

#Breedto  
Breathe  
campaign



New-look  
Vet Record



Canine  
Health Schemes  
launched online  
submissions



45,515  
unique  
blog views



Over  
17,000  
members



New farm  
assurance  
graphic  
#ChooseAssured



3%  
membership  
growth



48%  
Facebook  
growth



Launched  
comprehensive  
surveillance  
position



# Annual report 2017/18

# President's welcome



I'm delighted to present this annual report to you summing up what has been a very busy year.

My Presidential theme is 'Team Vet, working together' and we've seen the theme in action throughout the past 12 months as vets have helped to secure key wins for animal welfare and demonstrated the significant value of the workforce across multiple spheres.

This has all, of course, played out against the backdrop of the UK's imminent withdrawal from the European Union. BVA has been working hard to ensure that our members are championed in political discussions and supported to navigate the challenges and opportunities that Brexit may present. We have set out recommendations to help the UK's veterinary workforce operate at full strength in the years ahead, and our most pressing call – to reinstate vets on the shortage occupation list – is gaining very positive political traction and support.



The year has also shown what can be achieved when Team Vet works together to improve animal welfare standards and campaigns for change where it is needed. Not long into my presidency, nearly 1,200 vets, vet nurses and students signed an open letter to the *Daily Telegraph* on animal sentience, calling on the UK government to place a duty on the state to have due regard for animal welfare in policy, and this was quickly answered with draft legislation showing the strength of our voice.

Key recent wins for animal welfare include new legislation on CCTV in slaughterhouses in England, UK governments' pledges to ban wild animals in travelling circuses, and commitments to review the use of electrical shock collars. 2018 saw us ramp up our 'Breed to Breathe' campaign to raise awareness of the serious health and welfare problems suffered by brachycephalic dogs and cats.

Team Vet is a relatively small profession, but also a diverse, compassionate and hugely influential one. It has been an honour to represent you and I'd like to thank the wider BVA team for their support – our members, Board, committees, staff and fellow officers from across the BVA Branches and divisions.

**John Fishwick, President**

# Planning for the future



This year we have been planning ahead to make sure we continue to grow our membership, strengthen our voice, and improve our support to members.

In January we published our new *Strategic Plan 2018–2020* setting out how we will build on recent successes, adapt to the changing profession, and provide leadership of the veterinary agenda.

We've already made great progress against our strategic aims by: ensuring the veterinary voice is heard on Brexit and proactively campaigning on the things that matter to our members; focusing on the workplace issues that members are concerned about; delivering on the Vet Futures actions and our animal welfare strategy; developing our regional strategy to support members throughout the UK; and launching our new-look *Vet Record*.

We've also significantly progressed our property project to transform BVA headquarters. We look forward to welcoming members to the refurbished building in early 2019.

Thank you to our members for making all of this activity possible, and thank to you our dedicated staff and volunteers for their hard work on behalf of the profession.

**David Calpin, Chief Executive**



## Social media

 **48%**  
growth

We increased followers by 6,532 to 20,114. Our most popular Facebook post, about the incoming legislation to stop animals being bred with health and welfare issues, received 430 reactions and almost 290 shares.  
[/BritishVets](#)

 **16%**  
growth



We now have 19,000 Twitter followers. The most popular tweet, raising awareness about the dangers of dogs in hot cars, received 134 retweets.  
[@BritishVets](#)

 **46%**  
growth

Following a huge increase of 5,702, we now have 10,634 LinkedIn followers.  
[/BritishVeterinaryAssociation](#)

## Read all about it

[www.bva.co.uk/news](http://www.bva.co.uk/news)



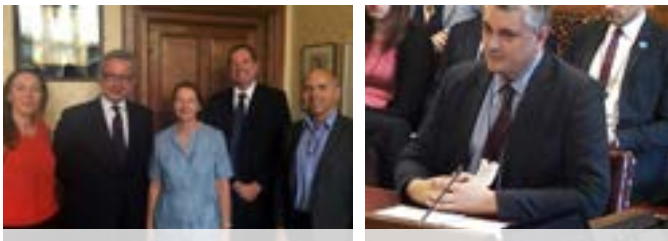
This year has seen another strong year for BVA in the media with coverage in national, regional and trade outlets, and BVA often leading the news agenda.

We were interviewed on BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme with Defra Secretary of State Michael Gove, on the issue of animal sentience. Our *Breed to Breathe* campaign gained widespread coverage from the *Guardian* and *Newsnight* to *This Morning* and *Newsround*, and inspired a BBC One documentary on the health issues facing British bulldogs.

