



April Newsletter



Staff Update



Congratulations are in order for our wonderful vet Frances, who has received her Advanced Veterinary Practitioner status in Small Animal Medicine! The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons have recognised Frances as an Advanced Practitioner in Small Animal Medicine, following on from her having completed her certificate in small animal medicine.

This means that Frances is now a Senior Vet and continues to be our Clinical Lead in Internal Medicine. To achieve this Frances has completed a huge amount of study, passed very difficult exams, and gained experience in a wide variety of cases, beyond her initial primary veterinary degree. Acorn House is extremely fortunate to have such driven staff so that our clients, their pets, our veterinary students, and newer vets can all benefit from the knowledge and experience that these achievements bring. Well done, Frances!

Avian Influenza Government Update



The Government announced that from the 18th of April the mandatory housing measures that were introduced last year will be lifted in our area. However, the threat of avian influenza (bird flu) remains present to captive birds meaning that the Avian Influenza Protection Zone is still present across England.

Keepers should continue to take precautions and retain a high level of biosecurity and should ensure that any birds that are now housed outside do not have access to ponds or watercourses that can be accessed by wild birds. Some safety measures that the government recommends that birds owners should take are:

- housing or netting all poultry and captive birds.
 - cleanse and disinfect clothing, footwear, equipment, and vehicles before and after contact with poultry and captive birds.
 - thoroughly clean and disinfect housing on a continuous basis.
 - keep fresh disinfectant at the right concentration at all bird housing entry and exit points.
 - minimise direct and indirect contact between poultry and captive birds and wild birds, including making sure all feed and water is not accessible to wild birds.
 - prevent access by poultry to ponds and watercourses and ensure that birds are kept in fenced or enclosed areas.
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Cat Microchipping

Cat microchipping to be made mandatory



The government have announced that as of 10th June 2024 it will be mandatory for your cat to be microchipped, and from that date kittens must be microchipped by the time they are 20 weeks old. The microchip details must also be registered on an official database by the owner.

This is a really positive step as if a pet is microchipped there is much more chance of them being reunited with their owners. In the sad event that your pet is handed into a vet, if your details are kept up to date with the microchip company you can be notified.

World Veterinary Day



The 29th of April is World Veterinary Day! The veterinary profession includes vets, nurses, receptionists, managers, administrators and other support staff and they play a vital role in the health and wellbeing of our pets.

The theme for World Veterinary Day this year is "Promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness in the Veterinary Profession". This theme focuses on the wellbeing of all veterinary professionals in what is an often-challenging vocation. At Acorn House we embrace diversity in all its forms. Veterinary staff dedicate their lives to the care and welfare of animals, and it is the perfect chance to recognise and appreciate all the knowledge, skill, time, effort and sometimes heartache that goes into every patient we see. We thank all our Acorn House team for their dedication and hard work that makes the practice what it is.

National Pet Month



National Pet Month runs from April 1st – May 1st and aims to raise awareness of responsible pet ownership. There is no doubt that animals enrich our lives and improve our mental and physical health and we should ensure the same for our pets. The focus this year is on five

welfare needs of our pets including companionship, behaviour, diet, health, and environment.

Not only do we all want to do what is best for our pet, but did you know that it is also a legal requirement? The Animal Welfare Act 2006 (England and Wales) and Animal Health and Welfare (Scotland) 2006 make a pet owner legally responsible for making sure any domesticated animal under their care has their welfare needs met.

Companionship



Many animals love companionship, either of other animals of the same species, or of their humans, whereas many animals are solitary by nature and do not need companionship and can be severely stressed by it. Dogs and cats for example often seek out human company and interaction and

dogs often enjoy the company of other canines. Rabbits, guinea pigs and rats are highly social animal and should be able to safely interact with members of their own species. Other species, such as hamsters, pygmy hedgehogs and the majority of tortoises, lizards and snakes are solitary and should not be housed together.

Behaviour and Environment



All our pets should be allowed to express natural behaviours in a safe environment that meets the needs of their species. For dogs, this can be as simple as letting them have a good sniff on their regular walks, for cats it can be allowing them climbing opportunities and high places to rest.

For others such as rabbits, they should have access to a large outdoor area and be able to fully stand up on their hind legs and be able to dig! For reptiles this includes having a temperature-controlled environment with naturalistic substrate and decoration that is specific to their species natural environment. [The National Pet Month Facebook page](#) has lots of interesting content on these subjects and many more.

Diet



All animals under our care should be fed a suitable diet, which is designed specifically for their species and should always have access to fresh water. Care should be taken to ensure that what we feed our pets meet their nutritional needs and are fed in the recommended quantities. For dogs and cats there are many complete foods available, as well as veterinary diets for pets that need specific diets. For most rodents, a pelleted diet is recommended to limit selective feeding, supplemented with other foods that are recommended

for their species. Guinea pigs for example, cannot produce their own vitamin C (like humans!) so need high quality guinea pig formulated pellets, supplemented with hay and vegetables containing vitamin C.

Health



We should ensure that we do our utmost to prevent our pets being subject to injury, illness, and disease. One way to help with this is to ensure preventative measures are carried out, for example, by keeping up to date with flea and worming treatments and by vaccinating dogs, cats and rabbits. Ensuring that our pet's environment is safe and clean will also prevent potential illness and injury.

Conducting regular home health checks, including weighing your pet and checking for any lumps and bumps or changes in behaviour as well as coming to the vets will hopefully mean that any signs of illness or injury are picked up early.

Repeat Medication

Repeat medication, including preventative medications such as flea and worming treatment can be ordered through our [website](#), **which then offers you a collection slot**, or by e-mail or by telephone if necessary. For all repeat medication we must ask 48 hours for this to be processed, authorised by a vet, and dispensed.

To order a repeat prescription for your pet simply visit our website, www.acornhousevets.co.uk and click on the link [Repeat Medication Request](#) this will open a new web page where you can fill in your details to make your request. The form can be used on a mobile, tablet or computer.
