

AUTUMN 2018 Paws & Hooves

The magazine of the Royal Veterinary College Animal Care Trust

Plus:
Your chance to win
£1000
in our winter
raffle

MUCKY PUPS

Amazing fundraising stories and
how your support makes a difference

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in action thanks to
YOU!

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foal's happy ending

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and other fundraising
stories!

Welcome to Paws&Hooves

It's been a really busy year at the Animal Care Trust (ACT) so once again, here is a bumper issue of Paws & Hooves to show you some of the amazing work you have supported.

Thanks to your incredible response to our appeals, the new CT scanner for the Queen Mother Hospital for Animals (QMHA) has been installed and officially launched; the refurbishments at the Beaumont Sainsbury Animal Hospital (BSAH) are complete and are making a huge difference to the care we can provide; and ground-breaking new research projects into complex diseases are launching. There is so much we have achieved and yet more we have planned, thanks to your donations.

We hope you enjoy reading the wide range of news and stories from around the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) and its hospitals, all made possible by your incredible support. From spare change to extreme challenges and everything in between; you are, quite simply, helping to save the lives of the poorly pets who need the expert care of the RVC every day of the year. Thank you.

We are looking forward to a very successful 2019!



Twig



Our new CT Scanner is here!

It's so fancy, it's so shiny, it's SO BRILLIANT!

As you may be able to tell we're delighted that our state-of-the-art new CT scanner is now installed in the Queen Mother Hospital for Animals (QMHA) and it's only here because of your donations, so thank you! The new scanner's advanced functionality and decreased imaging time is enabling our vets to diagnose more animals, more quickly, and get them started on the life-saving treatment they need much sooner. Twig's recent trauma highlights the incredible difference the scanner is already making to orthopaedic cases.

Twig's Story:

Twig Bradley (pictured above) was one of the first orthopaedic surgery patients to have a CT scan in the new scanner. He had undergone surgery for a bilateral humeral fracture and RVC surgeons used screws and plates to stabilise his elbows.

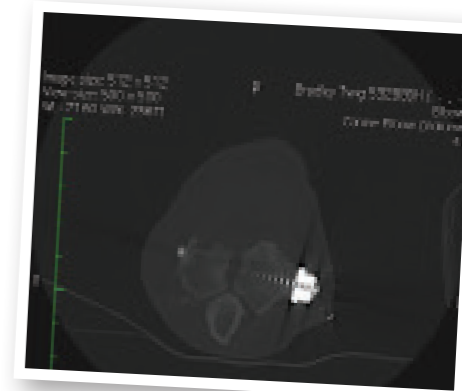
The RVC vets wanted to be able to assess the progress of these fractures after the procedure to make sure that the

fixation was stable, that it was healing and to assess the surrounding bone. Metal screws and CT scanners usually don't work well together because the high density metal produces dark streaks in the image the scanner produces. This means the anatomy around the implant cannot be seen because it is obscured by the streaks. With our old scanner it was impossible to see any of the metal work or whether the fracture was healing.

The new CT scanner has a 'metal reduction algorithm' so the detail around Twig's implanted screws can be seen clearly (right) with no dark streaks. The vets can now monitor the healing process around the screws and bone, with a crystal clear picture of the area.

Dr Pilar Lafuente, RVC Lecturer in Small

Animal Orthopaedic Surgery summarised the new feature as follows, "It is so exciting to be able to see these images in such detail because it is now possible to monitor Twig's implants with the utmost precision. This feature of the CT scanner brings so many benefits and we are looking forward to seeing what else it can do in the future."



Use your will power

Gifts left to us in our supporters' wills can have a huge impact on the care given to sick animals at the RVC.

A recent legacy has funded an important project to integrate a CT sedation room next to our state-of-the-art new CT scanner. The new room is a well-equipped space which enables sedation of patients in close proximity to the scanner, prior to commencing scans. Dr Randi Drees, Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Diagnostic Imaging explained, "The new scanner is significantly quicker than the old one which means we can

scan more patients in a day. The bespoke sedation room means we can prepare patients quickly and efficiently, lessening their sedation time. We also have everything we need to hand should additional scans be needed without having to move the patient around the hospital." For information on how a gift in your will could help sick and injured animals please contact us on 01707 66237 or act@rvc.ac.uk.

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Follow us online via our website and social media for the very latest news, stories and events.

