

PRACTICE NEWSLETTER

Sandhill Veterinary Services
Veterinary Care for Game Birds, Commercial Poultry and Pigeons



April 2018

Game Bird Clients

Welcome to our newsletter, keeping you up to date with our latest from Sandhill Vets

New staff at the practice:

Veterinary Surgeons

Laura Langstaff joined us in January. Laura qualified from the Royal Veterinary College in 2012 and initially worked in mixed practice in Hornsea and latterly in small animal practice in Middlesbrough. Laura is local, she grew up down the road in Sessay, and her interest in poultry started with her parents keeping a small flock of backyard chickens. Laura's desire to pursue a career in avian work was fuelled further by broiler and poultry practice placements completed whilst at vet school. She looks forward to playing an active role in all areas of avian veterinary care here at Sandhill.

Laura is currently undertaking the Poultry Health Course run by the University of Nottingham and is a member of the Young Poultry Vet Group, a branch of the British Veterinary Poultry Association.

Dan King qualified from Nottingham University in 2012 and went straight into farm animal practice in Ripon. He developed his interest in game birds and poultry, then in 2015 he started working here at Sandhill two afternoons a week throughout the summer to help with the busy rearing season. Having really enjoyed this work, Dan will join Sandhill in May 2018 on a permanent basis. Dan will still do a few days farm animal work between his Sandhill days.

Dan grew up on a mixed farm in Driffield and has always had a passion for poultry, rearing chickens and quail from a young age. Dan's interests include travel, shooting clays and game and he is involved in two small syndicates within Yorkshire. He has recently moved into his first house in York with his girlfriend Tess.

Having two additional vets will give us the opportunity to carry out more visits and follow up problem cases which has at times been difficult. It will also allow us the opportunity to develop the Veterinary Health Plans and training programmes – something we have long wanted to do but not had the time. And as Richard told the gamekeepers at our practice meeting on 14th February, this is not a sign that Richard is planning to retire but that he is looking forward to developing the practice with the support of additional vets. We also want to keep our website more up to date – there is a blog section that should be active, but which hasn't been updated for a long time. With more vets we want to be able to keep on top of what we already do and to grow the services we can offer our clients without changing the basic ethos of the practice.

Laboratory Technician

Rob Gillespie joined us at the beginning of March after previously working in the laboratory at Ripon Select Foods. He is very much looking forward to tackling the varied and interesting caseload that presents here at Sandhill.



GDPR – General Data Protection Regulation *IMPORTANT INFORMATION*

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) comes into force on 25th May 2018. It replaces the current Data Protection Act 1998. As a result, clients will have certain new rights over how their information is used. At Sandhill Veterinary Services we use your personal information to provide you with products and services, to comply with the law and enforce our legal rights if required (including debt recovery). We do not share information with third parties other than as outlined above. Under the GDPR we are allowed to email clients but may only phone (or text) them if we have their specific consent. As it is often necessary to contact clients regarding laboratory test results (Post mortem reports / Salmonella results etc.) we request that all clients either email us with permission for us to phone or text them if required or sign a permission form at the practice.

Please email consent to rtb@sandhillvet.co.uk – it would seem that verbal permission is not sufficient to comply with GDPR.

Sandhill Vets is now on Facebook

Sandhill Game Bird Services

Follow us:

@SandhillGame

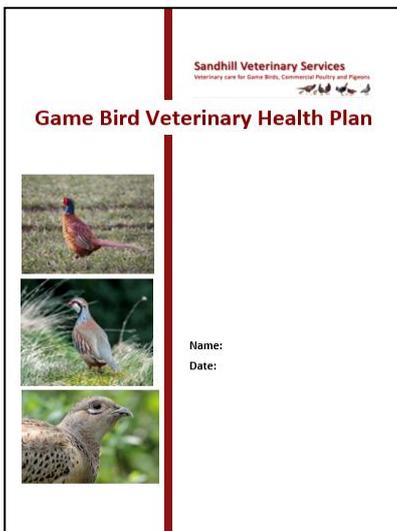
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Veterinary Health Plans

Veterinary health plans are commonplace in the farming industry. In many sectors they are compulsory, as they are for game farms in Scotland. The idea of a health plan is a document to compile all relevant health and welfare information for anyone to see; owners, staff, vets, government officials etc. They should include site information, day to day protocols, health and welfare recording and justification for certain management practices – such as biting.



The DEFRA code of practice for game birds recommends that all game farms/shoots have an active health plan. At Sandhill we feel a health plan is a good idea and forms part of an annual review, where we can sit down and run through the plan and what problems were encountered season to season. All post mortem records, performance, mortality and medicine use should be recorded in here. There often isn't the time during the busy rearing season to properly review all this information, but if compiled, we can go through the plan annually and discuss each problem and possible solutions in more detail. These plans should be dynamic and relevant to your business and be an aid to you and your staff. They also are a sensible thing to have from a defensive point of view – giving veterinary justification for antibiotic use and other practices. As a part of the plan we include several protocols; from the importance of clean water, to preventative medication and causes of stress and disease in birds. These protocols form the backbone of our training courses. We can run these courses with your staff on or off site and include things such as basic husbandry and management, administering medication and health and welfare... or anything you wish to include! Please contact us if you are interested in a veterinary health plan or any training courses.

'Mycoplasma-type' disease

Since January we have examined a number of cases of Mycoplasma-type disease in game birds and although Mycoplasma gallisepticum (MG) has been present in nearly all the samples, all have additionally had other diseases which in themselves can cause respiratory signs and which will intensify the clinical signs if MG is also present. By identifying and treating these other diseases, in addition to the MG, overall clinical signs can be reduced.

The other diseases that have been identified so far this year include:

1) Gapeworms – present in partridges which had not been caught up. These birds, together with pheasants from the same site also had gut worms present.

2) Pasteurella bacteria – isolated from a number of different sites in association with MG in breeding pheasants. This has been isolated in our own laboratory and after sensitivity testing birds have been treated with an appropriate antibiotic to help control the disease. In addition, we had an outbreak of Pasteurellosis in overwintered red-legged partridges which showed a sudden rise in mortality and the disease was controlled by appropriate antibiotic medication.

3) Ornithobacterium rhinotracheale (ORT) – this is a bacterial infection that we have identified in birds in association with MG. ORT is able to cause signs of watery eyes and respiratory distress even if MG is not present and Ornithobacterium rhinotracheale infection may be mistaken for Mycoplasmosis.

4) Avian Rhinotracheitis (ART) – this is a viral infection which causes respiratory problems and, like Ornithobacterium rhinotracheale, gives signs that may be mistaken for Mycoplasmosis. We have recently identified the presence of this virus in pheasants in our area. It has been reported for many years in the area around Hungerford, Berkshire but it is only recently that we have identified it in game birds north of the Humber.



When game birds with clinical signs of Mycoplasmosis fail to fully respond to treatment we are now undertaking further tests as standard to try to better understand the complexity of the disease in the birds.

We are able to provide our clients with the following services:

- Post mortem examinations
- Site visits and consultations
- Rearing field visits
- Coccidial oocyst and worm egg counts
- Regular faecal sampling of pens for coccidial oocyst and worm egg counts
- Disease screening of breeding birds
- Prescriptions
- Hygiene swab and drinking water cultures
- Medicine, vaccine and disinfectant sales

To discuss specific problems or requirements please contact the practice by phone or email.

Dunnington drug collection: As in previous years, drugs may be collected from Dunnington with prior arrangement from Topcliffe.

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