



AlphaPet News

Summer 2014

Exceptional Care For The Life Of Your Pet

Fun Day & Dog Show: Sunday 17th August



Plans and preparations are well advanced for this year's AlphaPet Charity Fun Day and Dog Show. As usual, it will be held on Queens Field next to our West Meads surgery with Dog Show entries from 11.30am and the Show proper starting at 12.30pm, the fun will go on until around 4.30pm. Each year, we try to build on the successes of the previous year as well as adding in some new attractions. This year, in addition to the Dog Show, we have a wide variety of other attractions for all the family including a really cool kids' corner, face painting and a bouncy castle, lots of unusual pets to see and handle plus great fun activities and competitions for all types of pet dogs. We also have a number of demonstrations from local dog training and activity clubs. Expanded refreshment facilities will be available this year.

And please don't forget, the whole purpose of the day is to try and raise some vital funds for two very worthy charities. This year we're supporting Brent Lodge Wildlife Charity and NOWZAD Dog Charity. For further information, please check out our website at www.alphapet.co.uk or ask at one of our surgeries.

We still need donations in the form of tombola prizes (adults and childrens), second hand pet accessories and good condition soft toys for the teddy tombola!

AlphaPet Hasn't Changed!



On April 1st, AlphaPet moved from being a Partnership to a Company. This was purely for accounting reasons - nothing else has changed! We still have the same staff and the same three owners (Richard Edwards, Doug Alexander and Paul Irvine-Smith), although they are now Directors rather than Partners. Most importantly, and contrary to some rumours that we are aware have been circulating, we have not sold out to a corporate or to anyone else! AlphaPet continues to be owned and run by Richard, Doug and Paul, and AlphaPet will continue to adhere to the same guiding principles on which we have built the last 21 years of veterinary care to pets and their owners. Being an independent veterinary group means that we can continue to put patient care above financial considerations; continue to offer a dedicated in-house 24 hour emergency service and continue to deliver "Exceptional Care for the Life Of Your Pet". AlphaPet hasn't changed!

Molly's Appeal



Molly is the daughter of one of our receptionists, Nikki Roots. She is just 3 years old, but she has cerebral palsy. She can't be cured, but there is a surgical procedure that can help her to walk better and thereby improve her life immeasurably. Unfortunately, it is not available on the NHS and the success rate is high in the US, so AlphaPet is getting behind the campaign to help Molly get to America and have this life-improving surgery. Several members of the AlphaPet Team are doing the 3 Peaks Challenge this year in aid of Molly's Appeal - climbing the highest mountains in Scotland (Ben Nevis), England (Scafell) and Wales (Snowdon) over 3 days. So we can still have enough staff to keep AlphaPet running 24/7, we are having to do 3 separate Challenges! Paul Irvine-Smith, led the first team (Claire Bounds, Joanna Parker, Hannah Osgood, Amy Harrington & Emma Luxford) on the weekend of 31st May to 2nd June. Richard Edwards is doing it TWICE, leading Nicky Bird, Natalie Pink, Amie van der Hut & Emma Nolan up on 12th - 14th July and then again on the August Bank Holiday weekend with Laura Wingham. For more details on Molly's appeal, check out: <http://www.mollywish.co.uk>

Staff News



It's been a relatively quiet few months for our staff, unless of course you are our two new mums!

It's just on a year since we were welcoming back West Meads receptionist, Becky Pullen from her first maternity leave. Now she has produced her second bundle of joy a few weeks ago and is understandably over the moon.

Similarly, Emma Hurley VN who returned from sabbatical just over a year ago has also just given birth to her first baby. Both she and baby Elliott are doing fine.

To help take the strain with all this maternity leave, we are very pleased to welcome back Alison Goulding on reception. Ali left us three years ago to follow her husband to Australia, but work has now brought him home again so we can have Ali back too!

Naomi Heard is our new student veterinary nurse, coming to us after working for a while at the Cat & Rabbit Rescue Centre in Sidlesham.

Text Reminders



AlphaPet now offers text reminders for worming and flea control to help our clients remember to give their flea and worm control on time. Forgetting to give flea and worm control at the correct times is a major cause of treatment breakdown and flea infestations, especially during the summer.

