

STABLE CLOSE EQUINE PRACTICE
EQUINE VETERINARY CARE ACROSS HAMPSHIRE

Autumn / 2025

SPRING EQUINE NEWSLETTER

Team Update

Rising Star: Archie Moffat Awarded BEVA 'One to Watch'

Stable Close was delighted that Archie Moffat was recognised this year by the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) as "One to Watch". This award is for early-career equine veterinarians who are making a significant impact. It recognizes individuals for their clinical skills, passion for equine welfare, and potential to shape the future of equine veterinary care. The award was presented at the annual congress by HRH Princess Anne. Archie joined the practice in August 2024 and has shown himself to be a capable, compassionate vet with excellent communication skills, enabling him to fit in seamlessly within the SCEP team, and become a deserved winner of this accolade.



BEVA Member of the Month



Vicky Jux

Vicky Jux Named BEVA Member of the Month for Outstanding Leadership

Vicky Jux was also honoured by the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA) as their Member of the Month for September 2025. She received this recognition following a nomination by a colleague, who highlighted her exceptional leadership qualities. Vicky is widely respected for her ability to lead by example, consistently demonstrating professionalism, dedication, and compassion in her work.

This recognition by BEVA reflects not only her professional excellence but also her impact on colleagues and the wider equine veterinary community.

horsevet.co.uk | 01962 779111

Stable Close Equine Practice, Bridgets Farm, Bridgets Lane,
Martyr Worthy, Winchester, SO21 1AR

Stable Close Invests in Advanced Oroscope to Enhance Equine Dental Care

Stable Close is delighted to have invested in a state of the art oroscope. This enables more detailed examination of oral pathology, identification of disease and ability to recommend suitable treatments early on in the disease process. It is also used for guiding treatments such as diastema widening, periodontal pocket flushing, and following up after extractions (all now carried out routinely on yard), and enables us to monitor healing more thoroughly after dental procedures.



If you are interested in booking an oroscope examination, or would like oroscopy to be included at your routine dental visit in future, please contact the office.

Autumn Client Evening: Connecting Over Coffee and Championing Horse Welfare

At the end of October we held our Autumn client evening which as always was really well supported by you all! These evenings are designed not only as a great opportunity for clients (and non clients) to get together and meet over a tea or coffee and snacks, but also an informal occasion for you to chat to the vets and of course for our office staff to meet the faces behind the voices that they speak to so frequently!

This time Malcolm Morley, previous Clinical Director of Stable Close Equine Practice, and now UK Director of World Horse Welfare, returned to talk about the important role played by the Charity in triumphing horse welfare.

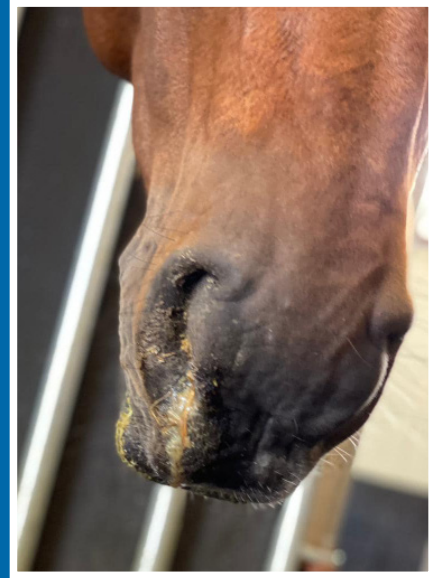
One of the WHW field officers also gave a presentation on some of the challenges encountered in their daily work in helping guide and provide support for owners where needed, and fostering and rehoming cases where their welfare cannot otherwise be ensured.

Malcolm also described one of the most recent challenges involving a strangles outbreak on one of their rehoming farms where up to 300 horses are in residence at any one time. Rapid responses from his team enabled strict biosecurity measures to be instigated and, alongside vaccination, the outbreak was speedily and successfully managed.



Understanding Strangles: Prevention, Vaccination and Control

Strangles is a highly contagious respiratory infection that affects horses worldwide, which is caused by the bacterium *Streptococcus equi equi*, and is characterised by fever and abscessation of the lymph nodes of the head and neck. Occasionally the bacteria may travel via the lymphatic system or blood vessels to other lymphoid tissue or other organs in the body and in these cases can cause severe, occasionally fatal, symptoms.



