Having moved to our new premises in August 2009 we are continuing to develop our services and, in response to demand, increase our numbers of personnel. Throughout this time of growth and exciting advances, we remain fully committed to excellence in our patient care and at every level of the service we provide, both to owners and to referring veterinary surgeons.

We hope you find the following update informative.

**Continued service enhancements...**

**Stenting** – our Specialists now offer this procedure using the latest self-expanding Nitinol and biodegradable stents for conditions including tracheal collapse, oesophageal stricture and urinary obstruction.

**Minimally invasive surgery** – we continue to invest heavily in our rigid and flexible endoscopic equipment. The latest addition is a state-of-the-art thermocautery unit, Valley-Lab’s Force Triad, which enables highly controlled, reliable vessel sealing and sectioning during laparoscopic and thoracoscopic procedures, as well as during open procedures such as liver biopsy.

**Knee and elbow replacement surgery** – our team of four orthopaedic Specialists, assisted by two orthopaedic residents, now offer knee and elbow replacements in dogs, as well as hip replacements in both dogs and cats. They have performed over 500 joint replacement procedures, making them one of the most experienced teams in the UK.

**‘Cold’ phacoemulsification** – phaco tips vibrate at about 40 KHz, producing potentially harmful heat as they break up the cataractous lens. Our brand-new AMO Signature phaco unit uses Whitestar® technology, allowing excellent cataract emulsification with a minimum of heat production, whilst its sophisticated fluidics optimise anterior chamber stability. Both of these features help to minimise intra-operative ocular trauma and optimise patient outcome.

**Dr Stephen Baines**

VetMB PhD CertVR CertSAS DipECVS MRCVS
European and RCVS Specialist in Small Animal Surgery

We are delighted to announce that Stephen Baines has recently joined fellow Specialists, Rob White and Chris Shales, in our Soft Tissue surgical team.

Stephen has come to us from the Royal Veterinary College where he held the posts of Senior Lecturer in Small Animal Surgery and Head of Surgery. He has a wealth of experience and his clinical interests include clinical oncology, wound management, reconstructive surgery and minimally invasive surgery, particularly thoracoscopy. Stephen has recently completed a Master of Science degree in Comparative Clinical Oncology at the University of Birmingham.
What’s your diagnosis? How should this condition be managed and what is the prognosis?

Case Study

**Joe - Staffordshire Bull Terrier**

Joe, a 2.5 year old neutered male Staffordshire Bull Terrier, presented for the further investigation and management of a pulmonary abnormality. The lesion was associated with the right caudal lung lobe and was an incidental radiographic finding of significant concern at the time of investigation of an unrelated condition (Figures 1a and b).

Auscultation of the right hemithorax revealed a reduction, and in places an absence, of lung sounds. Joe was admitted for CT scan of the thorax and the results confirmed the right caudal lung lobe to be dramatically expanded by a large, homogeneous, gas-filled, emphysematous cavity with numerous branching, thin soft tissue attenuating structures within it (Figures 2a and b).

Surgery was performed and the right caudal lung lobe was approached via a lateral thoracotomy (Figure 3). A right caudal lobectomy was performed with the aid of a surgical stapler (Figure 4). Histopathological examination confirmed lobar emphysema (Figures 5a and b). Joe made an excellent recovery and was discharged 48 hours post-operatively. He made a complete and unremarkable recovery and the long-term prognosis is considered excellent.

_Congenital lobar emphysema is a rare disease in small animals. In the dog, the condition is usually associated with cartilage dysplasia or hypoplasia, although an idiopathic aetiology is also described. To our knowledge, there are only five previous reports of the successful treatment of congenital lobar emphysema with lobectomy in dogs._

**Ben - Jack Russell Terrier**

Ben, a four year old male Jack Russell Terrier was presented with a four day history of _increased blinking_, _redness_ and a _watery ocular discharge_ in the right eye.
What are the risks associated with general anaesthesia at Willows?

We have a team of three experienced anaesthetists at Willows, headed by European Specialist Karen Walsh DVA DipECVAA. In addition, we have extensive monitoring equipment and intensive care facilities allowing us to cater for the most challenging anaesthetic and critical care cases. Whilst every general anaesthetic carries a degree of risk, we do all we can to minimise this, whatever the nature of the case.

What happens to patients overnight or at weekends and public holidays at Willows?

Willows’ in-patients have the benefit of care from nurses and vets who are working in our clinical areas, every hour of every day of the year. In addition, there is always a veterinary surgeon in each discipline with case responsibility, on duty and readily available at all times.

