



FARM NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2022

Over the past few months, I've been looking at a lot of old photos and stories for our centenary book, and it's had me reflecting on the key role that people have played in our practice. It's not just about the animals; we are very lucky to continue to have such a fantastic group of vets and a wonderful support team, and there have certainly been some notable personalities over the years. I hope you'll enjoy reading some recollections of them all when the book is complete.

We continue to encourage more people to join the wide world of veterinary practice too. It was great to see the team inspiring and offering advice to the next generation at the Blue School Careers Day. We encourage and support students and new vets, offering placements as well as using our shared experience across the team. One of our Vet Techs - Tom - started with us as a business apprentice in 2016 and then went back to college to further his higher education, whilst continuing to work for us - and as a result, has gained an offer to study veterinary medicine in September.

But, in the same way that we enjoy welcoming people to our industry, sometimes we sadly have to say goodbye too. After 10 years with us, Kate Sadler is leaving the practice this month. She's making a career change from vet practice to midwifery - moving from calves to babies. She'll do a great job and is very well suited to her new role, but we'll certainly miss her as I'm sure many of you will too. We also say a fond farewell to Cristian, who leaves us after a busy year of TB testing and export work.

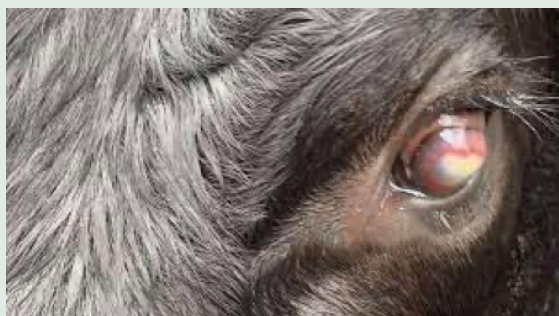
We feel that it's important to be part of the farming community beyond our everyday practice work, and I'm very honoured to have taken on the presidency at the Mid Somerset Show for this year. It's a privilege to have been asked and I'm very proud to support both local organisations as we work together for the local area and the farming community. I'm looking forward to getting involved in all the events the Society has coming up as well as Show Day itself, and know many of you will be part of it all too.



You may also like to get involved with another centenary event this year - Vet Rosie is organising a "Tour De Yorkshire" to visit a number of farms in North Yorkshire and we're inviting you to join us. There's more information on the inside pages.

/ Paddy

CONTROLLING FLIES: STAY AHEAD BY STARTING EARLY



healthcare for dairy cattle. Considering what your strategy will be and implementing it early, before fly populations have a chance to significantly increase will ensure you aren't on the back foot this season.

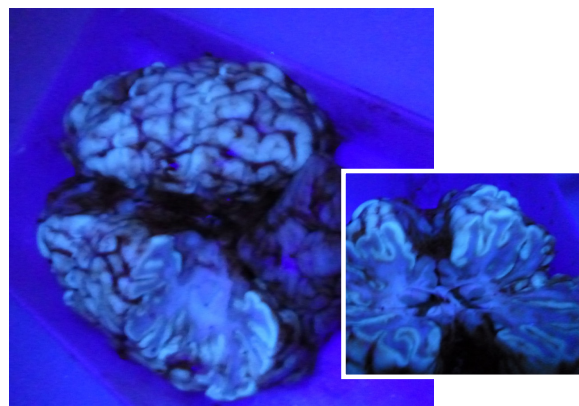
We recommend a combined approach. We've worked very hard to ensure we are able

to offer competitively priced fly treatments this summer with great value on 2.5litres of Spotinor that will treat up to 250 cows. Contact us for a price.

Vet Tech Tom will once again be putting up fly boards and distributing fly parasites on farms. Fly parasites are used increasingly and are suited to controlling populations of flies in calf sheds. These parasitic wasps deposit their eggs in the unhatched larvae of the developing nuisance fly which kills them at source.

Give us a call and speak to Tom to find out more.