During National Pet Month we teamed up with RCVS to launch a social media campaign encouraging people to register with a veterinary practice #petsneedvets.

## A record number of consultation responses

In the first six months of 2018, BVA responded to a massive 37 consultations; that's one every three or four days. Our evidence-based expertise is sought by governments, select committees and agencies when drawing up policy proposals and legislation.



### BVA blog

[www.bva.co.uk/blog](http://www.bva.co.uk/blog)



**23%**  
audience growth

Over the past year the BVA blog has had 45,515 unique views, which is an increase of 23% on the previous year.

The most popular posts have been:

**6,151**  
views

*Alabama Rot – behind the headlines*  
– David Walker

**3,420**  
views

*Brachy CT scans – the science behind the headlines* – Clare Rusbridge and Penny Knowler

**3,025**  
views

*The Spectator column was a 'joke' – so why is no one laughing?* – John Fishwick

## Thank you to our amazing volunteers

We couldn't achieve our successes without the help of our fantastic volunteers who bring their expertise and experience to our committees, working groups and Council. To support them in their roles, this year we ran our first ever BVA volunteer induction day and our first regional reps training day. Both events received very positive feedback and will help the wider BVA team do even more on behalf of our members.

### Engaging the whole profession in Vet Futures action

[www.vetfutures.org.uk](http://www.vetfutures.org.uk)

BVA, RCVS and Vet Schools Council are making great progress on the Vet Futures actions and this year we have engaged the wider profession to get involved. The Association of Vet Students set up the Vet Futures Student Ambassadors project and we launched a competition to find individuals and organisations who have been inspired by Vet Futures. Have you?



**VETFUTURES**

## The power of your Voice

[www.bva.co.uk/voice](http://www.bva.co.uk/voice)

Our *Voice of the Veterinary Profession* survey panel goes from strength to strength. This year the number of panellists has grown to over 1,800 and our survey results have shaped new policies and led to hundreds of pieces of media coverage.

Highlights of the survey from the year include: coverage on workforce issues including experiences of intimidation in practice and intentions to stay in the profession; widespread coverage on stats relating to chocolate poisoning and winter hazards; launching the 'Trust your vet' campaign to tackle antimicrobial resistance; and working with PDSA to provide the veterinary voice in the influential *PDSA Animal Wellbeing* (PAW) report.

## Change is good!

A year into our new committee structure we undertook a light touch review to find out how well it is working. The new structure received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with particular support for the new working group model. The top design criteria rated highly in the feedback were: provides leadership; allows for full and frank discussions; and ensures relevant expertise informs the policy making process.

# Campaigning across the UK

This year has seen a number of significant campaign wins for key BVA priorities across the UK. Our strong voice for the veterinary profession is only possible thanks to the support of you, our members.

## UK/England

Set up the Veterinary Capability and Capacity Project with Defra, RCVS and others to provide a strategic framework for tackling the veterinary workforce crisis.

Lobbied the Home Office and Defra for vets to be reinstated on the shortage occupation list, including working with RCVS to produce a strong evidence base to the Migration Advisory Committee.

Gave oral evidence to the Efra select committee inquiry on labour constraints to highlight concerns about the veterinary workforce.

Hosted a parliamentary briefing on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications directive jointly with BMA, the Royal College of Nursing, the Law Society and other professions affected by the legislation.

Gave oral evidence to a House of Lords committee inquiry on Brexit and biosecurity, and briefed the chair of the House of Commons select committee on international trade.

Lobbied successfully for new draft legislation on animal sentience, including signing up 1,200 vets, vet nurses and students to an open letter.

Gave oral evidence to the Efra select committee on dangerous dogs legislation.

Developed an evidence-based position on improving pet travel rules.

Launched our comprehensive position on veterinary surveillance which was warmly welcomed by CVOs and ministers.

Developed a veterinary vision for post-Brexit agriculture policy, which included securing a government commitment to defining animal welfare as a 'public good', and a position on sustainable animal agriculture.

The BVA Animal Welfare Strategy won a World Veterinary Association award for animal welfare.

Launched our evidence-based position on brachycephalic dogs to support the Breed to Breathe campaign, and developed a wider position on extreme conformation.

Launched our farm assurance infographic to help consumers understand the most common assurance schemes.

