

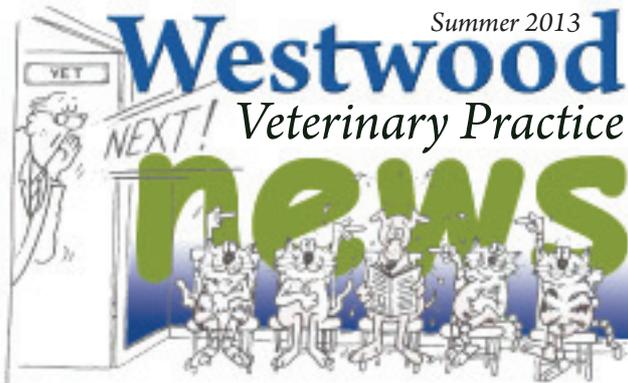
social skills



A chewed slipper, puddles on the floor, and squeaky toys strewn around the room. Your new puppy has arrived in the household, and after the morning's play of fun is now looking very cute asleep on your sofa! Life certainly changes when a new pet joins the family. From the time those small paws step through the door, your pet will depend on you for a lifetime of love, food, security and healthcare. This young one will also need your support in experiencing new encounters and some very important socialisation, particularly in those early days of puppyhood.

Learning Curve At first everything is a little scary for your puppy, especially being away from Mum and the rest of the litter, but it is usually not too long before they settle into their new home. They become braver and with a naturally inquisitive nature, show little fear at 'testing the ground', even if it is met with a swipe on the nose from the cat. Lesson One....approach the cat less boisterously next time! Under three months of age, they are most responsive to accepting new encounters. So the sooner they have social interaction with people, other animals, supervised meetings with children, exposure to noise, and experience of the world in general.... the better.

Puppy Parties We hold **FREE puppy parties every Tuesday evening from 6.15pm until 7pm** at our Boston Spa practice, where we encourage the little ones to play together for that important early socialisation. For you the owners, there is also plenty of informal, but helpful advice on the care of your young pet. All puppies from both surgeries are very welcome, providing they have received the first part of their vaccination course. We don't have jelly and ice cream, but we certainly do have lots of fun! **To book a place, call Hazel on 01937 842210.**



Summer 2013

Little by Little Once your puppy's vaccination course is complete, they can venture outside. Gradually introduce new experiences like lead walking in the town - countryside and park travelling in the car - crowds and traffic - ducks on the pond. Remember they are only young. At times your puppy may become a little anxious or over-excited. Consider their character. Shy or confident? Just like young children, a puppy's attention span can be short, they tire easily too, and although life is very interesting and thrilling, it may also be overwhelming.

The Key Work to establish a positive reaction from the encounter. Negative responses can generate fear, which might be difficult to rectify at a later stage. Familiarising your puppy with a wide range of experiences will help with their development and behaviour, so they mature into happy, socialised adult dogs.

If you would like to learn more, please call the practice and a member of our friendly team will be happy to help you.



Welcome to Vet Beth

Bsc(hons) MSc BVMedSci(hons) BVM BVS MRCVS

With a passion to fulfil her dream of becoming a vet, Beth's journey first took her to Durham University to study for a degree in Zoology, during which she also worked on a game reserve in South Africa. Following this, she attended Liverpool University, and achieved a masters in reproduction. With two qualifications now tucked firmly under her belt, Beth was on the way to making her dream a reality. Further hands on experience came next when she worked at a safari park for nine months, before attending Nottingham University, from where she qualified in July 2012.

Joining us in January 2013, she has quickly become part of the Westwood team, and very much enjoys meeting a wide variety of people and animals. With a particular interest in equine medicine, Beth owns a young horse called Beany, along with Bunty her pony. Other pets are 'her buddy' Patches a Collie cross, and two black Labradors Tilly and Messy. Outside veterinary life, Beth heads for the great outdoors, where she enjoys skiing, walling, competing on her horses and mountain biking, especially in the Alps.