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Twitter: @animalcaretrust

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Registered charity no:
281571

Another year of incredible support

MEMORY TREE
RAISED OVER
£15,000

CHRISTMAS
APPEAL 2017

£13,000

RAISED
IN SUPPORT
OF PETS LIKE
BRANDY

CORPORATE
PARTNERSHIPS - £12,000
THROUGH GENEROUS
SPONSORSHIP AND CHARITY
OF THE YEAR AWARDS

MUCKY PUP

150

RUNNERS AND
THEIR DOGS RAN
2K FOR FUN AND
FOR THE ACT

2017 RAFFLE
£12,000

WAS RAISED FOR
THE ACT, BE SURE TO
ENTER AGAIN THIS
YEAR FOR YOUR
CHANCE TO **WIN!**

Furry First Aid

Would you know how to help your pet if it was bleeding, burnt or had broken bones? Do you know the common causes of poisoning in pets?

Our handy new first aid guide for pet owners is on hand to help in those stressful situations where you find your pet sick or injured and need to provide some immediate care before you can get them to the vet. Your interventions could not only keep them comfortable before they receive professional treatment, they could even help save their life.



Written by the RVC's Emergency and Critical Care Team the guide covers numerous first aid situations including road traffic accidents, seizures and poisoning.

The guide can be used in conjunction with our handy and practical first aid kit for pets to deal with injuries at home or on the move. Each kit contains bandages, swabs, dressings and more, as well as useful information about how each item in the first aid kit should be used.


Get your first aid kit for just £9.99 from the RVC online shop at rvc.ac.uk/rvc-shop
To order a free first aid guide please call the team on 01707 666237 or email act@rvc.ac.uk.




Come along to one of our first aid events:

Join us for our first aid events where the RVC's fantastic veterinary team will teach you what to do in a crisis to give your pet the best possible chance of recovery.

These fun and interactive sessions, aimed primarily at dog and cat owners, will cover all sorts of emergency situations and you will get the chance to quiz the team and get their advice. Each event costs just £10 and you can register online at rvc.ac.uk/act

 **Hawkshead First Aid Day** 22nd September at our campus in Hertfordshire.

 **Camden First Aid Day** 17th November at our Camden campus in North London.

Generously supported by:



Small Animal Hydrotherapy

Helen Webb is a Senior Neurology and Rehabilitation Nurse at the RVC who has 12 years' experience delivering hydrotherapy to pets. Helen and the Veterinary Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Team deliver hydrotherapy in a purpose-built centre at the RVC's Queen Mother Hospital for Animals (QMHA). Much of their equipment has been funded by generous donations to the ACT and we asked her a few questions about her work.

Tell us about the hydrotherapy team

There are eight of us in the immediate team. We typically do up to 15 treadmill cases in a day and five pool sessions.

Who uses the service?

As well as working with pets referred from local vets, we provide support to other teams within the QMHA whose cases need physiotherapy as part of their treatment.

Which species do you work with?

95% of our cases are dogs but not many people realise we also work with cats like Stumpy, pictured above.

What are the conditions you treat most often?

The most common cases we see are problems with hips and elbows, spinal surgery recovery and intervertebral disc displacement. We also see animals for weight management, pain management, balance training and mental health and wellbeing.

What are the main benefits of using hydrotherapy for recovery and rehabilitation?

As it is a non-weight bearing activity there is less stress and pressure on the pet, yet extra resistance from the water increases and accelerates muscle build. It is a low-risk way to build up improved mobility and warm water provides a comfortable environment for pets.

How does the hydrotherapy treadmill help with pet treatment?

We have control over the water levels, temperature and treadmill speed. This enables us to set it up to suit the needs of the specific animal we are dealing with, even adding an incline to increase effort if needed. The treadmill computer enables us to store and monitor the pet's progress for each session and across a series of sessions. This provides us with vital data to adjust the recovery programme plan as we go along. This data can be shared with the referring vet as part of the pet's ongoing health management.

What do you think the future of hydrotherapy will look like?

We can see the benefits of hydrotherapy but we want to be able to quantify the results we are delivering, so there is a need for more research into the benefits of hydrotherapy in pet recovery and treatment. Benjamin Mielke, a surgical specialist-in-training at the RVC, is currently studying the impact of hydrotherapy on post-surgery recovery. More research of this type will help us refine what we do and establish our impact on recovery.

Water works

Born on a puppy farm and with suspected mistreatment in his early months, Border Collie Kane had not had a great start to life. When new owner Moya took him in at six months he not only had anxiety issues, but was having problems getting around.

