



CULVERDEN VETERINARY GROUP

NEWS

Tunbridge Wells • Crowborough • Wadhurst
SUMMER 2015

Appointment Times

Tunbridge Wells: 01892 520296

Monday to Friday:
9–11am, 2.30–4.30pm, 5–6.30pm

Saturday: 8.30–11.30am

Crowborough: 01892 661650

Monday to Friday:
9–11am, 2.30–4pm, 5–6.30pm

Saturday: 8.30–11.00am

Wadhurst: 01892 782382

Monday to Friday:
9–11am, 2.30–4pm

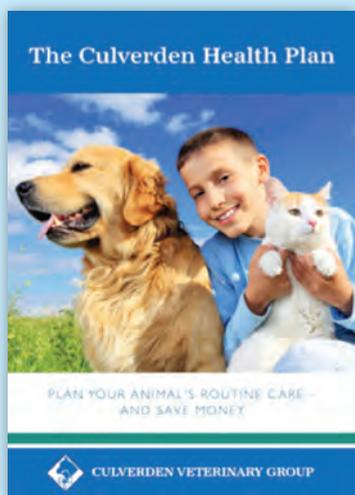
Monday & Thursday: 5–6.30pm



www.culverden.co.uk



Like us!



Meet one of our Partners!

Duncan Mitchell

I joined the practice in 2000 having spent the previous year travelling in India and Australia with my then girlfriend, and now wife Ruth. In those days we were still a mixed practice, but I have always only done small animal practice. However, I always thought I would be a farm vet when I was growing up watching James Herriot every Sunday evening. I always dreamed of having my name on the brass plate outside the practice and it is frightening to think that in July this year my name will be at the top. I was lucky to have a great tutor in Brian Rosevear and I like to think we have kept up to date and improved the practice every year that I have been here. My aim in veterinary practice is to be a good general practitioner and practice both medicine and surgery to a high standard. I also take great pleasure in watching trainee nurses become superb qualified nurses and new graduate vets



enjoy the challenge of their first job.



Outside of work my time is divided between my two boys, William (11) and George (9), the allotment, my classic Mercedes car and my latest addiction, my road bike. However none of this would be possible without my very understanding and supportive wife, who as an ex veterinary nurse knows that it is not a 9-5 job!

Kennel Cough – is your dog vaccinated?



Kennel cough is a highly contagious infection of the upper respiratory tract of dogs and in fact, unlike its name, can be caught anywhere that dogs meet – out on walks, training classes, dog shows, and of course boarding kennels. Dogs of all ages can be affected and signs include a harsh, dry, whooping-type cough. Whilst some dogs recover relatively rapidly, others may cough for weeks and some may get more serious complications such as pneumonia.

Prevention is much better than cure, because without vaccination, treatment of kennel cough can be a costly and lengthy process involving isolation and antibiotic therapy. Kennel cough is caused by a mixture of viruses and a bacterium – *Bordetella bronchiseptica*. We strongly recommend that dogs are vaccinated before staying in a boarding kennels and at other times when the disease is rife. Please contact us for more information or to book your booster.

Health Plan Update:

Every month, more and more clients are signing up to the Culverden Health Plan and are receiving **huge** benefits! We currently have over 220 clients who have signed up to the plan and are certainly reaping the rewards. You have the advantage of breaking up payments into manageable monthly instalments, which is great for budgeting, *plus* it works out as *roughly* a 20% discount on all your treatments! The plan includes your annual vaccinations and additional health check with the vet, flea and worm treatment for the year, lungworm and fox mange protection, not to mention discounts on dental work, neuterings, food and accessories and the kennel cough vaccine. The real bonus for us is that we get to see you on a more regular basis, and we love catching up with our loyal clients! Visit our website or call us for more information.



For further information on any of the topics covered in this newsletter, contact the practice on 01892 520296

Email: cvg@culverden.co.uk • www.culverden.co.uk

The heat is on!



At last, the prospect of warm lazy days and balmy barbecue weather! But as the weather warms up, do take the time to make sure your pets stay safe. Here we look at a few steps you can take to keep them fit and well.

Heat can be a real killer for many pets and for this reason it's a good idea to walk dogs in the morning or evening – before 8am and after 5pm.



If you have space, dogs love cooling down in a paddling pool. Frozen ice treats (photo left) are also a good way of cooling your dog down on a hot day.

Rabbits and guinea pigs are very susceptible to problems arising from excess heat, because – unlike dogs, if they overheat, they cannot pant effectively or sweat to cool themselves down. It is vitally important that they have access to shade at all times, plus cool water – preferably in a bowl (not a bottle).

