Happy new baby!

We are excited to announce that Beth is now mum to a little baby boy! Ben didn’t give Beth much pre-birth maternity leave as he arrived just six days after Beth’s last working day in practice! He weighed in at 5lb 12 oz and Mum and baby are both doing brilliantly. They have already been into work to say hi and to collect food for the family’s cocker spaniel. We look forward to them coming back very soon and staying for a cup of tea and baby cuddles next time round!

Good luck Sophie

Many of you will know our Registered Veterinary Nurse Sophie who went on maternity leave last year to have baby Annie. Very sadly, Sophie won’t be returning to 387 Vets as she is moving career direction to become a Student Liaison Officer at veterinary nurse training college Bottle Green. This new role means Sophie can continue to use her nursing knowledge with the flexibility to work mostly from home and better balance work and family life.

Sophie has been part of our team for over eight years, and in addition to her nursing role, has particularly enjoyed being clinical coach to student nurses in practice. Sophie is actually set to be liaison officer for our Bottle Green students moving forwards so she will still be a regular visitor to 387 Vets! Thank you Sophie, for all your valuable contribution and support. We look forward to seeing you again soon in your new role.

New faces

Anyone who has been into practice recently will have noticed two new faces on our reception team.

Clare Smith joined us at the end of January and brings with her a wealth of customer-facing and organisational experience. Former team leader with the Cooperative Group, Clare was in charge of day to day operations in store as well as offering front of house customer support. She has been a pub landlady where communication and great customer service was key, and is no stranger to veterinary reception work. Clare spent seven years on front desk at a small animal practice in Wolverhampton, so understands the responsibilities and challenges in her new role. We’re very pleased Clare has come back to veterinary practice life!

Laura Newell joined us in February from the customer care team at a Midlands-based veterinary referral centre. She had previously worked as a veterinary receptionist in first opinion small animal practice, and found, at referral level, she really missed seeing regular clients and getting to know people’s pets, so has come to work for us! Laura has 12 years of customer-facing experience, loves meeting people and has recently achieved Gold British Veterinary Receptionist Association Accreditation, the highest level of formal industry-specific receptionist training. Laura will be a great addition to the 387 team!

Now offering restorative dentistry at 387 Vets and The West Midlands Cat Clinic

With our vet Selenia’s return from maternity leave in January, we are now able to offer a wider portfolio of pet dental procedures here in practice. Selenia has always been passionate about pet dentistry and furthering her knowledge in this field. In 2019, she was one of the first cohort of around 20 vets to be accepted on a Postgraduate Certificate in Small Animal Dentistry, with a focus on cat and dog tooth extraction and periodontal disease. She has since undertaken additional training in restorative dentistry to be able to provide repair, in many cases, as an alternative option to tooth extraction.

WHAT IS RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY?

Restorative dentistry is the process by which teeth are returned to their normal function and appearance and involves ‘restoration’ of the enamel, the outer protective layer of the tooth. This protects the innermost tooth pulp which contains nerves, blood vessels and various tissues that supply blood flow and nutrients essential for keeping teeth healthy and ultimately alive. Restorative dentistry relieves sensitivity and pain where the outer layer of the tooth is damaged and dentine and/or tooth pulp is exposed or at risk of infection. It preserves teeth, halts further deterioration and leaves teeth looking cosmetically aesthetic.

WHEN MIGHT RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY BE APPROPRIATE?

• Some fractured teeth in dogs where no inner pulp has been exposed, or newly fractured teeth with pulp exposure
• Tooth decay in dogs, often identifiable by dark discolouration on the tooth. Restorative techniques can be used to repair early-stage caries
• Wear and tear from chewing toys or fibrous catch balls, but only suitable if the behaviour has completely stopped and there is no pulp exposure or tooth root damage
• Birth and developmental abnormalities where the outer protective layer of the tooth has been in some way compromised or has not formed properly
• Feline crown height reduction, to give a smoother tip to a cat’s canine tooth where the corresponding upper tooth is missing in order to prevent trauma to the cat’s upper lip from the remaining tooth, or where other teeth are impinging on and causing trauma to soft tissues in the mouth
• Jaw fractures can benefit from restorative techniques such as splinting teeth and then using an acrylic seal to stabilise fractures without harming the teeth

We are excited that Selenia is able to perform all of these restorative procedures on-site for eligible pet dental cases. Whether you feel restorative dentistry might be an option for your pet or not, no eating or tooth issue should ever be ignored. If you suspect your pet may have dental or gum discomfort, please do bring them in to get checked out.

