

COMPANION ANIMAL NEWSLETTER - AUGUST 2025

MEET THE VETS

In spring we shone a spotlight on our veterinary nurses which got such a great response from you that we felt we should do the same with the companion animal vets! Each vet has written a short bio to introduce, or re-introduce themselves to you!

As your local independent vet practice, and part of this vibrant community, it's important to us that our patients and their owners see a familiar face when they need us. That's why we are proud to provide our own out-of-hours service for our clients. Conveniently based locally here at our Settle surgery and staffed by our own vets and nurses, we work hard to retain this service, providing continuity of care with a vet you already know and trust, at what can be a stressful and worrying time for both owner and pet.

Guy Bolger – I qualified from Liverpool Vet School in 1985 and joined Dalehead Veterinary Group in 1990. From working in all areas of mixed vet practice, treating farm animals and horses as well as pets, 15 years ago I focused on developing the companion animal department, becoming a 'small animal' vet, dedicated to looking after our companion animal patients and clients. I enjoy all areas of small animal medicine, surgery and helping our clients find the right treatment for their animal's needs depending on the circumstances. I have thoroughly enjoyed the journey and am delighted to see us grow and thrive, now with a team of 4 excellent full-time small animal vets, plus our wonderful vet nurses, receptionists and vital support staff. Married with two grown up children, out of work I enjoy family, fell walking, music and the occasional round of golf. We live in North Ribblesdale with our dogs Purdy and Cora, cat Tibbs and chickens and enjoy running a small flock of Ryeland sheep.



Pete O'Hagan - Despite coming from the South of Scotland I've lived in the North of England for most of my life. I qualified from Glasgow Vet School in 2001 and started out in mixed practice in Wetherby. I've since worked in a variety of Small Animal jobs, including a stint at a busy charity hospital in Liverpool where I worked towards my postgraduate certificate in Small Animal Surgery. I love the variety of mixed practice work and have found the Dalehead team and clients to be incredibly friendly and welcoming. I've a lot of experience with orthopaedic surgery and since joining Dalehead have been able to put this to good use mending a few broken bones and ruptured cruciate ligaments. In my spare time I'm involved with a project with the Royal College (RCVS) to help create a new specialism in General Veterinary Practice which is hopefully something that might benefit Dalehead in the long run. Outside of work I'm kept busy with family life and can often be found walking our Border Terrier on Pendle Hill.

Karen Swindlehurst – I graduated from Glasgow University Veterinary College in 1991 and returned to work at Dalehead Veterinary Group in 2014, having worked here previously between 1994 and 2004. I have a strong background in companion animal work with a keen interest in preventative medicine as well as being a farm vet with special interest in herd and flock planning, health schemes and herd and flock disease monitoring.

Out of work I have a small flock of pedigree sheep which when I can, I take out showing. As well as sheep I have 3 Border Terriers Patsy, Spud and Betsy, who keep me very busy. I am also an active member of The Hodder Valley Show Committee which I have been involved with for many years.



Hollie Mackenzie - Originally from the Surrey/Hampshire border, I graduated from Bristol Vet School in 2016. My first stop up north was Derbyshire where I worked in a busy mixed practice for 4 years. During COVID, my husband and I decided to move to Yorkshire and we have never looked back. Prior to working at Dalehead I did some locum work (the most memorable being on the Isle of Lewis), but knew I needed to be back in a practice so I could start building my own client base up again. When I started working for Dalehead, I was doing 2 days of farm work, but moved over to 100% small animal a couple of years ago as this is where my passion is – I love working on a 1:1 basis with animals and their owners to achieve the best outcomes possible. We are kept nice and busy at home with our 2 black Labradors Moss and Damson and our 2 cats Parsnip and Pumpkin.



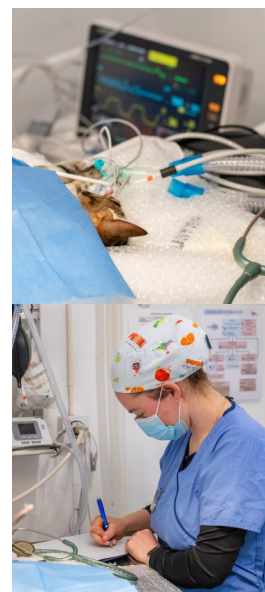
Marcus Bennett - I qualified from The Royal Veterinary College, London in 2014. I then did an internship at Newmarket Equine Hospital then worked in a GP equine practice in the Cotswolds for 4 years. I'd been interested in the pharmaceutical industry so joined one of the largest companies which was very interesting to see the time and effort which goes into researching new medications to treat diseases. However, I found I missed working with animals and their owners so when a position came up at Dalehead I jumped at the chance. I've now been here over a year and have loved every minute of it - well nearly every minute! In work I particularly enjoy medical cases or ultrasound imaging – leaving the surgical interest to Pete and Hollie. Outside of work I have 2 daughters (4 years and 7 months old), I am a Personal Trainer, and I try to bake weekly with my eldest. Not to forget our 2 dogs Roxy, Bertie and Tilly the cat!

Anaesthetics at Dalehead

As you will have seen on our previous newsletter, Dalehead anaesthetics have received a Highly Commended Award from the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons following an in-house audit carried out on small animal anaesthesia. However, the audit does not end there and after team discussion and some small changes the guys have again been number crunching the data!

A couple of weeks ago Pete and Marcus presented their most recent findings to the team. They reported that in the last 15 months the adjustments we have made to anaesthetic protocols have kept our patients warmer and helped them recover better. We have also adjusted our use of certain anaesthetic drugs in line with current recommendations, provided training for our team and invested in new equipment.

The audit has identified that there is an opportunity for us to further reduce stress in our patients BEFORE they get to the practice (something which affects more than half of dogs and over 80% of cats according to recent studies). On the day of surgery, it all starts at home and again we are here to help with keeping your pet calm and reducing their pre-op anxiety. If this is something you think might affect your pet, please contact the surgery to speak to one of the clinical team.



Malham Show & Hodder Valley Show 2025

On Saturday 23rd August we will be in attendance at Malham Show and on Saturday 13th September we will be at Hodder Valley Show which this year is being held at Langden Holme Farm, Dunsop Bridge, BB7 3AU.

See the show websites for further details: www.malhamshow.co.uk & www.hoddervalleysow.co.uk



It's a great day out so why not head along with the family and your canine companions? Don't forget to call in to see us on our stand for some light refreshments and to say hello to the Dalehead team!



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Check out our website www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk for more information about caring for your pet, special offers, vet and staff profiles and much more!

