



## In a year when the veterinary profession has come under unprecedented scrutiny, BVA's mission to represent, support and champion our members has never been more important.

When the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) launched its review into veterinary services for household pets back in September, the impact on the profession was sharp and immediate. Hard working vet teams across the country found themselves on the end of challenging and in some cases abusive exchanges with clients, themselves responding to unfair and often misleading media headlines. BVA is standing up for and supporting our members by bringing balance and accuracy to reporting, whilst leading the profession in its response to the ongoing investigation.

Supporting our members is in BVA's DNA and I'm really proud of the initiatives and practical support we've delivered this year linked to my presidential theme 'a profession for everyone'. Our new Return to Work toolkit is helping both employees and managers welcome people back into the workplace after time away. Whilst our new employment hub brings together lots of useful

employment-related resources and advice including how to have tricky conversations around pay.

We're supporting Animal Aspirations' role models campaign to make animal-related careers more accessible and welcoming for everyone. BVA staff also took part in an insightful workshop run by Affinity Futures exploring how we can all be active allies, as part of our commitment to championing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) across the profession.

BVA Live returned to Birmingham in June, our biggest and best show yet. It was particularly exciting to unveil *Great Workplaces by BVA*, our new accreditation scheme designed to help support a thriving veterinary workforce by recognising and rewarding positive workplace culture. Fully funded educational bursaries meant that even more people than ever before could attend BVA Live and access the CPD on offer.

This year we've continued to call for vital legislative reform to replace the outdated Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 to better support animal welfare but also to ensure we have a regulatory framework that's fit for purpose. Whilst it was extremely disappointing to see the Kept Animals Bill scrapped so close to the finish line, successes have included new licensing that effectively bans the keeping of primates as pets; a ban on live exports; and the introduction of the puppy smuggling bill.

Our live FAQ resource is keeping members up to date as the ban on XL Bully dogs rapidly comes into force across the UK.

We also welcomed His Majesty King Charles III as BVA's new patron, continuing decades of royal patronage of BVA.

As the year ends on my BVA presidency, I can only marvel at the scale of the challenges we have faced and the incredible work the team at BVA has delivered on behalf of members and the wider profession. There is still plenty to do but I cannot say it loudly enough, that without your support and membership, none of these achievements would be possible and so I thank you all.

● **Anna Judson**  
BVA President 2023-24



## A strong, respected and diverse veterinary profession

**This year we launched BVA's new strategic plan, setting out our priorities for the next three years. Our vision of a strong, respected and diverse veterinary profession – in which vets are fulfilled and play a leading role in animal health and welfare, public health and sustainability – underpins our work on behalf of our 19,000 members.**

Supporting and championing our members and the wider profession has taken on a new level of significance this year, as the CMA launched its review – now a market investigation – into the UK's veterinary services market for household pets.

BVA continues to champion the profession in its response, ensuring any future recommendations from the CMA are informed by a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities within the UK's veterinary landscape.

Membership numbers remain strong and this year we've made huge progress with an incredibly successful first-year student membership campaign, which resulted in a 47% increase in first-year student members.

I'm incredibly proud of our new *Great Workplaces by BVA* accreditation scheme. It's the next step in our work to support the profession in driving positive culture change and to help support recruitment and retention.

This report provides a snapshot of the hard work and achievements of our Officers, staff, and volunteers, on behalf of you – our members. I'd like to thank all of them for making it happen, and you for supporting us.

● **David Calpin**  
BVA Chief Executive

# Campaigning across the UK

We lobby and campaign on the issues that matter most to our members across the UK. Our Branches in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland continue to grow, representing the views of BVA members in the devolved nations of the UK to influence BVA policy and campaigns.

## Activity in England and across the UK

Successfully lobbied for the Animal Welfare (Live Exports) Act, banning the export of live animals for fattening and slaughter. We continue to press the Government to introduce broader legislation which addresses animal welfare during transport.

