Pride in our profession

I’m proud to present this annual report to you at the end of an extremely busy and productive year that has seen a lot of change and progress for BVA.

Being BVA President has been the greatest experience of my veterinary career, in large part because of the opportunity I have had to travel around the UK meeting fellow veterinary surgeons with a shared passion for our profession.

From my first national broadcast interview, to having a meeting with the Secretary of State, to chairing politically sensitive meetings, it’s been a series of firsts for me – some challenging, but all fascinating and enjoyable. The following pages are full of information about our collective achievements, and I’m particularly proud of the way BVA has responded so fully to what our members told us they wanted from their Association in our 2012 research.

We welcomed David Calpin, our new Chief Executive, to BVA in November and he is doing a fantastic job implementing a change programme to enhance and improve the way BVA works for its members as the voice of the veterinary profession and a provider of valued member services.

On the key issues affecting the profession we continue to take the lead. My personal highlights have been bringing key stakeholders together to take a view on the increase in veterinary undergraduate places at home and abroad; maintaining a broad consensus on the sensitive issue of the badger cull in England to influence Defra policy; and working with RCVS to arrive at a good outcome on the new Royal Charter to secure the historic step of regulation for the veterinary nursing profession.

This year we have been implementing a Visibility Strategy to raise the profile of BVA and the veterinary profession, and I have genuinely enjoyed the hours I’ve spent in TV and radio studios championing vets as a trusted profession that brings real value to animal health and welfare.

Thank you to the BVA Board, committee and Council members, BVA staff, and all of our members for helping us achieve so much.

Best wishes

Robin Hargreaves, BVA President 2013-2014

BVA is changing and improving

In my first few months at BVA I’ve been on a steep learning curve getting to know the great team here, meeting lots of inspiring vets and getting to grips with the key issues facing the veterinary profession.

You don’t need me to tell you that this is a time of rapid change. My job is to ensure that BVA keeps pace with and reflects those changes, and that we have the capability and resources we need to be effective.

We’re listening to your feedback and looking to improve – building on our traditional strengths but also working hard to be more engaging, more supportive and more influential.

It’s important that we keep growing our membership, so that our voice carries even more weight in the corridors of power.

We’re keen to throw off our slightly stuffy image and be more modern, open and inclusive. We want to make it easier for you to engage with us and have recently launched our new website which has a fresh new look, is more user-friendly and more personalised.

We’re also keen to build relationships with our key partners and stakeholders, including our divisions and branches.

As a not-for-profit organisation we exist to serve our members, which means any money we make is reinvested in representing and supporting you. That’s what we’re here for, and we never forget that.

David Calpin, Chief Executive
**Prioritising the issues**

BVA is the voice of the veterinary profession which means we are the go-to organisation on a vast range of animal health and welfare and veterinary issues. To make sure we focus on what matters most to our members we undertook a policy and professional issue prioritisation exercise using member research and the new BVA survey panel.

We’ve identified our top ten priorities which are:

- Non-stun slaughter
- Bovine TB
- Responsible dog ownership
- Veterinary surveillance
- Antimicrobial resistance
- Public perception of the profession
- Regulation and paraprofessionals
- Increase in veterinary undergraduates
- Tendering for veterinary services
- Veterinary wellbeing

But we will remain flexible enough to be able to lead on emerging issues.

**BVA in the news**

As part of our Visibility Strategy, this year we redoubled our efforts to increase BVA coverage in the national and regional media to put the veterinary voice at the centre of major debates on animal health and welfare.

We have nearly doubled our media coverage from an average of 162 media hits per month last year to 308 this year, and we have increased our national regional coverage share from 44% to 61%.

We've added 3,000 followers to our @BritishVets Twitter account (up to 8,000) and continued to develop our engagement on @BVACPD.

www.bva.co.uk/news

**Shaping the future of the profession**

News that more universities are planning to open their doors to veterinary undergraduates raised a number of serious concerns amongst our members. In October 2013 we brought together the key stakeholders in the debate to air those concerns and explore ideas to secure a brighter future for the UK veterinary profession.

The education forum identified actions for BVA, RCVS, government, and others, and BVA is working with all stakeholders to take them forward. Most importantly we will work together to ensure that veterinary students of the future understand the changing veterinary marketplace.

**Leading voice for animal welfare: spotlight on non-stun slaughter**

This year BVA hit the headlines – and the front page of The Times – with our long-held position on non-stun slaughter without stunning. This kickstarted a major public facing campaign to call for an end to non-stun slaughter in the UK.

