

Welcome to the latest issue of our newsletter designed to keep you up to date with whats happening in the practice.

www.tworiversvets.co.uk

BIGGAR SURGERY

157 High Street
Biggar
ML12 6DL
01899 220073

Office hours

Mon/Wed/Fri 8.30 - 6.30
Tues/Thurs 8.30 - 5.30
Saturday 9.00 - 12.00

Open consulting times

Mon - Saturday 9 - 9.30
Mon/Wed/Fri 5.30 - 6.30
& other times welcome
by appointment

PEEBLES SURGERY

15 Old Town
Peebles
EH45 8JF

01721 722879

Office hours

Mon/Wed/Fri 8.45 - 5.30
Tues/Thurs 8.45 - 6.30
Saturday 10.00 - 12.30

Consulting times

Mon - Fri 9.30 - 10.30
Mon/Wed/Fri 4.00 - 5.00
Tues/Thurs 4.00 - 6.00
Sat 11.00 - 12.00
all by appointment only

**24 HOUR
EMERGENCY SERVICE
on either phone number**

What happens when my bitch is spayed?

Following on from last months news article **To spay or not to spay?**, find out what happens when your bitch comes in for her surgery.

Is there anything I need to do to prepare my bitch for surgery? Yes, she should be starved from bedtime the night before, but it is important that she has access to water overnight. On the morning of surgery take her out so that she has a chance to go to the toilet, and if possible ensure that she is clean and dry.



What happens when I arrive? The vet or nurse will check that your bitch has been starved, weigh her accurately and take you through the consent form for anaesthesia and surgery. You may be given the option of a blood test to check kidney and liver function if the bitch is older, or if any problems are suspected. Shortly after being admitted to our warm purpose-built kennels, she will have a sedative to relax her and a painkiller (like morphine) to keep her comfortable throughout the procedure.

What happens next? Once she is nice and sleepy, the anaesthetic will be administered through a vein in her leg, and then a breathing tube will be placed in her windpipe to provide oxygen and anaesthetic gas. We have a wide range of modern painkillers and anaesthetic drugs, and tailor the drugs and dose to suit each individual patient. During surgery a nurse will monitor her breathing, heart rate and pulses, temperature and anaesthetic depth, supervised by the vet carrying out the surgery. We have the latest anaesthetic monitoring equipment including a pulse oximeter, ECG and blood pressure monitor, which help to make anaesthesia as safe as possible.



What happens during surgery? The abdomen is clipped and prepared then sterile drapes are placed. The actual surgery takes around an hour, during which time the uterus and ovaries are removed. After a thorough check for any bleeding, the wound is closed using absorbable sutures.

How long will she take to recover? A nurse will closely supervise your bitch while she recovers from her anaesthetic. We would expect her to be able to sit up within an hour or so. Most bitches can go home the same day, with further painkillers, but must be kept quiet and warm and allowed to rest.

What else do I need to do? Offer your bitch a small meal later in the evening. By the following day she should be near her normal self, but must have lead exercise only for a few days until the wound heals. She must not be allowed to lick the wound and may require a 'lampshade' collar. Remember that spayed bitches need less food than before and may start to gain weight immediately otherwise!



Chicken Profile : The Black Rock

The hybrid Black Rock (Barred Plymouth Rock x Rhode Island Red) is an excellent all-



rounder, bred in Scotland since the 1970's. These hens are very good layers (brown eggs) and are big enough for meat production. They have a dense layer of feathers making them very hardy in the Scottish weather, including snow. They will lay around 280 eggs in the first year and the eggshell quality does not degrade over the years like other hybrids. They are docile but active birds who are well suited to free-ranging in the back yard.

If you are introducing a new breed to your flock, take care as mixing birds with different body sizes may result in the larger breeds bullying the smaller ones.

OPEN SURGERIES

October is the last month where there will be open surgeries at the Biggar surgery. From the beginning of November we will be able to offer appointments in Biggar daily, with no more waiting for your turn!

Please help us to make the changeover by ringing in advance to make an appointment. Appointments will always be offered the same day if necessary for your pet, and emergencies will always be seen straight away as before - just ring before setting off so that we can make sure that a vet is available.



Firework Fear

Eighty percent of pet owners have had a pet who is afraid of fireworks. Fortunately, there are a number of ways we can help our pets to cope with the loud bangs which will begin next month.



Ensure there is a warm, safe and enclosed place your pet can use as a hiding place. Switch on the TV or radio or use toys to distract pets from the fireworks. Take any walks before dark. You may want to close your cat's catflap; however if you have a multi-cat household this can cause more stress.

In addition to providing a hiding place, use of a pheromone diffuser can help to reduce anxiety. **Adaptil** for dogs and **Feliway** for cats



contain synthetic copies of pheromones that bitches and queens naturally release to comfort their puppies and kittens. To get the best effect out of the plug-in diffusers, they should be plugged in **3-4 weeks before the firework season begins** and should be left on continuously. The diffuser should be refilled every 4 weeks and can be reused up to 5 times. Spray bottles and dog collars containing the pheromones are also available from the practice.

If your pet has a diagnosed noise phobia (intense fear), we may be able to prescribe medication which can be used together with a pheromone diffuser. Please phone the practice in advance and we will organise this for you. If we haven't seen your pet for some time, your pet may need an examination.

It is very important not to reinforce any fearful behaviour by fussing over pets. Instead, ignore the behaviours (such as whimpering, panting and shaking). Punishing or fussing over pets showing fearful behaviours will worsen their behaviour in the long-term.

Behavioural therapy can also help to reduce firework phobias and fear. This can be carried out by using the pheromone diffuser along with a veterinary behavioural support programme and a sound desensitisation CD ("Sounds Scary" CD). Use of the CD has a very high success rate. An instructional leaflet is enclosed with the CD but it may be more helpful to come in and see one of our nurses who will be able to help you tailor a desensitisation program for your pet. The CD must be used at a time when real fireworks are unlikely to happen.



If you have rabbits/small animals or birds, ensure cages are covered with blankets to provide protection from the lights and noise. Provide a generous amount of bedding for animals who burrow.