

Seaside Playtime



Dogs just love beach days whatever the season! A wide open space to run and play games in, plus lots of water fun. Currently for some the beach is 'out of bounds'. When we can visit again though, please be aware of a few potential hazards, so your pet stays safe while having fun!

Beach Games The wonderful game of throw and fetch the ball is high on the list of beach fun for your dog, however that ball will gather sand as it rolls along. As your dog picks it up, **sand** stuck to the ball can accidentally be swallowed. Some dogs even like eating sand, which unfortunately easily sticks to the intestines and is very difficult to remove.

Seaweed is another favourite snack, and if dried, expands in the stomach. Both sand and/or seaweed can become impacted causing a blockage. This is a serious situation, so if after a beach visit you notice signs of **vomiting, lethargy, abdominal pain, loss of appetite or even constipation.....** please do contact a vet immediately.

Paw Prints in the Sand We've all experienced sand stuck in between our toes.... ouch! So while you are rinsing out yours, please remember to wash your pet's paws too and brush away any sand from their coats, as it is an irritant to their skin. Have a supply of **fresh water** with you to use and for your dog to drink too. With all that running around he or she will get very thirsty!

The Salty Sea Stop your dog drinking sea water... it's salty and along with any nasty parasites and microorganisms, it can make them sick.

Sea Swimming Some dogs love it, others run away as the waves roll onto the beach. Whether you have a confident 'water dog' or one that is wary, please always remember the sea is a powerful element! **Tides, big waves and undercurrents** can all take your dog by surprise, and could result in your dog being swept further out or under the sea. For those water loving dogs consider a life vest.

Beachcombers Many dogs become absolute scavengers on the beach and finding anything they can eat will be for them like discovering treasure! Picnic leftovers, dead fish, plus any other 'delights' that may have been washed up on the shore and your dog is on cloud nine with excitement!

Dogs are naturally inquisitive creatures, so with noses to the ground, they will usually find something disgusting, but these can contain **dangerous and deadly toxins** ...and those fisherman's hooks with bait attached..... serious and extremely painful damage! If you suspect or see your pet has eaten **'beach food'** call us immediately for advice.

Signs of poisoning include drooling - frothing - panting twitching - muscle tremors breathing problems - lethargy vomiting - diarrhoea - fits

The beach is a great place to spend time with your dog to enjoy the lovely sea air and open space..... just take a little care while there to avoid any upsets or accidents.



Introducing David Barker BVetMed

New Practice Owner and Clinical Director

Hello to all pets and their owners! Some of you may have previously met me, as I have been working here since 2012 and recently took over the helm of our clinic from Greg Maskill, who has now retired. **My main aim is to ensure that the animal community of Wafford and South Herfordshire always have available the very best in veterinary care, and from an independently owned vets.**



Since qualifying from the Royal Veterinary College in 2009, I have seen and cared for a very wide range of cases within the animal world and have to say that animals never cease to amaze me! It is certainly not a boring job and that feeling of satisfaction when a patient recovers from a difficult emergency surgery to enjoy life again, is just incredible! With a particular interest in surgery, I received a postgraduate certificate in Small Animal Surgery in 2015.

Now as practice owner, I will be focusing more on the daily managerial role of the practice, so taking a step back from the day to day consult room. However, I am always available to provide my experience and support when required to our two fantastic vets, Kim and Alex. For those particularly complicated cases that may arise, you will find me back in the consult room!

Outside of work, I enjoy photography, especially wildlife, and have been lucky enough to take photos of local wildlife when in Kenya, Peru and Sri Lanka. Closer to home, I am really looking forward to returning to the football terraces when allowed, as I hold a Wafford Football Club season ticket! I have a grey rescue cat called Marty, who was sadly hit by a car and brought in to the practice where I previously worked. Once fully recovered, I adopted him from the Cats Protection League.

There are lots of new and exciting plans in the pipeline for the practice, which have been put on hold because of the pandemic. Hopefully we will soon be returning to some normality, so watch this space for more news!

