



# Shetland Vets

Bixter, Shetland • [www.shetlandvets.co.uk](http://www.shetlandvets.co.uk) • Summer 2016

## NEWS

### New Surgery Hours

#### Bixter Opening Times

01595810456

Monday – Friday: 8.30am – 5.30pm

Saturday: 9.00am – 3.00pm

#### Scalloway Opening Times

01595880000

Monday – Friday: 8.30am – 5.30pm

Saturday: 9.00am – 3.00pm

#### Lerwick Opening Times

01595690999

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 9.00am – 2.00pm

Thursday: 2.00pm – 6.30pm

Saturday: Closed

#### Consultation Times

All consultations are by appointment.

To make an appointment please telephone your nearest surgery or visit [www.shetlandvets](http://www.shetlandvets) to check consultation times.

#### Topics in this issue:

- *Parasite Alert*
- *Watch out, the sun's about!*
- *Better safe than sorry!  
Is your pet insured?*

### Looking after your new arrival!

Getting a new pet is an exciting time and there will be a lot to think about! Once you have collected your new arrival, please bring them in to see us for a full health check to make sure there aren't any problems. As well as giving your pet a check-over, we've put together a handy list of things you need to do to keep them fit and well:



**Vaccinations:** In the very early stages of life, puppies and kittens gain immunity against disease from their mother's milk. This protection starts to fade when they are around six weeks of age and without vaccinations, they are left vulnerable to some potentially deadly diseases. This is why it is so important to have your pets inoculated as soon as they are old enough. Regular booster vaccinations, combined with a health check, are the best way of protecting your pet, plus at the same time we can keep a watchful eye out for any emerging problems.



Roundworms

**Worming:** Regular worming is absolutely vital in the early weeks of your puppy's or kitten's life. Not only are they more likely to pick up worms than adults (because of their curious natures) they are also more vulnerable to their effects due to their immature immune systems. A good breeder will worm their litters regularly from birth and you should continue this monthly until they reach six months of age. As adults, cats and dogs should be wormed at least

every three months, and if they are hunters or are out and about

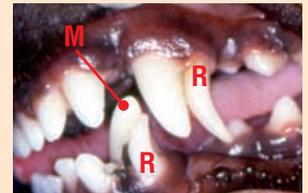


every three months, and if they are hunters or are out and about a lot, monthly is better to prevent significant worm infestations. **Microchipping** is now compulsory for all dogs in the UK and it must be carried out before they are eight weeks old. This means that in the majority of cases it will have been done by the breeder, but if not, then speak to us about booking them in. It is a quick and relatively painless procedure and vital to ensure your pet is permanently identifiable. Although it isn't law for cats to be microchipped, we think it is very important, especially as they often wander more than dogs.

We can advise on other topics such as **diets and feeding, dental care, flea and tick control, and pet insurance**. Please contact us for further information or to book an appointment.

#### Early Dental Care Guide

Pets have two sets of teeth, and their "milk" teeth progressively fall out from about 12 weeks of age to make way for their adult teeth. If this doesn't happen the corresponding adult tooth may erupt in the *wrong* direction. This is usually only a problem in **dogs** and is treated by extracting the retained teeth.



R = retained "milk" canine teeth  
M = mal-aligned adult canine tooth

Puppy and kitten photo: Jane Burton

### Our dog vaccine has been upgraded



One of the components of your dog's annual vaccination is a nasty disease called Leptospirosis. It can be present in stagnant water, or anywhere there may be rats or mice. It causes liver or kidney failure, and can also be passed on to the human family. Until now, vaccines have contained 2 strains of the disease, but new strains have emerged in the UK, and have caused fatalities in dogs.

There is now a new vaccine called Lepto 4, and this is what we will be using at Shetland

Vets from January 2016. Your dog should come back to the surgery FOUR weeks later for a SECOND booster with the Vet or Nurse (there is no additional charge to you for this). Thereafter, it will just be one annual vaccination as before.

We now see Kennel Cough infections on a regular basis in Shetland, so we recommend vaccination for this too.



Find us on Facebook!

**Our 24 Hour Emergency Service** can be contacted by phoning **(01595) 810 456**

## Parasite Alert!



Everyone loves the summer – us, our pets and, unfortunately, the pesky parasites that live on them!



**Fleas:** The balmy weather allows fleas to breed both inside and outside our houses. Pets who hunt are at particular risk because the fleas will be alive and well in large numbers on their prey. Fleas also carry worms, so always de-worm and de-flea pets at the same time. There are now several combination products on the market.



