Summer 2025 Newsletter

"Hot Days, Healthy Stock – Summer Support for All Keepers"

As summer settles in across the countryside, we hope this newsletter finds you and your livestock thriving. With longer days and busy schedules, our team is here to support you through the season's unique challenges and opportunities. From managing fly strike, cria arrivals, herd health visits and parasite control, we're committed to helping you every step of the way.

In this issue, you'll find seasonal tips, important updates from our team, and reminders to help you make the most of the summer months. As always, we're just a call away if you need advice or assistance.

Best wishes,

The Livestock Clinic Team

Important Management update:

What is happening?

On 6th June 2025, The Livestock Clinic changed ownership and became a subsidiary of The Livestock Partnership Limited.

The Livestock Partnership is a well-established independent livestock veterinary practice, based in Wisborough Green, serving commercial farm clients across Sussex, Hampshire and South Surrey. The Directors of the business are Claire Walker, Maarten Boers and Ben Brearley, who work alongside three additional vets and two TB Testers.

Why is this happening?

Owners of The Livestock Clinic have taken the decision to sell the company so they can concentrate on clinical work and relinquish some of the administrative responsibilities of running a growing business. Lissie Gercke will continue as Veterinary Clinical Director, working with vets Ollie Lyle and Laura Simpkins, assisted by Jane Marshall and Molly Wates, to provide clients with an independent veterinary service.

What will change for clients?

Clients of The Livestock Clinic will see very little change in their day-to-day veterinary service – the clinical team will remain the same, including for out-of-hours provision. Over time some operational processes may change for The Livestock Clinic, to bring greater efficiencies in the running of the business and therefore to clients, but these will be communicated accordingly. Links with an expanded veterinary team will bring other benefits to clients of The Livestock Clinic, such as the ability to provide OV testing services and an additional collection/drop-off point for medicines and/or laboratory samples. This is about future-proofing the business for staff and clients alike.

What if I have queries or concerns?

In the first instance, if you have any queries or concerns about the change in ownership, please contact Lissie Gercke (07912 281994).

If you would like to speak to one of the Directors of The Livestock Partnership Ltd, please call the office on 01403 700992.

Bluetongue Update:

Our Farm tech, Molly, has been busy over the last few months, running vaccination drives for the smaller herds and flocks to ensure as many animals are vaccinated as possible, without wasting doses. The vaccine offers broad spectrum immunity in a single dose (sheep) or as part of a two-dose primary course (cattle and other hoofed species). Onset of immunity occurs approximately 3 weeks after the primary vaccination course, however immunity duration is not yet established and yearly boosters may be advised at a later stage.

WHATSAPP

IMPORTANT

Please do not use whatsapp for urgent requests or enquiries

Please avoid ringing using whatsapp as these calls cannot be answered by the office

To book a visit please ring (the old fashioned way i.e. not via Whatsapp) the office (07912281994) to ensure your request is dealt with promptly.

Please continue to use Whatsapp to keep your vet updated on cases and ask non-urgent questions.

Whatsapp is not monitored 24/7

If you have not had a response please ring the office in the old fashioned way

From the 1st July 2025, the Bluetongue restricted zone was extended to cover all England. This means you can now move animals within England without a specific Bluetongue license or pro-movement testing. However, if you want to move animals to and from Scotland you will need a valid pre-movement test or vaccination with the Bultavo – 3 vaccine (cattle only) and have not clinic symptoms.

Generally, animals moving from the Bluetongue restricted zone in England to Wales require a movement license and pre-movement testing, however, there are exceptions for vaccinated cattle and movements to specific markets. The Situation is constantly changing so please keep an eye on the news and get in touch if you would like to discuss vaccination options.

AHDB offers a vaccine decision-making tool, to help understand your risk factors and develop a farm-specific plan with your vet. This can be found using the following link. BattleBluetongue-vaccine-decision-maker-tool-February-2025-.pdf

Flystrike

Fly strike (myiasis) is the infestation of living tissues with maggots - the larvae of flies. Flystrike in sheep is largely a preventable issue and should not be a regular occurrence within your flock. It causes intense pain, distress and death in severe cases. Estimates of the number of sheep struck each year range from 500,000 to 700,00 with mortality rates of 2-3%.

Flies are attracted to sheep by the odours – usually decaying organic matter in the fleece - urine or faeces, as well as wounds, skin folds, scald and foot rot. Flystrike can affect any part of the sheep but is most commonly seen around the shoulders and the back ends. Horned animals with skin folds at the horn base are also a higher risk for developing flystrike.

Impact:

- Welfare
- Loss in productivity (weight loss and decreased milk yield)
- Fleece damage
- Deaths
- Treatment costs; including medicines, labour and time

Symptoms: Sheep suffering from fly strike show obvious signs of distress.

