



From left: Julian Hoad, Malcolm Field, Catherine Thorin, Silke Dohne and Wolfgang Dohne.

Food and a helping of CPD make perfect mix

THERE was a real gourmet flavour to a CPD event called **Apps and Appetizers** organised by the south-east region of the BSAVA.

Held at the Abinger Cookery School near Dorking in Surrey, vets Julian Hoad and Wolfgang Dohne spoke about smartphone applications for veterinary surgeons, while cordon bleu chef Catherine Thorin introduced delegates to the delights of French cuisine with her cooking – and tasting – demonstrations, which were suited to busy veterinary lifestyles.

The event, sponsored by Virbac, Merial, Ceva and VetDirect, was oversubscribed and proved a great success.

Mr Dohne, of Virginia Water Veterinary Clinic in Surrey, said: "It showed CPD events do not have to be confined to a conference room and can't be replaced by webinars."

Feline airgun injuries prompt regulation calls

A BVA survey has revealed four in 10 vets have seen cats with airgun injuries in the past year, prompting calls for tighter regulation.

The latest Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey found 41 per cent of companion animal vets had seen feline airgun injuries in the past 12 months, and one per cent had seen crossbow injuries.

The results come as Cats Protection launched its Manifesto for Cats, which seeks tighter regulations on airgun licensing.

In the survey, many vets told how animals had died of their wounds or were severely injured, including fractured limbs that required amputation and injuries to eyes that required enucleation.

Several vets pointed to an increase in owners presenting animals with airgun injuries during the school summer holidays.

"One answer is to encourage and promote shooting by young people in clubs and on ranges where they can be educated in a culture of safe use, accuracy and responsibility," one respondent said.

Other vets advocated more stringent measures, with one vet calling for a ban on airguns. BVA president John Blackwell said: "These findings are distressing for both owners and vets.

"Whether the perpetrator is an adult or child, it is wrong to shoot indiscriminately at cats in this way. We urge the police and local authorities to take action where they can and ask parents to think carefully about the consequences of allowing their children access to a weapon that can kill someone's pet and inflict serious injury."

Cats Protection's advocacy manager Jacqui Cuff said: "We know from monitoring the press last year that nearly five cats a week were reported to have been killed or injured by airguns in the UK – and this is likely to be an underestimate.

"We also held a three-month public consultation to determine the most important issues for cat welfare and 98 per cent agreed this is one of them, which is why we're including it in our manifesto."

RCVS' mental health initiative gets £1m boost

THE RCVS will invest £1m in its Mind Matters Initiative over the next five years in a bid to address mental health within the profession.

Poor mental health is argued to be one of the biggest issues within practice and the initiative aims to encourage a culture that is better equipped for psychological well-being.

The operational board approved an investment of £100,000 for the first year of the Mind Matters Initiative, with a view to a similar amount per year for the following four years.

The Veterinary Surgeons' Health Support Programme, now under the Mind Matters umbrella, will receive a similar boost to its annual funding by the RCVS for the next five years.

The scheme, launched in December, has already actioned a Vet Helpline, part of the Veterinary Benevolent Fund, meaning callers are put through to a person instead of leaving a message. A confidential email service was also launched.

Pan-profession

Speaking to *Veterinary Times*, RCVS chief executive Nick Stace stressed tackling veterinary suicide would be a crucial part of the scheme.

He said: "The initiative will address mental health and well-being issues over an initial five-year period, and reducing veterinary suicides will be an important part of this. This is a serious programme of work and an investment of £1m over five years."

Neil Smith, RCVS vice-president and chair of the Mind Matters Initiative, has previously told *Veterinary Times*: "Mental health is a significant issue for the profession. Most of us

report by

Trudi Gibson

trudigibson@vbd.uk.com
01733 383561

have experience of colleagues or ourselves having problems. The Mind Matters Initiative is a pan-profession project, and I am very pleased there is active engagement from across the various veterinary associations and stakeholders."

The initiative will include five streams of activity – researching occupational stress factors; communication activities to generate a positive environ-

ment to playing a key role in food security. However, goals of zero veterinary suicides, less stress, and improved work-life balance were also highlighted.

Mr Stace added: "There were no issues that came up at the Vet Futures group meeting that were not already on the radar, but we are only in the first phase of the project. In terms of zero veterinary suicides, this came from the list of ambitions, but not the final goals for the project. These final agreed objectives and how we reach them will be published in the final Vet Futures report."

Surveys

BVA president John Blackwell added: "All issues are on the table and, although some of these ambitions may have been mentioned before others, it is too early to say which ones take priority. However, Vet Futures will soon be carrying out a survey, using the BVA's survey panel, to try to establish what the wider profession feels the main priorities should be, based on the list developed at the Vet Futures group meeting."

The Royal College will also conduct a second, larger survey of vets and VNs in 2015, which will feed into the final Vet Futures report. Professionals are also invited to roadshow events in April, May and June, where members will be encouraged to contribute their ideas. A Vet Futures presentation will be held at BSAVA Congress on April 11.

Mr Stace concluded: "It's our future and we need to shape it together – so I'm keen for as many members of the profession as possible to get involved."

For more information on Vet Futures, visit <http://vetfutures.org.uk>

It's our future and we need to shape it together – so I'm keen for as many members of the profession as possible to get involved.

ment for discussion of mental health; support for existing services such as Vet Helpline; training and guidance for those working or living with someone who needs assistance; and consider how issues of mental health may be addressed.

Vet Futures is a joint venture between the RCVS and BVA that aims to help the profession prepare for and shape its own future. It's also looking to tackle mental health and held its first group meeting in January 2015.

In the first of three phases, Vet Futures challenged a team of vets, VNs and animal owner groups to identify goals for the profession to achieve by 2030. Discussion was wide-ranging, from the issue of one health



Special treat for special arrivals

KEEPERS at ZSL Whipsnade Zoo have welcomed seven rockhopper penguins to their new home in Bedfordshire, by throwing a housewarming party with a difference.

■ **RVN IMPACT**
RCVS will host... at the legal iss... veterinary nur... implications fo... team. The free... by the Webina... place on Febru... and will be pre... Kissick, chairm... Mrs Kissick wil... impact of the r... RVNs and disc... 3 of the Veteri... means for all n... veterinary tea... what procedur... be delegated to... nurse. A recor... available for th... listen live. To p... up at www.th... com/rcvs

■ **RESEARCH**
The University... offering veteri... the chance to... doing research... labs. The taste... to provide prac... experience of... in a research e... to inspire the... career in rese... The Wellcome... will be offered... basis, with suc... receiving six m... research exper... date for applic... 6. For more inf... www.bristol.ac...

■ **KOALA SENSE**
that became a... after it was res... Australian bus... released back... Jeremy was on... injured in the... bush fire in So... received secon... thickness burn... It became an o... after social me... from the Austr... Wildlife Resear... Organisation a... two million vie...

■ **STUDENT A**
A final-year ve... has scooped a... campaigning t... welfare. Notti... Adeel Khan wo... Chancellor's Ac... in recognition... to improve stu... successfully ca... have street lig... a busy, but un... was president... market that w... and Farming A... UK market.