The campaign generated a huge amount of veterinary and public support: it was backed by a number of animal welfare charities, including the RSPCA; our HM Government e-petition attracted 70,000 signatures in just two months; BVA Officers carried out interviews on all of the major TV and radio news channels; the campaign hashtag #stun4slaughter was shared across social media; and members wrote to their MPs using our template letters. Although there's more work to be done we succeeded in raising the profile of this important welfare issue to the extent that it even featured in Prime Minister’s Questions.

**A constructive relationship with the RCVS**

This has been an historic year for the veterinary profession as a new Royal Charter was agreed in July shaping the role of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and providing for the regulation and recognition of the veterinary nursing profession.

At times it was a test of the relationship between BVA and the veterinary regulator, but by working together, discussing and finding areas of compromise, we were able to support the new Charter and were pleased that the College listened to our members’ comments and concerns.

We also provided written and oral evidence on 24/7 emergency care, the removal of post-nominals from the Register, and proposals for the RCVS fellowship. These issues have helped to define the different roles of BVA and the RCVS and demonstrated how we can work together constructively but also challenge one another when necessary.

**Lobbying across the UK and Europe**

BVA’s lobbying events attracted a record number of politicians this year, as we increased our efforts to engage with MEPs and parliamentarians in the devolved nations of the UK.

The Association year began with the then Defra Secretary of State, Owen Paterson, addressing the first BVA Members’ Day, and our dinners featured keynote speeches from Defra Minister Lord de Mauley, Northern Ireland CVO Bert Houston, Convener of the Scottish Parliament Cross-Party Group on Animal Welfare Christine Grahame MSP, and Shadow Minister for Sustainable Communities, Energy and Food Llyr Gruffydd AM.

In April the President spent a day in Brussels meeting MEPs to represent the profession’s views on antimicrobial resistance, animal health visits, and the movement of puppies across Europe.
BVA represents members at all levels of government across the UK and in Europe. Through meetings with politicians and civil servants, consultation responses, lobbying events, media appearances, and high profile campaigns we aim to bring about political and legislative change. Here are some highlights from the Association year:

**Westminster/UK**

- Launched a campaign to end non-stun slaughter attracting 70,000 signatures to our e-petition in just two months
- Lobbied successfully to secure real improvements to Defra’s plans for the second year of the pilot badger culls in England
- Represented the veterinary profession at an all-party group hearing on antimicrobial resistance
- Met with Defra Secretary of State and Ministers to discuss bovine TB, non-stun slaughter, antimicrobial resistance, and wild animals in travelling circuses
- Joined the dog subgroup of the associate parliamentary group on animal welfare (APGAW) to work on a dog welfare strategy for England
- Secured new legislation on dog control that takes a more preventive approach
- Lobbied the Treasury and Defra to ensure local veterinary practices were recognised in the tender process for Official Veterinarian services

**Scotland**

- Co-hosted the ‘Celebrating Scotland’s Animals’ Week with members of the Cross-Party Group on Animal Welfare in the Scottish Parliament to secure support from MSPs, including the First Minister and the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Affairs and the Environment
- Lobbied party leaders on the BVA’s non-stun slaughter campaign
- Joined members of the Microchipping Alliance at the Scottish Parliament to promote compulsory microchipping and registration of all dogs

**Wales**

- Met with the Minister for Food and Natural Resources to discuss non-stun slaughter and the role of veterinary surgeons in delivering the bovine TB eradication strategy and veterinary surveillance
- Met with Assembly Members in the Senedd to brief them on BVA’s position on a wide range of issues, and met the new chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee
- Joined members of the Microchipping Alliance at the National Assembly for Wales to promote compulsory microchipping and registration of all dogs
- Lobbied party leaders on the BVA’s non-stun slaughter campaign

**Northern Ireland**

- Met with the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development to discuss the veterinary involvement in disease eradication, the proposals for a new veterinary school, and dog breeding
- Developed a position on the test, vaccinate or remove policy on bovine TB
- Lobbied party leaders on the BVA’s non-stun slaughter campaign

**Europe**

- Lobbied MEPs to support the written declaration on welfare at slaughter, and provided template letters for members
- Worked with the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) to lobby MEPs to support or oppose amendments to the EU Animal Health Regulation
- Worked with FVE to develop policy positions on exotic pets, antibiotic resistance, and veterinary education across Europe
- Reviewed BVA’s activity in Europe through the European Strategy Working Group to develop and implement an action plan
- Visited Brussels to directly lobby MEPs on antimicrobial resistance, the EU Animal Health Regulation, and pet travel
New website to better connect with members

In August 2014 the BVA website was re-launched as part of the ‘BVA Connect’ IT investment project to deliver a new integrated website and member database. This will enable us to deliver an improved and more personalised service to our members.