/ Anna



CASE STUDY

A farm called us after one of their animals was found dead suddenly, and a couple of others were showing some concerning neurological signs. We suspected CCN (Cerebrocortical Necrosis) and this was confirmed at Post Mortem.

These amazing pictures show the brain glowing under UV light, which is a definitive sign of CCN.

This condition is caused by a deficiency of Thiamine (vitamin B1) - often as a result of a diet high in concentrates, which was the cause in this case. The affected animals in the group were given Vitamin B12 and have made a good recovery. The level of concentrates in the ration has been reduced to prevent further cases.

/ Charlie





ABORTION RATES, TESTING AND VACCINES IN SHEEP FLOCKS

funding testing for the two most common causes of abortion.

Although abortion in ewes can be catastrophic, we are lucky enough to have two very effective vaccines protecting against the two most common causes of abortion - Enzootic abortion and *Toxoplasma gondii*.

To diagnose these abortive agents during lambing, we would need ideally aborted fetus and/or placenta of the ewe. The labs are usually fairly successful at diagnosing a cause of abortion - SRUC reported a diagnosis in 60% of their submissions.

Remember many of the infectious abortions in sheep are also zoonotic, meaning that humans can be infected as well so it is vitally

important to maintain good hygiene around lambing. Pregnant women should not be in with lambing sheep.

If you couldn't diagnosis any of your sheep abortions this year, or you just had barren ewes, we are able to check your flock for evidence of the abortive agents by checking whether your ewes have antibodies to any of these infections. MSD are funding blood sampling for Toxo and Enzo. We can sample between 6-8 barren ewes at the end of lambing. This is a brilliant screening tool for flocks of 100 or more breeding ewes.

Please contact Bibby or Rosie at the practice for more details or to arrange your visit.

/ Bibby

Infectious causes of abortion most commonly occur after 100 days of pregnancy. An abortion rate in excess of 2% indicates an infectious cause and warrants veterinary investigation.

Abortion in sheep is costly, with the cost of abortion quoted as £85 per aborted ewe. We are working together with MSD offering

JOHNES DISEASE DISCUSSION GROUP

economic impact too. Johnes is linked to less productive cows and farmers participating in a Johnes control programme tend to gain additional income per cow, per year.

Eamon explained that supermarket requirements are likely to increase - that there will likely be a focus on 'priority cull' cows as well as 'red' cows for supermarket contracts, and that milk processors will be looking for evidence of active Johnes management rather than just surveillance.

We discussed and demonstrated the new tool for monitoring this active management, the Johnes Progress Tracker, and looked to see how NML presents those results in a user friendly format on Herd Companion. It helps see progress in areas of Johnes control as well as ranking your farms progress against a national dataset of other farms.

We presented an anonymised ranking graph to show how the attending farms are performing with Johnes on farm. As a practice, we've seen a positive overall

reduction in the presentation of Johnes at our client farms in the last few years along with much higher awareness and targeting. This is encouraging to see and we need to make sure we continue working together to maintain it and refine our management tools for controlling Johnes on farm.

Our top tips for reducing Johnes on your farm target stopping the cycle of reinfection of your farm and include :

- Prompt identification of high risk animals
- Effective segregation of any high risk animals from the rest of the herd at calving and calf housing
- Prompt culling decisions
- Don't feed pooled colostrum/waste milk
- Calving pen hygiene
- Slurry management and biosecurity

Ask your vet for the handy laminate we produced for the meeting! And of course, discuss control plans and tracking with your routine vet on a regular basis.

/ Alex



We had our last Pilton Group session of the winter and enjoyed a good gathering to discuss Johnes Disease and how we have made progress reducing the prevalence of it on our farms.

We welcomed Eamon Watson from NML to talk about the issue from a national perspective, and learnt that this chronically contagious intestinal infection is a common iceberg disease on farm - that is, you only see clinical effects in a small number of animals and it is only through testing that you see the extent of the problem.

