

## Practice News

### The Equine Health Club

We are launching the 'Equine Health Club' plan to cover the majority of the essential areas of health care for your horse.

The Equine Health Club is not insurance: It includes the regular things – like vaccinations, worm egg counts, annual tapeworm treatment, health checks and advice, in a manageable monthly payment plan – the things that insurance generally doesn't cover. However young or old your horse, the Equine Health Club is designed to adapt to your horse's needs. The Equine Health Club is a simple and affordable way to get all of the preventive care that our practice recommends for your horse.

All conscientious horse owners should be considering annual vaccinations, parasite control and dental care, and in addition to this we are providing twice yearly, health examinations and supportive blood tests whilst giving a discount on other services, such as emergency call outs.

Isabelle Vets has been running a similar scheme for our companion animal clients for several years with great success, and we would encourage you to consider making this part of your annual horse health care.

To learn more about the Equine Health Club, visit our website or contact Sarah-Jane Heathcote for any further information.



## Professional Support for the Equine Community

Isabelle Vets has seven veterinary practitioners who will regularly undertake routine equine consultations. Two of our team have a strong equine interest and knowledge to provide our horse community with a high class ambulatory equine service. The Practice has invested and committed in helping the horse owners' of Guernsey and when registered with us will provide a 24 hour 365 day service.



Sarah-Jane Heathcote was born in Guernsey and was a keen horse rider while growing up. She left Guernsey to study at Leeds, and Liverpool Universities, in Animal Nutrition followed by Veterinary Science. After qualification with Distinction in Veterinary Science in 1999, she worked in the North West of England for 13 years, predominantly in equine practice. Her experience is widespread

in equine practice including dentistry, orthopaedics, medicine and stud work supported through the staff at the University of Liverpool's equine hospital 'Leahurst'. Postgraduate study and examinations lead to Sarah-Jane becoming the second vet to have qualified as an Advanced Veterinary Practitioner in Equine Dentistry in 2012, which is recognised by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons. She became a Director of Isabelle Vets in 2015 and aims to expand equine veterinary services available to clients on the island.



Simon Bewsey-Dyke was born and brought up in Guernsey and was a keen rider throughout that time, regularly competing in show jumping and dressage events both locally and on the mainland. After a brief spell as a professional yacht skipper, Simon returned to the UK in 2007 and took up a place to study Veterinary Medicine at the University of Cambridge, where alongside his studies

he completed elective work in the welfare of racehorses and was captain of the Cambridge University Polo Club. Since graduation, Simon has worked in general practice in Somerset and Jersey, before returning to Guernsey in 2017. He is passionate about all forms of competition horses and works alongside Sarah-Jane to provide a first-class equine service to all clients on the island.



# Equine ambulatory facilities at Isabelle Vets

## Dentistry

Due to Sarah-Jane's additional qualification in Equine Dentistry, we have the experience and invested heavily in equipment to deal with routine and more advanced dental procedures. Teeth rasping is available by a motorised or manual rasp including a pony gag and pony rasps for the tiniest of mouths. New sedative techniques mean that we can remove teeth under standing sedation using specialist equipment from wolf teeth, incisors to molars. A portable intra-oral camera provides access to the mouth for viewing areas we could not previously. Periodontal disease can be treated by flushing out food material and filling defects between teeth. As veterinary surgeons, we can sedate horses for dental procedures and provide pain relief, antibiotics and tetanus antitoxin as necessary.

## Gastroscopy

Equine Gastric Ulcer Syndrome (EGUS) or stomach ulcers have a high incidence rate affecting 37% leisure horses, 63% competition horses and 93% racehorses. Travel and stressful situations are some of the major causes of stomach ulcers in horses. Given that many horses travel to and from the UK which increases their risk of developing ulcers, we have invested in a state of the art portable 3.3m fibreoptic gastroscop that can be brought to the stable yard. The gastroscop comes with a laptop enabling the procedure to be viewed by the vet and the owner. Signs of EGUS include poor performance, bad behaviour, pain on tightening the girth, weight loss, reduced or fussy appetite.

## Endoscopy

Endoscopy provides another method of investigation and diagnosis of upper and lower respiratory tract disease. Our small portable 1.5m fibreoptic bronchoscope of less than 1cm diameter can be passed through the nasal passages and used to directly visualise the nasal turbinates, sinus drainage angles, nasopharynx, larynx and guttural pouches. The camera can be passed into the trachea and samples taken from here and from deeper in the respiratory tract. Diseases that can be investigated include nasal discharge, nosebleeds, cough, infectious disease and disease of the sinuses.

## Radiography

Radiography is frequently used to investigate the cause of lameness and problems with teeth and sinuses in the horse's head. We have a portable X-ray machine and have purchased the latest digital CR cassettes in a range of sizes to take images at the stable yard for processing and interpretation at the practice. We are bound by the strictest rules in radiation safety using radiation protection equipment for our staff such as gloves, gowns and thyroid protectors and wear dosimeters to monitor radiation exposure. X-rays are taken after careful consideration of alternatives such as nerve blocks or other imaging techniques, to avoid overexposure to staff and horses.

## Ultrasonography

Ultrasonography is used to investigate soft tissue injury, for example, tendons, ligaments, muscle and can also allow assessment of joint surfaces such as cartilage. It can even be used to look at the eyeball if the eyelids are closed. Our ultrasound machine can be brought to the stable yard and is commonly used to investigate lameness. Our latest purchase has been an additional BCF ultrasound scanner which has a rectal probe. This machine gives us images of the ovaries, uterus, bladder and even the sacroiliac joint. This is particularly useful in the investigation of bad behaviour in mares, pregnancy, ovarian and sacroiliac disease.

## In-house laboratory

In 2017, our laboratory equipment was replaced entirely, to provide rapid, modern equipment to process blood samples. Our practice is a Veterinary Nurse Training Practice that has the skilled nursing staff to run the laboratory. Blood tests can show us evidence of anaemia, infection, inflammation, liver, kidney or muscle disease. We advocate a reduction in the use of wormers in horses by providing a worm egg count service to help in the decision-making process as to whether to use wormers or not and therefore try to reduce resistance to drugs. Samples must be processed on faeces less than 24 hours old to ensure the count is correct and therefore processing samples on the island is a significant advantage. Specialist samples such as those for PPID (Cushing's disease) are sent to the UK with special packaging criteria.

JULY

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## A Date for Your Diary

Dr Sarah-Jane Heathcote *BSc BVSc Cert AVP (ED) MRCVS* will be conducting a talk, alongside Master Saddler Steph Bradley and an Equine nutritionist at **La Villette Hotel** on **Monday 16th July, 2018**. Doors open at 7:00 pm for a 7:30 pm start.

# Tel: 01481 723863

Opening Hours: Route Isabelle - Mon - Friday 8.00 - 18.30 | Saturday 8.00 - 17.30 | Sunday by appointment  
Opening Hours: L'Islet - Mon - Friday 8.30 - 18.00 | Saturday 8.30 - 12.30 | Sunday by appointment  
Appointments & Emergencies 01481 723863 | [vets@isabellevets.co.uk](mailto:vets@isabellevets.co.uk)

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