**Ticks** are particularly numerous on moors and scrubland or where there are lots of sheep. They are most often found attached to the head and neck of pets and look like small, grey warts or peas. If you find a tick, it is best removed with a specially designed tick remover, using a twisting action to remove them. Spot-ons, collars and tablets are all available to kill, and in some cases, repel ticks.

**Harvest Mites** are a late-Summer and Autumn problem. The mites tend to attach themselves to our pets' paws and ear flaps and can make them very itchy. They are visible to the naked eye as tiny orange specks on the skin but they can be difficult to spot. Treatment is with a flea spray, rather than a spot-on medication.

If you have any questions about parasites and how to treat them in your pets, we are happy to help!

## Watch out, the sun's about!

Finally, the summer is here! Most of us, and our pets, love the warmer weather but it brings with it its own particular set of challenges and potential problems. Here are a few tips to keep your pet fit and well at this time of year:

**Heat Stroke** is an extremely serious problem and can even be fatal. Although all dogs are at risk, the shorter faced breeds, like Staffies, Pugs and Bulldogs are most vulnerable, and the danger is even greater if they are overweight. To prevent problems, avoid exercising your pets in the midday heat and make sure they don't over-exert themselves at any time. If you become worried, move them to a cool, shaded place, give them lots to drink and call us immediately.



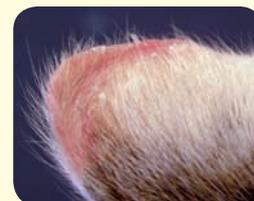
**Slip, slap, slop!** Most cats are real sun worshippers, which doesn't tend to be a problem unless they have white ears or noses. These areas are vulnerable to sun burn because the hair is so thin, which is painful in itself but can also trigger skin cancers (see photo right). To protect your pet, apply high factor waterproof sun lotion to their ears and noses. This is sometimes easier said than done but there are pet specific products out there to help you.

**Grass seeds** are another summer problem – the grass awns of the meadow grasses are easily trapped in the coats of pets, especially dogs. They then migrate and become lodged in a variety of places including the ears and between the toes. It is always a good idea to groom your pets regularly, and especially after walks, to keep a close eye out for grass seeds.

**BBQ Beware!** Lovely weather and longer evenings mean lots of people break out the barbecue, and dogs often have a great time hoovering up the left-overs! This can cause tummy upsets, but more seriously, if anything like bones, kebab sticks and sweetcorn cobs are snaffled, they can lead to serious blockages requiring life saving surgery to remove. So keep your pets away from the barbecue!

**Itch alert!** For sensitive dogs with allergies, the flowers and grasses that thrive in the summer months can cause real problems. Dogs will often break out with nasty skin rashes, especially on the feet, tummy and ears. If your pet is affected, please come and see us for a check-up as there are usually treatments we can give them to improve the situation. Also – don't forget to keep up to date with anti-parasite treatment, since fleas can be a big cause of itching!

So – enjoy the summer months, have fun and keep your pets safe. We are here to help, so if you would like any further information on summer hazards, please just ask a member of staff.



Ear tip of a cat showing cancerous changes – note the reddening of the skin. If your pet is showing signs of skin changes on their nose or ears, please call us.



Grass awns of the summer grasses are a perennial hazard

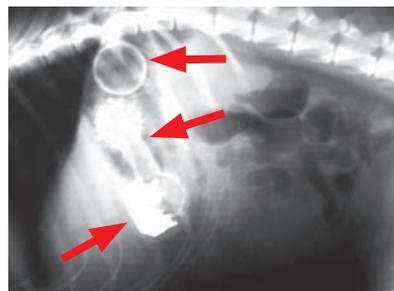
## Better safe than sorry! Is your pet insured?

Did you know that you are more likely to claim on your pet insurance than either your house or car policies? The good news is that the majority of policies represent very good value for money and can take a great weight off your mind if you are faced with large vet bills.

There are several different kinds of policies; '12 month' ones will only cover a condition for the first year after diagnosis, whereas 'life long' will continue to pay for treatment for as long as is necessary. Some will pay up to a certain amount per condition, whereas others are unlimited. So you really need to understand the policy before taking it out!

On a daily basis we see the heart wrenching decisions some of our clients face regarding the treatment of their pets, but with appropriate pet insurance, we can hopefully ensure that any treatment decisions are made on the basis of need rather than cost.

Don't take any chances – make sure you get your pet insured today!



**Case Study:** Harry needed veterinary treatment because he had been vomiting, refusing food and was generally miserable. X-rays showed that Harry had been treating his toys as after-dinner snacks! Harry needed an operation to remove the toys – happily the bill was covered by Harry's pet insurance!