Introduction

The British Veterinary Association is the largest representative body for the veterinary profession in the UK. We guide and support our members throughout their careers, from vet school through to retirement, and speak up for them on the issues that matter most. We are the only UK veterinary association that looks after the interests of all vets in all disciplines, and our membership continues to grow year on year.

But the veterinary profession is changing, and so must we. If we are to continue to grow we must respond to our members’ needs, adapt to the changes in the profession, and help the profession meet society’s changing expectations.

In 2012 we carried out our largest ever member research survey ‘Your BVA, Your Say’. The results gave us a very clear steer on what our members want from us and we have been working hard to respond.

Members very clearly wanted BVA to speak up for the profession more in the media and with the general public, so we have worked hard to increase our visibility, including through a new survey panel to generate news stories, which has resulted in a doubling of BVA’s media coverage. Members also wanted to see improvements in the way we communicate so we have invested in a more responsive website and member database. And members wanted access to high quality, low cost continuing professional development (CPD) so we have developed a national CPD programme.

We have achieved a lot but there is still more to be done. This Strategic Plan sets out an ambitious programme to drive the association forward over the next three years.

We are committed to growing our membership to ensure we can continue to be a strong voice for vets and deliver valued services that support veterinary surgeons throughout their careers.

If we are to be successful we know that we must remain relevant to our existing and future members. So we will continue to engage with as many members as possible, in as many ways as possible, so that we are able to understand and respond to their needs.
Our vision
A strong and respected veterinary profession working to improve animal health and welfare for the benefit of society.

Our mission
To be the leading body representing, supporting and championing the whole UK veterinary profession.

Our values
Our work is guided by our values:

- We are responsive to members’ needs and put our members at the heart of everything we do.
- We believe the veterinary profession is stronger when we speak with one voice and so we work collaboratively with our divisions and branches to represent the interests of the whole UK veterinary profession.
- We seek to influence public policy and debate by being proactive in our campaigning and we strive to develop and promote evidence-led policies.
- We are open, honest and transparent in our dealings with our members, staff and stakeholders, and we respect diversity and promote equality in everything we do.
- We are innovative in providing benefits and services to support our members and provide value for money.
- We demonstrate leadership within the veterinary profession and in representing the profession in wider society.
Being an effective voice for the veterinary profession

- Grow our membership to strengthen our influence
- Engage our members in new ways
- Develop a proactive campaigning agenda and an overarching strategy to promote animal welfare
- Review our governance structures to reflect best practice
- Increase our visibility to promote the positive value of the whole veterinary profession

Delivering improved value and support for our members

- Review our membership benefits, categories and rates to ensure we deliver value for money to members at every stage of their careers
- Maintain and strengthen our journals
- Provide more personalised communications to members
- Develop our CPD programme and resources
- Improve services to support members in the early stages of their careers

Building relationships and working in partnership

- More clearly define the relationship with our divisions and branches through our governance review
- Work constructively with other veterinary organisations including the RCVS, AWF and VBF
- Engage with the wider veterinary community
- Work with our partners to develop our services
- Work with the medical professions to advance the One Health agenda
- Work through international partners to promote the interests of the UK profession

Ensuring we have the resources we need to be effective

- Grow our membership and increase the revenue from our journals
- Investigate new business opportunities
- Control our costs tightly and deliver best value for our members
- Ensure BVA remains an attractive place to work
- Undertake a property review to ensure our HQ building meets our requirements

OUR MISSION:
To be the leading body representing, supporting and championing the whole UK veterinary profession

OUR VALUES:
Influential, Proactive, Representative, Open, Honesty and Transparency, Innovative, Leadership, Evidence-led, Diversity and equality, Value for money, Responsive, Leadership, Open, Honesty and Transparency, Innovative, Leadership, Evidence-led, Diversity and equality, Value for money, Responsive

A strong voice for vets

OUR VISION:
A strong and respected veterinary profession working to improve animal health and welfare for the benefit of society
Strategic aims 2015–2017

1 Being an effective voice for the veterinary profession

The veterinary profession is relatively small but BVA ensures that it has a strong and effective voice on matters of veterinary policy, animal health and welfare, and public health across the UK and Europe. We also act as a champion for the veterinary profession – promoting the good work of veterinary surgeons and challenging negative perceptions. We are an influential partner for governments, government agencies, and politicians at all levels, and we are the first source of informed opinion on veterinary issues for the media and policymakers. But we know that members want us to do more and be even more visible.

