

Coronavirus Update:

We are now back to carrying out most of our normal work, subject to a strict risk assessment. At the time of booking your appointment, you will be asked a few short questions below to ascertain the safety of carrying out the work. Where there are concerns about the safety or necessity of carrying out work, you will be passed to a vet to discuss the practicalities of carrying the work out.

Coronavirus risk assessment:

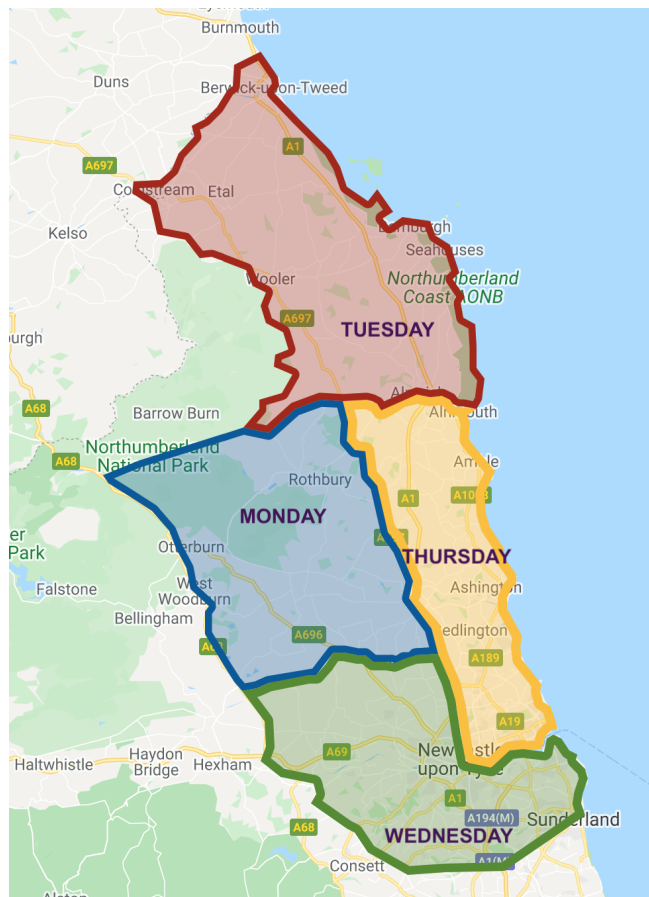
- Are you, or is anyone in your household showing signs of coronavirus?
- Have you, or has anyone in your household tested positive for coronavirus?
- Are you self-isolating or 'shielding' for any reason?
- Will your horse, pony or donkey stand tied-up to allow the vet to perform an examination and any basic procedures while maintaining a 2 metre distance from yourself?
- If for any reason you need to be within 2 meters of the vet then both need to wear a face mask

At present, we will not be carrying out any dentals unsedated, due to the risk associated with doing so without someone controlling the head of the horse.

We may also need to postpone some procedures, or have horses brought into the clinic to allow us to carry out some procedures safely, while maintaining our 2 metre distance at this time.

We are asking all clients to ensure that only one person is present with the horse we are examining. This is for the safety of our staff and our clients.

We are regularly reviewing the situation, and further information will be made available on our Facebook page and in future newsletters.



We are pleased to be able to offer £5 zone visits. Free visit if 3 or more horses seen at the same time on the same yard.

Please remember that all zone work is strictly payment at the time. If you would like an estimate prior to any work being carried out please let us know.

Antibiotic resistance

Antibiotics are commonly prescribed drugs in all areas of veterinary medicine, and are used for their abilities to kill or prevent the replication of bacteria. We are becoming increasingly aware of the growing problem of antibiotic resistance. This is a phenomenon where the antibiotics we are using are becoming less effective against some of the bacterial pathogens we are aiming to treat. Any use of an antibiotic drug can contribute to antibiotic resistance, as any exposure of a bacterial pathogen to an antibiotic provides an opportunity for bacteria to develop resistance mechanisms.

This is demonstrated in the image to the right. Imagine a horse starts with the bacterial population at the top of the image, with mixed resistance levels to antibiotics. By treating the horse with antibiotics, the resistance bacteria are 'selected' (i.e. they survive the treatment), and these then reproduce leading to a population of resistance bacteria.

This is why we are increasingly trying to reduce our use of antibiotics in practice. We may prefer to take a swab from an infected site to grow the bacteria involved, and establish which antibiotics are effective against them. This means we can select the most appropriate antibiotic in any infection. There are some situations when gaining a swab is not possible, or appropriate, such as:

- Internal infections
- Very contaminated sites

In these cases we use our knowledge of the likely bacteria involved, as well as the body systems particular antibiotics are better for to make a decision as to which antibiotic to prescribe.

Swabs are typically sent to the laboratory for 'microbial culture and sensitivity' - this is where bacteria from the swab are cultured (grown) and then tested for sensitivity or resistance to various antibiotics. In the image on the right, the clear area surrounding the white antibiotic disks represents

that the bacteria on the plate are sensitive to the antibiotics in question, whereas in the plate to the right of the image the bacteria are resistant to several of the antibiotics.

Any resistance that develops among bacteria infecting horses and other animals can be transferred to bacteria which infect humans, or these resistant bacteria in horses may well be able to infect humans, so antibiotic resistance in animals is an issue that has direct implications for human health. Due to this, in addition to selecting an antibiotic based on its applicability to any individual case, we also select antibiotics based on their level of importance in human medicine.

The route of antibiotic administration is also important, in some cases topical creams are most appropriate, however in others oral or injectable drugs are preferred—again we decide this based on a variety of factors.

Ultimately, it is really important to follow the vets advice when giving antibiotics to your horses and other animals, and to trust us when we advise that antibiotics are not necessary. It is also important not to self-prescribe antibiotics that you may have access to on your yard without discussing the case with one of our vets.

