

Not All Horse Play. The equine team see a range of larger animals' not just horses. See below for one of our stories.

Dr Green and how we can help our beloved horses and ponies cope with the dietary change

The Great British Vet Trek. One of our own vets/directors is embarking on this challenge.



SEADOWN
VETERINARY SERVICES

NEWSLETTER

Delivering first-class veterinary care to the New Forest since 1923

APRIL 2022

SUMMER IS ON ITS WAY

Hold tight everyone, we have nearly made it.

Well done everyone for hanging in there through the winter months. We can look forward to some summer sun, lighter evenings and more time with our four legged equine friends.

SUPPORT FOR UKRAINE.

Seadown legend, equine vet and retired Seadown Director Peter Tunney and his sister Debbie set off for a road trip to Poland on Monday 28th March, with a trailer of trauma dressings and various other consumables in support of the Ukrainian people and animals. First stop was at our Hythe practice to collect supplies donated from our wholesale providers and medical products suppliers. After a few more stops to collect more items off they went. Travelling through British customs without delay and onto France, Belgium, Netherlands and Germany. No sign of border control or anything to hold them up. After 4 days and a round trip of 2185 miles they arrived safely home. WELL DONE!!!



IT'S NOT ALL HORSE PLAY

Our large animal team are based at our animal hospital in Hythe, the practice offers a range of small holder services and we treat all small holder livestock from alpacas and pigs, to poultry and game birds, reindeer and lamas just to name a few!

THE GREAT BRITISH VET TREK.

May – July 2022
Seadown director and small animal ophthalmologist vet Kate McMorris is embarking on an epic journey from John O'Groats to Lands' end, a journey of well over 1000 miles as most of it is off road and onto bridle paths and tracks. Her companion for this trip will be her quarter horse Marylyn. The trip is in support of 2 amazing charities and to fulfill an ambitious urge to explore the beauty of our countryside. To find out more about Kate, Marylyn and the charities being supported follow the links below:

Facebook:
[@gbvettrek](#)

Website:
www.vettrek.uk

Carter Richards the llama

On 30th June 2021 we received an out of hours call from Mrs. Richardson to say Carter, one of her pet Llama was non weight bearing on his right foreleg and he was in distress.

Our duty large animal vet went out to see Carter and diagnosed a Closed metacarpal fracture in the right fore leg.

Carter was made comfortable for the night and we returned the next morning to get some images of the leg. The initial prognosis was not great. The vet had to advise Mrs. Richardson that it was a severe fracture and if the blood flow was compromised then prognosis was poor.

Obviously this was devastating news and discussions were had. It was decided to go ahead and treat the broken leg and see what Carter could manage, this meant close monitoring for pain and discomfort at each stage. A Fiberglass cast was applied to the right foreleg to support the beak and allow Carter to stand with the foot left out of cast to increase blood flow and give best circulation. Over the next 2 months and many cast changes the leg started to slowly heal. It was exciting and nerve wrecking at the same time as these large/heavy animals rarely cope with broken bones due to the weight bearing load they have to carry. Carter however was stoic and strong willed, he was amazing through the whole thing. Finally on 14th October 2021 Carter has the cast off. The final x-rays looked great and the bone had healed well. Three weeks later we called Mrs. Richardson for an update and it was the best news. Carter had no noticeable limp and was moving well, although still in a restricted area this could slowly be increased to give him more room to move about. Carter continues to recover well and is now back to a normal lifestyle.

SPRING GRASS

Dr Green

There is nothing better than watching a herd of contented horses munching on a sward of fresh, green grass. Traditionally, Dr Green was seen as the cure-all for any winter ailments as horses, once again were turned out for the summer. Now-a-days it seems that more and more of us find spring a very stressful time. The first shoots of spring grass should have a health warning on them for many equids. Even before we, mere humans, are aware of it happening, the grass will start to grow through the old dead sward that has accumulated over the winter or through the mud and bog (depending on your situation). This is the first problem; it is eaten as quickly as it is growing and most folks will see that there is still nothing much to eat, so no need to worry yet. Look out for less consumption of any hay offered, a change in consistency and colour (to green) of their poo and excess gas. All of these can provide clues to the fact that your horse is getting access to more grass than he is letting on!

Growth Flush

The next problem is that this first flush of growth of spring grass, is very sweet and attractive to horses. Grasses store sugars near the base of the plant, so when your horse nibbles on short grass, he is getting a very sweet, high sugar parcel. This means that even though he may be just nibbling, there can still be too much sugar and fructans (the storage carbohydrate for grass) for sensitive individuals. Clover also starts to peep through and it can also cause issues, as its storage carbohydrate is starch. Clover has no place in a field with horses and unfortunately tends to take over the sward if left unabated. Try to reduce the amount of clover in your fields' year on year.

Laminitis

This very early season high sugar grass can easily set off laminitis in sensitive animals due to the effect that it has on blood glucose and therefore circulating insulin levels. It could also set off laminitis in a horse that has never had laminitis before but who, unbeknown to the owner, has been sitting on a metabolic (EMS) knife edge for months, maybe even years.

Gassy bellies

For those who show their sensitivity to this sudden increase in sugars (from grass) and starch (from clover) by exhibiting bouts of gassy colic, this can also be a dangerous time of year. These horses tend to gorge themselves as soon as a fresh bite of grass is available, overwhelming the digestive system and upsetting the gut flora. This results in increased fermentation and gas build up in the hindgut, which can lead to a very painful colic. As a double whammy, this type of colic and the upset to the gut environment can oftentimes end up as a laminitis case too.

Spring fling!

The other issue that is heralded with the return of spring grass is more of a behavioral issue. Very many horses undergo a personality transplant at the time that spring grass starts to come through. Increased sugar levels in the diet mean an increase in fast release type energy available to the horse and that, in conjunction with the possibility of an upset gut, can make for a rather lively and/or grumpy ride. There is some thought that low levels of magnesium in lush grass is also responsible for some undesirable behavioral traits, hence why many of the calmers on the market rely on magnesium.

Precautions

At the first signs of milder and sunnier weather, normally from March onwards, sensitive individuals and their grazing should be closely monitored. Very sensitive individuals may need to be secured away from grazing altogether and kept in an area without grass (hard standing, arena or stable) until the spring danger time is over.

Staff spotlight

We have seen a few staff changes since the last newsletter

Hannah Blackburn and Hannah Buteux have both become mums again and have decided not to return to us after their maternity leave. We wish them well.

Sarah Chalke one of our equine nurses has moved further away and can no longer make the commute, she has moved closer to home and onto something a little different, working in a practice who look after exotic animals. Good Luck.

Breda McDonagh has become a permanent vet on our equine team. Yay.

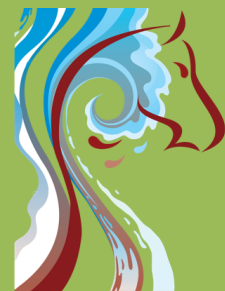
Next Issue:

Vaccinations what, when and why!!

With all the changes in regulations over the last few years, we will take a look at what vaccinations cover what diseases, the importance of vaccination cover and when vaccinations are required. We will look at competition requirements for vaccines.



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