We will:

• Continue to grow the membership to strengthen our influence as the leading representative body for the UK veterinary profession

• Engage with our members in new ways, including through greater use of social media

• Develop an overarching strategy to promote animal welfare, both through our informed advocacy and our support for members as animal welfare advocates

• Review our governance structures to ensure we are able to represent our members’ views more effectively, to keep pace with changes in the profession and to reflect current best practice (see box below)

2 Delivering improved value and support for our members

BVA aims to support our members through every stage of their careers, from vet school to retirement. Our members generally rate us as good value for money and the most important benefits and services that we offer are also the most highly rated. In 2014 we invested in a new website and member database to enable us to improve the way we communicate with, and support, our members.

We will:

• Conduct a full review of our membership benefits, categories and rates to ensure we deliver value for money and tailored support to our members at every stage of their careers, from vet school through to retirement

• Maintain and strengthen our journals Veterinary Record and In Practice, which remain our most popular member benefit, and grow our new online journals Vet Record Open and Case Reports

• Develop a proactive campaigning agenda on our priority issues covering veterinary policy, animal health and welfare, and public health (reflecting our members’ priorities – see box opposite) across the UK and Europe

• Increase our visibility through the media, our online presence, and our lobbying activities, and develop our public facing role to promote the positive value of the whole profession in society

• Work with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) and a wide range of stakeholders through the ‘Vet Futures’ initiative to provide leadership and develop an action plan to help the profession shape its own future

Governance Review

We will conduct a review of our governance to ensure we have a fit-for-purpose structure that:

• is more effective, efficient, transparent and representative

• takes into account modern principles of good governance and draws on current best practice in similar organisations

• ensures BVA is keeping pace with changes in the veterinary profession and wider society

• clarifies the relationship between BVA and our specialist and territorial divisions

• adequately reflects the devolution of power in the UK

Our priority issues for 2015

In response to member feedback we have identified our current top ten priority issues for 2015 as:

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

This list of priorities will be reviewed regularly to ensure we can continue to lead on emerging issues of importance to members.
Building relationships and working in partnership

Strong relationships within and beyond the veterinary profession are vital to our success. Within the BVA family there are many specialist and species-specific organisations providing expert advice and opinion to strengthen the veterinary voice. Within the wider veterinary community we work together for the good of the profession. And we work closely with external organisations both to deliver high quality services for our members, and to lobby collectively for improved animal health and welfare and public health.

We will:

- More clearly define the relationship between BVA and our divisions and branches through our governance review, for the benefit of the whole UK veterinary profession
- Work constructively with the RCVS to provide leadership for the profession, but be prepared to stand up for our members when necessary
- Work closely with the Animal Welfare Foundation (AWF) to promote animal welfare and with the Veterinary Benevolent Fun (VBF)/Vetlife to support veterinary health and well-being
- Engage with the wider veterinary community, including the UK veterinary schools, the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA), the Veterinary Practice Management Association (VPMA) and the Veterinary Defence Society (VDS), to support the profession
- Work with our partners to develop our services:
  - With BMJ to further strengthen our journals and their online presence
  - With the Kennel Club to review and promote the existing Canine Health Schemes and develop new schemes
  - With London Vet Show to develop and increase BVA’s presence and profile at the Show

Ensuring we have the resources we need to be effective

We will only be able to fulfil our mission if we have the resources and capability we need to do our job effectively. Our income relies in large part on our publications and membership subscriptions, and with fluctuations in the advertising market we will look at alternative sources of income to ensure we can continue to respond to members’ needs. We will also tightly control our costs to ensure we can deliver the services that members require for the best value. We have a small but effective staff team working across the organisation and have recently implemented a new structure to deliver BVA’s objectives following a number of staff changes in the past year.

We will:

- Ensure we have the income we need by continuing to grow our membership and by working with BMJ to increase the revenue from our journals
- Investigate new business opportunities
- Control our costs tightly in all areas and seek to deliver best value for our members by regularly reviewing our major contracts
- Review and update our staff policies and procedures to ensure BVA remains an attractive place to work with opportunities for our staff to develop their skills
- Undertake a property review to ensure that BVA’s headquarters building meets our requirements and delivers best value for our members
Join us and make us stronger

www.bva.co.uk