

# Lawton and Stoakes

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*Veterinary Education and Training Services (International) Ltd - T/a Lawton and Stoakes - Company Number 03431621*

## NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2019



### Staff News

Emily our Head Nurse is going to the BVNA Veterinary Nursing Conference in Telford in October. This is a four day conference with renowned speakers covering all aspects of nursing.

Martin is lecturing in Vienna in September on the subject of reptile skin conditions and attending as a delegate at the ACVO (American College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists) Conference in Hawaii in November. As a practice we had a "Lunch and Learn" on the topic of Gastrointestinal Health and disease covering topics of nutraceuticals such as probiotics and prebiotics and their role in maintaining gut health.

As always we are striving to keep up to date with all the latest ideas by encouraging CPD (Continuing Professional Development).

Reiss is starting the Veterinary Nursing Course in September at City and Islington College.

### STAFF

#### VETERINARY SURGEONS

**Dr Martin Lawton** B.Vet.Med; Cert. V. Ophthal; Cert. L.A.S; C.Biol; M.S.B;D.Zoo.Med; FRCVS

**Dr Lynne Stoakes** B.Vet.Med. MRCVS

**Dr Noemie McDermott** B.Vet.Med. MRCVS

**Dr Tatiana Mashanova** B.Vet.Med. MRCVS

#### RECEPTIONISTS

**Julie Austin**

**Clare Brimstone**

#### NURSING STAFF

**Emily Mathias** RVN Head Nurse

**Laura Bouchier** 2<sup>nd</sup> yr trainee

**Reiss Smith** 1st Year Trainee

**Katie De Veuve** Nursing Assistant

### What's New?

Some of our clients will have noticed that our waiting room aquarium has undergone a makeover. The fish in the previous set up were re-homed with Katie our Nursing Assistant and Emily has taken charge of emptying, cleaning and then setting up the new look aquarium. So far we have just added some Golden Minnows and we will be adding more varieties as they settle in.

Our centrifuge motor has broken and so we will need to be sending this for repairs. The fees we charge for blood samples and laboratory tests helps to fund the maintenance of these important machines.

## Kennel Cough

Kennel Cough is really a misnomer for a condition more properly called Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease (CIRD). It can be caused by many different bacteria or viruses.

Coughing is a complex reflex that occurs when receptors in the upper airway (larynx and the trachea or windpipe) are stimulated by a mechanical or chemical stimulus. It is a protective mechanism to prevent irritants from entering into the lungs. It is for this reason that we do not recommend cough suppressants in uncomplicated cases. The cough is typically harsh and is often described by owners "as if he's got something stuck in his throat".

Young dogs are often presented as they mix with other dogs in social areas.

Direct dog-dog contact is not necessary, however, because when the weather is mild and damp pathogens can survive in droplets in the air infecting the next dog that breathes them in. In most cases the condition is self-limiting and after a few days the cough subsides. The dog is usually well throughout and eating as usual.

Occasionally the cough will persist. This may occur in younger very hyperactive and excitable dogs as the increased respiratory effort irritates the inflamed throat. In older dogs it is possible that the infection will gain entry into the lungs or concurrent medical problems may suppress the immune system leading to pneumonia. This is quite rare.

If you suspect your dog has Canine Infectious Respiratory disease here are some handy tips for helping them recover. First keep them away from other dogs. If the weather is cold protect them as much as possible from the cold air. Rest is important to calm the irritation in the throat. You can try ice lollies or honey and lemon to soothe the throat.

You should contact your vet if the cough persists for more than a few days or if your dog shows other signs such as discharge from the eyes or nose or if they go off their food or are also unwell. It is important to seek veterinary advice if your pet is old or has other medical problems especially existing respiratory or cardiac disease.



## Nursing Natter – Fireworks



With Autumn in the air, the nights beginning to close in our minds can slowly start to drift to the latter months of the year. Autumn is a beautiful time of year, the trees shed their leaves of yellow, red and gold, the evenings become cosier but inevitably for pet owners our thoughts begin to turn toward fireworks night, or should I say fireworks month! These days fireworks go off all year round with little warning or consideration for our furry, feathered, scaly friends who do not appreciate the noise! Dealing with an animal that hates fireworks can be distressing for the pet and its owner alike. The key to dealing with this anxiety is preparation, in the weeks leading up to fireworks night start taking precautions, and ensure you have started trying to desensitize your pet to the noise. The dogs trust has an excellent sound clip that explains the process in training your pet not

to be scared ([www.dogstrust.org.uk](http://www.dogstrust.org.uk)). Neutraceuticals and medicines are available but have varying effects on individuals and should be discussed on a case-by-case basis with your Vet. In terms of environmental changes start by making your dog walks earlier, avoid the darkness and ensure you have given your dog a good walk to tire them out. Ensure you keep your cat in and make sure they go out hungry so they are more willing to come in when you call! Find a radio station that soothes your pet – classic fm did a pets only show last fireworks night which proved very popular or leave the television on a little louder than usual. Create a den in a place your pet likes to hide, put familiar smells like an old t-shirt and their favourite toy, this will make them feel secure, let them hide away. Avoid leaving your pet home alone and never scold them for being afraid. For more information please call and speak to one of our nurses, or alternatively book an appointment with one of our vets, preparation is vital! Have a safe and happy Fireworks Season!