What are the facilities and levels of care like at Willows?

Concerned clients are encouraged to view the hospital and our staff going about their day to day work. It is our experience that giving owners a behind the scenes tour, during which they can see our hygienic climate-controlled wards and superbly equipped Intensive Care Unit where their pet may be staying, gives them peace of mind at a time when they may be at their most anxious.

24 hour Emergency Referral Service

Did you know that... clinicians in every discipline at Willows provide referring veterinary surgeons with a 24 hour emergency service for new patients as well as ongoing cases? This comprehensive service is provided 365 days of the year and is unsurpassed in small animal referral services in the UK.

Radiographic Reporting Service

Did you know that... Our Specialists provide a rapid radiographic reporting service? To submit radiographs for reporting, please send them by post to the address overleaf or alternatively email the images to radiographs@willows.uk.net

To make the most of our report, please remember to provide the patient’s details and any relevant history and clinical findings.

Willows CPD

We continue to provide high quality CPD at our sponsored evening Forums in our well appointed conference facilities. These meetings are free of charge to attendees and include a buffet prior to the presentation. We are also planning to offer full day meetings, starting with ‘Ophthalmology – Back to Basics’ which will be held on Wednesday 15 June 2011 and which will feature presentations by all the members of our ophthalmology team. An informative tour of our hospital is offered to delegates at each meeting.

If you would like more details about our CPD provision, or if you would like to register for email notification of any forthcoming meetings at Willows, please visit www.willows.uk.net/CPD

Why not sign up to receive CPD event updates as soon as they appear online?

Register online:
www.willows.uk.net/cpd/registration
Willows referral survey competition winner

Congratulations to the winner of our recent Referral Survey, Geoffrey Cowap of Cufa’s Lea Veterinary Centre in Oxford! Geoffrey wins a £500 Red Letter Day of his choice.

Thank you to the several hundred vets who responded to our survey.

We very much value the helpful comments (and criticisms!) we received in the survey and we are working hard to ensure all our scores are 100% in the next survey we undertake!

If you have any feedback you would like to give about our service, please don’t wait until the next survey – feel free to write, telephone or email your comments to info@willows.uk.net

Over 80%!

In our survey of referring vets we achieved average scores of over 80% for:

- Client feedback (84%)
- Speed of reporting (82%)
- Quality of reporting (86%)
- Helpfulness of our clinicians (90%)
- Quality of clinical work (92%)

Willows Website

For those of you that may not have visited it, we have a superb website which has useful information including contact details, location maps, information for referred clients concerning our payment terms as well as information about our clinicians and CPD events. In addition, we have hundreds of pages of information for clients about different diseases and procedures – you may find these useful when you are discussing their pet’s problems and possible referral. Please visit: www.willows.uk.net

Practice tip: Orbital splash block

Did you know...

...that you can improve your patient’s comfort after an enucleation by simply carrying out an ‘orbital splash block’?

This block is carried out by applying a small volume of local anaesthetic to the orbit once the globe has been removed and any haemorrhage has been stopped. Bupivacaine 0.5% (Marcain 0.5%) is a suitable drug and in most patients the volume applied would be 1-2 ml.

Systemic toxicity is mitigated by using no more than 1-2 mg/kg in a single application. Bupivacaine will work for approximately 4-6 hours which, in combination with other agents such as NSAIDs and opioids, provides multimodal analgesia during the time in the post-operative period when the pain stimulus is likely to be greatest.

WHAT’S YOUR DIAGNOSIS: ANSWER

Ben had an anterior lens luxation – the refractile equator of the lens (arrowed) can be seen lying within the anterior chamber. Primary lens luxation is inherited in the Jack Russell Terrier and typically presents at around 3 to 5 years of age. The problem is potentially blinding and the second eye usually becomes involved within a few months. Early diagnosis and intervention, which may well include bilateral lens removal, preferably by phacoemulsification, is critical for optimising the prognosis.

Streamlining the referral process – new email address option for submitting histories

To refer a case for a routine appointment, all you now need to do is ask your client to call us to make the booking (please tell them which discipline to ask for) and email the history and any lab results/radiographs etc to: histories@willows.uk.net (please note that this email address is for sending histories only, and not for general correspondence).

If you need to make an urgent appointment or you would like to discuss the case first, please continue to telephone on: 0121 712 7070.

Willows Referral Service
Highlands Road Shirley Solihull West Midlands B90 4NH
Telephone: 0121 712 7070 Facsimile: 0121 712 7077
www.willows.uk.net

Willows Website

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