

Exceptional Care For The Life Of Your Pet

AlphaPet Fun Day & Dog Show - Sunday 14th August



We can't quite believe that this year will be the 7th AlphaPet Fun Day and Dog Show in aid of two very worthy charities. As usual, it will be held on the Queens Field just next door to our West Meads surgery. This year we have chosen Guide Dogs and Catastrophes Cat Rescue as our nominated charities. Guide Dogs provide specially trained dogs to assist non-sighted humans, while Catastrophes is a less well-known cat rescue charity based in East Sussex.

As usual though, whilst one of the aims of the day is to raise as much money as we can for these two very worthy charities, the other aim is for everyone to have some fun!

There is the Fun Dog Show with 7 popular classes including the staff favourite of Dog Most Like Owner! Registration starts at 11.30am with the first class kicking off at 12.30pm. Best in Show will be judged at around 4.10pm.

In between the show classes, we have all sorts of doggy fun games and activities, including the always hilarious Musical Sits, Fastest Recall, Temptation Alley, Gundog Scurry and Doggy Lucky Dip.

There will also be demonstrations of Agility, Obedience and Flyball.

But it's not all about the dogs! We aim to make this a family day out. We have our ever popular homemade cake stall (get there early to avoid disappointment!), second hand pet accessories and a tombola, plus a giant bouncy castle maze for the kids (and young at heart adults!), a kids corner, charity stalls, educational stands and competitions to enter.

There will be goats and sheep to pet, large and small tortoises to get up close to and more chances for anyone with Ophidiophobia (see, we told you it would be educational too - a fear of snakes!) to conquer it. A variety of small furry animals will be putting in appearances, as well as some very fancy owls! It's going to be a hoot!

We are still accepting donations for the tombola and 2nd hand pet accessories stall in addition to any teddies, soft toys and books etc - anything that we can use to raise some extra, much needed funds for our two nominated charities. If you have anything suitable, please just drop them in to any AlphaPet surgery as soon as possible before the big day.

Otherwise, please make a note in your diary and come along for a great fun day out for all the family. See you on the 14th!



Anna runs the London Marathon



A fantastic achievement for Anna Holden, one of our West Meads reception team who completed her first ever marathon at this year's London Marathon.

She was running in aid of the Snowdrop Trust (a charity very close to her heart) and completed the course in a very creditable 5 hours 55 minutes and was the 13,093rd woman to finish!

She wasn't quite as quick on her feet for a few days after, but she did manage to raise the amazing total of £1991.08, of which £344 was donated by AlphaPet clients. Very well done Anna!

Parvovirus Alert



For a good many years, thanks largely to highly effective vaccination policies, Parvovirus was a rare disease. We had felt that the horrific scenes of rows of dying puppies was a thing of the past.

Recently however, we have seen several cases of Parvovirus in young puppies. Very sadly most of these cases have been fatal despite treatment.

Despite high profile campaigns, people are still tempted by the lure of a young puppy and are prepared to buy puppies via the internet, often meeting sellers in car parks with no paperwork and never seeing either mum or dad.

Many of these sort of puppies are simply being traded as goods by the sellers. They have often come from Welsh puppy farms, from unvaccinated parents and then mixed with lots of puppies before they reach you. If any one of those puppies was carrying Parvovirus, it is only a matter of a few days before your brand new puppy goes down with it and with no maternal immunity, their chances of survival are very poor.

Please never buy a puppy without seeing mum. By doing so, you are helping to perpetuate the terrible trade in puppies and run the very real risk of having your puppy become seriously sick within days of purchase. For more advice on how to choose and buy a puppy

or a kitten, check out our website at <http://alphapet.co.uk/pet-advice/choosing-a-puppy-or-kitten/>

Watching your new puppy die a slow and horrible death from parvovirus is soul destroying and with Parvo around in the area, we strongly encourage all clients to ensure that all dogs, whatever their age, are up to date with their vaccinations.