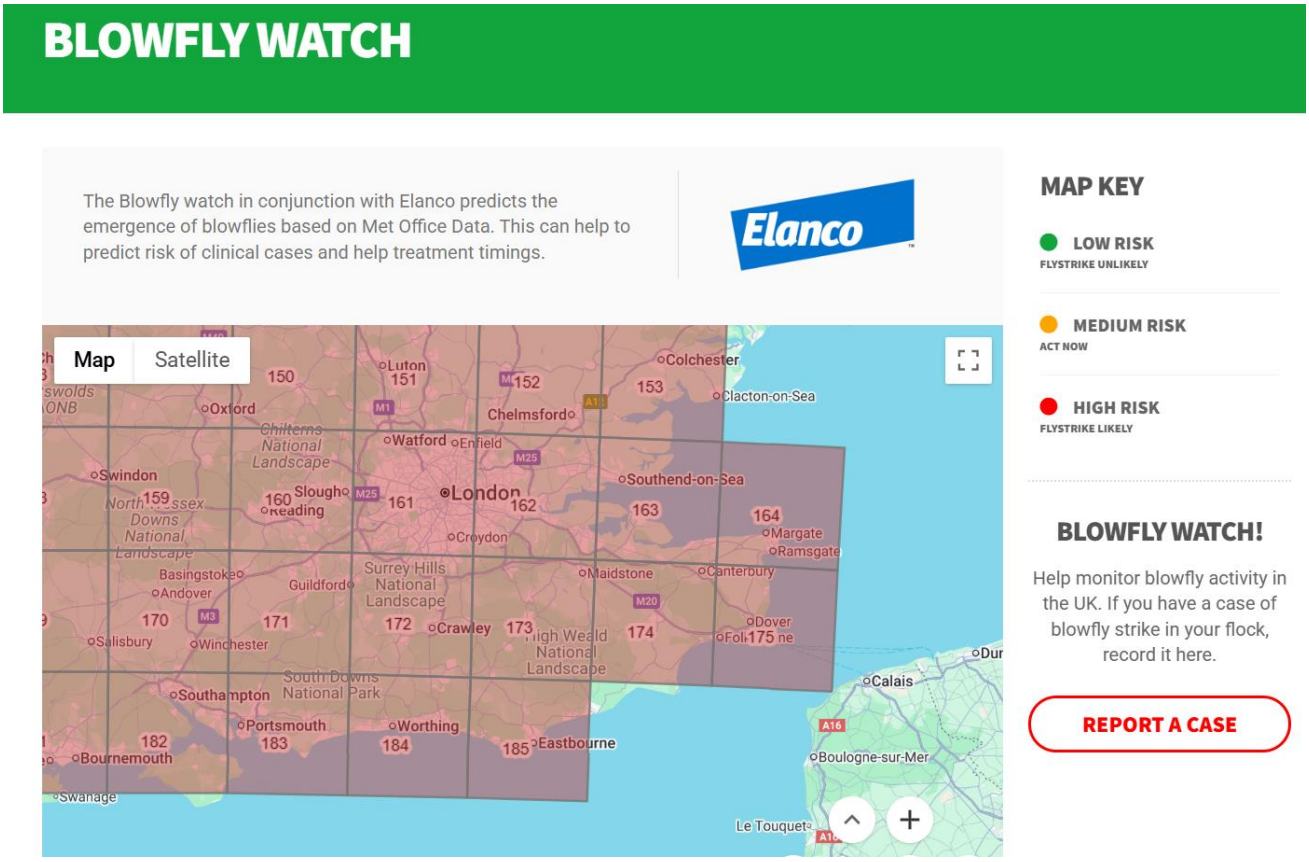
- Agitated or dejected and spend less time grazing.
- In tail or breech strike infested sheep stamp their hind legs, shake their tails vigorously or gnaw and rub at the breech.
- Foul smelling area of moist brown wool often with early stage maggots visible.
- Lameness (where maggots have infiltrated a foot lesion)
- If the infestation remains untreated the affected area increases, and wool is shed from the centre accompanied by signs of constant discomfort with deeper wounds to the skin and tissues beneath.
- Separation from flock
- Death (due septicaemia from secondary bacterial infection and release of toxins)

Prevalence:

The prevalence of blowfly strike is weather dependent, with the majority of cases occurring during periods of high humidity or warm periods after heavy rain. This risk period usually occurs between April and September with temperatures regularly above 15 C however the risk period can extend further.

The NADIS blowfly watch predicts this risk period based on weather conditions and should be checked throughout the year to guide use of preventative treatments.

- Shearing - recently sheared sheep are rarely affected but susceptibility increases as the fleece grows.
- Dagging (removal of wool from around the back end)
- Effective worm control to reduce scour
- Prompt and effective lameness treatment.



