



## WESTMORLAND SMALL ANIMAL NEWS

*kendal*

*kirkby lonsdale*

# SPRING

Dear Readers,  
Happy New Year, and welcome to our first newsletter of 2025! In this edition, we're excited to introduce some of our team members, highlight the importance of dental care for pets, and share information about our nurse clinics. We will also be covering a more sensitive but important topic—pet bereavement—and how it may affect you.

We hope you find this newsletter helpful and informative.

## Meet Hannah!

Hannah has been with Westmorland Vets for 3 years and her passion and enthusiasm for veterinary care is clear to see. She is approaching the end of her training to be a Registered Veterinary Nurse and is aiming to qualify this year. You will likely see Hannah in our nurse clinics or if you bring your pet in for a procedure. In her spare time she enjoys weightlifting and running, and is currently training to compete in a Hyrox Doubles. Hannah also spends her free time walking in the Lake District and would like to complete as many of the Wainwright Walks as she can in the coming months.





# Dentistry



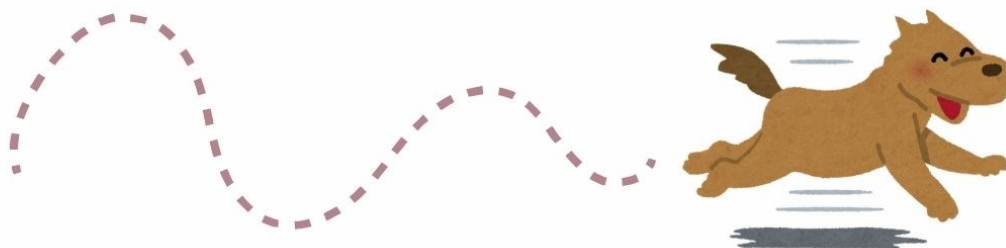
We asked our vet, Josephine, to tell us a bit about dental disease and why oral health is important in our pets. This is what she had to say...

Dental disease is one of the most common diseases affecting pets; over 70% of dogs and cats over the age of 3 years are thought to be affected. Bad breath, red/swollen gums, tartar build up & tooth loss are all signs of periodontal disease. It is generally caused by plaque and can be treated with a combination of scaling teeth under general anaesthetic and daily homecare to include brushing. Periodontal disease causes pain (although animals can be very good at hiding this), pockets in the gum, and bone loss. Often tooth extractions are required to treat the affected area.

What happens during a dental procedure?

Your pet will have a general anaesthetic for their dental procedure as this allows for a full examination of the mouth. We will remove any hard tartar first to assess the teeth underneath and decide if there are any extractions needed. If we are to remove teeth your pet is given an extra pain relief injection and often specific dental nerve blocks. Teeth are removed by careful elevation until wobbly. Sometimes this involves a gingival (gum) flap for better access and in these cases your pet may have dissolvable stitches in the mouth afterward. After extractions the remaining teeth are cleaned with an ultrasonic scaler and the mouth is rinsed. Your pet is woken up and monitored closely until they're back on their feet and ready to come home later on in the day. Often pets need to be given soft food and pain relief for a little while following extractions but you will be advised on this at your discharge appointment.

If you think your pet is in need of a dental check, contact the team to get them booked in.







# Nurse clinics

Veterinary nurses provide a wonderful service in practice when seeing our patients. Just some of the things our nurses offer are;

**Weight clinics and nutritional support**

**Diabetic clinics**

**Behavioural clinics**

**Geriatric clinics**

**Puppy checks**

**Nail clips**

**Anal glands**

**Post-operative care**

If you are a member of our Lifetime Care Club then nail clips, 6 monthly health checks and 2nd vaccines are all included in your monthly cost.

## Nutritional support

Has your vet recommended a weight loss plan for your pet? Do you need help formulating a specialised diet? Our nurses have the expertise to answer your questions!



## Diabetic clinics

Receiving a diagnosis of diabetes for your pet can be very overwhelming, and a lot to take in. Our nurses can help you process that information and give clear instructions regarding insulin treatment and management.

## Puppy checks

Why not bring your pup for a weigh and worm check to one of our nurse clinics. As well as keeping your puppy wormed, it is a great opportunity for socialisation and advice regarding training, teething or nutritional needs.



# Our newest vet

We would like to introduce you to Alison!

Alison has been qualified for 15 years and with that brings a wealth of experience and knowledge. She has a menagerie of animals at home; two dogs, three cats and two rabbits. Hopefully you will all get to meet Alison soon, as she will be working at both our Kendal and Kirkby Lonsdale practices.







# Pet Bereavement



This article contains descriptions of euthanasia which some readers may find upsetting.

Euthanasia of your pet is one of the most difficult things you will go through. It can be incredibly hard to come to that decision and the process itself can be upsetting. This article is going to try and help you understand euthanasia and what support is available for pet bereavement. If at any point you have any questions or concerns regarding euthanasia, please get in touch with one of our vets.

For clarity, this article is referring to euthanasia of dogs and cats, other species may have differing protocols.

## What is euthanasia?

Euthanasia means 'gentle death'. It is an agreement that the vet comes to with you, the pet owner, when your pet has become too unwell, injured or elderly to have a good quality of life. It is a humane way to provide a peaceful death and stop suffering.

## Why is euthanasia performed?

A lot of the time it is assumed that a pet passing away at home is going to be 'better' than performing euthanasia. This is not usually the case as it often means the pet will endure prolonged suffering due to illness or injury. Our vets are always here to have these kinds of conversations and to help plan a euthanasia that suits you and your pet.

## What should I expect at a euthanasia appointment?

Your pet may be euthanised at home or at the practice. In cases where you would prefer a home visit, we usually need 24-48 hours notice to facilitate this. In some patients sedation is required to provide relaxation and reduce anxiety. This is given via injection. A catheter is then placed into the vein, usually on a front leg, and a solution is injected which stops the heart. It is your choice whether you are present for the entirety of the appointment and there is no judgment either way.

## What happens after euthanasia?

It is your decision as the owner what you would like to do with your pet once they have passed away. We can arrange private cremation (where you receive ashes back) or communal cremation (ashes are scattered at the crematorium with other pets). Alternatively, you may wish to take your pet home to bury or make your own arrangements. If you have not decided, we can keep your pet here until you reach a decision.

**If you are struggling with the loss of a pet, please refer to the following resources:**



COMPASSION  
UNDERSTOOD

Compassion Understood  
Blue Cross - pet loss  
Cats Protection - Paws to listen  
The RALPH Site  
Samaritans