Raw Feeding - Seriously Risky



Feeding raw diets seems to be gaining in popularity, but there is a wealth of scientific evidence showing that there are serious risks to both our patients and clients from doing so. A recent study at Liverpool University showed that over half of dogs fed a raw meat diet contained a bacterium called E.coli that was resistant to a single antibiotic. This compared to just 17% in dogs fed a cooked meat diet.

Of even more concern however was the finding that 1 in 4 dogs fed a raw diet contained E coli that was resistant to 3 or more antibiotics and 1 in 3 was resistant to one of our more powerful antibiotics. This was 6 times more common than in dogs fed a cooked meat diet. The study concluded that "Raw-fed dogs may be a source of antimicrobial resistant E.coli for the household, representing both a potential public health and animal welfare issue".

And if that wasn't enough, there is also an increased risk of Salmonella and Campylobacter infections, both of which can be transmitted to humans.

For these reasons alone, we advise all clients to feed a cooked diet, either canned or dry, but preferably of a super premium brand such as Hills, which are guaranteed to pose no infection risk to either you or your pet.

Cat Fur-Endly Waiting Area At West Meads Surgery



Our main West Meads reception area can get very busy at times.

Cats and dogs frequently don't mix and we recognise that cats can become stressed if they are waiting in close proximity to dogs, especially if the dogs are excited themselves.

So, we have created a Cat Fur-Endly (get it?!) area at one end of our West Meads Reception where cats can escape the gaze and unwanted attentions of canine patients also waiting to be seen. The area is also intended to be used by other more timid species such as birds, rabbits and other small furrils.

This is also the first phase in the development of AlphaPet as a recognised Cat Friendly clinic. New, larger specific cat friendly kennel accommodation is shortly to be installed and we also intend to introduce cat-only clinics in the near future. Watch this space!

Using human medicines for pets



Recently, we have seen a worrying trend with clients medicating their own pets with human drugs. This is an extremely risky thing to do without specific veterinary advice.

Whilst dogs and cats are mammals, just like humans, their reactions and tolerances to drugs, which are considered safe in humans, is extremely variable.

For example, most of the common over the counter human pain relievers fall into the category of non-steroidal anti-inflammatories (NSAIDs). Some dogs and most cats are significantly more sensitive to these drugs than humans and inappropriate use can result in serious gastrointestinal problems, kidney and liver failure, bleeding disorders and even death. Paracetamol, while not an NSAID is highly toxic to cats and we have seen a number of fatalities from this over the years.

Please avoid using human medicines for pets without veterinary supervision.

Staff News



As usual, the last few months have been quite busy for our staff.

Vet, Laura Wingham, got married to Andy and became Laura Jenner. Many congratulations!

Vet, Charlotte Gray, swapped sunny Dubai for sometimes sunny Bognor in April and has slotted in very quickly and is helping to fill the gap left by the retirement from AlphaPet of Paul Irvine-Smith.

We've also lost nurse Aimee Dubben temporarily to maternity leave, but we've gained Megan Baker RVN to carry us through and beyond.

We'd also like to welcome Tamara Watson to the West Meads reception team.

Tamara started with us as a kennel hand, but we've found she's much better suited to reception duties.

And finally, we are sad to say that we will be losing Alex Avery in October. Having moved to the UK from New Zealand last year, he's having to move back again for family reasons. He's going to be a hard act to follow!

10% off Sunscreens for pets in July



Apparently, Bognor is the sunniest town in the UK. But it's not just us humans that can get sunburnt or get skin cancer as a result of too much unprotected exposure to the sun.

Cats and dogs with pink skin, especially on the ears and nose, can also get burnt and suffer from cancers such as squamous cell carcinoma. Every year we see several cats with this form of cancer on the ears which often necessitates surgical removal of the ears to save their lives.

Pets with pink areas of skin exposed to the sun should have sunscreen applied in the same way as humans if they are going out in the sun. But human sunscreens are not always safe to be used on pets. Zinc oxide (often used in human sunblocks) is toxic to dogs. The good news is that there are specific pet sunscreens available which are pet safe and effective.