Worked with species specialist divisions to develop strong positions on priority animal welfare problems, such as disbudding of goat kids (with GVS), tail biting in pigs (with PVS), fin-nipping (with FVS), and the welfare of singly housed rabbits (with BVZS and BSAVA).

Secured legislation to introduce mandatory CCTV in slaughterhouses in England – a long-running campaign for BVA.

Hosted a photography exhibition in the House of Commons to demonstrate the value of the UK veterinary profession across a wide range of sectors.

## Scotland

Secured a ban on the use of wild animals in travelling circuses and a consultation on mandatory CCTV in Scottish slaughterhouses – two major BVA campaign wins.

Held a Brexit briefing for MSPs on the impact of Brexit on the veterinary profession and wider agricultural and animal welfare sectors in Scotland.

## Wales

Briefed Assembly Members (AMs) on the impact of Brexit on the veterinary profession, which led to a cross-party campaign of AMs calling for vets to be reinstated on the shortage occupation list.

Secured a government commitment to banning wild animals in travelling circuses.

## Northern Ireland

Gave oral evidence to the House of Commons Northern Ireland Affairs committee on the impact of Brexit on Northern Ireland and met with Veterinary Ireland to discuss border issues.

Contributed to the development of the bovine TB eradication strategy.



## Policy priorities 2017/18

[www.bva.co.uk/policy](http://www.bva.co.uk/policy)

Brexit

Vet Futures

Veterinary workforce

Veterinary surveillance

Farm assurance

Responsible pet ownership

Welfare at slaughter

# Member benefits

## BVA journals

➤ [www.bva.co.uk/professional-development](http://www.bva.co.uk/professional-development)

### Vet Record's new design

Following extensive user research, *Vet Record* went through a redesign in 2017. The team carried out a thorough review of the journal, which included 121 interviews with vets. In response, the journal's newly appointed editor Adele Waters and her team introduced a number of bold changes in terms of design and content.



The new-look *Vet Record* was relaunched in November 2017 at the London Vet Show, where it generated enthusiastic reader feedback.

*Vet Record* celebrated its 130th anniversary in July 2018, with a special edition on 'One Health'.

### PPA Awards

We are proud that our editor, Adele Waters, was shortlisted for the 'Editor of the Year Award' at the prestigious Professional Publishing Awards.

## Legal helpline

➤ [www.bva.co.uk/legal](http://www.bva.co.uk/legal)

BVA continues to offer crucial support to members through our legal services, which includes the legal helpline, mediation service, representation service, and support for members who are employers.

“ I had an employment query, which I needed advice on before I acted on the situation. You were able to confirm my own understanding and answered all my questions. The call back time was good and easily arranged around my busy schedule. I rate the service as 10/10.”

– Anonymous

The legal helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Members can speak to a qualified advisor who is a non-practising solicitor with at least five years' experience, and the call is entirely confidential.

## Seeking the views of members and non-members

We are undertaking research to understand how our members and non-members feel about BVA and what we do.

Feedback across the perceived role and impact of BVA, brand identity, membership offering, engagement and communication style is being examined. Interviews and surveys with vets and students across all sectors and career stages will provide a thorough insight into the veterinary community.

## BVA In Practice CPD

➤ [www.bva.co.uk/cpd](http://www.bva.co.uk/cpd)

31 CPD courses have taken place over the past year, with 425 delegates attending across the UK.

“ The speaker was excellent and I came away with some very useful notes which I can share with colleagues. One of the best CPD courses I have attended.” – 2018 delegate

## Meeting members

➤ [www.bva.co.uk/membersday](http://www.bva.co.uk/membersday) ➤ [www.bva.co.uk/londonvetshow](http://www.bva.co.uk/londonvetshow)

In 2017 we welcomed 100 members and guests to BVA Members' Day at W5 at Odessey in Belfast. In 2018 Members' Day is in York for the first time, at The National STEM Learning Centre.

As London Vet Show's education partner, we were pleased to welcome 5,517 delegates to the two-day event in 2017 at ExCeL. BVA continues to be responsible for clinical and non-clinical content featuring BVA Congress, the BVA Career Development stream, BVA Farm Animal theatre and BVA/BEVA Equine theatre.

In 2018 BVA exhibited at Vet Festival and Vets: Stay, Go, Diversify LIVE! for the first time, to raise the profile of the impact we have through our campaigning and policy work within the veterinary community.

## Canine Health Schemes



The Canine Health Schemes, run by BVA in partnership with the Kennel Club, had another busy year with a growing number of submissions made to the schemes.

