



# Portland House Veterinary Group

## Retford • Ollerton

# NEWS

Winter 2006

### 53 Churchgate, Retford

Tel: 01777 703663

Consultations by appointment only

Monday to Friday:

9am – 12pm & 2pm-6pm

Saturdays:

9am-12pm – Emergencies Only

### Rufford Veterinary Centre

New Ollerton

Tel: 01623 860138

Consultations by appointment only

Monday to Friday:

9am-10am & 3pm-6pm

(Wed 9-10am & 3-4pm)

Full 24 Hour

Emergency Service

### Practice News



August saw the practice proudly achieve the

Tier 2 RCVS accreditation at the Retford practice, and the Tier 1 RCVS accreditation at the Ollerton surgery. In order to pass this, the practice underwent rigorous inspection carried out by an RCVS approved external veterinary surgeon.

**Babies!** Our Senior Small Animal Vet Janet Aitken gave birth to a baby girl in May and is still currently on maternity leave. In September, the practice welcomed back both Small Animal Vet Clair Caudwell, who gave birth to a baby girl in January and Veterinary Nurse Julie Forrest who gave birth to a baby boy also in January.



DID you know that what you feed you pet can have a direct influence on his or her overall health? As our pets develop from kittens and puppies into adulthood and eventually into old age, their dietary needs change. A huge amount of research has resulted in the concept of life-stage diets. Not only that, but size does really matter and Portland House stock diets to suit the life-stage, size and activity level of your pet as well as some breed specific diets.

### Free samples of food for ALL dogs and cats!

Whether you are visiting the surgery with a new puppy or kitten, or an older pet, Royal Canin have devised a range of food specific to all ages

## You are what you eat!

and dietary requirements, along with some specific breed diets (Labrador Retriever, Persian to name but a few). Both practices stock a full range of these samples so please call in and collect one. Royal Canin also has a 100% money back guarantee, should your pet decide that the food is not to their liking!!

### Too generous with the tit-bits?!

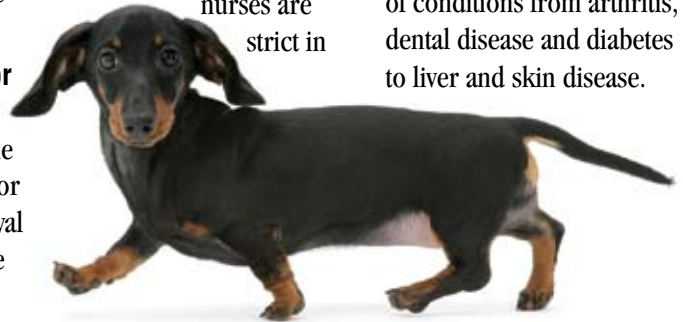
The nursing staff at Portland House run successful obesity clinics **free of charge** and can provide specific advice for the larger pet. All of our nurses are strict in

their quest to beat the bulge for your pet, so no cheating now, the scales don't lie!! Pets with specific diseases may sometimes benefit from special prescription diets. These are specially formulated that help greatly



Whether healthy, or poorly, your pet will benefit most from a high quality diet that suits his or her specific needs. A tailored healthy diet can help to *prevent* or *treat* disease, whilst an inappropriate one can be responsible for *causing* health problems.

in the treatment of a variety of conditions from arthritis, dental disease and diabetes to liver and skin disease.



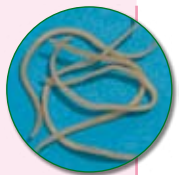
## Does my pet have worms?

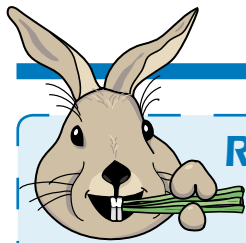
DOGS and cats commonly play host to two major types of worms – roundworms and tapeworms. **Roundworms** are spaghetti like in appearance and live in the small intestines.

They shed thousands of tiny eggs which pass out in the faeces and infect the environment. As well as reinfecting our pets, the eggs – if swallowed – can also pose a serious risk to children.

**Tapeworms** are long and flat and have a segmented body. Segments (containing eggs) are shed in the faeces and break down releasing the eggs into the environment. The eggs are then ingested by an *intermediate* host – these include fleas and mice. Both cats and dogs swallow fleas when grooming, and in doing so, reinfect themselves with the tapeworms.