AVENUE CLINIC HOURS

Our friendly staff are available for pet healthcare and advice

Monday to Friday
8.30am - 7.00pm

Saturday
8.30am - 12noon

Consultations by appointment

01923 894274

24 Hour 7 Day
Emergency Service



Fun Furry Friends

If you are looking to have a small pet, guinea pigs are lovely 'daytime' active animals, and very responsive to your attentions. These amazing little creatures are one of the oldest domestic animals dating back to 1000 - 500BC.

Healthy Guinea Pigs

Like all pets, they need regular check-ups with a vet. A guinea pig's teeth and nails grow continuously and may require clipping. Mites and fungal infections are sometimes a problem, so at their appointment we can examine their coat and skin too.

Guinea Pig Guide

- The average lifespan is 4-8 years.
- Guinea pigs like companions - a neutered pair or small group of the same sex.
- A good-sized hutch with plenty of dust free bedding and an outside run with tunnels and boxes as they are flight animals and like to hide!
- Provide protection from the sun as guinea pigs can suffer sun/heatstroke.
- Ensure they are warm, dry and snug during winter.

Good Food for Guinea Pigs

- A varied diet is essential - grass, dandelions, carrots, cabbage, spinach, apple and pear. They require a source of vitamin C in their diet. This is found in grass and also in good quality dried pellet food specifically for guinea pigs, which is great for their teeth too.
- Give a regular supply of hay and clean fresh water.
- **Warning!** Always identify any plants before feeding your pet as some may cause illness and sadly could be fatal. If in doubt.....don't let them eat it! Place outside runs away from potentially hazardous plants.

If guinea pigs sound like the right pets for you, why not get in touch with the rescue centres as there could be these delightful creatures waiting for their forever homes. For further information on guinea pig care, please contact us and a member of our friendly team will help.



A Wee Bit of Trouble!

When a new puppy or kitten arrives in the household, the mop and bucket are always to hand! With training and patience your young one soon gets the hang of toileting outside. For some pets, the puddles may continue longer than expected or reappear later in life, and this can cause a little desperation on your part. Initially, you may scold your pet for soiling in the house, but think before you do, as constant wetting could be a sign of **incontinence**. This basically means that your pet is unable to control when they urinate.



Urine is stored in the bladder until the body tells your pet it needs to wee, but if there is some failure within the waterworks system, then leakage occurs. It can happen at any age, in males and females and for a number of reasons.

Possible Causes of Incontinence

- Some animals can be born with a defective bladder and urinary tract.
- Urinary infections, stones, kidney disease or diabetes.
- For the senior citizen pets, sphincter muscles, which hold urine in the bladder, can weaken and then leakage occurs, especially while they are resting or sleeping.

If you notice one or more of these signs.....

- dribbling of urine
 - damp patches or soaking of bedding
 - skin irritation
 - wet fur/hair between hind legs or on stomach
 - constant licking around the genital area.....
- then please book an appointment to see the vet.

We will give your pet a thorough examination and possibly perform some tests, which will help us determine the cause. Once diagnosis has been made we can then begin the appropriate treatment.

Need More Meds for your Pet?

To ensure that we give you and your pet the best attention at all times, please note we require **24 HOURS NOTICE** for repeat medication orders.



If you should require a repeat prescription, it is necessary for our staff to obtain authorisation from a vet. For most of the day, our vets are busy consulting, operating and writing up their clinical notes. Time is needed to check your pet's medical records for the preparation and dispensing of their medication. If your pet is on a long-term course of treatment with us, it is required by law that our vet examines the patient at regular intervals, so you may be asked to bring your pet in for a meds check before any further medication can be dispensed to you. Occasionally, our stock levels might be low or some special orders need to come from a different supplier, which can then take a day or two to reach us. The team thank you for your patience and understanding.



**AVENUES
VETERINARY CLINIC**

*Caring for your pets....
as if they are our own*

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