Prevalence of strangles

Strangles can affect any age, sex or breed of horse and is endemic in the horse population, meaning it is always circulating at any given time.

Strangles is one of the most frequently diagnosed infectious diseases in horses. There are typically 5-100 times more outbreaks of strangles than of equine influenza, with approximately 300 outbreaks per year reported in the UK. We suspect many more go unreported. Large outbreaks of strangles can affect hundreds of horses and have a high economic and welfare impact.

Below is a link to the Surveillance of Equine Strangles page supported by the EIDS (Equine Infectious Disease Surveillance) team documenting outbreaks as they occur:

<https://app.jshiny.com/jdata/ses/sesview/>

The key to Strep. equi transmission is its ability to persist within the guttural pouches in around 10% of clinically recovered horses. These horses become 'carriers'. Carriers look healthy, but can spread strangles to other horses.

Given the impact a strangles outbreak can have from a welfare and economical perspective, biosecurity and vaccination are the two important aspects of prevention and they go hand-in-hand.

What are the benefits of vaccination?

- Reduced severity of clinical signs and bacterial shedding
- Reduced number of abscesses and spread of the disease
- Reduced likelihood of becoming a carrier
- Improved protection at an individual horse level as well as on a yard level
- Reduced risk of horses contracting strangles while travelling to other premises or attending equine events

Understanding Strangles: Prevention, Vaccination and Control Cont...



Vaccination aims to maximise herd immunity, which is achieved when a high proportion of a population is vaccinated. As a result, it becomes difficult for a contagious agent to spread, because there are not many animals left that can become infected and transmit the disease.

There is anecdotal evidence that vaccination may help resolve carrier status in an individual but there is no published evidence for this yet.

What is DIVA and why is it important?

DIVA is short for: Differentiate Infected from Vaccinated Animals.

The new intramuscular strangles vaccine does not contain live or killed *Strep. equi* bacteria. Instead it contains eight important proteins from the bacterium which triggers the immune response. These proteins are different to those used in the diagnostic blood test for exposure to strangles. This means that horses vaccinated with a DIVA vaccine can attend events or move yards normally without triggering positive tests (unless they have actually been exposed to *Strep. Equi* disease).

Can a horse be vaccinated if the yard has an index case of strangles?

- Horses with clinical signs/those in direct contact should not be vaccinated
- Vaccinated horses that have not been in contact with cases:
- Last dose >two months: booster doses will maximise immunity
- Last dose <two months: no booster required
- Unvaccinated horses: start primary course – this will offer partial protection from two weeks after second dose

Does a vaccinated horse need to be quarantined when moving yards?

This will depend on the biosecurity policy of the yard and whether the horse has also been vaccinated against other equine infectious diseases like equine influenza. With respect to strangles, the risk will be significantly reduced.

Can a horse compete immediately after vaccination?

It is generally recommended not to exercise horses in the two to three days following vaccination. This also depends on whether the horse shows a rise in body temperature as a reaction to vaccination or not: temporary mild fever after vaccination is not uncommon as this is part of the immune system activation.

Book Your horse's vaccination:

This November and December, Stable Close Equine Practice is taking part in Dechra's vaccination amnesty. Horses starting Strangvac now will receive the second dose and the first (annual) booster dose at half price (normal visit fees apply).

Book your primary course before the end of the year to give your horse the best protection this winter!



Dental Care for Older Horses: Why it matters more than ever

As horses age, their healthcare needs to evolve—and dental care becomes increasingly important. Just like in humans, age-related changes in the mouth can lead to discomfort, weight loss, and other health problems if not addressed. Proactive dental care for older horses is essential to ensure their comfort, performance, and quality of life.

The ageing equine mouth

As horses age, their teeth wear down, increasing the risk of dental problems, especially after age 15. Uneven wear can cause wave or step mouth, affecting chewing. Sharp enamel points may lead to painful ulcers, while loose or missing teeth create gaps that trap food and raise infection risk. Periodontal disease is common in older horses, often caused by chronic food packing. Some horses also experience eruption exhaustion, where teeth stop emerging, making wear-related issues more likely.