Kane's legs would often give way if he jumped up and they would cross and make him stumble while he was walking. Moya was concerned to see Kane struggling when he was so young, so took him to her local vet. X-rays there revealed he had hip dysplasia (where the hip's ball and socket don't fit together correctly) and he was referred to the RVC in October for hydrotherapy to help ease the pain and improve his mobility.

Kane was initially anxious about his treatment but some sessions in the pool helped him settle and he soon progressed to the treadmill so he now enjoys his treatment. We're so grateful to our supporters who raised the funds to add the treadmill to the range of hydrotherapy equipment available at the RVC.

"Kane has improved massively thanks to his hydrotherapy at the QMHA. Helen and all the hydro girls are amazing, they genuinely care and do fantastic work. Kane's legs no longer cross and he is now jumping the stair gate with ease – so his movement has greatly improved but his behaviour is a work in progress!"
Moya, Kane's owner.



Kane

Top tips for deadly dog disease

Alabama Rot, New Forest Syndrome or Cutaneous Renal Glomerular Vasculopathy (CRGV) to use its formal name, whatever you call it - it's worrying news for dogs.

CRGV is a serious and often life-threatening condition affecting dogs across the UK, with several new cases having been reported close to the RVC's Hertfordshire campus in recent months.

The period of September to March is the peak time for reporting of cases, so here are some tips from our expert Emergency and Critical Care team at the QMHA to help during this high-risk time.

How can I stop my dog getting CRGV?

The cause of CRGV is currently unknown, there is no quick and easy test to diagnose this condition so it is difficult to advise how to prevent the disease.

Currently the best advice is to avoid walks in muddy, wooded areas – especially after heavy rainfall.

What should I look out for?

Initial signs include small skin ulcers, called lesions, which can look like a simple wound. They often affect the legs but can also affect other areas of the body such as the belly and muzzle. They can appear as a distinct swelling, a patch of red skin or an ulcer-like open wound.

A large number of dogs that develop these lesions will go on to develop kidney failure and sadly, many dogs that reach this stage of the disease do not recover.

It is therefore important to check your dogs' legs regularly and keep them clean, particularly after walks.

Your dog could also become lethargic or suffer a loss of appetite. Other signs include jaundice (a yellow discoloration of the eyes, gums or nostrils), as well as vomiting and gagging and unexplained bruising.

What should you do if you suspect CRGV?

If you do notice an unexpected lesion then it is recommended that you contact your veterinary surgeon for further advice. **The first 48 hours are critical, so seek help as soon as you can.**

Your vet may then recommend blood tests to check kidney function.

Alba



Alba – the first dog in the UK to survive CRGV thanks to revolutionary new treatment here at the RVC

Louis' Luncheon



Louis, affectionately known as 'the camp Cavalier' was obsessed with pink tennis balls. He was eight years old when he received life-saving surgery at the QMHA. Louis was in end-stage congestive heart failure from mitral valve disease (MVD), a hereditary disease within his breed. Louis had only one choice to survive and that was to have surgery to correct his mitral valve. "We were aware of the risk that Louis may not survive the surgery but felt we were going to lose him shortly without it." Emma Bennett, Louis' owner.

In September 2017 Louis received the MVD surgery at the QMHA. This pioneering surgery is only performed by two people in the world and Dan Brockman, Professor of Small Animal Surgery at the RVC, is one of them. He said

"Louis was such a fantastic character and clearly an incredibly important member of the family. It was such a privilege to gain the trust of his owners and to be able to offer him the chance of an improved quality of life and lifespan. The operation for mitral valve repair is complex, challenging and carries significant risk. Louis came through all this with flying colours and his initial recovery was so swift that he was up and carrying one of his famous pink balls in no time. We were all so delighted with his progress and so excited to be able to give him back to his owners, apparently feeling so much better."

Sadly, Louis went on to contract a bug which developed into a very

resistant infection and despite many attempts to fight it, he passed away a few weeks after his surgery.

Emma organised the first 'Louis' Luncheon' in his memory in May this year and they raised an incredible £3,000 through their bbq, raffle, stalls and dog show! This money will support Dan's work in these complex cases, including the purchase of new equipment that will enable Dan and his colleagues to perform more surgeries simultaneously.

"We are so grateful to Emma and family for their incredible support of the ACT - fundraising in tribute to such beloved pets is so special and very much appreciated. Louis' legacy lives on." Nadja Hale, Head of Fundraising for the ACT.

