

President's overview



Welcome to the BVA's new-look, bitesize annual report.

I'm pleased to report that this year we have continued to grow. Not only in our membership numbers but also in our reach, by developing the services we offer to our members and increasing our policy, lobbying and communications activities on behalf of the profession.

In 2011 we are celebrating World Veterinary Year—the 250th anniversary of the first veterinary school in Lyon, France and the birth of our profession.

The theme for my presidential year has been 'Vets in a changing world' reflecting the political and economic challenges and opportunities we face as a small but significant profession.

This year every UK member gained direct representation on our Council—the Association's overarching policy body—through the election of regional representatives. And all members can now network and influence our policies through the new online community platform.

The new structure ensures that when we lobby parliamentarians and civil servants across the UK and Europe, it is the collective voice of our 12,000+ members that carries weight.

I hope you enjoy this overview of the activities we undertake. There are many ways to get in touch with us (all of which are detailed in this report) and we would be delighted to hear from you.

Harvey Locke BVSc MRCVS, President

Improving member representation



Following an 18-month review of Council, to ensure it was fulfilling its representative function, a new structure was adopted in March 2011.

The most significant change was a new structure for representation across the UK with 12 elected regional representatives covering nine regions in England, plus representatives for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The representatives were elected by members via online and postal voting. The election attracted an impressive 30% member turnout.

The 12 newly elected regional representatives are a vital link between members on the ground and our policy and member services activities. For the first time all UK members have a directly elected representative on Council.

Members can contact their regional representative via the BVA community (see left).

→ www.bva.co.uk/councilchanges

 **bva community**
Network • Debate • Influence



Member networking

In March 2011 we launched the BVA community, an online networking site exclusively for members. It's the first port of call for members, whether discussing clinical issues, networking, or making sure their voice is heard at Council.

→ www.bva.co.uk/community

Working with others to achieve common goals

A particularly effective way to lobby parliamentarians is through coalitions of organisations with a common aim.

In December we helped to establish the Microchipping Alliance. Under the chairmanship of the Dogs Trust the Alliance brings together veterinary expertise, the major rehoming charities, enforcement agencies, and others to campaign for the compulsory microchipping of all dogs.

On the controversial issue of dangerous dogs we continue to work with other key organisations through the Dangerous Dogs Act Study Group (DDASG). In June the DDASG joined forces with the RSPCA and representatives of the police to lobby Defra Secretary of State Caroline Spelman for new legislation.

In April we joined *The Independent* newspaper's campaign to ban the use of wild animals in travelling circuses along with the RSPCA, Born Free Foundation and Captive Animals Protection Society (see right).



Looking to the future

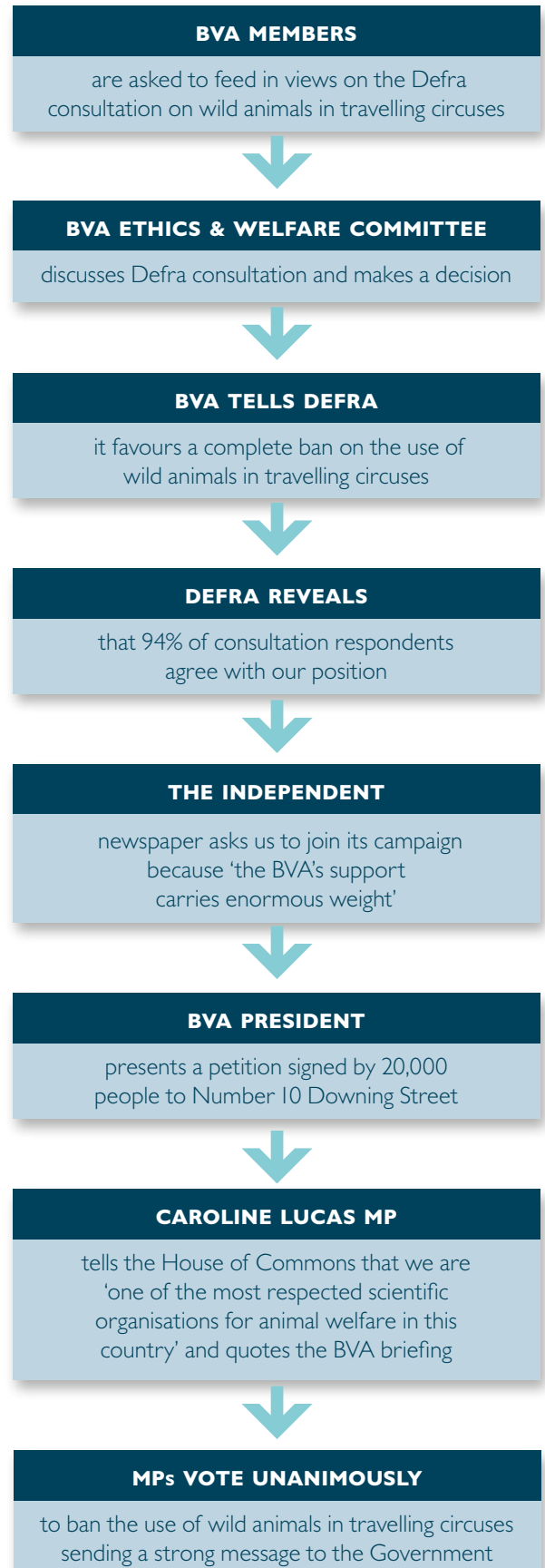
The veterinary profession faces a number of challenges, including the changing needs of clients and the increasing role of paraprofessionals.

