

## **Veterinary Report MSPCA June 2021**

Milan Veterinary Practice is happy that we have been able to continue to provide veterinary services to the society. As a practice we wish to continue our excellent working relationship with the society, and hope to build on what is already a strong foundation.

As we have done previously, a veterinary surgeon visits Arg Jerkyl weekly. We examine new animals, perform routine vaccinations and microchipping, and follow up on existing cases where necessary. All surgeries are carried out at either our Douglas or Castletown branches.

Over the past year from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2020 until 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021 we have carried out the following procedures:

Bitch Spays – 5 (6)

Dog Castrates – 3 (9)

Cat Spays – 60 (125)

Cat Castrates – 41 (96)

Dentals - 30 (20)

Rabbit Spays – 6 (3)

Rabbit Castrates – 4 (5)

Other procedures - 23 surgeries (10)

Radiographs - 7 (17)

The figures in brackets relate to the period 1<sup>st</sup> August 2019 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2020. These figures indicate that the numbers of neutering are lower than in the previous year. However, the numbers of dentals and 'other procedures' e.g. lump removals has increased.

Over the past year we have continued to have to adapt to working whilst under the restrictions in place due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These restrictions have not been as strict as those in early 2020, and they have only been in place for short periods of time while we had circuit breaker lockdowns. This made it easier to manage. We have kept our Douglas and Castletown clinics open throughout, and we continued to provide a service for unwell animals and also for emergencies, whilst ensuring the health and safety of our staff and clients.

We decreased the frequency of our vet visits to the society to every 2 weeks during the circuit breaker lockdowns. This was partly due to lower numbers of animals needing to be seen by a vet, and also to reduce unnecessary contact between people. Our visits have been back to once weekly since the last circuit breaker lockdown ended.

One thing we have seen an increase in throughout the pandemic is the number of people buying puppies as pets. Although the levels in the Isle of Man are perhaps not as high as those in the UK, we have definitely seen an increase. The reasons for this include people being at home

more (e.g., working from home, unable to go out as before, unable to travel), and also as people are lonely and seeking companionship.

Some of these new owners do their research beforehand. They understand that ‘a puppy is for life, not just for Christmas’. They consider their own lifestyle and whether a dog will really fit into that, and if it does which breed is best for them. They then research responsible breeders, using The Kennel Club Assured Breeders Scheme, or by asking family, friends or vets for local recommendations. A responsible breeder should have performed any relevant screening and health tests on the parent dogs. The puppies should have had regular worming treatment from 2 weeks of age and have been fed a good quality puppy food as they were weaned. Responsible breeders will always have had the puppies health checked by their vet, and most will have had them microchipped (by law this must be done by 8 weeks of age) and have had at least their first vaccination.

Most responsible breeders will also home their puppies with an initial 4 weeks of insurance cover. This ensures that any unfortunate accidents or illnesses in the puppy’s first few weeks with its new family are covered for. It also gives the new owners chance to set their puppy up with its own insurance policy. This is crucial in ensuring you can give your puppy the care it deserves throughout its life. Veterinary care can be expensive, and when it comes unexpectedly, insurance is invaluable to allow your puppy the care it needs.

The MSCPA provides an invaluable service in finding homes for all the animals under its care. However, so many of these situations would be avoidable had the owners done their research properly beforehand. The number of animals we see who have been gifted to the society as their owners ‘do not have enough time’ or ‘cannot manage them’ is disappointingly high. Thankfully, the society is very successful at rehoming these animals, so they go to lead the life they deserve.

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