

COMPANION ANIMAL NEWSLETTER— MAY 2024

PATIENT STORY

Recently Cheetara, one of our lovely patients, went missing from her home for five days. As pet owners this is one of the things we all dread. Cheetara is a beautiful ten month old Bengal cat, who was out enjoying the sights and sounds of her neighbourhood but then didn't come home for her tea.

Her owners were extremely worried and went out every day looking for her but to no avail. By the fourth day, they were so worried that they decided to ask the public to help with the search and put a post on Facebook. The next day someone sent them a photograph of a cat they had sitting in their conservatory looking very poorly, it was Cheetara and she was not too far from home!

Normally Cheetara is a very vocal cat but when her owners arrived, she was just sat quietly, looking very sorry for herself, that is until they spoke to her, then she let out a big shout and ran straight into her cat basket which she would normally run a mile from! Unfortunately Cheetara was dragging one of her front legs so her owners brought her straight to Dalehead for us to examine.

Upon examination we found that Cheetara had several wounds and a very swollen right foreleg. Some of the wounds looked dry and quite old and were most likely sustained when she first went missing. X-rays were taken and these showed that the right foreleg was severely fractured.



BEFORE



AFTER



The type of fracture Cheetara had is called a 'displaced' fracture where the bones are completely separated from each other. Cheetara's fracture was made more complicated to repair due to it being very near her elbow joint. It had probably occurred on the first day she went missing so now was an 'old' injury and the muscles around the bones had contracted pulling the bones even further away from each other, with possible nerve damage too.

Sometimes complicated orthopaedic cases need to be referred to centres where they have specialised equipment to do the surgery but fortunately, due to our new veterinary surgeon Peter O'Hagan joining Dalehead we were able to repair the fracture here. This meant Cheetara didn't have to travel miles for her treatment whilst in pain and we could manage her wounds and pain here straight away and prepare her for the surgery.

Like any surgery there can be post operative complications and it will be a long road to recovery for Cheetara, but at present she is doing very well and we are happy with the progress that she is making.

Please note— consent has been given from the owners to publish the article

MARCUS' FIRST MONTH AT THE SURGERY

It's been a busy but incredibly rewarding first month! Getting to know the team, and clients. Learning the IT system and where the everything is kept, especially the coffee! Fortunately, everyone is still as welcoming and helpful at the end of 4 weeks as at the beginning. In my previous job I was mainly working from home. Whilst this was very attractive to start with, the shine did wear off. Coming into work with a great group of people really makes a difference.

What have I seen? There are lots of older animals and an area I am particularly interested in is managing their pain. Osteoarthritis is a very common condition in cats and dogs – as well as many smaller patients. Making sure these animals are comfortable and able to express their normal behaviours is crucial for their later years. Whilst they can be difficult to see as its slow onset, being able to provide pain relief and then see a younger looking animal come back at a recheck is very gratifying.

Having been away from clinical practice for a few years, coming back to surgery was a bit daunting. But happily, there has been lots of support and coaching, so now I'm back to where I was when I left – and enjoying it more!

Now I've got my bearings around the practice, I can have more discussions of interesting or challenging cases. With Peter also bringing a different perspective to the discussion it has been a very interesting time. A great feature of smaller, friendly practices is the collective discussion behind the scenes when a tricky case presents itself.

It has also been a busy time outside of work. With a 3-year-old daughter there is very little sitting still at weekends. I'm also training for a 100km walk within 24 hours in June, which will be to raise money for a chosen charity.

Overall, it has been a great move back into practice and I am very pleased to have come to Dalehead, the clients and the staff are all so lovely and supportive. I look forward to meeting more of you over the coming years and see what the future holds.

MEET THE NEWEST MEMBERS OF OUR TEAM



Peter O'Hagan - BVMS, Cert AVP (GSAS), MRCVS

Pete comes from Ayrshire and qualified from Glasgow University in 2001. He then spent his first few years working in mixed practice and a busy small animal PDSA charity hospital before settling down in the Ribble Valley with his wife, three boys and a small Border Terrier. Pete gained a certificate in Small Animal Surgery in 2012 and a Diploma in Business Management in 2023. Prior to joining Dalehead in April Pete worked in small animal practice with an additional role on the Clinical Board of a large veterinary group and has strong interest in Evidence-Based Veterinary Medicine. Outside of work Pete is a music enthusiast and also loves getting out in the countryside for dog walks or bike rides whenever possible.



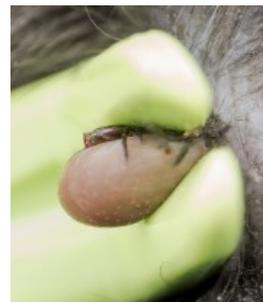
Sarah-Jane Haggas – Companion Animal Administrator

Sarah-Jane joined the practice in April 2024 and comes from a farming background. Having gained transferrable skills whilst working in the horseracing industry, Sarah-Jane aims to expand her administration and customer service skills through working at Dalehead.

Outside of work, Sarah-Jane spends the majority of her time exercising her horse, and helping on the family farm.

TICK SEASON

We are hopefully approaching the warmer months and as pet owners we need to be aware of ticks. Ticks are most commonly found in woodland and overgrown areas awaiting a host whilst clinging to tall grass and shrubs. They are a member of the spider family which feeds on various species for blood. Ticks transmit bacteria which can cause Lyme disease. A large percentage of ticks feed on wild animals such as hedgehogs, deer, rabbits and birds, but they occasionally attach to family pets as well as humans! It's important to remain vigilant when walking in high risk areas. Keep your pet up to date with a veterinary prescription parasite control, and also carrying a tick hook ensures that ticks can be removed prior to disease transmission. For more information regarding parasite control please contact the surgery on 01729 823538.



Check out our website www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk for more information about caring for your pet, special offers,

