



Royal College Day

– Programme –

**One Great George Street
Westminster, London, SW1P 3AA**

Friday 3 July 2026



Annual General Meeting

10.30am – Registration and refreshments

Open to all registered veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses

11.00am – AGM starts

- Formal declaration of RCVS Council and Veterinary Nurses Council elections results and appointments
 - Presentation of Annual Report and Financial Statements 2025
 - Council Meeting to approve the new 2026–2027 Officer Team: President, Vice-Presidents and Treasurer
 - Address from RCVS Chief Executive Officer, Lizzie Lockett
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12.00pm – AGM closes followed by a buffet lunch in the Great Hall

Honours and Awards Ceremony

1.00pm – Awards Ceremony starts

- Presentation of awards
 - Address from VN Council Chair, Belinda Andrews-Jones RVN
 - Address from outgoing RCVS President, Professor Tim Parkin FRCVS
 - Investiture of new Veterinary Nurses Council Chair Kirsty Young RVN
 - Investiture of new President, Tim Hutchinson MRCVS, Senior Vice-President Professor Tim Parkin FRCVS, and Junior Vice-President Professor David Barrett FRCVS
 - New President's remarks
 - Guest speaker address by Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter OBE FRS, Emeritus Professor of Statistics at the University of Cambridge: ***Communicating evidence and uncertainty in a trustworthy way***
 - Afternoon tea in the Great Hall
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4.00pm – Royal College Day concludes



Welcome to Royal College Day 2026

Welcome to Royal College Day 2026, our AGM and awards ceremony and a chance to celebrate some of the fantastic achievements of colleagues within the veterinary community, both here in the UK and around the world.

This year, for the first time, we have a new Collaboration Award. This award reflects the 'stronger together' theme of our new Strategic Plan, which recognises the power of collaboration to ensure the best outcomes as one of its key values.

Our professions are in a period of change and we've seen an increased level of public and parliamentary scrutiny, which has brought with it both challenges and opportunities. This year the professions and public were given the once-in-a-generation opportunity to share their views on the Government's proposals for reforming the Veterinary Surgeons Act. A much-needed development and something we've been calling for over many years.

We also published our exit survey report which provides invaluable data to help us understand the reasons why some vets and vet nurses choose to leave the RCVS Registers. While relatively few do so each year, and the numbers joining the professions well exceed those leaving, it is helpful to know what we could do to improve retention.

The importance of data cannot be understated and though sometimes it doesn't make easy reading, we shouldn't shy away from it. It is a powerful tool to inform our work and understand the changes we need to make. That is why I'm really pleased to be welcoming the renowned statistician, Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter OBE, as our guest speaker today. His ability to make statistics relatable is something I have strived to do for my whole career.

Sir David is Emeritus Professor of Statistics at the University of Cambridge and has had a very distinguished career, including serving as former President of the Royal Statistical Society and currently as Non-Executive Director of the UK Statistics Authority. His talk on Communicating evidence and uncertainty in a trustworthy way comes at a very apt time, given the changes to the veterinary sector, and society at large.

Today, I will be handing over the RCVS Presidency to my successor Tim Hutchinson and I wish him every success in the role. I'd also like to take the opportunity to express my thanks to my fellow Council and committee members, and the whole RCVS team, for their work and support over the last year. It's been a pleasure to work with you all on our shared goal to protect the public interest, advance animal health and welfare, and support veterinary professionals in delivering world-class care.

I hope you all enjoy the day and the chance to come together and celebrate the wonderful work taking place across the veterinary world.

Tim Parkin FRCVS

President





Changes to RCVS Council and Veterinary Nurses Council

These pages feature a list of all the retiring and incoming members of both RCVS Council and Veterinary Nurses Council, including details of their committee memberships and any other notable positions within the College.

RCVS Council

RETIRING MEMBERS

Dr Alice McLeish MRCVS: Elected July 2023 – May 2026 (three years)

Standards Committee; Vet Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) Subcommittee; VetGDP and Continuing Professional Development Compliance Subcommittee; Competition and Markets Authority Working Group; Mandatory Practice Regulation Working Group; Content Management System Project Board.

Dr Abbie Calow MRCVS: Elected July 2022 – July 2026 (four years)

Vice-Chair, Education Committee; Registration Committee; Standards Committee; Chair, Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice Subcommittee; Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Policy and Compliance Subcommittee; Post-Nominals Subcommittee; Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) Subcommittee; VetGDP and CPD Compliance Subcommittee; Competition and Markets Authority Working Group; RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees.