Lobbied for action to protect primates being kept as pets in the UK and welcomed the resulting Animal Welfare (Primate Licences) (England) Regulations 2023.

Continue to press Members of Parliament (MPs) and peers for a minimum set of standards in any future trade agreements to safeguard our high animal welfare.

Convened a new working group to look at growing anthelmintic resistance in grazing animals, with a view to launching a policy position in 2025.

Worked with British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA), Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS) and British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) to develop our policy position on *Brucella canis* producing a suite of resources around the diagnosis, testing and management of the disease.

Launched our policy position on canine breeding services and with BSAVA we're calling on Government to license unregulated fertility clinics to help clamp down on irresponsible dog breeding.

Launched our policy position on feeding cats and dogs, following over a year of work by our Companion Animal Feeding Working Group. The position includes ten recommendations on nutrition, safety and sustainability of pet food, as well as calls for the profession to improve understanding in this area.

Published our policy position on gene editing, following the passing of the Precision Breeding Act in 2023. This exciting new technology has great potential to tackle disease and congenital disorders, but must be carefully regulated to protect animal welfare. We're working with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) to shape secondary legislation.

Called for a holistic review of Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) governance, a package of measures to bring greater clarity of RCVS functions, and external scrutiny of its regulatory role as part of wider veterinary legislative reform.

## Activity in Northern Ireland

Represented the veterinary profession in the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs' (DAERA) Agricultural Policy Stakeholder Group, advocating for the needs and concerns of our members in the design of the Future Farming Framework.

Lobbied DAERA to prioritise animal health and welfare funding, against a backdrop of budget cuts and political instability.

We welcomed Sharon Verner as the new Northern Ireland Branch President and Kirsten Dunbar as Junior Vice President.

## Activity in Scotland

Following Stage 1 of the Agriculture and Rural Communities (Scotland) Bill passing through Parliament and continued lobbying by BVA, we welcomed the Scottish Government's commitment to animal health and welfare, as evidenced by its inclusion in the overarching objectives of the Bill.

Successfully lobbied for a ban on the use of snares which was passed under the Wildlife Management and Muirburn (Scotland) Bill.

Influenced the Scottish Government to set the neutering age window for XL Bullies to the recommended 18 months instead of one year, to help ease pressure on already overstretched vet teams.

Following the introduction of firework control zone powers for local authorities in June 2023, we continued to press for these to be implemented across the country.

We welcomed Vivienne Mackinnon as the new Scottish Branch Junior Vice President and Alastair George as the new Scottish Regional Representative on BVA Council.