At AlphaPet, we stock the Petkin sunscreen range of sprays, sticks and wipes and there is 10% off all these products during July. Pop in to AlphaPet and get your pet protected.

Tick alert



Ticks have always been a regular problem for many dogs and cats in the Chichester and Bognor Regis areas. We've known for a long time that some can transmit Lyme disease to dogs, but we have seen very few cases and indeed, we have seen more owners suffering from Lyme disease than their pets!

However, this may be about to change. This year, new species of ticks have arrived in the UK from the continent and with them has come a new disease - Babesiosis. The first reports were from Harlow in Essex where 4 dogs who had never been out of the UK contracted Babesiosis. One died and three were seriously ill. It is considered only a matter of time before this very worrying disease spreads to the rest of the country.

Treatment is difficult and prevention from tick bites is considered the best way forward. The good news is that there is a variety of effective tick treatments available, so if your dogs or cats are picking up ticks, please talk to us about the tick treatments available.

Missing cat returns after 2 years away



Meet Alfie! He'd been hanging around a house in Chichester for a couple of months gradually becoming more friendly. Eventually, a member of the public managed to catch him and take him to our Kingley surgery.

He was rather thin, and had a skin allergy caused by fleas but otherwise seemed reasonably OK.

We also discovered he had a microchip and after a bit of further detective work, we finally managed to locate a very surprised but very happy owner. It turned out that Alfie had been missing for over 2 years!

No one has any idea where he had been for the last 2 years or how he came to end up at a house in Chichester, but it just goes to show that for any of us who have lost cats over the years, we should never give up hope, especially if they have been microchipped because one day they may just turn up at a vets and be able to be reunited with their original family for a fairy-tale happy ending!

Could your dog be a Life-Saving Blood Donor?



Like humans, dogs need blood transfusions from time to time, usually as an emergency. Unfortunately, there is no local blood supply service for dogs, so at AlphaPet, we maintain a register of dogs that are suitable for donating blood.

To be eligible to donate blood, a dog needs to be:

- Between 2-8 years old and fit and healthy (so not on any regular medications)
- Fully vaccinated and over 25kg
- Regularly treated for lungworm
- UK based and never having travelled, or come from abroad

We are always in need of more potential donors. If your dog meets the above criteria and you are interested in putting them forward, here are some further points you should be aware of.

- An AlphaPet patient could require a blood transfusion at any time of the day or night, so once on the register, your dog could be called upon at any time. We do however offer you the choice as to what time you wouldn't mind being contacted.
- Dogs require a light sedation in order for blood to be taken, so they receive a full health check

prior to this to ensure they are fit to be sedated.

- The vast majority of blood donors go home the same day once the sedation wears off.
- A dog can donate a maximum of 4 times in one year.
- The whole process is free and as a thank you, your dog will receive an 'AlphaPet Hero' bandana and if you are not yet signed up to our Pet Health Club, we will be offering the first month's membership free of charge to dogs on our donor list.

If you have any further questions about the donation process, or you would like to take the first steps in getting your dog assessed for suitability, please give us a call at any one of our surgeries.

Heat stroke in pets



Every summer we warn about the risks of heat stroke for pets, but every summer we still see cases all too frequently.

Dogs are still the most commonly seen patients. They have fur coats on which they can't take off. If they go charging around on a hot day, or they are confined in a house with no windows open, but the sun coming through, or they are shut in a car for even a few minutes in the middle of the day, they can very quickly overheat. Because of their coat, they then cannot cool down quickly enough and effectively cook from the inside out. Fatalities are frequent.

Please, never leave dogs in cars. Always make sure your pet can move to a cool part of your house. Avoid allowing them to exercise during the heat of the day.

But it is not just dogs that are at risk of heat stroke. Rabbits and guinea pigs confined to hutches in the garden are also at serious risk. They also have non-removable fur coats and their hutches can act like ovens on hot days. Please always make sure that their hutches are placed out of direct sunlight and make sure they have access to cool, shady areas. Heat stroke is a horrible way for any creature to die and it is completely avoidable.

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



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: 10am-1pm & 5pm-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