He discussed how Johnes can have an impact on lying time, milk yields and lameness - and as a result, it can also have a significant

TB TESTING: PLEASE BOOK YOUR VISITS ASAP

Unfortunately, we have a lot of herds currently under TB restriction requiring short interval testing. In addition to this, 6 monthly testing is now in full swing. This is making the TB diary very busy, creating lots of juggling for Carolyn and Anne-Marie who book our TB tests.

Upcoming bank holidays mean we lose several days of testing. We would like to ask that if you know you need a TB test done, to contact us and get it booked as soon as possible. The more notice we have the more flexible we can be. We will be as accommodating as we can, and we always aim to do our best to offer you the dates and times that suit you but please understand that it is a very busy time for TB work and that many clients want animals tested before turnout. Thank you.



JOIN US FOR OUR CENTENARY "TOUR DE YORKSHIRE" THIS SUMMER

To celebrate Shepton Vets centenary we are going on a study tour to Yorkshire and would like you to join us.

This is a great opportunity to visit some fantastic dairy farms in North Yorkshire who are modernising and adapting their dairy businesses to be resilient and successful in the changing industry.

Visit One: A trip to an 800 cow AYR housed system, milking three times a day through a 60-point rotary. They'll share with us how they've expanded the herd through

selective breeding whilst remaining closed as well as their use of precision livestock farming tools.

Visit Two: A trip to a 200 cow Autumn calving dairy after significant change from AYR pedigree Holsteins with robots. We'll learn how they've improved business resilience through utilising milk from forage.

Visit Three: A trip to a 1300 Pedigree Holstein AYR housed system, who will share how their attention to detail and outsourcing expertise led to them becoming a Gold Cup winning farm.

The trip will also sample the delights of Yorkshire hospitality - including a trip to the Black Sheep Brewery - and will finish with a day at the Great Yorkshire show.

We will be joined for dinner by Guest Speaker Miles Middleton - a farm vet and farmer to talk about his Nuffield Scholarship on working towards net zero in the dairy sector.

The trip will be from Sunday 10th to Wednesday 13th of July, at a subsidised cost of £325 towards travel, accommodation (based on two sharing), meals and show tickets.

Spaces are limited, so if you would like further details about the trip or to book a place, then please call Charlotte at the practice or speak to Rosie or your routine vet. It would be wonderful if you could join us for this special Tour de Yorkshire!

/ Rosie



BACK TO SCHOOL

As we reflect on a centenary of Shepton Vets, we also look ahead to the future. Some of the team - along with some of our small animal colleagues - supported a careers day at The Blue School in Wells last month, hopefully inspiring the next generation of vets, nurses and vet technicians as well as lots of different practice support roles.

Vet Rosie gave a presentation to students about how she always wanted to be a vet and what studying for it was like, whilst Vet Tech Tom told them how he originally started at the practice in a Business Apprenticeship role, before taking on some Vet Tech duties and is now enrolled for further veterinary studies. Pharmacy Manager Vin provided an alternative view, explaining the other roles and skills that are needed to support a practice.

Here's to inspiring the new colleagues that will take Shepton Vets into the next 100 years!



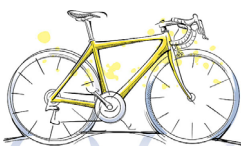
JOIN US FOR A BEEF FARM WALK WITH AHDB

Join Rosie and Alex for an on-farm meeting and farm walk at Dan and Vikki White's Wick Farm in Glastonbury on Tuesday 26th April.

We'll be joined by Emma Steele from AHDB to discuss Maternal Matters, Shepton will be talking heifer selection and we will see how effectively Wick Farm produce prime Angus beef from grass.

What can we learn from each other? Join us to take a look at this highly productive Angus farm.

Spaces are limited so give us a call to confirm your free place and for meeting times and arrangements.