## Activity in Wales

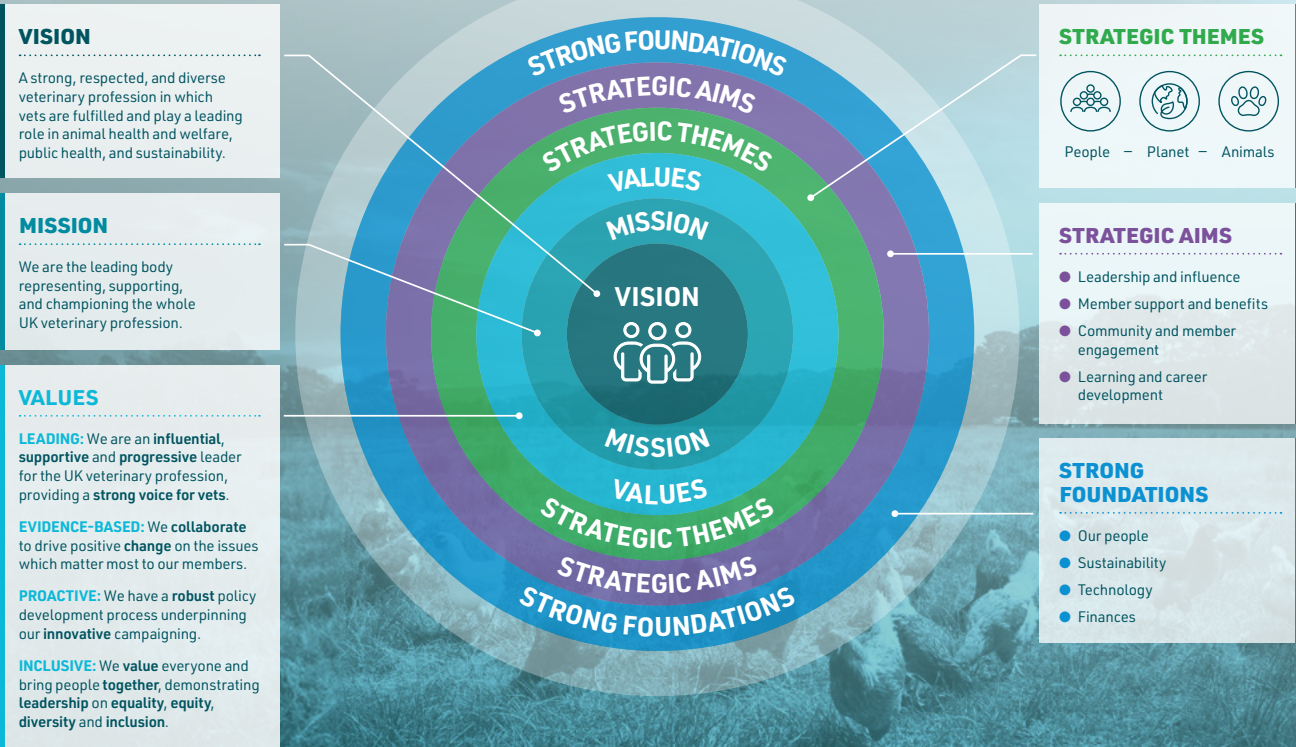
Worked closely with the Welsh Government and farming unions to strengthen the provisions on animal health and welfare within the Sustainable Farming Scheme, more latterly via representation on the Ministerial Roundtable.

Participated in working groups on dog breeding enforcement, bovine TB and sheep scab.

We unveiled our latest three-year strategic plan in February, setting out how we will deliver on our long-term goals and support the profession. It includes three new over-arching themes – People, Animals, Planet. Mirroring a One Health approach it’s enabling BVA to strategically align our work with the needs of the profession. Our four strategic aims underpin all BVA’s activity, focused on: providing leadership for the profession; supporting members; building a strong community; and delivering our award-winning journals and other high-quality CPD.



# 2024-26 strategic plan summary



## Providing practical support for members



**44,034**  
member resource downloads

**1365**

member calls to our 24/7 legal helpline



**34**  
hours of high-quality CPD at BVA Live and London Vet Show

**Four**

world-class journals



## Membership

In 2023, 3,486 new members joined BVA. We continue to maintain a healthy retention rate (above 80%) with a net growth in membership of 0.5%. At the end of the year our membership total was 19,793.



Year	2023
Members at start of the year	19,703
New members joining	3,486
Members retained	16,646
<b>Retention rate</b>	<b>84%</b>
Members leaving	3,025
Deaths	32
Members at the end of period	19,793
Net gain	92
Net gain (%)	0.5%

- **46%** Group Scheme
- **26%** Student
- **11%** Main/standard
- **7%** Young Vet
- **5%** Concession
- **3%** Other
- **1%** Joint
- **1%** Associate members

## Competition & Markets Authority investigation

We've been championing our members' interests and promoting the value of veterinary care in relation to the CMA investigation into veterinary services for household pets.

We responded to the CMA's initial call for information by warning of the complex challenges facing the profession and highlighting the need for greater transparency around treatment prices and practice ownership. We also convened our Transparency and Client Choice Working Group to develop guidance to support vet practices with voluntary measures to address some of the CMA's concerns. We will continue to engage constructively as the investigation progresses, mitigating against any unintended consequences of the potential remedies being considered by the CMA.