## Breed Focus

### Neapolitan Mastiff

**Neapolitan Mastiff** or **Mastino** (Italian: *Mastino Napoletano*) is a breed commonly used as a guard dog. Fully grown these powerful dogs can weigh between 50-70kg and stand between 24 and 31 inches making them strong and threatening to an intruder. Neapolitan Mastiffs rarely bark, are renowned for their intelligence and ability to sneak up on intruders and are prolific droolers! As with any dog early socialization and training is key as these powerful dogs don't always know their own strength and can be overpowering especially around strangers. These distinctive looking characters do come with a list of hereditary illnesses including many eye problems such as ectropion and entropion (a condition affecting the eye lids rolling outwards/inwards) as well as common large breed dog problems such as heart, joint and digestive problems. Neapolitan mastiffs were thrown under the spot light when Harry Potter and the Philosophers Stone was released in the cinema, a Neapolitan mastiff was cast as Fang, Hagrids canine companion.



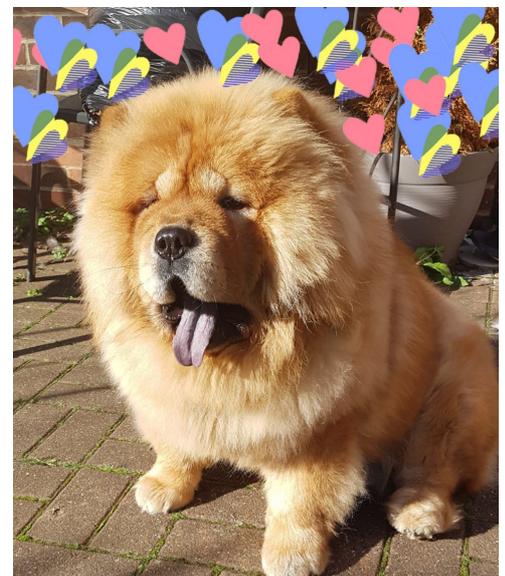
## Seasonal News

Once again it is time for the Autumn clear up. Emily has given tips on how to keep your pets safe during this season. Please don't forget the wild life too! Check bonfires before lighting to make sure no hedgehogs have chosen the inviting pile of garden debris as a place to hibernate! If you are lucky enough to have hedgehogs visit your garden why not make a hibernaculum for them? There are plenty of ideas online. Amphibians too will be looking for places to spend the winter so don't be too tidy in the garden leave a pile of twigs and leaves by the garden pond. If you have pet tortoises then ask for our leaflet on safe hibernation for these species.



## Star Pet

Meet Teddy, a loveable 1y8m old Chow Chow who for the last 6 months has been visiting us with not only an eye problem but most lately pneumonia. Teddy first came to see us in March with an eye problem called entropion which is where the eyelids roll inward causing a rub against the surface of the eye, this is a painful condition and Teddy was reluctant to have drops put in his eye. With this in mind his lovely owners decided to admit him here to allow us to medicate him. He wasn't keen in the beginning but with the ingenious use of a towel and spoon feeding his favourite food, our nursing team won Teddy over and he returned to his owners with a much more comfortable eye and a new technique for administering eye drops was born! Teddy was a complete diva while staying with us but won everyone over with his cheeky personality and the improvement in his eyes was fantastic. Teddy came to see us more recently with pneumonia and since has made yet another remarkable recovery, a true testament to his loving owners and swift veterinary treatment. Well done Teddy !



## Exotic Spot

Axolotl (*Ambystoma mexicanum*)

Axlotl's were first recorded in 1863 by French Zoologist Auguste Dumeril, but were discovered by the Aztecs in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Since their discovery they have been popular pets due to their unusual appearance. Throughout history, axolotls have been used as a food source, for medicinal purposes and centuries ago when the original cities in Mexico were built, as currency to pay the builders!

These cute reptiles have become popular pets and are wholly aquatic, can regenerate limbs and are known for their individual personalities. Fully grown an axolotl can grow to 10-12 inches and require a minimum tank size of 3ft wide and 1ft deep. They require water that is filtered and a flat surface as they like to walk across the bottom of the tank as well as swim. Heaters are not required but a room that has natural temperature fluctuations is beneficial. Axolotls can be voracious eaters so gravel can pose a threat to their digestive system so large pieces of smooth slate can be useful to provide a substrate for the bottom of the tank. Axolotl's are carnivorous and enjoy trimmings of fresh meat, fresh frozen food such as bloodworm and occasional live food such as brine shrimp.

In conclusion axolotls can make great pets but as per with any pet research and husbandry is key before taking on any of these extraordinary animals we have in the world.



## KIDS CORNER

Here's another animal word search for you. Can you find them all?

ALLIGATOR  
CAMEL  
ELEPHANT  
FLAMINGO  
GIRAFFE  
GORILLA  
HIPPO  
KANGAROO  
KOALA  
LION



MONKEY  
PANDA  
PELICAN  
PENGUIN  
POLAR BEAR  
RHINO  
SEAL  
TIGER  
TOUCAN  
ZEBRA