Prevention

There are many licensed pour on products that can be used against fly strike. Some of these products only prevent the problem; others both prevent and treat. You must make sure you are using an appropriate product at the right application rate. These products will protect for varying periods and reapplication is often needed before this period ends to ensure protection. Product choice depends on the breed of sheep, age, withdrawal periods, shearing and lambing dates. From personal experience clik or clik extra offers the best long term protection against flystrike but does hold the longest withdrawal period.

Other preventative measures:

- Reducing the fly population early in the year has the greatest impact on the fly challenge during the grazing season. Inexpensive fly traps have been shown to reduce strike incidence by 80% in a season.
- Prompt disposal of deadstock
- Keep dung/compost heaps on areas away from stock

Treatment and control options for blowfly strike

This information is provided by SCOPS as a guide. SCOPS does everything within its power to ensure the information is up-to-date and correct but product choices remain the responsibility of the prescriber and user. Always read the manufacturer's instructions before use. Withdrawal periods are subject to change and it is the user's responsibility to ensure withdrawal periods are adhered to.

Product	Company	Chemical name	Ectoparasites control			Meat withdrawal period
			Blowflies	Lice	Ticks	
CLiK	Elanco Animal Health	Dicyclanil (IGR)	16 weeks protection	None	None	40 days
CLiK EXTRA	Elanco Animal Health	Dicyclanil (IGR)	19 weeks protection	None	None	40 days
CLiKZIN	Elanco Animal Health	Dicyclanil (IGR)	8 weeks protection	None	None	7 days
Crovect	Elanco Animal Health	Cypermethrin	Treats and 6-8 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	Up to 10 weeks	8 days
Dectospot	Bimeda	Deltamethrin	Treatment only	4-6 week reduction in incidence	6 weeks	35 days
Deltanil	Virbac	Deltamethrin	Treatment only	4-6 week reduction in incidence	6 weeks	35 days
Dysect	Zoetis	Alpha-cypermethrin	Treats and 8-10 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	8-12 weeks	49 days
Ectofly 12.5mg/ml	Bimeda	Cypermethrin	Treats and 6-8 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	Treatment only	8 days
Fly & Lice Spot On	Zoetis	Deltamethrin	Treatment only	4-6 week reduction in incidence	Up to 6 weeks	35 days
Fly Off	United Farmers	Cypermethrin	Treats and 6-8 weeks protection	Kills existing lice	Up to 10 weeks	8 days
Spotinor 10mg/ml	Norbrook	Deltamethrin	Treatment only	4-6 week reduction in incidence	6 weeks	35 days

Note: these products must be applied to a dry fleece. If the fleece is heavily soiled then dagging should take place before application.

Treatment:

Treatment of blowfly strike should aim to kill any maggots present, prevent the likelihood of further fly strike and assist the wound to heal.

- The wool should be carefully clipped away from around the wound and surrounding area until unaffected skin has been found.
- Products such as Crovect / Ectofly can be used to treat individual cases of strike. Take care to ensure that that the product does not seep into open wounds, as this will cause affected animals more discomfort.
- A suitable antibacterial cream should be applied to the affected areas of skin.
- Pain relief – meloxicam - is essential and also aids recovery due to its antitoxin effects.
- Antibiotics will be needed in advanced cases to prevent secondary bacterial infection.
- Fluid therapy is recommended in these cases and will improve recovery rates - oral electrolytes will be adequate in most cases.

If the decision is made not to use pour on preventatives for any groups of sheep due to withdrawal concerns or effect on the environment, you are risking a serious welfare issue for your sheep. Doing nothing to prevent fly strike is neglectful.

Herbal remedies and natural repellents may provide very short-term repellent action but will not offer the same protection the products listed in the table. We regularly see more cases with owners using only these natural preventatives than with the products listed above.

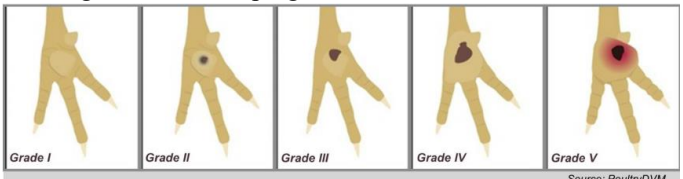
Bumblefoot in back-yard chickens

If you have chickens you will probably have heard of bumblefoot. Also known as pododermatitis, bumblefoot is an inflammatory bacterial condition affecting the bottom of the chicken's foot commonly seen in birds kept in captivity. The danger with bumblefoot is what can seem like an innocuous scratch on the bottom of the foot can lead to a severe infection that can travel up the leg and into the bones, joints and tendons causing crippling deformity and loss of function if not caught and treated early.