## Ten years of amplifying your Voice



2024 marks ten years of our Voice of the Veterinary Profession surveys. For a decade, BVA members have been shaping and influencing BVA's campaign and lobbying work, raising the profile of vets and their work in media, driving legislative change, and supporting the profession. To celebrate the impact of Voice we've launched a 10 years of Voice campaign, including a new brand identity for the survey.



We launched *Great Workplaces by BVA* this summer. An innovative new workplace accreditation scheme, it's helping to build a thriving veterinary workforce by recognising and rewarding positive workplace culture. Underpinned by BVA's Good Veterinary Workplaces initiative, it's the latest step in BVA's support for the profession as it tackles recruitment and retention issues in the workforce. Westport Veterinary Clinic in Linlithgow and South Moors in Devon were the first workplaces to receive *Great Workplaces by BVA* Silver accreditation, announced at BVA Live in June.

## Media impact

BVA's visibility and influence has been exceptionally high in 2023/24. Our media work navigating the ban on XL Bully dogs, the CMA investigation, alongside our campaigning and lobbying, means our average monthly reach was 260 million.



BVA Senior Vice President Malcolm Morley standing up for the profession on Radio 4's Today programme when the CMA launched its investigation into UK veterinary services.



Talking about the impacts of the XL Bully ban on vet teams, BVA President Anna Judson appeared with Clare Balding on Channel 4's coverage of Crufts.



Continuing to raise awareness of imported dog diseases, BVA President Anna Judson appeared on BBC One's *Breakfast*.



BVA President Anna Judson speaking to BBC *Springwatch* on how the veterinary profession is responding to its use of parasiticides in light of new evidence linking them to pollution in our rivers and waterways.



## BVA Live

BVA Live returned for its third year in June 2024 and with more than 2000 delegates from across the veterinary professions gathering to hear from expert speakers, participate in thought-provoking debates and gain high-quality CPD; it was our biggest event yet. For the first time, the clinical programme covered both small and large animal content in collaboration with our specialist divisions and the over-arching conference theme focused on contextualised care. The BVA Interactive Zone returned giving delegates the chance to discuss hot topics ranging from the impacts of the CMA investigation to the future of dangerous dogs legislation. We also introduced fully funded educational bursaries this year giving more BVA members access to the show and its high-quality CPD.

## BVA Congress at London Vet Show

BVA Congress took place in November 2023 at London Vet Show. We explored fascinating topics such as the potential drawbacks of surgical castration and its impact, engaging panel sessions on the concerning rise of *Brucella canis* in the UK, and the crucial battle against antimicrobial resistance. Additionally, we asked whether veterinary apprenticeships could be part of the future of veterinary education. Professor Susan Michie, the pioneer of ground-breaking research exploring how influencing people's actions can have a positive impact on health and sustainability, delivered the prestigious Woodrudge Memorial Lecture.

## BVA Members' Day

BVA members gathered at Trades Hall Glasgow in September 2023 to mark the official handover of BVA's Officer team. Anna Judson stepped into her role as BVA President following Malcolm Morley who became Senior Vice President, whilst Elizabeth Mullineaux joined the team as Junior Vice President. We were delighted to have the inspirational Dr Niall Connell as our keynote speaker. In his speech, he described his 'pure squinty' career, which didn't go as originally planned, and how overcoming challenges made him the veterinary professional he is today.

## BVA Young Vet of the Year Award



Poultry vet Dr Henry Lamb was named BVA Young Vet of the Year 2023, shortlisted from a total of 140 nominations. Now in its sixth year, Zoetis has supported this award from its inception. It celebrates and spotlights the incredible work of young and early career vets who lead, inspire, and go the extra mile to deliver outstanding work in their chosen field.