To address some of these issues and provide leadership for the profession we set up the Veterinary Development Council (VDC), which met for the first time in January.

Under the chairmanship of Professor Richard Bennett the VDC brings together representatives of the profession, the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), government, veterinary education, and industry (producers, processors and retailers).

➔ www.bva.co.uk/vdc

The lifecycle of a policy issue: wild animals in travelling circuses



Giving vets a voice in the corridors of power



As the voice of the UK veterinary profession one of our key functions is to represent the profession's viewpoints to policy makers.

Our Officer team leads in this function directed by the expert input from BVA's committees, Council and individual members.

Throughout the year the Officers have met with Defra Secretary of State Caroline Spelman (pictured above with Harvey Locke) and Ministers Jim Paice and Lord Henley on several occasions to discuss policy on bovine TB, pet travel and other issues.

We also secured early meetings with the incoming ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland following the elections in May 2011 to establish strong links between the veterinary profession and the new governments.

We held four successful lobbying dinners in Westminster, Stormont, Holyrood, and Cardiff, with guests from across the agri-food industry, animal health and welfare organisations, parliamentarians and the media.

Cabinet Secretary Richard Lochhead MSP described the June Scottish dinner as 'an integral part of the farming social calendar'

and told guests, 'The BVA has shown leadership on a range of issues and the Scottish Government values that.'

We have also responded to a number of consultations on behalf of members on issues including tackling bovine TB, veterinary medicines regulations, mandatory annual screening for BVD, the Farming Regulation Task Force, the EU Animal Welfare Strategy, dog breeding, and many more.

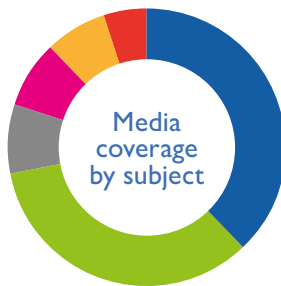
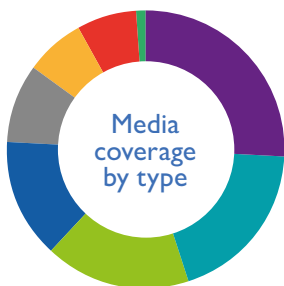
➔ www.bva.co.uk/lobby

See pages 4–5 for an overview of the key lobbying issues this year.

Read all about it

Every week our media office fields enquiries from local, national and trade media journalists seeking the expert opinion of the veterinary profession. The charts below give a snapshot of the BVA's average monthly media coverage showing the type and subject matter of our 130 media hits per month.

➔ www.bva.co.uk/news



- National & regional print/online 26%
- International and other 9%
- Large animal 38%
- Profession (including education) 8%
- Veterinary print/online 19%
- Science/medicine print/online 7%
- Companion and wild animal 34%
- Other 7%
- Companion animal print/online 17%
- Regional & local broadcast 7%
- Medicines 8%
- Public health 5%
- Large animal print/online 14%
- National broadcast 1%

Social networking

The world is embracing social media to communicate quickly and efficiently online. This year the BVA and BVA Publications joined Twitter to get news and information directly to members and opinion formers.

