A year of achievements

Our most important achievements, as identified by our members, have been:

**Vet Futures**

With fantastic engagement and input from vets and vet nurses (VNs), we launched the Vet Futures report with the RCVS in November 2015, setting out six ambitions to enable the profession to take charge of its own future.

Our Vet Futures Action Group then worked on converting the report’s 34 recommendations into 24 actions to take forward over the next five years.

This hugely ambitious project culminated in the Vet Futures Summit in July 2016 to launch the Action Plan and engage with vets and VNs from all sectors of the profession, who pledged their support to deliver the actions.

www.vetfutures.org.uk #VetFutures

**Campaigning on animal welfare**

We have been increasingly active in promoting the veterinary profession as an authoritative voice on animal welfare – as highlighted by the launch of our landmark animal welfare strategy in February 2016.

Welfare at slaughter, specifically, continues to be a priority issue. We have lobbied parliamentarians across the UK and kept the issues in the headlines. We met with the Defra Minister; we publicly called for mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses with unrestricted access to footage for OV, and we sparked a debate on poultry slaughter in the House of Lords.

www.bva.co.uk/News-campaigns-and-policy

**Modernising**

A major focus of our year has been making sure our Association is modern and transparent so that we remain relevant to our members and future members.

Through an in-depth review of our governance we are changing the way we elect our President, improving our day-to-day working with the specialist divisions, and changing the way we make policies – mainstreaming ethics and welfare and making sure we work with divisions to access the most up-to-date evidence.

We’ve also revolutionised the way we communicate. We’ve increased our social media engagement; we have more blogs and bloggers; and we deliver more online debates.

President’s welcome

I’m delighted to present our annual report, summarising BVA’s activities and successes over the past 12 months.

My Presidential theme has been vets in the human-animal age, recognising that we live in the so-called “Anthropocene” – a period when human activities are having unprecedented impact on the climate and environment.

Animal welfare is a top priority for members and I was proud to launch the BVA animal welfare strategy, which will ensure we meet society’s, and our members’, expectations to advocate for the best interests of animals.

Supporting members is key and BVA has lent its full support to the recently formed British Veterinary Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and others (BVLGBT+) group, as well as developing the Young Vet Network. A key political moment was, of course, Brexit. During the coming negotiations BVA will work hard to ensure the voice of the veterinary profession is heard and we will retain an outward looking and inclusive perspective.

**We will keep striving to ensure BVA makes the world a better place for vets and a better place because of vets**

All of the above will be taken forward alongside the Vet Futures project.

When I became President I said that we will keep striving to ensure BVA makes the world a better place for vets and a better place because of vets. Over the past 12 months we have set in place the foundations to achieve this. None of it would have been possible without the support of our members, Board, committees, staff and fellow Presidents from across the divisions. I’d like to say a huge thank you to you all.

Sean Wensley, BVA President 2015-16
A message from
THE CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Another solid year, with membership growing year-on-year and a healthy financial position.

I’m pleased to have overseen another solid year at BVA, with membership growing again year-on-year and a healthy financial position.

The Board has continued to ensure that BVA has a clear strategy and remains financially sustainable, while investing for the future and managing risk.

This year the Board has approved investment in the membership strategy, the Young Vet Network and the Canine Health Schemes.

Through the governance review we have worked hard to make BVA more modern, open and transparent, and to build relationships with our key partners. The Board itself has been refreshed and now better reflects the membership in terms of gender balance.

The property review has been a major focus this year, as we look to find a new home for BVA that better meets our requirements as a professional body in the 21st century.

I’d like to thank members and my colleagues on the Board for their continued support, and the Chief Executive and his team for their sterling efforts.

Derek Williams, Chairman of the Board

Over the past 12 months we’ve continued to drive change at BVA to ensure we are a modern, confident and effective professional body. Through our governance review we’ve redesigned our committee structure to make it more agile, and we’ve worked to strengthen the relationship with our specialist divisions.

As always we have focused on being an effective voice for the whole UK veterinary profession. Our visibility continues to increase in terms of media coverage, helped by our Voice member survey panel and a stronger presence on social media.

We’ve been investing in a digital project that will enable online submissions to our Canine Health Schemes by the end of 2016, in partnership with the Kennel Club. Over the coming year we’ll be providing more support for the Young Vet Network, as well as delivering on our commitments in the Vet Futures Action Plan.

We’re a small organisation with a big agenda, and we value your feedback.

Thank you for supporting us, and a big thank you to the BVA staff who work so hard all year round.

David Calpin, Chief Executive
Speaking up during times of change

Strengthening our devolved Branches
As more legislative powers are devolved, our Branches are becoming increasingly important. Ahead of the 2016 national elections we published manifestos for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The policy recommendations we set out provide clear pathways towards improving animal health and welfare, and promoting the role of vets, and our Branches are successfully using their manifestos to engage with ministers and other parliamentarians. We are also supporting our Branches to play a key role on government stakeholder groups, and to represent the profession in the media.