## BVA Wellbeing Awards



We launched BVA's inaugural Wellbeing Awards in 2023. Sponsored by MSD Animal Health UK, they celebrate veterinary workplaces which have embraced the ethos of BVA's Good Veterinary Workplaces Voluntary Code and which support and enhance the wellbeing of their teams. Winners were selected across three categories: The Food Standards Agency won non-clinical workplace; Inglis Vets in Dunfermline won best Large Practice; and Blue Cross Merton Hospital won the Small Practice category.

# BVA manifesto for animals, vets and public health



To focus our public affairs activity in the run up to the general election, we launched our manifesto for animals, vets and public health. It sets out our five key asks: reform of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966; a minimum set of animal welfare standards in trade deals; a permanent solution to secure access to veterinary medicines in Northern Ireland; reform of the Dangerous Dogs Act 1991; and the delivery of the individual pieces of animal welfare legislation previously in the Kept Animals Bill.

## Veterinary legislative reform



Alongside RCVS, we continue to lobby for much needed reform of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966. Veterinary legislative reform was the focus of our Parliamentary Briefing event in March, one of our five manifesto asks, a key ask at our regional political dinners and the focus of a series of meetings with MPs. We have secured cross-party support and will continue to press for reform.

## Northern Ireland medicines

Lobbying to secure the permanent supply of veterinary medicines to Northern Ireland has been a significant focus, working closely with our Northern Ireland Branch. In addition to ongoing engagement with MLAs, MPs and industry representatives, we have provided evidence to the House of Lords Sub-Committee on the Windsor Framework's inquiry into veterinary medicines and represent the profession on the Government's Veterinary Medicines Working Group.

## iiE green accreditation

For the second year running, we're thrilled to have achieved Investors in the Environment's (iiE) highest 'green'-level accreditation. This recognises our progress towards more sustainable ways of working, including a review of our travel, environmental and procurement policies, updating our carbon footprint calculation, and completing a number of projects such as staff litter picking days. We were also proud to be shortlisted for three iiE awards; "Best Social Impact", "Sustainability Influencer" and "Overall Outstanding Achievement (SME)".

## XL Bully ban

With the XL Bully bans being implemented across the UK, we have engaged with DEFRA, DAERA and the Scottish Government to provide a veterinary perspective. Through our campaigning, we have focused on mitigating impacts on vets and have successfully advocated for improvements in the language used within neutering confirmation forms and the extension of the neutering age for XL Bully dogs to 18 months. We've also provided practical support for members to help both them and their clients to navigate the new restrictions.

## Equality, diversity and inclusion

The BVA Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Advisory Group, composed of representatives from the British Veterinary Chronic Illness Society (BVCIS), the British Veterinary Ethnicity and Diversity Society (BVEDS), BVLGBT+, Animal Aspirations, BVA's Policy Committee and Ethics and Welfare Panel (EWAP), and experts in neurodivergence was convened in 2023 to consider ways in which we might address diversity across our groups and committees. More recently it has been agreed that the Advisory Group will be established as a standing committee, to provide advice and guidance during the policy development process, support the development of EDI guidance and resources, and formalise our relationship with the affinity groups.

## Young Vet Network

The Young Vet Network, kindly supported by the Veterinary Defence Society (VDS), has been re-energised in 2024, relaunching with a new structure of 12 regional hubs that brings it in line with the structure of BVA Council. 15 volunteer Young Vet Network Representatives have been recruited to support the new networks. They will be provided with new resources and a forum developed to help build a series of engaging activities for all early career vets across the UK.

## BVA journals

**VetRecord** **InPractice** **VetRecord** **VetRecord**  
CaseReports Open

BVA's world-class journals remain one of our most popular member benefits, with 85% of members reading them on a regular basis.

Work continues to develop our digital offering and improve accessibility for time-poor readers. QR codes are making research in *Vet Record* easier to find; digital flipbooks are improving accessibility; and our new curated content email – Inside Look – delivers new articles from our full range of publications direct into members' inboxes.



