

# On the Move

# ORCHARD

Winter 2016/17 VETERINARY CENTRE

# news

## Bubble wrap and boxes..... you must be moving house!

A new home is exciting for you.....but for your cat? Well their secure and sedate world is about to be turned upside down! As territorial creatures cats like a daily routine, which helps provide the safety and happiness they need. So it can be quite a traumatic experience for your cat when all this suddenly changes!

**With some forward planning, you can take steps before, during and after the move, to help your pet confidently settle into their new home.**

### Your cat may wander off

#### Ensure your cat is microchipped!

If already chipped, then remember to update their records with your new details.

**Cat carrier** This can be seen by your cat as 'the enemy' at the best of times! Encourage 'making friends' with the carrier. Place it in a quiet part of the house, with the door open and comfy bedding inside, plus a piece of your clothing too. It will have the secure familiar scent of you and the old house. Allow your cat free access to the carrier.

### Moving day has arrived!

Know where your cat is, so keep them indoors. Place your pet and the carrier in a quiet room, with a litter tray and drinking water. Ensure the windows and doors of this room are firmly shut. Stick a 'do not let cat out of room' notice on the door. You may then confidently continue packing, knowing your cat is safe until they can be moved.

**The New House** The key is to make your pet feel safe and minimise stress.

**Don't immediately let your cat out of the carrier.**

**Choose a quiet room** with recognizable items from your previous home, plus familiar bedding, toys, scratching post, a litter tray, food, water and some treats.

**Use a pheromone diffuser** to promote calmness.

**Ensure windows are firmly shut** Stick that sign on the door again as a reminder to everyone!

**When all is safe and cosy**, open the carrier door. Allow your cat time, and provide gentle, happy attention and food for reassurance. With your cat in a secure place, you can continue the unpacking, but do visit your pet regularly.

**Later when it's calmer**, and ALL the windows and doors of the entire house are firmly shut, you can then gradually introduce your cat to its new home.

**Scent Marking** As your cat investigates, do not stop the head and body 'rubbing' against furniture, walls, doors etc. They are doing their own 'new home furnishing' by leaving their scent for security.

**The Big Outdoors** Your cat will need to stay in the house for at least 3-4 weeks, but each cat is different, so judging exactly when to allow the first steps outside can sometimes be difficult. It's all about building confidence, establishing a new routine and the new house as a focal point.

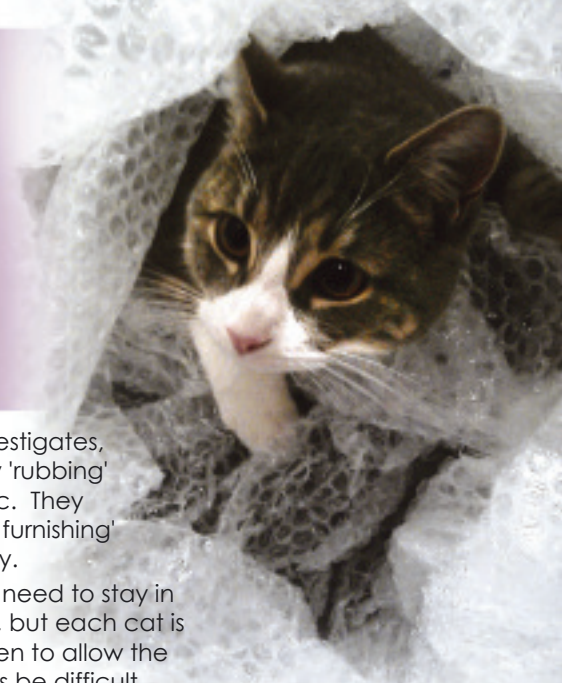
**Begin with short periods of time outdoors and close to the house.**

**Accompany them for reassurance; maybe try a harness lead.**

**Allow your cat to scent mark fences, bushes etc.**

**Coincide trips outside with feed times.** It will encourage your cat to return and connect the house with you and feeding.

**We are always here to help. So if you are soon on the move, contact us for more information and advice.**



## New Trainees

We extend a warm welcome to two new trainees, both of whom joined us in September. **Hannah Caswell** and **Sarah Craddock** are working with our clinical coach, Becky. They are on a two-year training programme after which they will become Registered Veterinary Nurses. Look out for them, as you might see either working at any of our three surgeries!

## Our Congratulations

Meanwhile, our former trainee **Charlotte** has now qualified as a RCVS Registered Veterinary Nurse, with a degree from Warwickshire College of Agriculture. She has joined our team of nurses and we are really pleased to see her rewarded for her hard work. Congratulations!

## Iron Man is an

**Orchard Vet** Steve, our vet, recently completed an Ironman style triathlon. In this race competitors must swim 2.4 miles, ride a bicycle for 112 miles and then run a marathon (26 miles)! This must be completed within 17 hours; Steve did it in 13. The rest of us are exhausted just thinking about his achievement, and we're very proud of him!

## New Fatal Rabbit

**Disease** A new strain of Rabbit Viral Haemorrhagic Disease (RVHD) has been identified. RVHD is a common disease found throughout the UK and can be fatal to unvaccinated rabbits. Spread by direct rabbit-to-rabbit contact and insect bites, it can even reside on objects such as shoes and clothes.