Dr Olivia Cook MRCVS: Elected July 2022 – July 2026 (four years)

Chair, Standards Committee; Examinations Appeals Subcommittee; Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee (renamed Professional Conduct Liaison Committee); Education Committee (Observer); Certificate Subcommittee; Primary Qualifications Subcommittee; Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD); Compliance Subcommittee; Chair, VetGDP and CPD Engagement Group; Competition and Markets Authority Working Group.

Mr Derek Bray: Lay appointed July 2018 – July 2026 (eight years)

Audit and Risk Committee; Examinations Appeals Committee; Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison Committee (renamed Professional Conduct Liaison Committee); Standards Committee; Estates Strategy Group; Covid-19 Taskforce.

Mr Timothy Walker: Lay appointed July 2018 – July 2026 (eight years)

Vice-Chair, Examinations Appeals Committee; Advancement of the Professions Committee; Finance and Resources Committee; Preliminary Investigation Committee and Disciplinary Committee Liaison



Committee (renamed Professional Conduct Liaison Committee); Standards Committee; Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) Subcommittee; VetGDP and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Compliance Subcommittee; Chair, Council Culture Working Group (renamed Council Effectiveness Group); Chair, Legislative Change Working Group; Competition and Markets Authority Working Group; Limited Licensure and Reasonable Adjustments Working Party.

Dr Susan Paterson FRCVS: Elected July 2014 – July 2026 (12 years)

President 2023 – 2024; Chair, Advancement of the Professions Committee (including Lead for Environment and Sustainability, and Lead for Leadership); Chair, Education Committee (latterly Observer); Chair, Nominations Committee; Chair, Specialist Recognition and Advanced Practitioner Appeals Committee; Finance and Resources Committee; Registration Committee; Standards Committee; Veterinary Nurses Council; Chair, Post-Nominals Subcommittee; Chair, Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) Subcommittee; Chair, VetGDP and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Subcommittee; Recognised Veterinary Practice Subcommittee (renamed Routine Veterinary Practice Subcommittee); Chair, Council Culture Working Group (renamed Council Effectiveness Group); Chair, Environment and Sustainability Working Party; Chair, Hardwick Street Refurbishment Group; Chair, Limited Licensure and Reasonable Adjustments Working Party; Chair, Mandatory Practice Regulation Working Group; Competition and Markets Authority Working Group; CPD Referral Group; Estates Strategy Group; Graduate Outcomes Working Party; Legislative Change Working Group; Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) (RCVS representative on UK Co-ordination Group); VetGDP Entrustable Professional Activities Task and Finish Group; Brexit Taskforce; Covid-19 Taskforce; CPD Compliance Panel; Fellowship Science Advisory Panel; Officer Team; RCVS Knowledge Board of Trustees; Vet Futures Project Board.

NEWLY- ELECTED MEMBERS

Ian Battersby FRCVS

Dr Neil Smith FRCVS

Dr Lara Wilson MRCVS

Alison Price MRCVS (elected 5 June 2026)

RETURNING MEMBER

Claire McLaughlan (Lay member)

NEWLY-APPOINTED LAY MEMBER

Gail Fleming

Helen Grantham



Veterinary Nurses Council

RETIRING MEMBERS

Simon Williams RVN 2023 – 2026 (three years)

Veterinary Nurses Council; Advancement of the Professions Committee; Veterinary Graduate Development Programme (VetGDP) and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Compliance Subcommittee; Content Management System (CMS) Project Board; Diversity and Inclusion Group; Legislative Change Working Group; Veterinary Nurse Futures Project Board.

Matthew Rendle CertAVN RVN 2016 – 2026 (10 years)

Chair, Veterinary Nurses Council 2020 – 2023; Advancement of the Professions Committee; Finance and Resources Committee; Nominations Committee; Standards Committee; Chair, Veterinary Nurse Futures Project Board; Brexit Taskforce; Council Culture Working Group (renamed Council Effectiveness Group); Covid-19 Taskforce; Estate Strategy Group; Hardwick Street Refurbishment Group; Invited to attend Officer Team meetings.