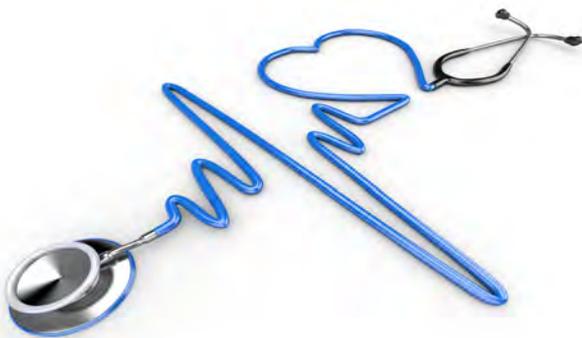
With the widespread use of mobile phones these days, we can easily send you a simple text, according to your pet's records, to remind you to give your pet its treatment.

The responses we have had so far have been great! Many clients have commented on how useful this method of reminder is proving. However, it does rely on us having a correct and up to date mobile phone number and/or email address for you. So, please, if you do change your mobile number or email address, remember to tell us so we can continue to send you timely reminders.

And, yes, we are trying to extend this service to booster reminders too, so please watch this space!

Cat Manifesto

Cats Protection is developing a manifesto for cats in advance of the General Election next year. They have launched a campaign called "Speaking up for cats" which aims to consult and come up with 10 manifesto priorities designed to create a better world for cats. If you would like to have your say and make some suggestions of your own, the consultation is open until September 12th 2014 and you can access it online at: <http://www.cats.org.uk/manifesto>



In-House Specialists

AlphaPet has linked up with a group of specialist surgeons to allow us to deliver a range of advanced procedures using the facilities at our West Meads surgery. These specialists come to us meaning that you and your pet don't have to travel to a distant referral centre to have the procedures. Your pet can also continue any post operative hospitalisation and recuperation at AlphaPet.

It also means that the cost of these procedures is significantly reduced compared to dedicated referral centres allowing more patients to benefit from these advanced diagnostic and surgical procedures.

Summer's Here - Shed Those Pooch Pounds!



It's summer! Time for all of us to get out there, do some exercise and trim a few inches off our waistlines. And that applies to many of our dogs too!

Far too many of the canine patients we see in the surgery are overweight or significantly overweight. Just as it does for humans, being overweight can have serious health consequences. But it's never too late to do something about it.

Starting off with just doing a little longer walk each day or simply more short walks.

Cut down on, or cut out altogether, the number of treats your pet eats. Which human diet still allows you to eat chocolates and ice cream while following a serious diet?

Go swimming! We are privileged to live by the coast, with free access to the largest hydrotherapy pool in the world! Swimming is non-load bearing, highly effective exercise which burns calories and builds muscles and is great for even less mobile arthritic dogs.

So, make a pledge, take advantage of the summer and get your dog in shape. You might even benefit too?!

Summer Tips



Summer's here and many of us are going away on holiday with or without our pets. Please remember to make sure that whoever is looking after your pets, have our details close to hand in case of emergency or need for simple advice. Similarly, if you are taking your pet away with you, remember to take our details with you so that if your pet needs treatment while you are away, the vet treating him/her can be supplied with his/her vital clinical notes. Following the very mild (albeit rather wet!) winter we are already seeing an upsurge in flea and tick problems, so please remember to treat your pets regularly.

There are also predictions of a very hot summer to come, so please make sure you can keep your pets, with their fur coats, cool at all times. Don't exercise dogs in the heat of the day. Always carry water for them to drink. NEVER leave them in cars for any length of time - if you need further reasons why not, please just watch this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aQIQKYfyVug>

Blood Donors - More Needed

Unfortunately, there is no local blood supply service for dogs. However, like humans, dogs still need life-saving blood transfusions from time to time, usually in an emergency. AlphaPet maintains a register of 2-8 year old, fit, healthy, fully vaccinated dogs over 25kg who haven't been abroad, have been treated with against lungworm and are suitable for donating blood. But we are always needing more potential donors. If you have a suitable dog and would be willing to allow him/her to donate blood in an emergency, please contact us so we can assess them and hopefully add them to our potential donor list.

Compulsory Microchipping



With effect from 6th April 2016, all dogs in England will have to be microchipped by law. In addition, all dog owners will need to:

- Have their dog microchipped and registered on one of the authorised commercial databases
- Register the details of any new owner before selling or giving the dog away
- Keep their contact details up-to-date on the databases

Recent evidence suggests that at least 30% of dogs currently have incorrect details registered against their microchip. Even before the legal requirement to correct this in 2016, all pet owners should check that their contact details are correct and up to date, since this is how anyone who finds your pet is going to try and contact you. AlphaPet regularly has to spend time playing detective trying to locate owners of stray or injured (RTA?) animals. If you wish us to check your details for you, please email us at info@alphapet.co.uk

Adder Risk



Now is the time of year when you might see Adders as you are out and about walking your dog. Adders are the UK's only venomous snake. They can grow up to 75cm long. They have a dark zigzag down their backs and a "V" shape on the neck. They are found in rough open countryside on the edges of woodland but you will rarely see them as they are generally shy creatures. However, dogs running through scrubland can surprise them and the Adder will often bite them in self defence.