Spotting dental issues

Dental pain in senior horses can be subtle. Signs include weight loss, quidding (dropping chewed hay), bad breath, slow or messy eating, head tilting while eating, or nasal discharge. Early recognition is important to avoid more serious health problems.

The vet's role

Dental checks every 6–12 months are essential, especially for older horses. A full

exam includes using a speculum and light to inspect teeth and soft tissues, checking for mobility, infection, or unusual wear and taking X-rays if deeper problems are suspected. Vets trained in equine dentistry can also manage complex issues like extractions and advanced gum disease.

Feeding and management tips

Older horses with dental issues may struggle with hay or grazing. Offering chopped or soaked forage (such as hay cubes or beet pulp) and senior feeds can help. Schedule dental checks before winter when forage changes, as poor chewing can affect digestion and increase the risk of colic or weight loss.

A lifetime of comfort

Dental care is key to keeping older horses healthy and comfortable. With regular check-ups, timely treatment, and dietary support, senior horses can thrive well into their later years. Whether retired or still active, every older horse benefits from a tailored dental care plan, speak to your vet to get started.

Don't Miss the Signs:

Why Autumn is crucial for catching PPID early.

As autumn approaches, it's the ideal time for horse owners and vets to check for PPID (Pituitary Pars Intermedia Dysfunction), formerly known as equine Cushing's disease. With naturally rising ACTH levels in the autumn months, this season offers a window of opportunity for accurate testing and early detection.



Why test in autumn?

ACTH (adrenocorticotrophic hormone) levels fluctuate throughout the year, peaking between August and October. Veterinary laboratories provide seasonally adjusted reference ranges during this time, making autumn the most reliable period for detecting abnormal hormone levels that indicate PPID.

Signs of PPID to watch for

PPID affects horses of all breeds and types, especially those over 15 years old. Early signs can be subtle but are important to catch.

Look out for:

- Delayed or failed coat shedding, or a long, curly coat
- Lethargy or reduced performance
- Laminitis, particularly recurring or unexplained cases
- Weight loss or muscle wastage along the topline
- Increased drinking and urination
- Recurrent infections or poor wound healing

Treatment and management updates

PPID is a progressive condition, but with early diagnosis and proper management, horses can continue to live active, comfortable lives. Treatment typically involves daily administration of pergolide, which helps regulate hormone levels. Regular dental care, farriery, vaccinations, and parasite control are also vital.

Recent updates in management emphasise a more tailored approach, monitoring ACTH levels over time and adjusting doses accordingly, while also considering each horse's clinical signs and quality of life.

Take action this autumn

If your horse is showing signs or is at risk due to age, now is the time to act. Speak to your vet about scheduling an ACTH test and creating a proactive PPID management plan. Early detection makes all the difference.

Winter's Coming

Is your horse at a healthy weight?

As the nights draw in and the temperature drops, managing your horse's weight becomes even more important. Whether your horse tends to pile on the pounds or struggles to maintain condition, taking a proactive approach in autumn can help ensure a healthier, happier winter.



1. Know your starting point

Start with a body condition score (BCS) assessment. Use a weight tape and hands-on checks to get an accurate picture of your horse's current condition. Look for fat coverage on the ribs, neck, and rump. Document the results so you can monitor changes over time.

2. Adjust the diet early

Don't wait until winter hits to make dietary changes. Horses that are overweight may benefit from reduced-calorie forage and limited access to lush pasture. For underweight horses or those prone to losing condition, consider adding extra fibre-based calories now to build reserves before colder weather increases energy demands.

3. Review rugging and clipping

Rugging and clipping can influence how many calories your horse uses to keep warm. Unclipped horses with a natural winter coat often manage fine

without heavy rugs, which can help weight management. For older or lean horses, however, rugs can help conserve valuable calories.

4. Encourage movement

Shorter days and muddy paddocks can mean less turnout and exercise. Find ways to keep your horse moving, turnout in safe winter paddocks, in-hand walks, or indoor schooling can help maintain fitness and support a healthy metabolism.

5. Regular monitoring

Continue to weigh-tape and body score every few weeks. It's much easier to adjust a feeding plan gradually than to play catch-up later in the season.

6. Speak to your vet

If you're unsure how to adapt your horse's diet or if your horse has a medical condition such as PPID or EMS, get tailored advice from your vet or an equine nutritionist.