Assessing the impact of Brexit
Within days of the EU referendum result the BVA President and BVA Branch Presidents had written to the Secretary of State at Defra and Ministers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland requesting statements of reassurance that non-British EU vets and VNs who are currently living, studying or working in the UK will be able to continue to do so. BVA will retain an outward looking and inclusive perspective, working with international partners including the Commonwealth Veterinary Association (CVA), Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE), International Veterinary Officers Coalition (IVOC) and World Veterinary Association (WVA). We are gathering members’ feedback and working to assess the implications of Brexit for the veterinary profession.

Social media
We have gained an additional 2,000 followers on Twitter, 2,000 followers on Facebook and 740 followers on LinkedIn during the year.

BVA blog
Since its launch in October 2015, there have been 46 posts with a combined total of 18,909 unique views. The most popular posts have been:
- Becoming a vet…is it worth the student debt? by Becky Marr
- As a young vet, I empathise with junior doctors, by Nicky Mansell
- Striking a healthy work-life balance as a vet, by Becky Marr

www.bva.co.uk/blog

Our top posts

14,802 VIEWS

Great to see @benfogle on side about balls being a good alternative to throwing sticks in @Telegraph yesterday. ow.ly/YkABq

236 AM - 17 Apr 2016

47,984 VIEWS

British Veterinary Association - BVA

Use this quick-thinking tool to help you safely transport your dog in a car: ow.ly/yVKBq

10:00 AM - 10 Sep 2015

11,464 VIEWS

BVA

Countrywide walk in the fine weather this weekend? Please keep your dog on a lead around livestock. ow.ly/uZfGw

12:00 PM - 15 Aug 2016
Media coverage

In the first six months of 2016 total media hits reached 2,301 and the average number of media hits per month was 384, an increase of 10% on 2015, which in turn was an increase of 27% on 2014.

www.bva.co.uk/news

Survey successes

Our Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey statistics helped to generate hundreds of national, regional and trade news stories, including coverage for members on our panel. Stories generated from survey statistics include:

- Veterinary nurses bringing joy to our loved pets, Daily Express
- Borough vets offer advice for hazard-free Christmas, Solihull Observer
- Scared of losing the one you love? Get them microchipped, Daily Telegraph

www.bva.co.uk/voice

‘Veterinary View’

Following the success of 2015’s ‘Veterinary View’ programme, we’ve again partnered with ITN Productions in 2016. The collaboration has produced another series of short, current affairs-style films covering issues including antimicrobial resistance, preventive pet healthcare and varied veterinary careers.

www.vets.tv

OUR POLICY PRIORITIES

Each year we focus on priority areas inspired by member feedback and agreed by BVA Council. Our policy priorities for this year have been:

Welfare at slaughter

We hit the headlines with our call for mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses, with footage made accessible to vets. Our campaign on poultry slaughter regulations was the subject of a House of Lords debate, helping to keep the pressure on ministers on non-stun and welfare at slaughter.

Bovine TB and endemic disease eradication

Our bovine TB briefing at Westminster to explain the disease and various control methods attracted a lot of the new intake of MPs, and a briefing for Welsh Assembly Members is planned. We’ve joined the BVD Free campaign and have worked with our specialist divisions to identify priority endemic diseases across species.

Dog health and welfare

Ahead of compulsory microchipping coming into force, our advice, guidance, posters and social media messages were well received and shared. We worked with the Kennel Club to encourage more reporting of conformation altering surgery and caesareans, and developed a strong position statement on aversive training devices.

Veterinary medicines and AMR

We met with the O’Neill team to input into the government’s major review of antimicrobial resistance (AMR) to push for global action and evidence-based measures to reduce antimicrobial use, and to champion the good practice in the veterinary profession. As European legislation develops we have been inputting views and amendments at every stage.

Responsible pet ownership

We gave oral evidence alongside BSAVA to a House of Commons select committee inquiry on the Animal Welfare Act calling for better tools for enforcement. We’ve gained excellent media and social media coverage for our key messages on the five welfare needs, hitting the front page of The Times on the dangers of throwing sticks for dogs.

Promoting the value of the profession

We highlighted the charitable and pro bono work carried out by vets using statistics from our Voice survey gaining fantastic local media coverage. Our new ITN films profile the veterinary team and alternative veterinary careers, demonstrating the wider roles of vets in society.

Improving veterinary wellbeing

We are actively engaged in the profession-wide Mind Matters Initiative, led by the RCVS, and have supported the relaunch of Vetlife. We have developed the Young Vet Network, worked with the Association of Veterinary Students to identify issues amongst students, and supported the newly formed BVLGBT+ group.

Veterinary workforce issues and career support

Our new workforce issues working group examined existing research and current issues to develop a research brief to help us better understand workplace concerns. In the aftermath of the EU referendum BVA called for the rights of EU vets and VNs working and studying in the UK to remain.

Surveillance

We lobbied to retain the surveillance centres threatened with closure in Scotland, and supported the development of a veterinary science and surveillance hub in Wales. Through our journals we have increased the dissemination of surveillance data in large and small animal practice.