NEWLY-ELECTED MEMBERS

Meghan Conroy RVN

Lauren Hargrave RVN

NEW ELECTED COMMITTEE MEMBER

Mr Matthew Redford

RETIRING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Mr Victor Olowe: Audit and Risk Committee: Lay appointed July 2017 – July 2026 (nine years)

Member, Audit and Risk Committee 2017-2025; Chair, Audit and Risk Committee 2025 – 2026.



RCVS Honours & Awards

Veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses are expected to meet high standards in order to safeguard animal health and welfare.

However, some individuals far exceed expectations, and we feel this should be recognised and celebrated through the RCVS Honours and Awards. We also like to recognise the achievements of those who have contributed to the health and welfare of animals by working in fields related to the veterinary professions.

This year, we are presenting the awards described below, and you can read more about our winners on the following pages.

The RCVS Queen's Medal

The RCVS Queen's Medal is our most prestigious honour for veterinary surgeons and was launched with the kind permission of the late Queen Elizabeth II. It recognises a veterinary surgeon who has achieved a highly distinguished career, with sustained and outstanding achievements. Nominations may be made by any Member of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (MRCVS) or registered veterinary nurse (RVN), excluding current RCVS Council members.



VN Golden Jubilee Award

The VN Golden Jubilee Award was introduced in 2011 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first veterinary nurse training course. The award is aimed at veterinary nurses who have had a sustained and distinguished career, who can demonstrate a leadership role within the profession and who can act as an ambassador for the value of veterinary nurses and their work. Nominees must be RVNs (excluding current VN Council members) but nominators can be RVNs or MsRCVS, also excluding current RCVS Council and VN Council members.



RCVS Honorary Associateship

Honorary Associateship of the College is a prestigious honour that we confer on a small number of non-RCVS members each year, in recognition of their special contribution. We are keen to recognise the full range of individuals who contribute to the veterinary sphere, for example, veterinary nurses, scientists, lecturers, charity-workers, farriers, farmers and those involved in the commercial field.



The RCVS International Award

The International Award recognises veterinary surgeons, veterinary nurses and lay people who have worked internationally from within or outside of the UK. This could involve, for example, raising veterinary standards, veterinary education, improving animal health and welfare, developing leadership, and/or promoting mental health and welfare.



The RCVS Inspiration Award

This award is bestowed upon a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse who has recently demonstrated the ability to inspire and enthuse others consistently throughout his or her career. It is open to those who have inspired and motivated individuals, groups or who have worked at a profession-wide level. The award recognises those who have gone 'above and beyond' what may normally be expected from a professional colleague.

The RCVS Impact Award

This award is bestowed upon a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse who has recently made a considerable impact that has affected the profession at large, animal health or welfare, or public health. Such impact could have been made through any field of veterinary endeavour, including clinical practice, research, education or veterinary politics.



The RCVS Compassion Award

The Compassion Award is bestowed upon a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse who has demonstrated compassion towards fellow professionals and/or members of the animal-owning public, either as part of a one-off initiative or sustained over a longer period of time. The individual needs to have made a significant impact and shown genuine compassion over and above what might have been expected of them as part of their day-to-day work.

The RCVS Student Community Award

The Student Community Award recognises exceptional veterinary and veterinary nursing students who demonstrate outstanding commitment to supporting their peers and wider communities. Established in 2021, this prestigious award celebrates students who go beyond their studies to make meaningful contributions through leadership, outreach, or innovative initiatives that benefit others.

The RCVS Collaboration Award

The Collaboration Award recognises a project that involves more than one individual, organisation or group that has made a positive impact on the veterinary professions, animal health or welfare, One Health or public health, through structured teamwork. The nominated team must include at least one RCVS-registered veterinary professional.





Presentation of the RCVS Queen's Medal

Professor Emeritus Lance Lanyon

CBE BVS PhD DSc DSc hc FMedSci HonFRCVS

Lance qualified as a veterinary surgeon from Bristol University in 1966. He immediately started a PhD, during which he developed in vivo bone-strain measurement techniques, showing bone strength depends on brief vigorous loading. He later identified cellular mechanisms of bone adaptation, linking estrogen receptors to post-menopausal osteoporosis.

He was Principal (President) of the Royal Veterinary College from 1989–2004, where he led the RVC in its transition from being a small, stable, constituent College of the University of London, through which it was funded, to a fast-growing, internationally recognised, directly funded organisation with its own degree-awarding powers.