Our bitesize messages travel around the globe in seconds reaching a rapidly growing online veterinary audience.

Veterinary Record and *In Practice* can now be found and 'liked' on Facebook—a fun way for veterinary surgeons to hear the latest news and research hot off the presses.

Follow us on Twitter @BritishVets and @VetRecord and 'Like' us on Facebook



Scotland

This year we:

- Worked closely with BCVA to advise the Scottish Government on plans to eradicate Bovine Viral Diarrhoea (BVD).
- Provided a veterinary pathologist to give expert oral evidence to the Scottish Parliament Rural Affairs and Environment Committee on our position on snaring during the scrutiny of the Wildlife and Natural Environment (Scotland) Bill.
- Contributed to the review of veterinary surveillance and the Expert Forum tasked with looking into responsibility and cost sharing.

Northern Ireland

In October we worked with the North of Ireland Veterinary Association (NIVA) to provide written and oral evidence to the Agriculture and Rural Development Committee on:

- The Dogs (Amendment) Bill—securing the compulsory microchipping of all dogs and arguing for the removal of breed-specific legislation.
- The Welfare of Animals Bill—supporting the principles behind the historic legislation and making the case for the banning of tail docking in all puppies, with no exemptions for working dogs.

Wales

This year we:

- Lobbied Assembly Members (AMs) to support proposals to eradicate bovine TB that included a targeted, humane, government-led badger cull alongside stricter cattle measures. During the debate Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM said, 'The British Veterinary Association understands the science of animal welfare.'
- Lobbied the Welsh Government to enact proposed regulations to tackle puppy farming. The proposals, drawn up by the BVA and other organisations, tighten the thresholds where a dog breeding licence is required and introduce compulsory microchipping of dogs on licensed breeding premises.
- Established the BVA Welsh Branch, under the presidency of Bob Stevenson, to strengthen our voice in Cardiff Bay.

Across the UK and Europe the BVA is representing the views of its members directly to policy makers. Here is a brief overview of some of the issues we have been working on this year.

Europe

- In April we joined forces with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) to successfully lobby MEPs on the AGRI Committee to oppose attempts to remove the right of vets to dispense veterinary medicines.
- We worked closely with MEPs on the ENVI Committee to support proposals for the compulsory labelling of meat and meat products from slaughter without stunning. Unfortunately the plan was opposed by the European Commission but we will continue to push for better animal welfare labelling.
- Working with Defra, British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA), Veterinary Ireland and the FVE, we lobbied for the UK to maintain tapeworm controls to protect against the introduction of *Echinococcus multilocularis* (EM).

UK/Westminster

- The BVA and British Cattle Veterinary Association produced a robust scientific response to the Government's consultation on bovine TB giving Defra the confidence to announce plans for a targeted, humane badger cull.
- Working with a number of organisations we kept up the pressure on the Government to introduce new legislation to replace the failed Dangerous Dogs Act and to introduce the compulsory microchipping of all dogs.
- We strongly opposed plans by the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) to introduce a new medicines category for extended administration (POM-EA). We kept up the pressure and in June the VMD dropped its plans.
- To safeguard the future of the veterinary profession we raised the profile of the financial difficulties faced by veterinary students with Higher Education Minister David Willetts and Defra Secretary of State Caroline Spelman. Mrs Spelman took our concerns to a meeting of the Cabinet.



Strengthening student ties

Strengthening our relationship with veterinary students and the universities has been a focus this year.

We have been working closely with the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS), helping to create a structure that can better develop joint policy positions and respond to matters arising as one. In addition to continued presence at its committee meetings, regular joint officer meetings are now scheduled so that both organisations work together to promote the best interests of the UK and Ireland's 4,500+ veterinary medicine students.

We have also worked closely with AVS to raise the profile of

the financial difficulties faced by veterinary students. We have been in contact with Higher Education Minister David Willetts to make the case for additional help for vet students and we fed into the report on Access to Education by Simon Hughes MP.

This year we've made some changes to our student membership package so that all students now have access to both our journals, *Veterinary Record* and *In Practice*. In conjunction with the UK vet schools, we have introduced a scheme whereby every first-year veterinary medicine student in the UK will get that year of membership free. The aim of the changes has been to enhance student learning while not impacting on their wallets.



