



Another year has nearly passed by so from all of us here at Ikin and Oxenham we would like to say thank you to all our clients over the past year and wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

*Merry
Christmas*

Puppies or Kittens first Christmas

For lots of pets this year will be their first Christmas. With this in mind there are a few things to think about when preparing for the exciting few weeks ahead.

There are lots of items around the house during the festive season that are not usually there and puppies and kittens are inquisitive and will certainly go and explore everything they can.



The Christmas tree must be safe and secure especially if your kitten loves to climb, or your puppy loves to jump up, a tree will easily topple over with a kitten climbing up it or a puppy pushing against it! If you have a real tree inside the house then watch-out for pine needles. They can cause a lot of pain if trodden on for you and your pet.

Most of us will have lights on our trees and around the house; this means extra power cables where once there were none. Puppies and kittens love to chew, especially if they are teething. Make sure that all cables are tucked away and that your new pet cannot easily get to them to have a chew on.

A cat's favourite toy is often a ball or piece of string, unfortunately if ingested this can cut through the intestine necessitating in an operation. With all the tinsel, ribbon and baubles around your cat will be in heaven, but it is very important to ensure none is eaten. Once ingested tinsel and ribbons can play havoc in the intestines. Baubles are great to play with also, either knocking them whilst on the tree or playing with them on the floor after successfully knocking it off the tree. It is worth inspecting the decorations you choose to put on the tree first to ensure that they do not have any sharp objects such as pins or hooks. Bear in mind if your new pet does decide to play with them on the tree the chances are they will end up on the floor at some point, glass decorations will easily shatter after hitting a hard floor.

Unopened presents under the tree, particularly the edible ones, will be very pleasing for your pet. It might be worth keeping the present out of your pets reach until Christmas Eve when you can ensure your pet does not unwrap them for you.

Your Dog Must be Microchipped by Law!

The microchipping of Dogs (England) Regulations 2015 will introduce compulsory microchipping of dogs in England by April 6th 2016.

If you wish for your dog to be microchipped before April 2016, then please contact the surgery to arrange an appointment with a vet or nurse. It costs just £10.

Arthritis

As many as 2million dogs and cats are estimated to suffer from joint problems each year.

Arthritis is a painful degenerative disease of the joint that reduces your pet's mobility. Cartilage degeneration results in joint inflammation which is responsible for the chronic pain and restricted joint function that can spoil your pet's quality of life.

Any joint can be affected, but it is most common in the hips, elbows, shoulders, knees and back. Different breeds can be affected in different ways.

Typical signs your pet is suffering from a joint condition include:

- Pain, lameness and stiffness, especially after rest or following exercise.
- Joints can become swollen or warm.
- Personality changes or increase aggression due to pain. Cats groom themselves less when they are sore.

In the majority of cases, arthritis occurs secondary to a lifetime of wear and tear on the joints. So, what can be done? Although arthritis cannot be cured, even those pets that are only mildly affected can benefit from treatment.

The most effective approach involves several factors. **Weight loss** can make a massive difference for pets carrying a few extra pounds. **Regular exercise** including swimming or hydrotherapy is also helpful. **Anti-inflammatory pain relief medication** and **food supplements** containing glucosamine and chondroitin sulphate such as Nutraquin+ can help with these symptoms.

Contact the surgery for more details on how to help your pet.

Contact us.

Chandlers Lane
Sidmouth
Devon, EX10 9BX

Telephone **01395 512611**

Website ikinoxenhamsidmouth.co.uk

Email sidmouthvets@ikox.co.uk

Facebook [facebook.com/ikinoxenhamsidmouth](https://www.facebook.com/ikinoxenhamsidmouth)