Factor 50! Cats are natural sunbathers and for many cats this causes no problems. However cats with white ear tips and noses are prone to sunburn and this can lead to cancerous changes over time. High factor sun block applied to the at-risk areas helps to minimise this risk. Call us if you are worried.



Ear tip of a cat with early (reddened) cancerous changes. If your pet is showing signs of skin changes, please call us at once



A grass seed has become lodged between the toes in a dog causing an interdigital cyst

Grass awns of the meadow grasses are an issue at this time of year. They are commonly trapped in dogs' ears (see article right), and may also become embedded in the feet (see photo left) or other areas. In view of this, thorough inspection of the coat is advisable following walks.

Flies are another summer hazard. Flies are very attracted to rabbits if they have soiled bottoms – here they lay their eggs which rapidly hatch out into flesh eating maggots. It is important to check bunnies' bottoms on a daily basis and call us at once if you are worried.

Finally, please remember that the temperature in cars can rise rapidly and death from heat stroke can follow in minutes, so **pets should NEVER be left unattended in cars.**



Microft's Story

Microft was a one year old tabby cat who was admitted to us after his owners had returned from their holiday to discover he had become very lame on his front right leg. He had no other obvious injuries. The veterinary surgeon took radiographs of the limb to discover a fracture of the radius and ulna; the two bones equivalent to the ones in our forearm.

Orthopaedic procedures are often referred to specialist surgeons, as they require more specialist equipment and expertise in a more specific field. This can make a procedure much more expensive, which can be a factor when considering surgery. Amputation of the limb can also be considered, as cats in particular, manage perfectly well on three limbs and recovery time can be much quicker. The negative, of course, is that they can't afford to lose another limb!

In Microft's case, he was lucky enough to be under the care of Mr Phillip Cusack, who was keen to use his skills to repair the fracture, 'in house'. Mr Cusack is currently working towards a certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice (Small Animal Surgery), and relishes the challenge of a fracture repair.

Microft was kept comfortable on pain relief prior to surgery, and for the duration of his stay. Mr Cusack used an external fixator to immobilise the bone and encourage bone repair. The fixator consists of a series of screws and pins set in specific points to hold the bone, and as it begins to heal, these screws get gently tightened, to ensure the bone remains in place. Microft stayed in the hospital for around a week following his surgery, in order for the fixator to be carefully monitored, cleaned and adjusted as necessary. When he was discharged, he required further follow up appointments with Mr Cusack, who was pleased he was showing good progress.

After two long months of rest and gentle exercise, the fixator was removed and radiographs showed a perfectly healed radius and ulna. The staff members involved in Microft's case were ecstatic to see how well he had healed, and how well he had coped for such a young, energetic cat! He is now bounding around and enjoying the freedom of life without a metal frame.

With the skills of Mr Cusack and the rest of the highly qualified veterinary surgeons, we are able to perform far more surgical procedures within the practice than we ever have before. This is a *huge* advantage to you, our client, to be able to offer such a wide range of skills, and your pet can have the required surgery where they are familiar with the staff and environment, with no great distance to travel.

We are continually investing in new and better equipment, to allow our vets to develop and improve their skills, which will ensure our patients are always receiving 'gold standard' treatment, every time.

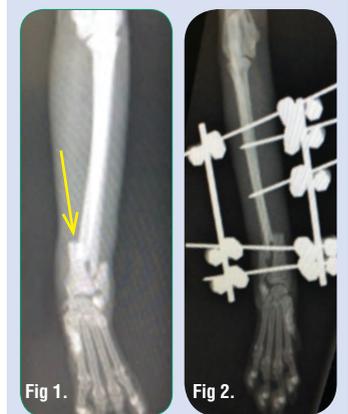


Fig 1.

Fig 2.

Fig 1. Fracture of the radius and ulna

Fig 2. External fixator to immobilise the bone and encourage bone repair

Guinea pig care!

Guinea pigs, originally from the grasslands of South America, are sociable animals that make great family pets. They thrive on a mixture of hay, fresh greenstuff, fruit and vegetables and can be given small amounts of commercial concentrate. Relatively trouble free, they require no annual vaccinations but we do recommend regular health checks so their teeth and nails can be monitored. Problems to look out for include chest infections (that can follow bad weather or stress), diarrhoea (which can relate to infections or a diet change), skin disease and dental problems (usually associated with overgrown teeth).

If you would like any further information on any aspect of guinea pig care, or if you would like a check-up for your pet, please contact us!

Skin problems

may occasionally occur and the most common of these is an infestation with a burrowing mange mite – *Trixacarus caviae*. Affected guinea pigs are itchy and develop scaly skin, which is often most obvious on the ear tips initially. If untreated, areas of hair loss, self inflicted wounds and skin infections can develop.

