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Volume 46

## SURVEY REVEALS LOWER PAY FOR NEW GRADUATES

**SALARIES paid to newly qualified vets have fallen by almost four per cent in the past year, according to the SPVS' latest salary survey.**

The survey, which gathered responses from more than 1,900 veterinary professionals between October and November 2015, showed the median salary paid to new graduates is lower by 3.7 per cent.

It also highlighted the gender pay gap in the profession, with men on full-time salaries paid 16.7 per cent more than their female counterparts.

Peter Brown, the SPVS' lead on benchmarking and surveys, said: "Overall, there is little movement in salaries, but this hides a growing gap between the salaries of new graduates and vets qualified 10 years or more.

"This reflects an earlier survey of our members showing a shortage of more experienced vets, suggesting this is a reflection of the marketplace.

"If we are to attract more young people into the profession, it is not encouraging to see a fall of 3.7 per cent in the salaries of those starting their first job."

Mr Brown added: "It is disappointing to report no further progress in closing the gender pay gap in the profession."

### Widening gap

In total, 87.5 per cent of respondents were full-time, working a median 40-hour week. Women comprised 66.5 per cent of all respondents and 79.7 per cent of part-time workers.

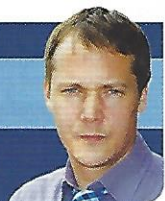
Salaries were analysed by years qualified, work type, gender and geographical location, with only marginal changes from last year's survey.

The report also highlighted a widening

report by

**James Westgate**

jameswestgate  
@vbd.co.uk  
01733 383547



pay gap between newly qualified vets and those with more experience. While newly qualified vets have seen salaries fall, those with 10 or more years' experience have seen wage increases of between 2.6 per cent and 10.8 per cent.

This suggests a lack of vets with experience is increasing the wages for this group – a positive development, according to BVA junior vice-president Gudrun Ravetz.

"According to the Vet Futures report, the three factors with the greatest influence on the choice of career path for students and graduates are intellectual satisfaction, location and a supportive environment," she said.

"While fair salaries obviously impact new graduates, we're hearing money is not the be-all and end-all for vets starting their careers.

"The increase in salaries for vets qualified 10 years is encouraging, as those who are staying in the profession are finally starting to see their wages ebb away at the pay of their contemporaries in the medical and dental professions."

Earlier this year, an action group was formed to help implement the 34

recommendations in the Vet Futures report, which was published by the BVA and the RCVS last November. This group is working on an action plan, which will be released on 4 July in London.

Mrs Ravetz said: "The Vet Futures Action Group will be specifically looking into the issue of diverse and rewarding veterinary careers, with the aim of addressing the profession's concerns about salaries, and ensuring vets can be confident they will be fairly rewarded for the work they do, alongside other aspects that make up a rewarding career, such as opportunities for diverse careers options and career development."

### Lagging behind

The survey also showed, despite the reported fall in starting wages, salaries for newly qualified vets compare favourably with newly qualified medics and dentists; however, more qualified vets still lag behind.

A vet qualified between 11 years and 15 years, for example, can expect to earn from £44,194 to £65,217 (median £48,750), compared with £55,412 to £83,617 for doctors and £55,000 to £110,000 for dentists (source: www.prospects.ac.uk).

Most respondents worked in small animal practice, which showed a five per cent increase in median salary to £43,200.

Salaries rose by 10.3 per cent in equine practice to a median of £47,449; by 3.9 per cent in mixed practice to £42,791, and 0.1 per cent in large animal practice to £44,184.

Vets in industry earned a median £64,870, up from last year's £59,106.



"Smurf and Shrek" and, inset, "Shrek" being bathed.

## Kittens 'coloured in' with marker pens

**STAFF at a cat rescue centre are appealing for help identifying the "sick yobbs" who coloured in the white patches on a pair of kittens.**

The black and white animals, which had been defaced with blue and green permanent marker pens, were found by police and taken to Bradford Cat Watch Rescue Centre (BCWR) in West Yorkshire.

From there, they were taken to see vets as staff were unsure a risk posed by the possibly toxic ink.

The kittens are believed to be only four weeks to five weeks old, and the rescue centre's spokesman Katie Lloyd said they were already "very poorly" when she said she was "utterly shocked and disgusted" at the action of the defacers.

The kittens – named in the national press as "Smurf and Shrek" – were carefully bathed to safely and systematically remove the ink following advice from the Veterinary Poisons Information Service.

An appeal has been made for donations to help care for the kittens at the centre. For details, visit <http://bcwr-kittens.co.uk>

**3.7%**  
↓  
median salary for new graduates

### Salaries of experienced vets, doctors and dentists

Dentists: **£55,000-£110,000**

Doctors: **£55,412-£83,617**

Vets: **£44,194-£65,217**

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