"The care and compassion shown by the RVC was overwhelming and we were so pleased to be able to dedicate a leaf to Louis on their beautiful Memory Tree. In tribute to the 'campest of Cavaliers' and his obsession with pink, I am raising funds to help research into this dreadful disease and why Cavaliers are so prone to it. My boy's final gift was to donate himself to help other Cavaliers in the future through research for MVD, SM/CM, pancreatitis and diabetes." Emma Bennett, Louis' owner.



The Prae Wood Arms pub in St Albans celebrated their resident pooch Chester's birthday with a paw-ty and dog walk with their locals and raised £58 for the ACT – **Happy Birthday Chester and thank you!**



Memories rooted in our minds

Leaning leaf by leaf, branch by branch, this beautiful tribute to your faithful pets and loving companions is quite simply saving lives. THANK YOU for all your support so far.

There are now more than 100 leaves dedicated on our tree and the response from staff and visitors alike has been incredible.

"It's an absolutely beautiful and elegant way of commemorating any pet. We bought leaves for three pets, who were all involved with the RVC in some way, be it for treatment or as blood donors. It's our special way of saying thank you." Joan Lockett, supporter.

This is the first tree of its kind to be created to pay tribute to animals and we are so proud of what it has achieved so far. We would love to fill the tree with tributes so if you would like to dedicate a leaf, then please visit rvc.ac.uk/memorytree or call us on 01707 666237.

Corporate kindness!

From raffles to runs, prize draws to donations, support from staff and customers of companies big and small makes a huge difference to the animals treated at the RVC.

Abbeywood Pet Foods raised more than £100 from their customer raffle, with all prizes kindly donated by Burns Pet Food. Abbeywood owner Caroline was inspired to support the ACT after hearing about superhero blood donor dog Romeo, pictured here giving blood. We look forward to working with Caroline and her team again soon.

Richard and Toni-Ann, the lovely couple behind Lowther's Estate Agents, are supporting the ACT after receiving high-quality care for their horse at the RVC. If you market your house with Lowther's and mention the ACT we will receive a generous 15% of their fee. If you're in Hertfordshire or North London and are thinking of selling your house, give them a call on 020 8449 9069.

Thank you to these generous supporters and the many other companies who have supported our fundraising this year.

Perhaps you and your company could help too? Just contact Jenny Collins on 01707 666045 or act@rvc.ac.uk to find out how you can get involved.



Our winter raffle is now open and you could get your paws on our fantastic cash prizes! Not only will you be in with a chance to win £1,000 but with every ticket purchased you'll be making sure our patients are winners too by helping the RVC provide the expert care they need.

If you'd like to buy or sell tickets please call us on 01707 666237.

Simulator for students

Avet student's first colic case can be a terrifying and potentially dangerous experience with a desperately sick and stressed horse and a concerned owner looking on. It is vital that in situations like these, vets have the requisite confidence and skills in place and the RVC's Clinical Skills Centre exists for precisely this type of training.

The RVC Equine Practice and Clinical Skills Centre teams are looking to purchase a full-size equine colic simulator to enable students to practice their rectal examination skills using an anatomical model, pictured below, before they are faced with the real thing.

The simulator is a life-sized model horse supplied with four sections of inflatable gastrointestinal tract as well as model reproductive organs. The model also has areas on the neck and leg where students can practice injections. The model acts as a perfect transition step, enabling students to refine their basic dexterity and practical skills before undertaking procedures on live animals.

This simulator is more than the sum of its inflatable parts. It enables our teaching staff to get a really good view on how the students are doing (which of course wouldn't be possible with a live horse) and it

gives our students the freedom to make mistakes and learn in a safe environment before seeing live horses, often in terrible pain. The ACT is currently fundraising for this £25,000 model and would welcome any contributions.

Equine simulator



Junior is making excellent progress thanks to his new mum, after his very difficult start in life.

Junior

Junior's journey

Back in the summer, the RVC Equine Team took on a case with an absolutely heart-breaking beginning. Junior was only 36 hours old when her mum, Juniper, sadly died following complications after birth. She was a healthy foal, who had fortunately acquired good immunity from her mum, but she urgently needed a suitable foster mare who would accept Junior as her own.

After a social media post trying to connect her to possible mares, the RVC Equine Team had a few options to pursue and the firm belief that this strong foal could make it through her tragic start in life.

"Foals need large amounts of milk during their first month of life, so while we waited for a suitable foster mare to be found, Junior was being fed every 2 hours to meet those needs. One of the biggest challenges was to get Junior to drink from a bowl, as bottle feeding would have increased the risk that she would aspirate milk into her lungs and develop pneumonia. To our surprise, Junior took to drinking from a bowl within a few hours, and despite her traumatic start, she quickly adapted to the hospital routine and became a firm favourite amongst the staff and students." Mike Hewetson, RVC Equine Veterinary Surgeon.

