



# NOSE TO TRAIL

## PET BEHAVIOUR SERVICES

### Meeting summary for April's Q&A (04/08/2024)

#### Quick recap

Rachel and the team discussed various issues related to pet health and behavior, including dog ear infections, training techniques, and neutering options. They also shared their experiences with their own pets, offering advice and support to one another. The team also planned to observe and record their dogs' behavior when they leave the house, and announced a coffee morning for the following Thursday.

#### Next steps

- Rachel will send Kirsty the APBC guidance on neutering to help her decide whether to castrate both Ellis and Luna at the same time or separately.
- Kirsty will ask her vet about the possibility of using a chemical implant to prevent Luna from going into heat and having to be surgically castrated.
- Kirsty will send Rachel a video of Rodgers' behavior when she leaves the house, so Rachel can review it and provide further guidance.

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#### Summary

##### Confusion Over Meeting Participants and Audio Issues

Rachel expressed confusion about the decision to allow participants into the meeting without microphones and cameras, and briefly discussed dishwasher detergent with an iPhone user. She also acknowledged technical issues with the audio, particularly with Andrea's connection. Eventually, Rachel decided to proceed with the meeting, opening the floor for questions for April.

##### Discussing Dog Behavior and Treatment Experiences

Rachel and an iPhone owner shared their experiences with their dogs, Lunar and a potential dog, respectively. Lunar, despite undergoing treatment for six weeks, still exhibited a problem turning left on certain streets, but showed improvement in this regard. Both dogs had issues with specific locations, such as village greens and areas with the scent of other animals, and owners agreed it was best to avoid these places rather than forcing their dogs

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through them. The discussion also touched upon previous coffee morning and Q&A sessions relating to these canine behavior issues.

### **Dog Health Issues and Team Support**

Rachel and the iPhone speaker discussed their dog's health issues, specifically ear infections. The speaker planned to take their dog to the vet for a check-up, and Rachel shared her recent schedule changes that allowed for more time to create new handouts. The conversation also touched on other pets with ear problems and the importance of cooperative care. Rachel announced that Mal would be of assistance with various tasks, emphasizing the need for a step-by-step approach due to the task's length. Lastly, Rachel suggested that treats were needed for the team.

### **Dog Training With High-Value Treats**

Rachel emphasizes using high-value treats for training and a slow, relaxed approach. The dog should be comfortable, with a towel or pillow for chin rests, and allowed breaks. Training should alternate between chin rests and easy, fun behaviors. For Luna, who is recovering from an ear infection, Rachel suggests focusing only on building up chin rests until her condition improves.

### **Slow and Steady Ear Treatment for Dogs**

Rachel advised that progress with ear treatments for dogs should be slow and steady, emphasizing the importance of respecting the dog's cooperation and not pushing too far. She highlighted that dogs should be encouraged to tolerate chin handling before attempting ear treatment, and any signs of discomfort or aversion should be addressed. Rachel's advice was to work gradually, even if progress seems slow, to establish trust and avoid causing the dog undue stress or discomfort.

### **Desensitizing Dogs to Treatments and Procedures**

Rachel advised AJ's and Andrea on how to desensitize their dogs to various treatments and procedures, such as ear treatments and nail clippings, using positive reinforcement and a gradual approach. Rachel emphasized the importance of not letting the dogs associate these treatments with negative experiences and to be guided by their vets regarding specific treatments. AJ's and Andrea were encouraged to share their progress and any issues they encountered in the group for feedback.

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### **Dog Ear Care and Protocol Guidance**

Rachel and AJ's discussed a project aimed at helping dogs with ear problems. Rachel provided guidance on ear care for dogs, emphasizing the importance of identifying the origin of ear problems and focusing attention on affected ears. AJ's and Andrea discussed the risks of touching or inserting anything into a dog's ear without proper vet approval due to potential pain or infections. Rachel stressed this point, repeating that nothing smaller than an elbow should be inserted into a dog's ear. The team agreed to follow this protocol to ensure dogs' wellbeing.

### **Pet Vaccinations, Convenience, and Neutering**

The team discussed a new pet vaccination option and shared experiences with previous pet vaccinations. Rachel and iPhone discussed the challenges of administering vaccinations to their pets, including Rico's reluctance and the need for isolation due to immuno-suppression. The group also discussed the possibility of combining multiple vaccinations in one injection for convenience. AJ's raised a question about neutering their two and three-year-old dogs, seeking advice on when it would be appropriate and mentioning a desire to take their dogs to the breeder for the procedure.

### **Discussing Dog Neutering and Potential Impacts**

AJ's and Rachel discussed the complexities and potential impacts of neutering AJ's's two dogs, Kirsten and Ellis. Rachel explained that chemical castration could be a try-before-you-buy solution, but warned it was not without its difficulties and could change the dynamic between the two dogs. She shared that testosterone levels could surge in a response to the female hormones introduced, leading to undesirable behaviors. If AJ's decided to proceed, Rachel advised to set aside time for potential behavior changes. The hormonal effects could last around six months, after which AJ's would need to consider another chemical castration or surgical castration.

### **Discussing Dog Castration Alternatives and Costs**

Rachel and AJ's discussed the decision against surgical castration for their dogs due to its irreversibility and potential complications. AJ's planned to consult their vet on this matter. They also discussed the cost implications of regularly re-implanting a chemical alternative to surgery, with Rachel advising AJ's to check for the best deals and to inform her of any exorbitant quotes they received. Lastly, Rachel suggested AJ's check out informative videos on the company's website that offered an alternative to surgical castration.

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### Addressing Separation-Related Dog Behaviors

Kirsty raised concerns about her dog, Rodger, who seemed to be displaying separation-related behaviors. Rachel clarified that such behavior could be a result of boredom rather than anxiety. She also shared her own experiences with her dog, Maisy, who exhibited similar behavior when someone left the house. AJ's added that their previous dog, Alice, had also been destructive when they first started working with her. The team agreed to approach these behaviors with patience and understanding, considering that their pets might be seeking entertainment or attention.

### Dog Behavior and Monitoring Challenges

Rachel, AJ's's, and Kirsty discussed the behavior of their dogs when they leave the house. They shared anecdotes of their pets' reactions, including standing at the door and watching them leave, and sometimes moving off to sleep when they realize they're gone. They also discussed the use of cameras to monitor the dogs' behavior and the challenges with interpreting the footage, particularly with regards to the dogs' barking. The team agreed to continue observing and recording their dogs' behavior for future analysis. They also announced a coffee morning for the following Thursday.

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