



It's that time of year again,  
The cows are on their winter ration,  
Christmas jumpers are back in fashion.  
The sheep have come from far away,  
To graze on Ayrshire's luscious leys.  
And here at MBM we all just wanted to say,  
**Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year's Day!**

*(Michael Fallon)*



Season's greetings from the whole MBM team and we look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Our Christmas Opening Hours;

Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> December – Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> December – **CLOSED**

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> December – Friday 31<sup>st</sup> December – OPEN AS USUAL

Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> January – Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> January – **CLOSED**

Normal hours will resume on Wednesday the 5<sup>th</sup> of January.

*Out of hours emergency cover will be provided when we are closed over Christmas and New Year*

### Welcome! – Two New Vets

We are delighted to have two experienced farm vets starting with us in mid-January. We need some extra resources to help with our increasing workload. We are sure you will give them both a warm Ayrshire welcome!



#### Alex Lyon BVMS MRCVS

Alex grew up on a family farm in Largs and studied at Glasgow University Vet School. After graduating in 2016, he worked in a mixed practice in Aberdeenshire for five years. In his spare time he enjoys cycling and hillwalking with his dog. Now he is back in Ayrshire and looking forward to getting out on farm and meeting some new faces.

#### Penny Stewart BVM&S MRCVS

Penny graduated from the Royal Dick School of Veterinary Studies in 2018 and has been working in mixed practice in South Lanarkshire since then. Having grown up on the family farm in Aberdeenshire she has always had a special interest in farm animal work. Penny is looking forward to starting in Ayrshire and meeting new clients and patients!



### Estrumate® - beware! *(Mark Crawshaw)*

Please take care when using Estrumate® if it has been dispensed for you to use following a fertility visit or for misalliance. The drug is a prostaglandin which affects fertility but causes smooth muscle contraction as a side effect. It can be absorbed through contact with human skin or mucous membranes. It will not only cause abortion in cows it will have the same effect on pregnant women, so women who have any chance of being pregnant should not handle it. Furthermore, it can exacerbate asthma and other respiratory conditions, so ideally asthmatics and anyone with other lung diseases should not handle it either. At the very least everyone using it should wear gloves. Finally always use a sterile, clean needle to inject the animal and discard it if it becomes contaminated or falls on the ground. This is because injection site reactions with prostaglandins can be particularly severe if the injection site is contaminated. In the worst case scenario animals can die from blackleg.

## New Crush or Calving Gate? (Rebecca McCloy)

We have been really pleased by the shiny new crushes and calving gates that have appeared over the past year and have some points to consider when choosing where these are positioned for use in calving-caesarean scenarios;

- Out of rain and wind: these can blow dirt into the surgical site/onto surgical equipment causing an infection around the guts (which will then lead to death)
- Good lighting: calvings are often in the wee dark hours so good lighting is essential
- Access to left hand side: Should a Caesar be required we need clear access to the left side of animal from shoulder to rump and from the topline to the bottom of the belly
- Relatively clean dry floor: whilst we prefer bedding not to be stirred up prior to operating it is also important the floor is free from wet muck that could splash into the wound if the cow jumps



Operating on a cow on farm is never going to be a risk-free undertaking, so it is important that we do everything within our control to tip the odds in favour of a good outcome. We really hate sending you a bill for the same cow as Grayhill.

## **\*\*ATTENTION ALL POULTRY/BIRD KEEPERS\*\*** (Natasha McCappin)

The Chief Veterinary Officers across the UK have agreed to bring in new housing measures to protect poultry and captive birds from avian influenza following several recently confirmed cases in the UK.

As of Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November, it is a legal requirement for all keepers to house their birds and to follow strict biosecurity measures in order to limit the spread of the disease.

*Poultry keepers must now do the following:*

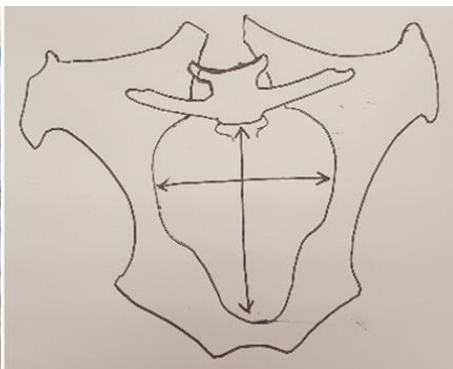
- house or net all poultry and captive birds to keep them – and feed and water - separate from wild birds
- cleanse and disinfect clothing, footwear, equipment and vehicles before and after contact with poultry and captive birds.
- reduce the movement of people, vehicles or equipment to and from areas where poultry and captive birds are kept and use effective vermin control
- thoroughly cleanse and disinfect housing on a continuous basis

*In addition:*

Poultry keepers and members of the public should report dead wild birds to Defra's national dead wild bird helpline on 03459 33 55 77 (please select option 7) and keepers should report suspicion of disease to APHA on 03000 200 301.

## Breeding Heifer Selection for Easy Calving (Natasha McCappin)

Traditional selection of breeding heifers concentrates on the external frame and appearance of animals, however this outer frame does not always reflect the internal size of the pelvic canal; this results in heifers being bred that were always going to struggle to calve, and have a high risk of complications such as tears, dead calves or caesarean.



Using a pelvimeter we can accurately measure the internal pelvic space and weed out heifers that are unsuitable for breeding before they go to a bull. Pelvimetry is performed by rectal examination and with heifers adequately restrained is relatively quick and inexpensive to perform so whilst it does not guarantee all will calve unassisted, if it prevents even one unsuitable heifer being bred you will save from costs of complications. The ideal time to perform pelvimetry is around 12-13mts of age, please contact one of our farm team if you are interested in measuring your heifers.

### MBM Veterinary Group

**MAUCLINE**  
(01290) 550452

• **KILMARNOCK**  
(01563) 522701

• **BEITH**  
(01505) 502126



[WWW.MBMVETGROUP.CO.UK](http://WWW.MBMVETGROUP.CO.UK)