SPRING 2024

387 Walsall Road, Great Wyrley, Staffordshire WS6 6DP
Tel: 01922 411755 • www.387vets.com • www.wmcatclinic.co.uk

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Extension work at 387 Vets imminent!

You may remember from our Autumn newsletter that we announced plans for further extension work to continue to improve our facilities. New additions include a second sterile theatre and a dedicated dental operating suite as well as extended office space upstairs and bigger staffroom facilities which will have french doors leading out onto a roof terrace! Work is scheduled to start in March and is estimated to take around 4-6 months to complete. We have made careful planning provision to minimise disruption to working practice and your visits to practice at this time. We can’t wait to share project progress with you, and unveil our new and bigger working space!

Charity bonanza

A massive thank you to everyone who contributed to our ‘Give a Pet a Christmas Dinner’ campaign.

We collected an incredible 100kg of dry pet food and 500 tins and sachets of wet dog and cat food. In addition to this, we received heaps of pet accessory donations including pet toys, bedding, towels, blankets, cooling mats, leads, collars, feeding and water bowls, cat carriers and more! Donations have been very gratefully received by the Coven branch of Birmingham Dogs Home and Kats Cradle.

YOU ARE AMAZING.

Spring parasite alert!

The arrival of Spring heralds better weather and warmer temperatures. However the downside is this also increases the number of pesky parasites keen to feed on our pets.

**Fleas** love the warm weather, and in addition to your home, they thrive outside in parks and gardens. Here, any dormant flea eggs from last year will rapidly hatch out into adult fleas. These hop onto passing pets, bringing dozens of these tiny pests back into your home. Adult fleas feed on your pet’s blood, causing a range of problems including itchy skin, rashes and hair loss. Worse still, they hop off our pets and make their home in pet beds, carpets and soft furnishings, where the flea life-cycle is perpetuated.

The best way to prevent fleas is year-round treatment for all your pets with veterinary-licenced flea products. These are very effective at killing fleas and will kill them before they lay their eggs, with the aim of preventing infestations in your home.

**Ticks** are tiny spider-like creatures and are most active from March to October, living in long grass and woodlands. Here they wait to attach themselves to passing pets, and feed off their blood for several days. Unlike fleas, ticks are not itchy, but can spread a range of serious tick-borne diseases including: Lyme disease – affected pets (and also humans) can develop swollen joints and stiffness, and often a range of other symptoms. In mainland Europe, Babesiosis (caused by Babesia canis) is an emerging tick-borne disease, destroying red blood cells and causing acute anaemia in affected dogs. Erlichiosis also attacks red blood cells and can be fatal. Both Babesiosis and Erlichiosis are particularly prevalent in mainland Europe, so if you take your dog abroad on holiday, it is essential to protect them against ticks.

The good news is that current evidence suggests that tick-borne diseases take many hours after tick attachment to be transmitted. Using a treatment that rapidly kills or repels ticks will help to reduce the risk of these diseases. No tick product is 100% effective however, so pets should also be checked for ticks every 12-24 hours and, any found, removed with a special tick remover.

If you would like further information on flea and tick prevention, or parasite prevention more generally, please ask a member of our practice team – we are happy to help.

DON’T FORGET...

Additional ways we can support you when you need advice about your pet

**SAVE MONEY AND GET PEACE OF MIND**

VidiVet is a vet triaging service, available 24/7 (bank holidays included), that lets you know if you need to see a vet and how urgently. Free to our registered clients, send a text, video-message or photo via the VidiVet App for a comprehensive video response from a qualified vet in minutes. Check communications from us for your access code or response from a qualified vet in minutes. Check communications from us for your access code or contact us to re-request. You can use VidiVet for medication and post-op queries too.

**SAVE TIME. MESSAGE US!**

Our PetsApp messaging facility is great for requesting appointments, repeat prescriptions and for general queries. Staffed during our open hours, message us at your convenience and we pledge to respond as soon as we can. Also great for us to send you specific pet care or condition information and in-patient photos! Download PetsApp App and select our practice to get set up.

**Removal of ticks** Attached ticks with buried mouthparts are often found whilst grooming your pets. Ticks are best removed with a specially designed tick hook with a twisting action.