RVHD-2, first identified in 2013, has few symptoms, and rabbits can die without any signs of being unwell. The new strain is still being researched, but a vaccine is now available. Although not licensed for use in the UK, it is in France, so it can be administered under an EU veterinary medicine reciprocal arrangement. Pet rabbits, both indoor or outdoor, should be vaccinated annually. The existing vaccination can be given to rabbits from 5 weeks old, and the new RVHD-2 vaccine from 10 weeks. Bring your bunny in for a full check-up, and we will discuss the vaccinations with you.

## HOURS

Church Street

**OLDBURY**

B69 3AF

**0121 544 0404**

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm

Saturday 11am - 12pm

Home Farm

Northfield Road

**HARBORNE**

B17 0TD

**0121 428 1777**

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm

Saturday 2.30pm - 3pm

210 Holyhead Road,

**WEDNESBURY**

WS10 7DH

**0121 556 6890**

Mon to Fri 8:30am - 6:30pm

Saturday 9am - 10am



# Creaky Joints

Your much-loved family dog has begun to occasionally limp. You also notice a slight stiffness as they get up from their comfy bed. Your dog is a little reluctant to go for walks, and that enthusiasm for playing games has disappeared.

These could all be signs that your pet has developed osteoarthritis, which causes inflamed, stiff and painful joints. Fortunately this condition, which generally affects middle-aged and older dogs, can often be treated. So if your dog is showing the slightest stiffness or limping, then let us check them over here at the surgery. If we do diagnose osteoarthritis, there are options available to assist with easing pain and improving movement.

**How and Why?** Cartilage that helps cushion joints and protect bones begins to deteriorate. Bones thicken in an attempt to protect the ends. This continues, only to cause more pain, more inflammation and gradually restricts mobility.

**Changes** Treatment and fine-tuning their lifestyle can happily help your dog lead a better quality of life again. We may suggest a prescription course of medication, to ease pain and reduce inflamed joints. A good weight needs to be maintained, as extra kilos mean extra strain on those sore joints! Correct and suitable exercise is important, so we can advise you on that too. There are even special foods and supplements available.

**If you have any concerns regarding your pet's health, call for an appointment with our friendly, experienced vets.**



## Five Top Tips for Firework Fright

1. Create a safe haven for your pet in one room of your house.
2. Keep your pets indoors.
3. Do not comfort your pet. A hard one we know, but it can reinforce their worry.
4. NEVER punish or scold a fearful pet. Playing a quiet game during the whizzes and bangs can encourage confidence.
5. Use a pheromone diffuser or spray.

Preparing in advance to combat Firework Fright is best. We are here with plenty of help for nervous pets and advice for owners, so please do call us.



**Antifreeze** is sweet tasting to animals, but is poisonous and potentially fatal if ingested by your pet. Clear away spills asap, and do not allow your dog to drink from water puddles by the roadside.

**Winter salt and grit** are nasty irritants to paws, so do rinse off after walks.

**Fairy lights** mean extra cables. Beware of pets chewing at wires and connectors.

**Tinsel and baubles** are a great attraction for your cat and dog, but may end up decorating the inside of their stomachs instead of the tree!

## Seasonal Safeguards



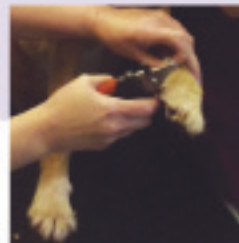
## The Pet Alphabet

**N**euter<sup>ing</sup> prevents pyometra, mammary tumours, related cancers and unwanted pregnancies.

**O**todectes is an ear mite infection, and causes inflammation, irritation and a dark waxy discharge.

**P**yometra is a serious infection of the uterus (womb) in unneutered females and requires **urgent** veterinary treatment. Signs include lethargy, vaginal discharge, excessive drinking.

**Q**uick (dermis) lays under claws and over bone, and if cut during nail clipping, is very painful and will bleed! Let our experienced nurses trim your pet's nails proficiently.



**R**ingworm is a skin fungus, and can be transmitted from direct contact with or where an infected animal has been.

**S**ocialising and familiarising your puppy with a wide range of experiences in their first 3 months, helps with development and behaviour into adulthood.



**T**icks are blood-sucking parasites that require a host to attach to.... your dog or cat! Ensure protection is maintained, as ticks can cause skin problems and transmit Lyme disease.

**U**rinary tract disease covers a range of conditions affecting the bladder and urethra. Signs such as frequent urination or blood in the urine, need checking out asap.

**V**ets must study for five to six years to become a qualified Veterinary Surgeon.

**W**orms are a risk to all cats or dogs. Some also pose a threat to humans, so please ensure your pet is given regular and effective treatments.

**X**-Ray provides images of a patient's skeletal structure should we suspect injuries, for example from a road traffic accident or fall.

**Y**east infections of the skin can initially produce a rash or itching, which becomes intense and produces an odour. Signs of scratching or redness, then we should take a look.

**Z**oonotic is the term used for a disease or infection that can pass from animals to humans.

**Chocolate** is poisonous to our pets and sadly can be fatal if eaten. Store chocolate in any form out of your pet's reach.

**Grapes and raisins** are toxic to dogs. If ingested, they can cause kidney failure.

**Treats** - too many may cause stomach upsets and unhealthy weight gain.

**Turkey bones** can get lodged in the mouth, throat or intestines. So a big 'no no' for your pets!

**Small furry pets outside** require daily checks, plenty of warm bedding and unfrozen water.