## Animal Welfare Foundation – BVA's charity

This year, BVA's charity the Animal Welfare Foundation (AWF) funded innovative human behaviour change research on farm animal welfare, as well as four student research projects covering equine and lab animals, ensuring animal welfare is kept at the forefront of veterinary education.

AWF also launched free online student talks covering diverse topics such as animal boredom and overtreatment, engaging more than 500 veterinary students. The annual AWF Discussion Forum in May 2024 gathered 200 delegates to discuss animal welfare topics on the theme of animal welfare, ethics and rights.

## Digital engagement

With a refreshed focus on building engagement over following, our social media channels have performed really well this year with average engagement rates increasing between 12–24%.

- 3,795,216** impressions
- 1,852,264** users reached
- 167,337** followers
- 61,478** reactions/likes
- 9,853** shares (not inc. Instagram)
- 1,788** comments

Our website content ranges from our latest news, advice and our popular blog posts, to our members' area which contains our member benefits and huge range of resources and guides. This year our XL Bully FAQs supporting members through the implications of the XL Bully ban has been incredibly popular, as have our dedicated pages on the CMA investigation.

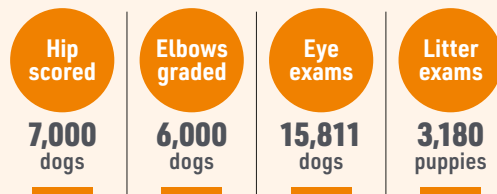
## Our most popular blogs

- 18,333** views | *Brucella canis*: what vets need to know
- 8,521** views | Is it safe to feed my dog a plant-based diet?
- 4,194** views | Alabama Rot: what dog owners need to know

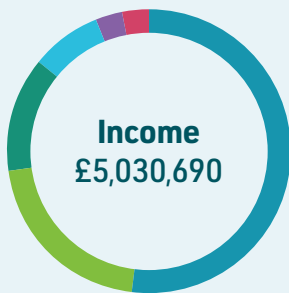
## Canine Health Schemes

Our Canine Health Schemes, in partnership with the Kennel Club, are operating well and continue to maintain quick turnaround times. A comprehensive overhaul of the website, now showcasing the expertise of our scrutineers and the benefits screening provides, is part of a wider strategy to boost the profile of the schemes and increase engagement with vets and breeders.

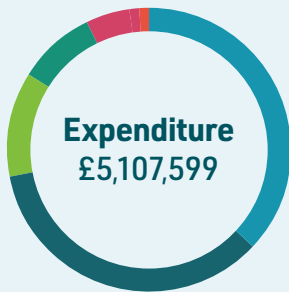
### Over the past 12 months



## Our finances



- 52% Membership subscriptions
- 21% Canine Health Schemes
- 13% Publications
- 8% Membership services and sponsorship
- 3% Events
- 3% Investments and miscellaneous



- 37% Membership subscriptions, services and policy
- 35% Overheads and support costs
- 12% Canine Health Schemes
- 9% Publications – cost of sales
- 5% Events
- 1% Investments and miscellaneous
- 1% Donations

### Income

The results for 2023 show an operating surplus of £282k before depreciation and donations. After allowing for depreciation charges of £344k and donations during the year to veterinary related charities of £15k, there was an operating deficit of £77k.

Income for the year increased by 4% to £5.0m. Income from membership increased by 8%, whilst there was a small decrease in our income from both publications and the Canine Health Schemes. All three of BVA's core revenue streams continue to make a net contribution to the operating surplus.