By updating preferences on the new website, members are able to tailor the content to their needs, ensuring the most relevant resources to them are also the easiest to find. This capability is underpinned by the integration of a new CRM database which has improved how we record members’ contact with us so that we can better understand our members as individuals, and therefore better serve their needs.

www.bva.co.uk

BVA community

As part of the BVA Connect project the BVA community has been refreshed and fully integrated within the new website which means we are able to highlight the discussions taking place so members can have their say more easily on the issues that matter most to them.

The functionality of the BVA community has also been improved with the introduction of anonymous posting, allowing members to discuss more sensitive concerns.

www.bva.co.uk/community

BVA at the London Vet Show

London Vet Show 2013 saw BVA Congress hosted at the event for the first time. It was also the first year that BVA farm and equine clinical streams were run at the show.

The clinical streams proved so popular that there was often standing room only in the lecture theatres. Holding BVA Congress at the show enabled us to widen the debate on key issues affecting our profession to reach a larger audience than ever before, whilst the members-only BVA Careers Fair provided support and advice for members at all stages of their careers.

www.bva.co.uk/londonvetshow

Celebrating vets at BVA Members’ Day

2013 saw the launch of BVA Members’ Day incorporating the BVA Awards Ceremony and AGM, following our decision to move BVA Congress to the London Vet Show.

The inaugural BVA Members’ Day, held at the prestigious City Hall in Cardiff, was a great success with a keynote speech by the Rt Hon Owen Paterson MP, then-Defra Secretary of State.

BVA Members’ Day is an opportunity for us to host a celebration of our profession and for guests to be inspired by the achievements of fellow members.

www.bva.co.uk/membersday
You said, we did.

We have been making improvements to the BVA community and running more ‘meet the members’ events, and we’re developing a social media strategy.

Over 1,000 join BVA survey panel

As part of BVA’s Visibility Strategy we launched the BVA Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey panel in May, inviting members to undertake regular surveys to share their thoughts, opinions and experiences of working in the profession in the UK.

We were delighted that nearly 1,100 members joined the panel and completed the first survey giving us statistics and news stories to promote positive messages in the media to improve the public perception of vets.

www.bva.co.uk/voice

Recent graduate support undergoing transformation

As an Association we remain committed to doing more to engage and support our young vet members. Together with our recent graduate representatives and the AVS President we have identified two key areas where the Young Vet Network needs to move forward – over the next year we will be working to improve the pastoral support offered to young vets and to increase the engagement of recent graduates in current affairs.

www.bva.co.uk/youngvetnetwork

Supporting the future of our profession

Over the past year we have continued to work closely with our student division to ensure the voice of the student body is heard on key issues affecting them.

In January 2014 we launched free membership of The Webinar Vet for final year student members as part of our ongoing relationship with Anthony and his team.

The BVA President attended a number of student events, including AVS Congress and the Lancaster Final Year Student Seminar weekend, to engage with student members and express the importance of students getting involved in BVA.

www.bva.co.uk/students

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www.bva.co.uk/students

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BVA CPD

In 2014 we launched our first multi-species national CPD programme with the support of our CPD Group, offering over 40 courses across the country.

The programme included our unique blended learning initiative in which delegates receive pre-course reading and post-course support to supplement the course itself. We’ve also introduced basic, intermediate and advanced level courses and have run practical days alongside our theory-based events.

BVA CPD continues to go from strength to strength and we look forward to building on this success over the coming year.

www.bva.co.uk/cpd

Improving public perceptions of the profession

In our 2012 research project our members asked us to help them with the challenge of educating and raising awareness amongst the general public about the realities of veterinary practice.

In response we have produced a range of client leaflets covering issues such as the cost of veterinary care and the importance of getting your pet vaccinated. All of these resources are available to download free of charge.

We’ve also produced a short, animated video on the cost of veterinary care and the benefits of pet insurance for members to share via social media and their practice websites.

www.bva.co.uk/public

BVA journals

This year we decided to renew our contract with BMJ, who will continue to publish our journals for the next five years, including Veterinary Record and In Practice.

Our new open access online journals, Veterinary Record Open and Veterinary Record Case Reports, have both seen significant growth since their launch in 2013. Veterinary Record Open had 57 submissions within the first 12 months, whilst Veterinary Record Case Reports had 99.