Every year we see dogs presented with suspected Adder bites. Signs of a bite would be swelling and bleeding around the bite area that will feel hot and painful to the touch. You might see one or two small puncture wounds. Other symptoms could include fever, vomiting and shock. If left untreated, liver and kidney damage can also occur and, in severe cases, bites can be fatal especially if they are on the face or neck which can lead to breathing difficulties.



Stray Dogs

Stray dogs are becoming a problem! Technically, the local authority (Chichester or Arun in the AlphaPet area) have a responsibility to deal with stray dogs. However, presumably due to budget cuts, the local dog wardens only operate part time and are closed after office hours, including weekends and bank holidays. Members of the public are required to take stray dogs to specific local kennels (Amberley for Chichester; Clymping for Arun) when the dog warden is not available. Unfortunately, these kennels do not operate 24 hours so, because AlphaPet is genuine 24/7, 365 days a year service, and we don't shut up shop and refer everything to Portsmouth or Worthing after normal working hours, we are being asked increasingly to deal with strays. Whilst we don't have a legal responsibility to deal with strays, we are vets and so we have a moral and ethical responsibility to deal with them. It is that or let them continue to roam until they get knocked over and we have to deal with them as emergencies. Either way, it is a drain on our resources for which we get no recompense currently.

Going Abroad Diseases

If you are going abroad and thinking of taking your pet abroad with you, in addition to the legal PETS requirements, please make sure you are familiar with other potentially very harmful diseases. In the UK, we are privileged that we have very few nasty diseases to worry about. The same is unfortunately not true abroad and, because our UK pets have never met these diseases before, they can be more susceptible. Before you set off, we recommend that you research local diseases where you are going and instigate preventative measures before you travel. They may not be legal requirements, but if you value your pet's health, they are still a must. If you are uncertain, please contact us and speak to one of our vets who can give you appropriate advice.

Pet Health Club



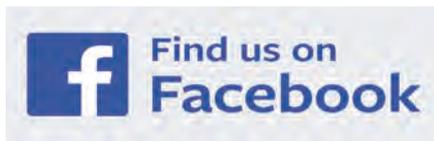
The PHC is a convenient way you can both save money and budget for your pet's annual preventative healthcare needs. It includes all your pet's routine annual vaccinations, flea control and worm control as well as FREE additional nurse appointments, FREE regular weight assessments and unlimited FREE claw clipping. We've included puppies and kittens right from the start with a one-off joining fee of £35 (less than the cost of the first vaccination!) then 11 monthly payments of £10 and we've simplified the adult pet categories to make it even more transparent. We've included a range of discounts including 10% off all diets, counter sales, in-house laboratory work, neutering, dentistry, additional parasite control and vaccinations and 30% off microchipping and PETS Passports! For more information, please ask at reception.

Out Of Hours and Emergency Service

As most of our clients already know, AlphaPet operates its own 24/7 Out Of Hours (OOH) Emergency service in addition to being open 7 days a week, including Saturdays and Sundays. Unfortunately, because many other local practices require their clients to travel to Portsmouth or Worthing for OOH emergencies at night, weekends and Bank Holidays, we are receiving increasing numbers of requests from clients registered with other practices, to take advantage of our own, more convenient OOH service. Unfortunately, we could not cope with dealing with all the emergencies from other local practices, so only AlphaPet registered clients are able to take advantage of the dedicated in-house AlphaPet Emergency Service, together with our normal Saturday and Sunday surgeries.

Check out our website at
www.alphapet.co.uk

We also have a very lively Facebook page, so why not check it out and follow us?



West Meads Surgery

11-17 The Precinct, West Meads
Bognor Regis PO21 5SB
Telephone **01243 842832**

Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.30 - 7.00pm
Sat 8.30-6.00pm
Sunday: 10.00-1.00pm & 5.00-6.00pm

Kingley Surgery

Oldwick Farm, West Stoke Road
Lavant, Chichester PO18 9AA
Telephone **01243 528899**

Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.30-6.30pm

Birdham Surgery

Northleigh Farm, Main Road
Birdham, Chichester PO20 7BY
Telephone **01243 513514**

Opening Hours

Mon-Fri: 8.30-6.00pm

Don't forget:

We are open on **Saturdays** and **Sundays** for routine appointments
We are also open until at least 7pm at our West Meads surgery every weekday