© Pip Watkins

Canine Health Schemes changes prove popular

The BVA/Kennel Club Canine Health Schemes continue to go from strength to strength.

In 2010 over 35,000 certificates were processed through the Schemes; for elbow dysplasia (3,291), hip dysplasia (10,693) and hereditary eye disease (21,784).

In January 2011 the Schemes began accepting digital radiographs on CD or DVD in addition to conventional radiographs. This has proved to be very popular with practices and over 30% of submissions are now received in a digital format.

➔ www.bva.co.uk/chs

Our graduate support

We are committed to supporting our recent graduates and have two ongoing initiatives which aim to ease their transition into working life.

The Young Vet Network comprises additional support and services for all members in their first eight years after qualification. The key benefits are a free copy of the *BVA New Graduate Guide*, free personal accident insurance, discounted national and online CPD and a discounted membership fee.

The Graduate Support Scheme (GSS), set up by us, is run through our territorial divisions and provides support face-to-face through facilitated meetings. In the meetings recent graduates are encouraged to collectively find solutions to problems, both clinical and employment, which they might encounter in practice. The GSS is available to non-members as well as members to ensure access to support for all recent graduates.



➔ www.bva.co.uk/youngvetnetwork

Developing our journals

Our journals *Veterinary Record* and *In Practice* continue to go from strength to strength under the British Medical Journal's management. January 2011 saw the launch of the new-look *Veterinary Record* which boasted not only a new design but new features such as the popular careers section.

In Practice has developed to include a useful question and answer feature against articles, which members can use to assess their self-directed CPD hours. Both journals also have an improved web presence.

We were delighted to welcome Professor Sandy Trees to the newly

created post of Veterinary Editor in Chief. Sandy started the position in August 2011 and we have no doubt that he will continue to enhance the standing and reputation of *Veterinary Record*.



Access to discounted CPD

During 2010–2011 we developed our CPD package to further meet the needs of members. We're working with the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) to put on a programme of one-day clinical refresher days which are aimed primarily at those returning to work after a career break. The days have been a great success, with many sold out, and delegates rating the courses as excellent.

Our other successful partnerships this year include: 2011 Congress, with BSAVA providing two days of small animal clinical CPD; free equine evening CPD with the Animal Health Trust; and discounts on selected CPD from Improve International and RVC for our Young Vet Network members.

We've also developed a programme of non-clinical business and personal development courses, including employment law, leadership and motivation, marketing, and planning for the last 10 years in practice.

Going forward we are looking to further our CPD package both with partners and our own courses in order to provide discounted CPD to members to cover them at every stage in their careers.

➔ www.bva.co.uk/events



Mediation and legal representation

We understand that legal disputes, be they employment related or personal, are costly and stressful. That's why we offer free legal support to our members as part of the membership package.

Our legal helpline has always been popular, averaging 600 phone calls a year from members on professional and personal issues.

In March 2010 we added two new legal services to the package, a free mediation service and free legal representation for employee members should the case progress

beyond mediation and into the courtroom.

In 2010, the advice line took calls from 594 BVA members, with subjects that ranged from disputes over contracts of employment to maternity rights and property law. Of those calls, 6% were passed on to the mediation and/or representation teams.

We are proud to be able to provide this service to members as part of a comprehensive support package.

➔ www.bva.co.uk/legal

New employment resources

One of the key aims of the Members' Services Group (MSG) is to develop services and information that improve the working lives of our members and so, through MSG, we have developed a number of new resources to provide guidance on employment issues for both the employee and the employer.

Members can now access information on personal development reviews, including preparation forms and guidance on how to get the most from the review.

We've also developed information on Working Time Regulations, exit interviews, and pre-employment health checks.

Free to members

The new resources complement the existing contract of employment template and guidance, and the extramural studies guidance for both practices and students. All the resources are available to members to download free of charge from our website.