2014 also saw the launch of a new-look In Practice and closer collaboration between the journal and BVA CPD.

www.inpractice.bmj.com
www.veterinaryrecord.bmj.com

Launch of debt recovery service

We know debt recovery is an area of concern for our members which is why this year we launched a partnership with Quest Debt Recovery Ltd to offer significantly reduced rates for BVA members.

Quest specialises in the recovery of bad debts, slow paying customers and disputed accounts in the veterinary sector. They act with professionalism and sensitivity, balancing client retention against recovery of fees. The service is already proving to be a popular new benefit for members.

www.bva.co.uk/quest

Re-launch of Lloyd & Whyte Professional Indemnity Insurance

Lloyd & Whyte re-launched its PI policy in 2013 after reviewing and enhancing the product to include a panel of experienced veterinary surgeons to give clinical advice when required.

Available to BVA Group members and existing Lloyd & Whyte customers, the PI scheme is able to offer substantial savings by arranging insurance on a group basis.

www.bva.co.uk/lw

Improving canine health

The Canine Health Schemes, run by BVA and the Kennel Club in partnership, continue to provide dog breeders with the option of testing for certain inherited conditions, to enable them to breed only from dogs that have fewer or no signs of inherited disease.

• Hip and Elbow Schemes
  • 80% of all submissions for the Hip and Elbow Scheme now arrive on disc. Our focus is now on taking this forward and launching online submission for all Schemes

• Eye Scheme
  • Turnaround time for submissions for the Eye Scheme is now down to two weeks
  • An online tool to help the public find their nearest eye panellist is in development to launch in 2015
  • 12 different inherited conditions are currently certified under the Eye Scheme

• Chiari Malformation/Syringomyelia Scheme
  • 11 different breeds have been graded
  • Scans have been submitted from 25 different centres

www.bva.co.uk/chs
For the year ending 31 December 2013
BVA made a surplus of £149,454

**Income**

Total income last year increased by 3.7%, to £5,327,513. BVA’s membership continued to grow, up 4.6% to 14,525 members, leading to a 4.5% increase in revenue. Income from the Canine Health Schemes increased by 6.6%, whilst there was a 2.3% increase in revenue from BVA’s publications.

**Expenditure**

Total expenditure increased by 4.1% to £5,178,059. The cost of providing membership services increased by 3.7%, publications by 4.1% and the Canine Health Schemes by 3.2%, whilst the cost of BVA CPD courses and BVA at the London Vet Show increased by 9.0% due to CPD courses now being provided nationwide. Administrative expenditure increased by 4.6% and included £23,000 donations to veterinary related charities. Capital expenditure totalled £102,871 including an update to the community platform as well as external maintenance to BVA’s headquarters in line with the leasehold requirements.

**Reserves**

In addition to the surplus of £149,454 there were unrealised investment gains of £43,205. Total reserves increased during the year by £192,659 to a year-end total of £10,209,313. Excluding tangible assets, the resulting working capital reserves are £1,957,559.

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.

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**MEMBERSHIP**

Total membership for 2013 was up by 4.6% to 14,475, as reported at the December 2013 Council meeting.

The table below provides a breakdown of key membership figures for 2013:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members at the start of the year</td>
<td>13,845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New members joining that year</td>
<td>2,268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members renewing</td>
<td>12,249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention rate</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members leaving</td>
<td>1,596</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members at the end of the year</td>
<td>14,475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net gain</td>
<td>630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net gain (%)</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**New members**

Achieving membership growth each year is incredibly important to the Association. It is through our membership base that we are able to continue to offer enhanced membership benefits and services, and can speak with a strong voice when representing the veterinary profession.

2013 saw strong growth in the Group and student membership categories, representing 16% and 29% of the total membership figure respectively.

The end of year membership figure (at 31 December 2013) was 14,525.
You said, we did.

We launched a UK-wide campaign to end slaughter without stunning and we have been lobbying hard in Europe and the UK to safeguard veterinary medicines.

Our Year in Numbers

1,950
BVA client leaflets downloaded

BVA Officers travelled 15,888 miles over the year to meet members. That’s 26 times the length of the UK.

1,300
CPD hours earned by delegates

1,093
Members signed up to BVA survey panel

47,712
Canine Health Schemes tests carried out

1,071
Hours of free legal support for members

58 applications for 17 committee vacancies

74
UK politicians attending BVA lobbying events

28
Mentions in UK parliamentary debates

1,989
BVA members at London Vet Show 2013