Just a few days later, Junior was introduced to Jess, who happily - and thankfully very quickly - adopted her as her own. Junior is now growing well and is strong and healthy, drinking from her new 'mum' with a little bit of supplementary milk.

"We would like to say thanks to the staff involved with Junior's care at such a very sad time for myself and my family. The pain and devastating loss of Juniper was eased by the fact that Junior is so strong and thankfully is growing up to be a young filly who simply loves life."

Jasmin, Junior's owner



Juniper



A new Beaumont!

Over the last year, there's been quite a transformation at the Beaumont Sainsbury Animal Hospital (BSAH), made possible by your generous support. Additional consulting rooms, expanded facilities for exotics and the development of our theatre suites have all made a huge difference to the hospital.

In the basement we have created specialist wards for exotic patients separating predators and prey and we now also have a minor procedures room next door to a separate x-ray room for use with exotics, cats and dogs. The first floor surgery spaces are hugely improved with a dedicated surgery ward next to the theatres. Hospital Director, Anne Richings, explains, "Our new facilities are helping us to improve the experience for animals in our care with less movement around

the hospital and therefore less stress on our patients. The new space has also significantly helped with team communication as staff are now working on one floor and able to multi-task and visually assess where their help is needed."



Elmo's fracture

Traumatic injuries are unfortunately a fairly common problem in the small mammal. Sometimes the cause can be obvious, such as a fall or predator attack, whereas in other cases the initial cause remains a mystery.

This was the case with Elmo, a little eight-week-old female guinea pig, who arrived at the BSAH with a suspected fracture. This type of injury is not always easy to spot in guinea pigs as, being prey animals, they will hide signs of even severe pain.

After a physical examination revealed an unstable fracture, the team decided the best possible chance for Elmo was surgery. Although a relatively straight forward technique, her small size made this surgery technically challenging.

Such surgery is a major procedure for a guinea pig but within six weeks Elmo was bright, active and mixing with her friends, moving around normally on all limbs.

The specialist skills and equipment required to perform such a surgery are what makes the work of the RVC so special.



Fundraising events

Amazing people taking on big challenges for sick and injured animals

Mucky Pup Mayhem

Once again there was fun for all the family at our Mucky Pup event on 17th June at our Hawkshead Campus. 150 people and their pups tackled the jumps, towers and cargo nets along the 2km route and raised a fantastic amount for the Animal Care Trust.

We loved celebrating all the doggy Daddies out there in our special Father's Day dog show and can't wait to do it all again next year. Look out for the next Mucky Pup event on our social media pages or Spring Paws and Hooves!

Battling the straw bales!



150 mile ride!

Biking for Bob

Dawn, Gemma and Rachel cycled over 150 miles from Silchester to the British Flyball Championships in Derbyshire in August. They cycled in memory of Rachel's beloved dog Bob who sadly passed away at just four years old after suffering from EPI (Exocrine Pancreatic Insufficiency). EPI is the inability to properly digest food due to problems with the pancreas and is a common condition in dogs.

The Cycle4Bob team are raising awareness of and money for research into EPI to help other dogs lead a happy and healthy life.

Thanks for your support ladies!



Mud-tastic!

Barking Mad Mudders

Massive congratulations to our 70 RVC 'Barking Mad Mudders' who completed the eight mile Tough Mudder challenge in July in just three hours - what an incredible achievement! The fantastic team of RVC staff and students headed up by the wonderful Helene Baker made us all at the Animal Care Trust so proud. With £3,000 already raised the team haven't stopped there - they continued their fundraising efforts with a car wash on campus, washing 30 cars in an afternoon - these guys are machines!

If you would like to show your support, simply go to their Virgin Money Giving sponsorship page to make a donation. Just search for **RVCBarkingMadMudders**.



Feeling inspired?! To get involved in any of these events, or to organise your own, please contact us on 01707 666237 or act@rvc.ac.uk

"We knew on arriving at the RVC that Bertie was in really bad shape and his chances weren't good. It was a nightmare situation. However due to the talents, hard work and compassion of the staff at the RVC, Bertie made it and amazingly has very few long term effects from the accident." Jack and Victoria, Bertie's owners, who went on to complete the 100 mile Ride London event to raise funds for the ACT.

Bertie is pictured here with Sophie Wyatt, one of our specialist neurology vets, who treated him for severe skull and brain injuries after a traumatic accident.



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