trying to keep all the staff and clients happy whilst also steering us through our ongoing development as a practice.



Sarah Eglan

Exam success

Huge congratulations to Kayleigh Galdes Giappone on qualifying as a Registered Veterinary Nurse.

Maternity changes

A warm welcome back to Aimee Dubben RVN and also to vet, Nicky Bulbeck after their respective periods of maternity leave.

Many congratulations to nurse Emma Luxford who recently became a mum for the first time and very best wishes to Charlotte Sampson who is also expecting shortly.



Cannabis toxicity in dogs

Whilst cannabis is still illegal in the UK, sadly, it is becoming increasingly common as a recreational drug. Many people aren't aware that dogs are particularly attracted to the smell of cannabis but its effects are many times greater than they are for humans.

Toxicity is an increasingly common problem for us to deal with, especially as many owners are reluctant to admit that their dog may have had access to an illegal drug.

Dogs can be affected both by inhaling the smoke and also from direct ingestion.

Signs are usually seen within 3 hours and include severe depression, unsteady walking, low heart rate, depressed breathing, coma and seizures.

Please ensure you keep your pets safely out of the way of cannabis.



AlphaPet Online



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 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 - definitely more reliable than Dr Google!

Client Focus Groups

Would you be interested in contributing towards the future of AlphaPet?

We'd like to create a number of focus groups to help us understand what we are doing well, what we could be improving upon and most importantly where you would like us to focus our efforts in the future development of AlphaPet as a practice.

If you would be interested in this, please contact the Practice Manager, Gayle Bardgett at our Bognor Regis hospital or drop her an email at info@alphapet247.vet

AlphaPet Bognor Regis Hospital

11-17 The Precinct, West Meads, Bognor Regis,
West Sussex PO21 5SB

Tel: 01243 842832

AlphaPet Chichester (Kingley surgery)

Oldwick Farm, West Stoke Road, Chichester,
West Sussex PO18 9AA

Tel: 01243 528899

AlphaPet Chichester (Birdham surgery)

Northleigh Farm, Main Road, Birdham
West Sussex PO20 7BY

Tel: 01243 513514