From 1997–1999, he served as Pro-Vice Chancellor of the University of London. A Founder Fellow of the Academy of Medical Sciences in 1998, he was made Commander of the British Empire in 2001. A member of RCVS Council from 1989–2004, he chaired RCVS visitations to the Universities of Glasgow, Liverpool, Edinburgh, Bristol, Cambridge, Nottingham, Pretoria, Brisbane and Sydney.

His nominator is Tim Skerry FRCVS, Professor Emeritus at the School of Medicine at the University of Sheffield, who said: "Lance's career has been so impactful because he has influenced many people within and outside the profession to aspire to high goals, providing a role model for many other researchers (vets, medics and other scientists).

"His extraordinary ability to manage and solve complex problems led to major regeneration of the RVC, developing modern research-led teaching, and increasing student numbers to fill growing needs for UK veterinary graduates. In research, Lance's discoveries are fundamental to all today's researchers in bone biology/osteoporosis internationally. He changed views and altered understanding profoundly and to the benefit of humans and animals."

He is currently Emeritus Professor of the University of London at the Royal Veterinary College. His hobbies involve boats, maintaining old buildings and holding his wife's horse.





Presentation of the RCVS VN Golden Jubilee Award

Samantha Fontaine DipAVN (Medical) RVN

Sam qualified as a veterinary nurse in 2002 and is currently a Senior Lecturer in Veterinary Science and Education at the University of Glasgow.

She holds an MSc in Veterinary Clinical Science, an RCVS Advanced Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Medicine), and is currently in the third year of a doctorate in education.

Through teaching and mentorship, Sam encourages students and qualified professionals to expand their scope of practice, develop critical thinking and leadership skills, and embrace reflective lifelong learning. She is committed to enhancing standards in veterinary nursing by integrating contemporary clinical practice and research literacy into education. She also contributes actively to curriculum development, driving programme design to meet the evolving needs of the profession and regulatory expectations.

Known for her collaborative and supportive approach, Sam works closely with colleagues, clinical partners, and professional networks to strengthen links between academia and practice. She is particularly passionate about promoting advanced practice roles and advocating for the recognition and value of veterinary nurses within the wider veterinary team.

Her nominator is Dr Mary Fraser FRCVS, Director of Education, Training and Assessment at the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. She said: "Throughout her career, Sam has strived to further develop, highlight and advance the subject of veterinary nursing and the role of the veterinary nurse in practice. She has shown by her own example what is possible and, alongside this, has always brought her colleagues with her. She is approachable, interested in hearing what others have to say, and focusses on finding solutions.

"Whilst undertaking her own clinical and pedagogical research, she has been able to share that knowledge with the wider profession, supporting students and colleagues along the way. She has been able to work with different medical health professionals including veterinary surgeons and human medical nurses, to see areas of similarity rather than focusing on differences, supporting teams to work together to improve standards of care."





Presentation of Honorary Associateship

Dr Rowena Packer BSc (Hons) PhD PGCert (VetEd) FHEA

Rowena is a companion animal behaviour and welfare scientist at the Royal Veterinary College (RVC) whose career has been dedicated to generating evidence to improve the health and welfare of dogs and cats. Through research, education, policy engagement and advocacy, she has become an internationally recognised voice on some of the most pressing welfare challenges facing companion animals.

After graduating from the University of Bristol with a first-class BSc in Animal Behaviour and Welfare (2009), Rowena immediately commenced a PhD at the RVC investigating the welfare consequences of extreme canine conformation. Her doctoral research has informed animal welfare legislation and breeding reform initiatives internationally, including in the Netherlands and Norway.

Following positions as a research assistant and postdoctoral researcher, Rowena was awarded a prestigious BBSRC Future Leader research fellowship to investigate epilepsy which transformed understanding of the condition.

Currently a Senior Lecturer in Companion Animal Behaviour and Welfare Science at RVC, Rowena leads a research programme addressing endemic and emerging welfare challenges in companion animals.

Passionate about ensuring research achieves real-world impact, Rowena works closely with charities, industry partners, policymakers and veterinary organisations. She regularly contributes to public and professional discussions on companion animal welfare through media engagement, policy consultation and expert commentary. Her contributions have been recognised through honours including the 2026 BSAVA Ray Butcher Award.