➔ www.bva.co.uk/employment

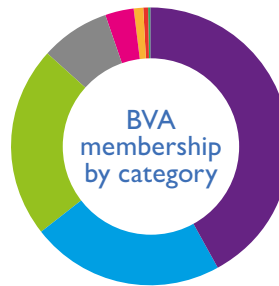
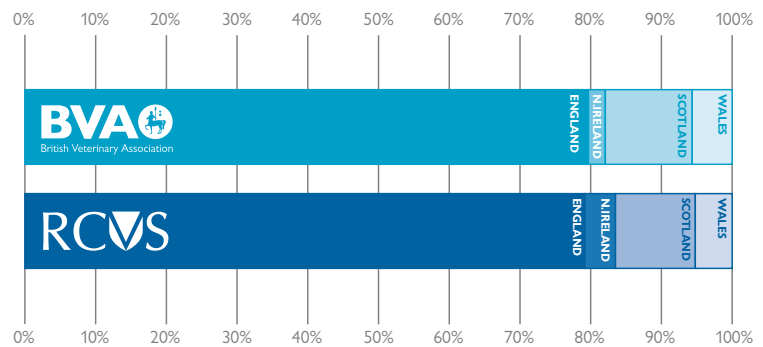
Membership

We reported a membership figure of 12,398 to our Board at the end of 2010 having achieved growth of 1.1% over the preceding 12 months.

Beneath the headline membership figure the demographic profile of the membership is interesting to record.

- Almost 5,000 of our members are in their 20s, more than in any other similarly measurable age range.
- Females now make up 56% of our membership, with the average age of a female member being 33 and the average age of a male member being 48. The changes in the demographic of the UK veterinary profession are being reflected in our own membership.
- The UK-based membership is well spread, almost mirroring that of the RCVS (RCVS Facts 2010), showing that we are achieving our goal of reaching members across the UK.

BVA/RCVS UK member geographical spread



- Standard* 42%
- YVN* 22%
- Students 22%
- Concession 8%
- Joint* 3%
- Associate Members* 1%
- Other 1%
- Life Members <1%

*Figures include distribution of group scheme members

Financial results

For the year ending 31 December 2010 BVA made a surplus of £374,401. There were unrealised investment gains of £23,070 meaning that the total recognised gains for the year were £397,471.

Income

Total income last year increased by 18%, to £4,884,045, primarily due to an increase in returns from BVA's publications. Following the significant investment made during 2009 when BVA's publications were transferred to BMJ, 2010 has seen a 40% increase in revenue from publications. Income from the Canine Health Schemes increased by 8% and there was an increase in income from courses and sponsorship as BVA invested further in vets.tv and expanded its CPD course provision. Whilst BVA membership continued to grow, subscriptions income fell back by 2.6% as a new, combined, reduced student membership rate was introduced and the recently introduced group category continued to grow.

Expenditure

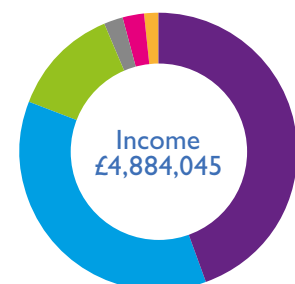
Total expenditure increased by 2.7%. Excluding the 2009 exceptional transfer costs of publications, there was an

underlying increase in the cost of sales of just under 10%, which is less than the corresponding 18% increase in revenue. Administrative expenditure increased by 7.8% with business rates up 16% and an increase in depreciation charges associated with a significant increase in capital expenditure. This latter investment was made in embedding vets.tv into BVA's website, expanding online payment options and converting the ground floor at BVA into meeting rooms.

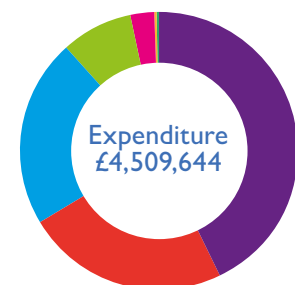
BVA made £4,000 donations during the year to veterinary-related charities and there was a taxation charge of £6,738.

Reserves

The reserves increased during the year by £397,471 to a year end total of £8,420,171. If one excludes the tangible assets then the resulting working capital reserves are £1,040,959.



- Publications 44%
- Membership subscriptions 37%
- Canine Health Schemes 13%
- Membership services and sponsorship 2%
- Congress and sundry courses 2%
- Investments and miscellaneous 2%



- Publications—cost of publication sales 43%
- Overheads and support costs 23%
- Membership subscriptions, services and policy 22%
- Canine Health Schemes 8%
- Congress and sundry courses 2%
- Investments and miscellaneous 1%
- Tax and donations 1%

A copy of the full set of statutory accounts is available to all members, on request, from BVA headquarters. They also appear in the members-only section of the BVA website at www.bva.co.uk