



# Newsletter Summer 2013



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## Joys of summer

We are all looking forward to some sunny days in shorts and t-shirts after this long and cold winter. Fortunately, many dogs have already been getting their "hair-do" to make them more comfortable on hot days. Don't forget that dogs can be really sensitive to heat and sunshine especially when exercising. It is a good idea to plan a walk along "refreshments" for your canine companion such as lakes or little streams where the can have a drink and a dip to cool them down. Just make sure vaccinations are up to date because there is a risk of Leptospirosis infection especially in pools and puddles. On a real scorcher, it might be sensible to wait for the cooler evenings until taking your dog out.

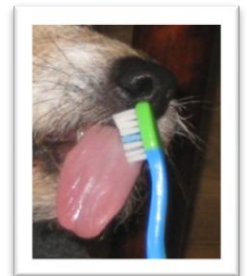


You should also be aware that pet owners have to take special care when gardening. Many chemicals such as slug pellets and weed killers can be poisonous to dogs and cats. Some fertilisers contain tasty and harmful ingredients, too!

## Putting a smile on your face:

### Free dental checks and 25% off preventative treatments

Did you know that dental disease is the most common hidden pet illness? It is not just about bad breath! Cats and dogs suffer silently from gum and tooth root infections and will only stop eating when they are in severe pain at the very end stage. Yet when discovered and treated early, dental problems can be avoided by a combination of professional scaling and polishing followed by daily home care.



*Book your free dental check to find out if your pet will benefit!*

## Reinforcements at Weardale Vets

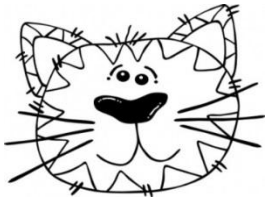
Have you met our new staff yet?

Here you can see Katie examining a blood sample with the in house blood analyser. Katie comes with years of experience in general small animal practice and has worked at a state of the art referral centre. We are very pleased to have another enthusiastic and dedicated nurse who has settled in really well.



You will also find a new vet in the consulting room and operating theatre, Melanie has been working at a small animal practice in the Midlands for the last ten years but has finally decided to swap the dirty city for the muddy countryside. She qualified in Germany some 17 years ago but prefers England to her native country. Melanie's little terrier cross Roo has quickly been promoted to the practice mascot.





## Insurance

There is no question that getting your pet insured for veterinary treatment provides peace of mind at stressful times. It is enough to have to worry about your little friend's speedy recovery without having to fret about the cost. But in today's world of increasing choice and internet comparison sites, how do you pick the right pet insurance? Of course we all know we should read the small print but what to look out for? The cheapest premium might not always be the best value.

First of all it is important you get your pet covered before any health problems occur. **All policies will exclude pre-existing conditions.** This also applies when changing companies later on, so what is well covered by your old policy will be excluded by a new provider. All the more important to sign up with the best possible provider in the first place, switching later will almost always be a disadvantage. All insurance premiums will go up as your pet gets older because the risk of health problems increases. Pet insurance premiums are not like car insurance premiums, you don't get a no-claims-discount over the years. In spite of increasing costs, don't be tempted to switch because all pre-existing conditions will be excluded, whether there was a claim on the old policy or not!

The best policies provide "**cover for life**", meaning as long as you renew in time every year, even on-going treatment for chronic illnesses will be paid for. Common examples are skin allergies or arthritis which can never be cured but are well managed by regular medication. You also need to ensure the maximum amount per condition is calculated per year. Some policies will only pay so much for any given condition and once you reach this maximum there will be no further cover. With the better pet insurances you get a **set amount for one condition for one year** and the same amount again for the next year and so on. Again, chronic illnesses can use up the maximum cover quite quickly and you don't want to be left to pay everything thereafter for the rest of your pet's life.

It is also important to think about the **maximum amount of cover** provided. The cheaper policies often give you up to £2000 which may be well sufficient for even intensive treatment at a general practice but is most certainly used up quickly when referral to a specialist becomes necessary. If you would like peace of mind that the most advanced technology and the best available specialist can be used, a maximum of £6000 might be more suitable.

Some companies have now started to limit access to certain specialists or emergency out of hours vets. Before signing up, ensure you have the freedom to choose your own vet.

Finally, be aware that there are certain areas of veterinary fees that are not paid for by insurance, such as preventative health care like vaccinations, worming and flea treatments, neutering and dental procedures. Most policies also exclude cover for breeding related treatments such as caesarean section.

***We hope this helps you to find the best insurance policy for your pet. If you have any further questions, don't hesitate to contact us for further advice.***



### Taking good care

This time of year vets all over the country are being asked to care for young birds which were rescued by well-meaning animal lovers when found somewhere under a hedge unable to fly and seemingly helpless. We would like to discourage you from picking up fledglings from the ground because they are usually still being looked after by their parents. While we are very happy to assist injured wildlife free of charge, if there has been no obvious accident, the young birds are best left in place and untouched. As if to pose for this article, we had some visitors the other day:

Two young collared doves were "stranded" on our window sill, looking a little lost and sorry for themselves.



Until "Mom" (or Dad, we don't know) arrived.

And provided them with nourishment which was greatly appreciated!