To keep your pet worm free – **worm your pet regularly, use regular flea control and clear up faeces.** Please let us advise you on the best worm and flea control for your pet!





## Rabbit teeth – time for a check-up?

YOU MAY be surprised to learn that the most common health problem in rabbits is dental disease. Rabbits have *continuously growing* teeth, with both the cheek teeth and the incisor (front) teeth growing by as much as 1-2 mm per week!

The **incisor teeth** should meet, thereby ensuring that as your rabbit chews, they will wear down. If they become misaligned they will continue to grow, and will overgrow past each other. This invariably leads to eating problems.

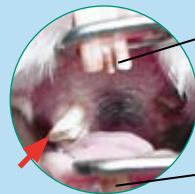
Turning to the **cheek teeth**, these are grinding teeth. However if they become overgrown, they frequently develop sharp spikes (see photo – lower right) which can lacerate the tongue and cheeks, making eating very painful. Signs commonly include “slobbers” with saliva wetting around the mouth, a decreased appetite and often marked weight loss.

If you are worried about your rabbit's teeth, we would be pleased to check them for you and also advise you on diet regimes aimed at promoting optimum dental health.



Lower incisors

Misaligned and overgrown lower incisor teeth.



Upper incisors

Lower incisors

Overgrown cheek teeth (arrowed) are sharp and lacerate the gums.

## Winter worries!



WITH THE cold weather upon us, now is a time when we all start to feel our aches and pains, and dogs and cats are no exception! Look out for limps, and difficulty rising after a rest – these are signs that your pet has a bit of joint stiffness and pain which can be exacerbated by cold or damp wintry weather.

With all the seasonal cheer, it's all too easy for pets (and sadly their owners as well) to start expanding the waistline! Don't hesitate to get in touch if your pet is gaining a few extra pounds and we can give you some nutritional advice; carrying too much weight has a multitude of adverse effects on the body.

Inside the home, remember that items such as ribbons and tinsel are very attractive to kittens and may be swallowed, leading to an intestinal blockage.



Don't forget to keep pets away from anti-freeze, a very palatable poison, and to prevent access to fallen fruits, conkers, acorns, chocolates off the Christmas tree, and leftover Christmas dinners – all of which can cause illness!



Finally, don't forget about fleas – even in winter they can breed in your home, so it is advisable to keep anti-flea treatments up to date, even at this time of year!



## Ticker trouble – is your pet affected?



THE MOST vital muscle in the body, the heart is the muscular pump responsible for supplying the tissues of your pet's body with oxygen and nutrients, allowing him to lead a normal active life.

The heart receives de-oxygenated blood from the tissues of the body and pumps it to the lungs where it is re-oxygenated. The oxygen rich blood then returns to the heart where it is then pumped back to the tissues of the body.

As the heart muscle squeezes and pumps, valves within the heart prevent back flow of blood. Heart problems can occur due to weakening of the **heart muscle**,

or – more commonly, to disease of the **heart valves** that prevents them from working properly.

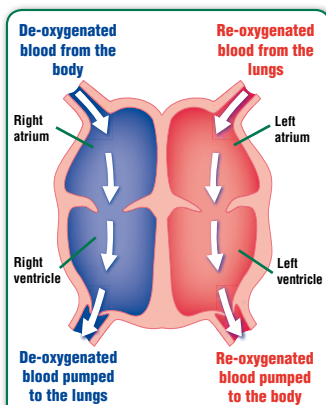
Any kind of heart problem can prevent the blood from being pumped effectively around the body. This causes poor circulation and

abdomen (tummy).

Heart disease is generally more common in older dogs, however in certain breeds it is more prevalent at an early age. In cats, heart disease is quite commonly associated with thyroid gland disease.

If you are concerned that your pet is showing any of the previously described signs, please come and see us for a check-up.

The good news is that these days we have a range of medicines that can help pets with heart disease. So, if you suspect that your pet may have heart disease, give us a call and we can arrange to see him – treatment gives the best results if it is started promptly.



**Schematic diagram of the heart**  
De-oxygenated blood is pumped to the lungs where it is re-oxygenated. Re-oxygenated blood is then pumped to the tissues of the body.

reduced oxygen flow to the tissues, leading to **weakness** and **tiredness**. Fluid can also build up in the lungs and other organs causing **coughing**, **breathlessness**, and sometimes a **swollen**