When the barrier of skin under the foot is compromised it can allow the entry of bacteria which cause inflammation, pain and infection. Factors which predispose birds to developing bumblefoot include large body size breeds, skin wounds, imbalanced diet, foot deformities, overgrown toenails and bullied birds. Having very hard or narrow surfaces to stand on most of the time is a main cause of bumblefoot.

There are 5 stages of bumblefoot and as each stage progresses and the infection goes deeper, it becomes harder to treat. This is a great reason to check your poultry's feet once a month to spot any developing issues and catch them before they progress too far. Establishing the grade of bumblefoot helps determine the appropriate treatment plan. Grade 1 bumblefoot lesions may mean adopting environment changes compared to treating grade 5 which would need intensive therapy and surgery.

Clinical signs include irritation of the footpad, ulcers and swelling as the disease progresses, redness and heat.



Source: PoultryDVM

Grade I: *Redness on the surface, shiny appearance, or small lesions. No infection apparent.*
Grade II: *Lesion with infected tissue, no swelling.*
Grade III: *Infected lesion with swelling.*
Grade IV: *Plug of dead tissue, with infection of tissue in the foot, mild lameness.*
Grade V: *Swelling around the plug of dead tissue, with severe lameness.*

Treatment in early stages of bumblefoot includes soaking the foot in epsom salts/hibiscrub, bandaging the foot or purchasing a protective boot to help provide cushioning and environmental modifications such as adding astroturf to perches, providing softer ground footing and preventing accumulation of mud and faeces.

We recommend that you get in touch with us if the feet are not getting better or are getting worse in order for us to tailor a treatment plan.

References

What is Bumblefoot. Available at: https://extension.umd.edu/sites/extension.umd.edu/files/2021-11/FS-1179_Infographic_What_Is_Bumblefoot_Magnaterra_Weimer.pdf

From Jane in the lab: BARBERS POLE WORM (HAEMONCHUS) IN SHEEP

This particular worm is an Abomasal blood sucking worm, and the clinical considerations are as follows:

- Adults and Lambs can both be seriously affected.
- Affected animals do not always exhibit scour unless there is another infection or parasitic involvement. There can be a lag of 3 weeks between initial infestation and egg production.
- In less acute cases some animals can show lethargy, bottle jaw and weight loss.
- Barbers Pole is notorious for being a prolific egg producer and each female is capable of producing 10,000 eggs a day, causing affected animals to succumb quickly.

Mainly due to the difference in weather between 2024 and 2025 we are a seeing a stark difference in WEC egg numbers in the lab currently. Our highest counts so far this year have been around 6000epg compared to 35000-44000epg last year. However this is not a reason to take your finger off the pulse! Periods of rain and cooler temperatures will accelerate parasite cycles on pasture. Please continue to be watchful, check the SCOPS parasite forecast and contact the practice for further information and advice especially if you are concerned that your flock might be affected.

THE LIVESTOCK CLINIC

Heat Stress

ACT FAST SAVE LIVES

Heat stress can be fatal. Please ring urgently for advice if you are worried

Water intake can increase up to 20% in hot weather!

Ensure animals have access to shade and clean drinking water.

Key Signs of heat stress:

- Refusal to lie down (progressing to recumbency when severe)
- Huddling / bunching
- Body splashing (in water troughs)
- Increased respiration rate
- Open mouth breathing
- Salivation
- Wide base stance (front legs apart)
- High rectal temperature (cattle over 39°C, sheep over 41°C)

High temperatures can also affect

- feed intake,
- growth rates,
- ovulation, conception and fertility.

Prevention

- Avoid handling animals during the hottest part of the day
- consider feeding in the late afternoon to allow heat from rumen fermentation to disperse
- Avoid gathering animals unless absolutely necessary
- Avoid transport unless necessary
- Provide adequate shelter and adlib water. Consider increasing the number of water points

Treatment:

- Advice varies between species. Please ring quickly for vet advice if you suspect heat stress.

Temperature Humidity Index (THI)
Relative Humidity %

C	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	100
22	66	66	67	68	69	69	70	71	72
24	68	69	70	70	71	72	73	74	75
26	70	71	72	73	74	75	77	78	79
28	72	73	74	76	77	78	80	81	82
30	74	75	77	78	80	81	83	84	86
32	76	77	79	81	83	84	86	88	90
34	78	80	82	84	85	87	89	91	93
36	80	82	84	86	88	90	93	95	97
38	82	84	86	89	91	93	96	98	100
40	84	86	89	91	94	96	99	101	104

No heat stress
Moderate heat stress
Severe heat stress
Dead cows

The Temperature – Humidity – Index (THI) is a useful tool for assessing the risk of heat stress.

See AHDB.ORG.UK for comprehensive livestock guides