Her nominator, Dr Zoe Belshaw FRCVS, said: "Rowena's research and advocacy has driven significant advances in veterinary clinical practice, education, and the wellbeing of companion animals and veterinary staff. She leads groundbreaking, clinically relevant studies on brachycephalic disorders, canine epilepsy, the Pandemic Puppy phenomenon, designer crossbreeds and end-of-life decision making, lecturing on these topics at veterinary conferences globally.

"Collaborating closely with veterinary clinicians, Rowena embeds animal welfare, behaviour and human-animal interactions within her applied, impactful research, which has informed clinical epilepsy guidelines and international extreme conformation legislation."





Presentation of Honorary Associateship

Jim Green

Jim is internationally recognised in emergency response and animal incident management with over 25 years of strategic and operational experience. He is currently Director of Operations for the British Animal Rescue and Trauma Care Association (BARTA) and Animal Tactical Advisor with Hampshire and Isle of Wight Fire and Rescue Service.

Joining the fire and rescue service in 1996, Jim pioneered the UK's first comprehensive animal response model. His vision led to 95% of UK fire and rescue services adopting large animal rescue protocols and established critical training partnerships with the veterinary profession to ensure safer outcomes for both animals and responders.

In 2012, Jim co-founded BARTA to extend these principles globally. His expertise has since influenced international legislation and disaster response, including a secondment to UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine where he helped shape California state law to protect emergency responders and improved wildfire evacuation strategies through firefighter training. He supported disaster response training for undergraduates and deployed with the Veterinary Emergency Response Team to wildfires in Northern California.

Jim's current mission is establishing an international community of practice. He remains dedicated to ensuring the vital role of the veterinary professional is recognised at every level of global incident preparedness and response. He continues to work with the National Fire Chiefs Council, RSPCA, and RCVS to develop national criteria for major incidents.

Jim received two separate nominations. One of his nominators, Dr Adam Mugford FRCVS, said: "Jim's work has had a transformative impact on the veterinary profession by professionalising the interface between veterinary teams and emergency services during animal rescue and disaster response." His other nominator, Dr Patrick Pollock FRCVS, added: "Through BARTA, Jim embedded vet-led decision-making into national guidance, standard operating procedures and equipment specifications for animal rescue. This has given clinicians clear legal/ethical frameworks, safer scenes to work in, and defined responsibilities within incident command - moving vets from ad-hoc helpers to recognised professional partners."





Presentation of the International Award

Dr Sanjay Singh BVSc & AH

Sanjay qualified as a veterinary surgeon in 2016 from Rajasthan State Veterinary College in India. Immediately after qualifying, he attended Worldwide Veterinary Service (WVS) in Ooty, arriving there without a reservation and camping outside until they let him in to do a surgical training course.

After his training, he joined Help In Suffering (HIS), an animal welfare charity in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India, working in their Street Dog and Rabies Control Programme. Rabies kills approximately 20,000 people in India annually and over 95% of human rabies cases are from dog bites. As part of the programme Sanjay worked to surgically sterilise street dogs and vaccinate them against rabies, and also testing and monitoring the impact of World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines.

Sanjay receives this award in recognition of his work in improving animal health and welfare, as well as public health, through rabies vaccination drives and sterilisation programmes for the street dog population.

His nominator Jack Reece, Volunteer Veterinary Director for Help In Suffering, said: "Through his enthusiasm for evidence-based medicine, Sanjay has helped international and local research teams in studies of transmissible venereal tumours, uterine pathology; dog population management evidence and, most recently, rabies surveillance. By careful and particular attention to high surgical standards Sanjay has demonstrated that it is possible to run a successful high-throughput street dog sterilisation programme without routine prophylactic antibiotic usage thus championing responsible antimicrobial use."

Sanjay's work also involves organising final-year veterinary interns to see practice at HIS, where they can learn about welfare and modern small animal treatment. He also helps young veterinary research students with their clinical research.

He is currently involved with Cambridge Veterinary School in research on canine transmissible venereal tumours. He has also worked with Edinburgh University on a project on human-street dog relationships in India. In 2025, he was awarded the World Rabies Day Award for welfare from the Global Alliance for Rabies Control (GARC).

Outside of work, he is married and has just become father to a little boy.





Presentation of the Impact Award

Dr Sean Wensley BVSc MSc FRCVS

Having undertaken a Master's in Applied Animal Behaviour and Animal Welfare, Sean has devoted his career to the advancement of animal welfare through veterinary policy and practice.

