**STAFF NEWS**

Katrina Ward joined us in June 2016 and has already got married and moved house to Kilmacolm since then!! She was brought up in Kilmacolm but has been working in various places for the past 10 years so she brings a wealth of experience to the practice. Cheryl returned from maternity leave in October. Ian is no longer doing regular clinical work but still fills in now and again when necessary. After 28 years, he thinks he needs a rest!

**EARLY TRAINING AND SOCIALISATION!**

Did you know that exposing your young puppy to a range of sounds and experiences, in a controlled and gradual manner in the first three months of his life (while pups are naturally investigative) can be of help in preventing him develop fears, phobias and behavioural problems? Even before he’s fully vaccinated, you can try to familiarise your young pup within safe environments like your house, garden and car, and with other adults and children. Short car trips can be fun and allow him a wide range of experiences – try to take him to places where he will hear other traffic and loud noises. As soon as he has developed immunity from his vaccinations it’s important for him to get out and about to different environments, to meet as many other dogs and animals as possible to build up his confidence. If you would like any further information on this very important topic – please just ask!.

**LUNGWORM ALERT!** ![C:\Users\C660-2R0\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\ZR4LFIA3\MC900090999[1].wmf]()

If last year’s weather is anything to go by, there’s a fair chance that Spring and Summer 2017 will be another wet one. Apart from making us all generally depressed, there are in addition, some animal health issues associated with this. Slugs and snails love warmer wet weather and as well as being very bad news for gardeners, they can also spell trouble for dogs. Slugs and snails carry the *larvae* of the life threatening lungworm parasite *Angiostrongylus vasorum.* This is a problem for dog owners since dogs may unwittingly swallow infected snails and slugs (or their slime trails) whilst exploring parks and gardens. Once swallowed, the larvae migrate to the heart where they will develop into adult worms. Affected pets may show a range of symptoms including: coughing, reluctance to exercise, weight loss, fits, diarrhoea, and clotting problems. The disease can be potentially fatal. Lungworm is not prevented by routine wormers against **roundworms** and **tapeworms**, so in addition to these we also recommend specific treatment aimed at preventing lungworm. We advise the use of Advocate regularly to control possible lungworm problems.

**LUMPS AND BUMPS**

Grooming and regularly stroking your pets is a very important part of pet care – not just because you and your pet will enjoy it, but also to alert you to any ticks, embedded grass seeds, developing lumps, and a host of other issues. If you do find a lump, there are several possible underlying causes. These include: abscesses, bee and wasp stings, hernias and tumours. Tumours are the most worrying and are either *benign* – which tends to be slow growing and remain in one place, or *malignant* – which can be fast growing and have the potential to spread to other parts of the body. If you do find a lump, it is very important that we examine it as soon as possible. Speed is of the essence and a delay in appropriate treatment can be the difference between a small mass that is easily treatable and one that is difficult to treat – or sadly sometimes untreatable. So now is a good time to check your pet over and to give us a call if you find anything unusual.

**OTHER NEWS**

We have a Facebook page for those of you who like the social media world. Feel free to make a post to share with others. Go to Facebook Kerr Vet Group.

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**WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

****To cut down on postage costs, we are trying to send out most of our booster reminders by e-mail and text– can you help us by sending us an e-mail with your name and address and mobile number and then we will have your mobile and e-mail address correct. We guarantee this information will only be used in the practice and not given out to other companies – thank you. Our e-mail address is:-

**kerrvetgroup@gmail.com**

**Best Wishes from all staff at both surgeries.**

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