

# Colne Valley News

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## Colne Valley Veterinary Practice Ltd

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**your friends  
are  
our concern**

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Meet the staff pet:

*Maisie Bennett*

## Welcome back, Bill!

Yet another return to the practice as we welcome Bill Steele back from convalescence following shoulder surgery in March.

Martin Hyde has provided locum cover in his absence. We thank him, and wish him success in the future.

The summer is traditionally a busy time at the practice with booster vaccinations, for example. We hope that, with the six-vet rota up and running, we will still be able to offer you an appointment at a time to suit you.

## Grass seeds alert

Grass seeds or awns keep us busy through late spring and the summer. They can find their way into ears causing acute pain and infection.

They can also penetrate the delicate skin between the toes, giving rise to the classic appearance of an inter-digital cyst: a swelling between the toes which may weep or discharge pus (see photo bottom of page 2). Grass seeds rarely back out of their own accord because of their whiskers,

instead migrating up the leg, causing swellings intermittently. So, do check your dogs' paws after walks.

They may be inhaled into a nostril, or through the mouth into the windpipe which is a very serious situation.

I can remember one Saturday when we had four English springer spaniels sedated to have grass seeds removed from inter-digital cysts!



A favorite family phrase or slogan can go here.



A grass seed was retrieved from the inter-digital cyst on this dog's paw

## CLINICS IN THE SPOTLIGHT: 2 – Puppy and kitten checks

This clinic is run by Esther Heard, VN, who will check on the development of your six month old puppy or kitten. During your appointment, Esther will weigh your puppy and assess whether he or she is growing well and in good body condition. She will check that the adult teeth are erupting correctly and advise on dental care. Your puppy or kitten will be

examined for signs of fleas, and Esther will advise on routine flea and worm control.

Any questions about microchipping or neutering? This is your chance to ask them, along with any other concerns you may have concerning your adolescent. These may relate to diet, vaccination, or behavioural issues such as house-training, for example.

## HOW OFTEN SHOULD I WORM MY DOG OR CAT?

Not a simple question: it is a matter of risk assessment. Routine worming is mainly aimed at roundworms because of the potential for zoonotic transmission, ie humans picking up roundworms from affected pets. *Taenia canis* is the roundworm affecting dog which can migrate within our tissues and cause all manner of problems, not least of which (but fortunately rarely) is blindness. The incidence in humans has fallen dramatically in recent years. A dog with roundworms may also have the eggs on his coat where they can be picked up during stroking and cuddling. Sensible hygiene is therefore important.

Whether there is the same risk to human health with the roundworms affecting cats (*T cati* and *T leonina*) is unclear. Routine worming is therefore a sensible precaution.

You may have been unfortunate enough to have seen spaghetti-like roundworms passed in faeces or brought up in vomit. The problem is that you will not be aware of your dog or cat passing roundworm eggs without examining the

faeces under a microscope, because the eggs are not visible to the naked eye.

These eggs need to develop in the environment before they are infective to other animals and humans. How long this takes depends on the temperature, so it is therefore quicker in the summer (as little as two weeks) than in the winter (several months). Also, the eggs can survive in the environment for two years and more. It takes a few weeks from the time that a dog swallows a roundworm egg to himself passing viable eggs. This is why we advise **routine worming every one to three months**.

Puppies and kittens can acquire roundworms from the mother whilst developing in the womb. It is therefore important to treat the mother both during and after pregnancy, as well as her offspring.

There is a wide range of worming products available. Please ask us for advice on the best way for you to worm your canine or feline friend. We will discuss tapeworms in the next newsletter.

## WHAT ABOUT PET RABBITS?

There is also a zoonosis, or infection transmissible to man, which is associated mainly with rabbits. This is *Encephalitozoon cuniculi*, abbreviated as *E. cuniculi*. Fortunately, standard basic hygiene should prevent any risk to human health unless an individual's immune system is compromised, for example following an organ transplant.

The effects on a rabbit of an active *E. cuniculi* infection are various: for example, neurological signs (head tilt, shaking, fits, hind limb paralysis), cataracts, kidney failure, urinary incontinence, and/or death.

In certain situations, treatment with Panacur Rabbit paste (fenbendazole, Intervet UK) may be recommended two to four times per year.