Westwood hours
Consultations
by appointment only

Boston Spa

01937 842210

Monday to Friday 8.30am - 6pm
Saturday 8.30am - 1pm

Garforth

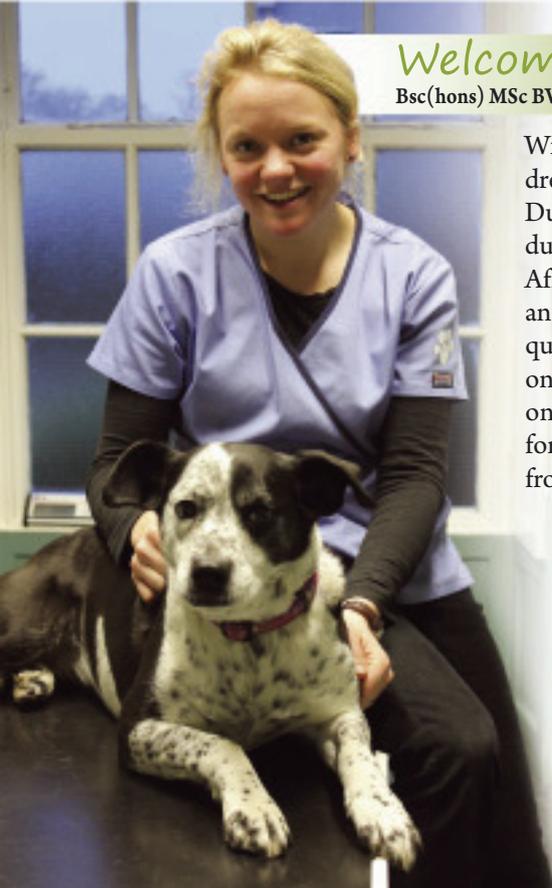
01132 320085

Monday to Friday 8.30am - 6pm

**24 Hour 7day
Emergency Service**

by our own Vets for
Pets Equine and Farm

www.westwoodvets.co.uk



★★★★★ Five Star Accommodation for your Rabbits

At local DIY stores people are found buying anything from comfy cushions to draught excluder, to help make their homes a more pleasant environment to live in. For those pet rabbits living outdoors, they require basic comforts too, plus a whole lot more!

★ Natures Needs

Rabbits are inquisitive, active, intelligent and sociable. In the wild they always live with other rabbits. So one pet rabbit kept in a cramped wooden hutch at the bottom of a garden, is leading a very lonely and unhappy life indeed. Rabbits need company, and in captivity male and female pairs work well, provided they are neutered. They also need to forage for food, dig, feel secure, hide, hop, stand on their hind legs and explore.



★ Just a hutch?

A rabbits' accommodation must provide opportunities to allow expression of natural behaviour. They require choice and control within their own home. All of this can be achieved through quantity and quality of space, plus environmental enrichment.

★ The Ideal Home

This must suit the number of rabbits you are planning to keep, their size, age and any medical conditions.

They will require - **Raised, secure and adequate sized housing** for privacy and safety,

together with an **outdoor enclosure**. Both must allow your rabbits to:

- ✓ easily stand up on their hind legs
- ✓ lie fully outstretched
- ✓ make at least 3 consecutive hops
- ✓ turn around unhindered

Visit www.rabbitwelfare.co.uk for full information on housing and run size.

★ During building consider -

The type of materials/preservation treatments are **not toxic** or will cause injury to your rabbits. **Ventilation and provision of shade** for both in and outdoor areas, as they can suffer heatstroke in the summer. Will the housing be **warm and draught free in winter**; dry, strong and **escape/predator proof**? Positioning of outside enclosure, as **some plants are poisonous** to rabbits. **Hiding places** like cardboard boxes, large tubes etc. plus platforms, separate areas for eating, sleeping and toileting.

★ Environmental Enrichments

will help your rabbits express their natural behaviour. **An earth pit** - rabbits love to dig! Provide tree stumps, twigs and suitable toys. **Encourage 'foraging of food'** by filling boxes, cardboard tubes or racks with hay. Place food in puzzle feeders or scatter the pellets amongst hay.

Remember to regularly inspect their accommodation for damage or hazards that require repair or removal. When you provide a suitable home to meet all your rabbits needs mentally and physically, you are helping to keep your pets healthy and happy. When rabbits do a jumping and twisting action, this is called 'the binky', which they do when life is good!



Come Rain or Shine

Even if the sun is not shining, and that's not unusual for a British summer, temperatures can still rise, and affect our pets in the form of heatstroke (hyperthermia), an increase of body temperature. A cloudy humid day can cause a higher heat in our homes, conservatories and gardens. As our pets' cooling system is not as efficient as ours, they can very quickly become overheated and dehydrated.

Aim to Prevent

Never leave your pet in the car or conservatory

Ensure access to shady cool areas in and outdoors

Regulate time spent in sun and heat

Exercise in cooler morning or evening air

Provide fresh cool drinking water

Guinea Pigs, Rabbits, Ferrets etc.

Position housing, outside run & water in shade

Ensure hutch has good ventilation

Recognising Heatstroke

increased panting - excessive saliva

anxiousness - dark gums - vomiting

reluctant to rise - dizziness - collapse

Pets can recover from heatstroke, but it is a serious condition. The key is early recognition and prompt action.....better still prevent it!

If you suspect your pet is **suffering from heatstroke** move them to a cool area and **immediately contact your vet.**



www.westwoodvets.co.uk

Westwood

Veterinary Practice

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