

Hello and welcome to the December Newsletter – hope you're all feeling festive!

Last month I attended a follow up on the pilot programme for the Animal Health Improvement Cycle (AHIC) – part of the SFS. Since that meeting, alterations have been announced, for example, there are now 12 universal actions rather than 17, although I think this has been achieved by merging rather than omission.

Headline alterations include:

- Alterations to the woodland maintenance and hedgerow maintenance actions – becoming more achievable and able to fit in to your system
- No longer a blanket 10% tree cover – now you are offered support to create a Tree Planting and Hedgerow Creation Opportunity Plan – needing to demonstrate progress by 2030. Far more flexible. May include retrospective planting.
- Animal health and welfare. Few tweaks including anonymity of your data, no need to record antibiotic use and lameness prevalence. Also work is being done to try to reduce duplication with other farm assurance schemes such as FAWL.

The AHIC pilot project is going well – I think this part of the SFS will really give benefit to farmers. It is very flexible and centres entirely around what you want to improve.

I also went to the Johnes Conference in Worcester – another very interesting day. It was mainly about the National Johnes Management Plan (NJMP) that all our dairy farmers need to do. The overall picture is good – infection levels nationally are now falling after ~8 years of the project – that is certainly the picture in our practice as well.

Headlines include:

- The NJMP must be done annually
- The 30 cow targeted screen is now replaced with a 60 random cow screen.

Johnes's is such an interesting disease. Eradication is impossible but the disease level can be reduced on every farm by assessing your risks and targeting a few alterations.

All that remains to say is that we all wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year. See you in 2025, enjoy some deserved time off over the holidays with family and friends.

Mary

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Inaugural intra-practice hockey match

November saw the first hockey match between 2 members of the practice; Sarah and Sian.

Since returning from her travels in September, Sarah has joined Penarth Ladies Hockey Club, playing in the defensive line for them. Sian, on the other hand, has been playing for Bridgend Ladies Hockey Club for a number of years, playing in midfield or attack. This means that they are in direct opposition during a match between the 2 sides.

The first of these match-ups was a close fought affair with Penarth going a goal in front, before Bridgend levelled the score 1-1. That's how the match finished, leaving honours even until the return fixture at Penarth in the New Year. We'll keep you posted.

Both players travel across the south of Wales for their away games, as far west as Milford Haven and as far north as Llandrindod Wells. Good to keep them busy on their weekends off.

As an aside, although not involved in this match, Russell is playing goalkeeper for the Bridgend Men's side. Imagine him fully kitted up in all the padding, charging out at you!



Lambing Course



Tom will once again be running the ever popular lambing course in the New Year. The course is aimed at newcomers to lambing, and is a mixture of lecture and discussion based learning with lots of practical teaching.

Previous attendees have given us great feedback about the day.

We do not have a time and date fixed yet but if you would like to register your interest and reserve a place on the waiting list then please give the office a ring on 01443 223751.

Christmas opening hours

23rd Dec: 8.30am -5.30pm

24th Dec: 8.30am-Early closure **

25th & 26th Dec: Emergencies only

27th Dec: 8.30am-Early closure **

28th & 29th Dec: Emergencies only

30th Dec: 8.30am-5.30pm

31st Dec 8.30am-Early closure**

1st Jan: Emergencies only

2nd Jan: Return to normal opening hours

** Ensure medicines are ordered and collected before 1pm due to early closing



Office opening hours (Standard)

Monday – Friday (Except Bank Holidays)

8.30am - 5.30pm

Emergency out of hours service

Weeknights 5.30pm - 8.30am

Saturday & Sunday all day