Global issues

Our One Health working group successfully engaged with human medics and environmentalists to scope plans for a UK One Health coordination group, in line with the Vet Futures Action Plan. Through FVE we championed the veterinary role in sustainability and food security.

www.bva.co.uk/policy

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www.bva.co.uk/policy
Supporting our members

Young Vet Network
This year we increased our support for members who have recently graduated or who are in the early stages of their careers. We know this period is often stressful, with negative impacts on wellbeing and career satisfaction.

Our efforts centred on reviving the support we provide to the Young Vet Network groups. There are several groups active across the UK, run by volunteer facilitators. These offer peer support and CPD to young vets in their local areas.

We now provide a central point of contact for these groups, assistance with promotion and administration, and help with running events. In the coming months we aim to build on this work by providing more support and by encouraging new groups to form where required. This will ensure that as many young vets as possible have access to much-needed peer support.

www.bva.co.uk/youngvetnetwork

Meeting members
Almost 2,000 members attended the London Vet Show in 2015 and we had the chance to meet many of them at the BVA stand. It was the first year our Equine stream was planned in partnership with BEVA, alongside our regular BVA Congress, BVA Career Development stream and Farm stream.

The third BVA Members’ Day was held in Edinburgh and celebrated member achievements as well as welcoming the new Officer team. This year, BVA Members’ Day will be held in Bristol on 22 September.

www.bva.co.uk/londonvetshow
www.bva.co.uk/membersday

Photo competition
In 2016 we ran our inaugural photo competition giving members the chance to showcase their talents. We received 404 entries across two categories - You and your work and The wonderful world of animals.

The judging panel, which included Stefan Rousseau, Chief Political Photographer for the Press Association, selected photographs by Karen Coumbe and Stephen Powles as the winning entries.

Egyptian fruit bat in flight,
Stephen Powles, BVA member since 1983

Equine surgery – no foot, no horse,
Karen Coumbe, BVA member since 1996

www.bva.co.uk/youngvetnetwork

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www.bva.co.uk/londonvetshow
www.bva.co.uk/membersday

BVA In Practice CPD goes from strength to strength
By June 2016 we had already had as many delegates book to attend BVA In Practice CPD courses as in the whole of 2015. We have used the results of our 2016 CPD member research to plan our 2017 programme, with courses to be held in Scotland as well as Manchester, London and Bristol.

www.bva.co.uk/cpd

Canine Health Schemes
The Canine Health Schemes, run by BVA in partnership with the Kennel Club, continue to grow with a steady increase in overall submissions since last year.

Over the past 12 months we have celebrated the 50th anniversaries of both the Hip and Eye Schemes.

Updated statistics from the results of the Hip and Elbow Dysplasia Schemes were published this year and show a clear and sustained reduction in the incidence and severity of these conditions.

Online submission to the Schemes is due to be launched by the end of 2016.

- 89% of all Hip and Elbow Dysplasia Scheme submissions now arrive on disc
- 9,929 dogs had their hips scored over the past 12 months
- 5,435 dogs had their elbows graded over the past 12 months
- Over 15,180 dogs had individual eye examinations during 2015
- 559 Chiari Malformation/Syringomyelia Scheme scans have been graded

www.bva.co.uk/chs

ENTRIES
**Our finances**
For the year ending 31 December 2015 BVA made an operating surplus before tax and donations of £91,787.

**Income**
- Publications 43%
- Membership subscriptions 37%
- Canine Health Schemes 14%
- Membership services and sponsorship 2%
- CPD courses/BVA at the London Vet Show 2%
- Investments and miscellaneous 2%

**Expenditure**
- Publications - cost of publication sales 39%
- Membership subscriptions, services and policy 25%
- Overheads and support costs 24%
- Canine Health Schemes 8%
- CPD courses/BVA at the London Vet Show 3%
- Investments and miscellaneous 1%

**Reserves**
After allowing for tax, donations and unrealised movement on our investments, the year-end total reserves increased by £94,731 to just over £10 million, including working capital reserves of just over £2.3 million.

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

**Membership**
Membership grew by 3.5% between the December 2014 and December 2015 Council meetings.

The total membership figure recorded for December 2015 was 15,565.

**MEMBERS BY CATEGORY**
- Group scheme members 24.2%
- Main 23.5%
- Young Vet Network 12.0%
- Joint 1.7%
- Concession 6.4%
- Students 31.3%
- Honorary/Associate/Life members 0.9%

**GROUP MEMBERS BY CATEGORY**
- Group Main 67%
- Group Young Vet Network 28%
- Group Associate 3%
- Group Joint 2%

Continued growth in Group scheme members meant that in 2015 it overtook the Main membership category. Group membership could be broken down into the following individual categories:

At the close of 2015 the three largest categories of members were:
- 40% who were nine or more years’ post-graduation, and working in the profession
- 19% in their first eight years after graduation, and working in the profession
- 31% veterinary students