



# ST. RUNWALD'S Limited

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 VETS' NO.1 CHOICE  
FOR THEIR OWN PETS

# NEWS

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## Rabbiting on!



Rabbits are popular pets who have very different needs to dogs and cats. Here are some tips to keep them fit and well:

**Diet:** Rabbits have continuously growing teeth so they need ad lib quantities of good quality hay and/or ideally grass – available 24 hours a day to wear down their teeth. Dental disease is a common problem in rabbits and is due in part to incorrect diets allowing tooth overgrowth. Remember a wild rabbits natural diet is grass and that obesity in a pet rabbit is a common problem. Rabbits can become selective feeders so a pelleted diet rather than a muesli based one has many advantages. There are some excellent diets available and we are only too happy to advise you on these.



**Vaccinations:** We recommend vaccination against two potentially fatal infectious diseases:

- Myxomatosis – an infection spread by blood sucking insects and Viral Haemorrhagic Disease – spread directly between rabbits or directly, via contaminated hutches, bedding or food. These are given annually as a combined vaccination.

**Two's company!** Rabbits are by nature social creatures and can be housed with another friendly neutered rabbit. A good combination is a neutered female with a neutered male that have been brought up together. Rabbits will also enjoy spending time with people, particularly if gentle handling is encouraged from a young age.

We are here to help! Please ask us for further information on dental care, correct feeding, vaccinations and general rabbit care. We are again offering a promotion on their annual vaccinations in September (saving £4.67 against the normal price). Call 01206 572173 for an appointment.

## Benefits of pet neutering

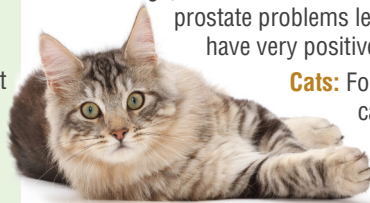


There are many medical and management advantages of neutering your pet. These procedures entail a general anaesthetic and hospitalisation for the day.

A thorough pre-op assessment is made by qualified staff and surgery performed to remove the ovaries and uterus in a female and testes in a male. Pets are discharged later in the day with guidance given in post operative care sheets and at an appointment with a nurse or a vet.

**Dogs:** For female dogs the benefits of spaying are very clear. If left entire, the chances of them developing mammary (breast) cancer and life-threatening infections of the uterus are very high. Also, you don't have the practical considerations of them being in season (heat) every six months; when they will bleed, be attractive to the advances of a male dog and be more likely to run away to find a mate.

In male dogs, castration eliminates testicular cancer and makes prostate problems less likely. Also, for some it can have very positive effects on their behaviour.



**Cats:** For both male and female cats, neutering is imperative! Female cats can come into heat as often as every two weeks during the breeding season (which occurs in the spring and summer months) and will endlessly try to escape and mate with local tom cats.

For un-neutered females coming into heat – if they go outside (even just once!) they will in all likelihood get pregnant and add to the cat population, which already hugely outnumbers the available homes. They will also be vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases, wounds from the males they mate with and they are also very likely to develop mammary cancers and uterine infections.

For toms, castration is equally important. Entire male cats wander and fight, putting them at risk of being run over by cars, getting nasty infected fight wounds and exposing them to deadly infectious diseases.

For further information on neutering your pets, please contact a member of our practice team.



**Rabbits** will generally benefit from being neutered. Both sexes make much better, calmer pets and are also much more likely to live peacefully with others. Entire rabbits will often fight, even if related. Also over 80% of older female rabbits may suffer with, and often die from, uterine cancer.

Images: Warren Photographic



## Choosing the ideal diet for your pet!

When choosing a diet for your pets, the range and variety of diets can be over-whelming. So how do you decide which is best for your pets? The good news is that specially balanced *life-stage* diets are available for every stage of your pet's life, from tiny puppies and kittens to senior pets.

**Puppies and kittens** require specially formulated diets with higher (but not excessive) levels of energy, protein for muscle development and essential fatty acids for a healthy shining coat. **Adult pets**, with their major growth phase behind them, require a balanced diet to keep them healthy, but with lower levels of many of the nutrients mentioned above. **Senior pets** are vulnerable to many health issues, and specially formulated diets typically contain supplements to soothe arthritic joints and help heart, brain and kidney function.

If you are wondering about how to ensure your pet's diet is a perfect fit for them and their lifestyle, please come and speak to us – Karen (RVN) runs our puppy parties and Sarah (RVN) is our Senior Wellness nurse – both are only too happy to offer advice or to see you for a free of charge nursing appointment.



Ask about our loyalty scheme for kittens and our monthly promotions on routine procedures throughout the year.

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