CYCLING INTO THE CENTENARY

To celebrate 100 years of Shepton Vets, we're organising a couple of 100km cycle rides to raise money for the Farming Community Network charity. We'll be taking part in a 100km group cycle ride in September as well as a month long challenge to complete a total of 100km in bitesize rides.

We'd love you to join us, sponsor us or come and cheer us on. Look out for more details coming soon!

UPCOMING COURSES



**APHA APPROVED
DIY AI COURSE**
WEDS 27TH - FRI 29TH APRIL
10am - 3pm

Our DIY Artificial Insemination course includes:

- 3 day course combining classroom theory (with the help of our training cow) and on-farm practicals
- leads to a licensed AI certificate in fertility management
- includes a follow up visit 1-2 months later on your farm to check progress

£550+VAT per person. Places are limited so please book early.



DOWN COW FIRST AID
WEDNESDAY 18TH MAY
11am-2pm

Bibby will be running another of these popular, practical courses which will cover:

- Caring for a down cow to optimise the chances of her getting up
- The correct way to lift a cow
- How to assess limbs for breakages
- Passing a stomach tube and giving oral fluids
- How to give IV injections
- Blood sampling allowing calcium levels to be assessed
- Prevention of down cows

£65+VAT, extra team members £15pp. Booking is essential.



**PRACTICAL
CALVING COURSE**
WEDNESDAY 6TH JULY
9.30am - 2.30pm

Join us for a practical calving course, covering:

- what is normal for a calving cow and how it can be different in heifers
- when and how to intervene in calving
- how to correct common malpresentations
- how to manage post-calving complications
- practical session with our artificial cows to practice putting head ropes on and correcting malpresentations

£134+VATpp - includes lunch, hand-outs and certificate of attendance. Booking is essential and this course always fills up quickly.

We can also organise one to one foot trimming training with Charlie and other practical support sessions for your team - give us a call on 01749 341 761 to book onto a course or for a chat about how we can help with other training needs.

**MEDICINES
DELIVERED
TO YOUR
DOOR**



Do you know we can deliver your medicine order? Save yourself some time and let us deliver it all to your farm! We deliver across the area on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays - it's £5(+VAT) for a one off delivery, or £7.50(+VAT) for the monthly subscription service which gives you one delivery a week. Give our Pharmacy Manager, Vin, a call for more information or to sign up.

Don't forget, you can order medicines at any time of day by text or WhatsApp!
07592 307 394



ZOE ROGERS

**MEET
THE
TEAM**

Name: Zoe Rogers / Job Title: Farm Office Manager
How long have you worked here? 4 1/2 years.

Where are you from? I grew up in Chewton Mendip, living a feral childhood! I now live in Chantry with my little boy Harley and Benji the dog.

What did you do before this? I left school and trained as a hairdresser and spent 5 happy years chopping hair before sadly having to give up the profession. I then spent many years figuring out what I wanted to do, working as a receptionist in a mechanics & doctors, as customer service adviser for a pet pharmacy, I even spent 2 years selling steel!! And then I found my feet at Shepton Vets.

Why did you want to do this job? Growing up, I lived a rural life, surrounded by farm animals and farmers, so this job was right up my street. I love the variety it brings, there's never a dull moment and you never know what calls you're going to get. The office can be manic but the more challenging, the better I think! Favourite animal and why? I am a horsey girl so they're probably my favourite. Cows are my least favourite - I am terrified of them!

Do you have any pets? I have a horse called Paddy and a dog called Benji.

Favourite biscuit? It's a close tie between a chocolate bourbon and a custard cream!

Hobbies? Horse riding, walking, and am trying to get into cycling - although last time I cycled I broke my foot!



Shepton Veterinary Group
Allyn Saxon Drive
Shepton Mallet
Somerset BA4 5QH
Tel: 01749 341 761

Email: farm.animal@sheptonvets.com



Office Opening Hours
Mon-Fri: 8am - 5.30pm
Sat: 8.30am - 12.30pm

We also provide a 24 hour emergency service