Hampden Vets

Newsletter

Autumn 2025 Edition

In this edition!

Page 1 - Supporting our senior pets | Page 2 - Our top tips for navigating fireworks season

Supporting our senior pets

As part of our new senior campaign, we've put together some top tips for taking great care of older pets.

Comfort is key

- Provide somewhere comfortable, warm and cosy for your pet to sleep that meets their specific needs.
- Make sure everything they need is easily accessible, and provide extra water sources to help them stay hydrated throughout the day.
- Non-slip mats and steps are also helpful, while rugs and carpets can prevent slipping.

The right diet

- Your pet's dietary needs will change as they get older, and your vet will be able to advise you on the best options.
- Monitor how much your pet is eating and drinking, and mention any changes in eating, drinking and toileting habits or weight to your vet to rule out underlying medical issues.
- Try feeding your pet with dispensing devices, so that they have to work to eat. This will provide mental stimulation.
- Ensure food and water bowls are at the ideal height for your pet. Watching them eat will help you work out how they like their bowl placed.





Meet their changing needs

- Older pets need regular exercise and mental stimulation, so walk dogs little and often and avoid exercise that might put too much pressure on their joints, like chasing balls.
- Remember that it's important to be consistent and avoid changes in their exercise patterns.
- Letting them sniff, explore and play with toys and feeders also keeps them entertained and mentally stimulated.
- If your pet seems stiff or struggles with stairs or getting into cars, ramps and steps can help, but make sure to get them checked out by the vet as they could be in pain.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle

- Maintaining regular activity and a healthy weight gives your pet a better chance of looking and acting youthful – just like humans!
- A decline in eyesight or hearing can cause confusion, so try to reduce changes in their environment and the layout of furniture. Please check with your vet if you notice sudden changes to these.
- Regular dental checks are essential for checking for signs of painful dental diseases.
- Older pets might need their nails trimming more often, especially if they're exercising less – your veterinary team will be happy to help you out with this if you're struggling to do this at home.

To learn more about taking the best care of your senior pet, please reach out to the practice.

Avoid these ghoulish Halloween hazards!

While many of us love Halloween and all it entails, it can be a stressful, confusing and potentially dangerous time for our pets.

Every pet is different, and while some are happy to participate in the festivities by wearing costumes, it might not be every pet's cup of tea. If you're not sure whether a costume will upset your pet, then it is safer to avoid it completely.

Always keep chocolate and sweets safely out of reach, as they can prove toxic for pets if eaten. Any treats containing raisins can also cause serious damage to dogs' kidneys. If your pet does eat something they shouldn't, the best course of action is to contact your vet straight away.

If you're planning a Halloween party, make sure your pet has a safe, quiet place to hide. You could give your cat space under a bed or create a cosy den for your dog by placing a blanket over their crate. Your vet can also recommend supportive products to help your pet feel more relaxed.

While pumpkins, tea lights and candles can help set a scary scene, they can be a fire risk for our pets, so any flames should be put on a stable surface and kept well out of reach to prevent burns.

If you're worried about your pet or think they may have eaten something harmful, please contact the practice straight away.

Our top tips for navigating fireworks season



Fireworks can be stressful for many pets, but your veterinary team is here to support you and your furry friend.

Preparation is key

- Speak to your vet as early as possible about managing anxious pets and the season.
- Use the run-up period to familiarise your pet with dens or hiding spaces.

Provide a hiding place

- Provide a hideout area where your pet feels safe and won't bedisturbed, and familiarise them with it two weeks before expected fireworks.
- Safe spaces include dens made by covering crates with a blanket, or allowing cats to hide under beds.

Make use of supportive products

- Speak to your vet about managing your pet's anxiety, as there are supportive products and medications available.

Keep pets indoors

- Bring cats and dogs inside just before dark.
- Encourage dogs to go to the toilet beforehand so that they can then remain indoors once fireworks start.
- Stressed pets should not be left home alone.

Keep things quiet and secure

- Close windows and curtains at dusk.
- Keep lights on and create background noise by playing music or having the television on.

Secure escape routes

- Stressed pets can behave in unexpected and unpredictable ways.
- Ensure your home is secure before fireworks start, so they don't bolt through open doors or windows.
- Microchipping ensures any escaped or missing pets can be traced back to you and is a legal requirement for dogs.

Distract your furry friend

- If it's not too distressing, try playing with or training pets with puzzle feeders or treat-dispensing toys.
- Some pets may be too stressed, so don't force it if they seem reluctant.

Plan for the future

- If your pet struggles with stress, think ahead and plan long-term.
- Anxious pets often benefit from year-round desensitisation training.
- Contact your vet or a registered pet behaviourist for further support, and try resources like Dogs Trust's sound therapy tools.



How to keep rabbits and guinea pigs warm and cosy

It's important to make sure that we keep our pets warm and dry in the colder months, especially if you usually keep your rabbit or guinea pig outside.

- Housing should ideally have some shelter from the weather, such as run covers that can be used to keep the rain off your pet's home. This may mean moving their hutch to a more sheltered part of your garden.
- During the colder months, make sure drinking water doesn't freeze, and provide lots of bedding and fibrous food.
- It is important to cover any housing with a blanket or quilt and waterproof materials when temperatures drop – while also leaving space for ventilation.
- Where possible, you should also consider between-wall insulation for rabbit and guinea pig housing to prevent extreme fluctuations in temperature.
- In extreme weather conditions, you should also consider bringing pets indoors.

This newsletter is provided as an education service to our clients. All news and other items in this newsletter are for information only and should not be treated as a substitute for veterinary advice.