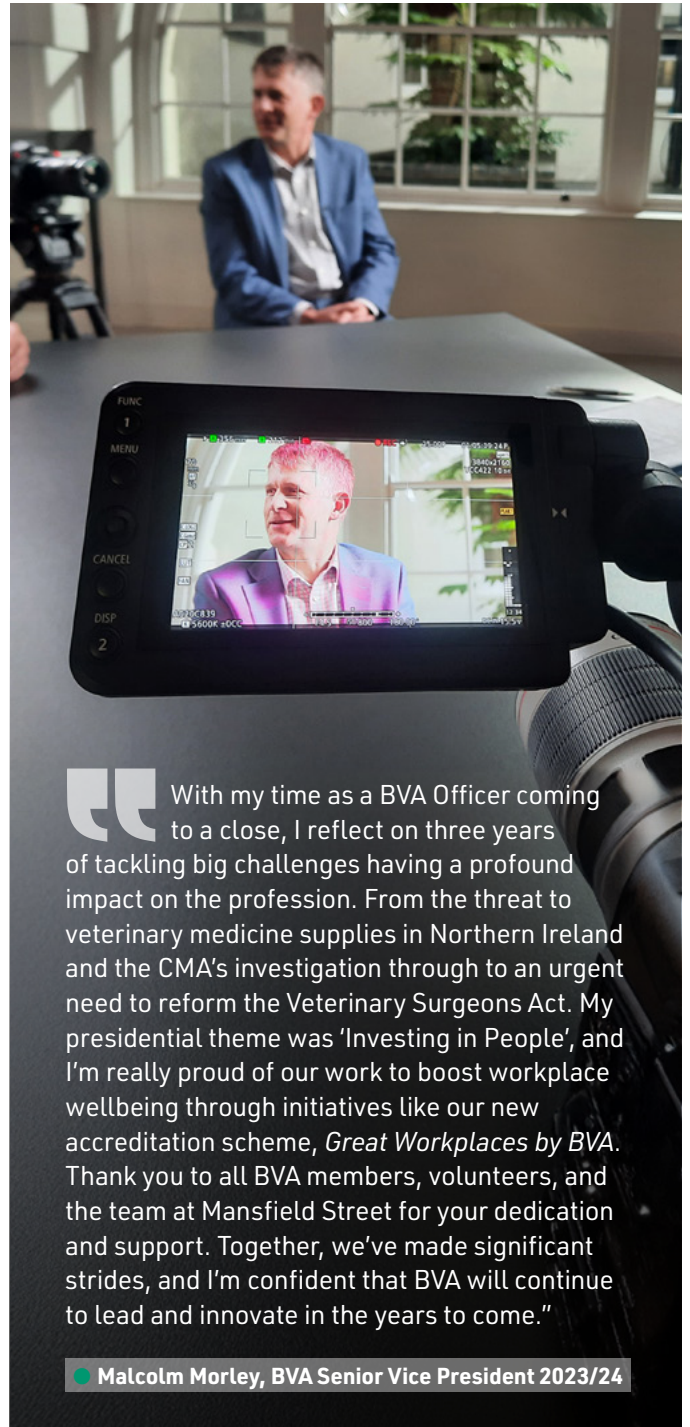
### Expenditure

Expenditure for the year increased by 6% to £5.1m. The main reason for the increase is due to additional staff capacity to support our continuing investment in lobbying and campaigning, membership services and events.

### Reserves

After allowing for unrealised investment gains of £72k and a tax reclaim of £28k, BVA's total reserves increased by £23k to £12.8m (including £11.3m net value of our headquarters building in London).

A copy of the full set of statutory accounts is available to all members, on request, from BVA. They also appear in the members' section of the website, [mybva.bva.co.uk](http://mybva.bva.co.uk)



“With my time as a BVA Officer coming to a close, I reflect on three years of tackling big challenges having a profound impact on the profession. From the threat to veterinary medicine supplies in Northern Ireland and the CMA's investigation through to an urgent need to reform the Veterinary Surgeons Act. My presidential theme was 'Investing in People', and I'm really proud of our work to boost workplace wellbeing through initiatives like our new accreditation scheme, *Great Workplaces by BVA*. Thank you to all BVA members, volunteers, and the team at Mansfield Street for your dedication and support. Together, we've made significant strides, and I'm confident that BVA will continue to lead and innovate in the years to come.”

Malcolm Morley, BVA Senior Vice President 2023/24

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A strong voice for vets