Over the past 12 months

- Over 11,000 dogs had their hips scored
- Over 6,000 dogs had their elbows graded
- Over 21,000 dogs had eye examinations

### Online submissions

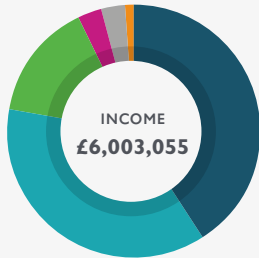
We have now launched online submissions for the Hip and Elbow Dysplasia Schemes, making them quicker and easier to use. The streamlined process means vets can upload images and information via the BVA website, replacing the current paper method.

“ The advent of the online submission process has been of real value both to the practice and for my clients. For the practice, it cuts out time and money wasted in posting the digital images to BVA then the certificates on to the client. For the client, it means a much quicker turn around and some results have been back within a couple of weeks. For the planet, it means no paper and more trees! Winner all around!”

Pauline Tolhurst BVSc MRCVS  
Hook Norton Veterinary Group

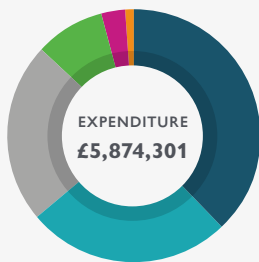
# Our finances

For the year ending 31 December 2017 BVA made an operating surplus before tax and donations of £128,754, a slight decrease on the £150,929 surplus in 2016.



## INCOME BY CATEGORY

- Publications 41%
- Membership subscriptions 37%
- Canine Health Schemes 15%
- CPD courses/BVA at the London Vet Show 3%
- Membership services and sponsorship 3%
- Investments and miscellaneous 1%



## EXPENDITURE BY CATEGORY

- Publications—cost of publication sales 38%
- Membership subscriptions, services and policy/media 26%
- Overheads and support costs 23%
- Canine Health Schemes 9%
- CPD courses/BVA at the London Vet Show 3%
- Investments and miscellaneous 1%

Gross revenue increased by 1.6% during the year with all key business areas yielding an above cost return. Expenditure increased by 2% during the year with BVA continuing to spend substantial resource on policy and media activities, lobbying and campaigning on priority issues such as animal welfare and on the provision of membership benefits and engagement. There was a slight decrease in administrative expenditure during the year.

There was £14,000 of donations to veterinary related charities. Capital expenditure totalled £117,629 primarily on the cost of the launch of digital online submissions for the Canine Health Schemes and the provision of new laptops for staff.

### Reserves

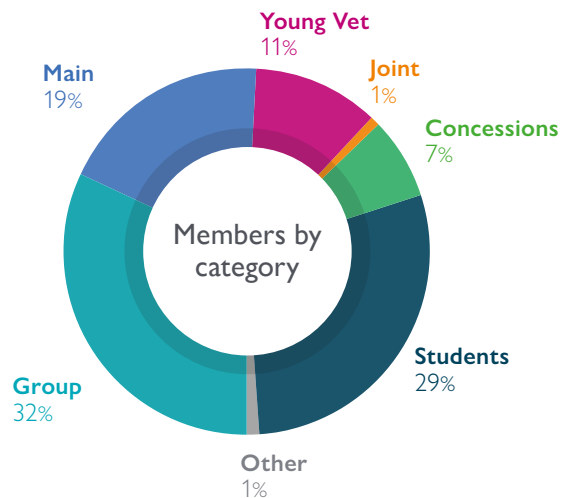
After allowing for tax, donations and unrealised movement on our investments the year-end total reserves increased by £204,910 to just over £10.5 million, including working capital of £3 million.

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' section of the BVA website at [www.bva.co.uk](http://www.bva.co.uk)

# Membership



In 2017 we were pleased to welcome nearly 3,000 new members to BVA as we grew our total membership by 3%. On 31 December 2017 our membership stood at 17,109.



| Year                                | 2017   |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Members at the start of the year    | 16,597 |
| New members joining during the year | 2,828  |
| Members renewing                    | 14,281 |
| Retention rate                      | 86%    |
| Members leaving                     | 2,316  |
| Members at the end of the year      | 17,109 |
| Net gain                            | 512    |
| Net gain (%)                        | 3.1%   |

2017 saw continued growth in Group scheme members (up by 15%). By the end of the year there were over 5,600 members on a Group scheme, representing 32% of the total membership. The year also saw growth in the Concessionary categories, up by 6%.

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A strong voice for vets