He was Senior Veterinary Surgeon for Animal Welfare and Professional Engagement at the UK veterinary charity PDSA. There he led a nationwide network of hospital-based veterinary professionals driving practice-level changes to improve the welfare of companion animals. Currently Sean is a Research and Policy Advisor at the charity Compassion in World Farming International.

As President of the British Veterinary Association (BVA) in 2015–16, Sean led the development of the UK veterinary profession's first animal welfare strategy, *Vets Speaking Up for Animal Welfare*. This delivered strategic commitments in areas including veterinary animal welfare education and veterinary advocacy, and its approach was replicated at the European level during Sean's term as Chair of the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) Animal Welfare Working Group.

Sean's book *Through A Vet's Eyes: How to care for animals and treat them better*, was one of the Financial Times' best summer books of 2022 and places animal welfare in the context of One Health and sustainability.

Sean has undertaken animal welfare and conservation work in countries around the world, and he is an Honorary Life Member of the Commonwealth Veterinary Association. In 2017 he was the inaugural recipient of the World Veterinary Association Global Animal Welfare Award for Europe.

His nominator, Professor Paul McGreevy FRCVS, said: "Sean's career illustrates the critical path from science to impact: animal welfare research identifies animals' needs, but research only matters when it changes how people interact with animals. Sean bridges this gap through veterinary-led change that translates evidence into action.

"His combination of strategic leadership, gentle diplomacy, and compelling communication makes him an ideal ambassador for showcasing how veterinary professionals create tangible improvements in animal welfare."





Presentation of the Inspiration Award

Helen Silver-MacMahon DipAVN (Surgical) RVN

Helen is Co-Founder and Director of Being Human Consulting Ltd and works in veterinary education, coaching, and culture development. She recently joined Granta Veterinary Specialists as Hospital Operations and Culture Lead, where she supports positive workplace culture, team development, and operational excellence.

Helen completed an MSc in Patient Safety and Clinical Human Factors with the University of Edinburgh in 2021 and is currently undertaking a PhD exploring the non-technical skills required for safe anaesthesia. She also collaborates with the University of Aberdeen on research into veterinary incivility.

Helen has been a veterinary nurse for more than 20 years, with experience in both first-opinion and referral practice. Her clinical qualifications include the Advanced Diploma in Veterinary Nursing (Surgical), the Emergency and Critical Care Certificate, and the Small Animal Nutrition Certificate. She enjoys coaching, lecturing, mentoring, and contributing to published work on both clinical and non-clinical topics.

Her professional focus is on human factors, workplace wellbeing, leadership, and supporting veterinary teams to deliver safe, effective, and compassionate care.

This award recognises Helen's leadership and development roles, with a particular focus on helping veterinary practices improve their culture in areas such as psychological safety, civility, team development and quality improvement.

Her nominator, Sara Jackson MRCVS, said: "Helen's work is centred on human factors within the veterinary profession and has inspired action at individual, team and organisational levels. Through her courses on civility in veterinary teams, her contribution to the first handbook on the subject, and her forthcoming book, Helen has not only raised awareness but empowered people to create change themselves.

"I attended a course and experienced first-hand how she creates a psychologically safe environment where individuals can discuss their challenges openly and explore how to spread the message. Helen consistently helps people develop the intrinsic strength and confidence needed to carry this work forward."





Presentation of the Compassion Award

Dr Robert Campbell

BVM&S AFHEA FHEA PGCAP SFHEA MRCVS

Rob graduated from the Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies in 2018. Throughout his time at university, he was heavily involved in peer-to-peer teaching and mentoring projects, earning him Associate Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA) during his final year. This brush with student teaching would later be the spark for a career in veterinary academia.

Following graduation, Rob moved to rural Northumberland to work in a small, family-run mixed practice. He returned to academia in March 2020, working as a Primary Care Lecturer at the University of Liverpool School of Veterinary Science; a role that combined small animal clinical work with student rotation teaching.

Whilst working at Liverpool, Rob was invited to speak at a Schwartz Round titled 'A Euthanasia I'll Never Forget'. Schwartz Rounds are structured forums where staff and students working in healthcare come together to discuss the emotional and social aspects of their work.

Following his experience as a panellist, Rob felt compelled to train as a Schwartz Rounds facilitator and went on to lead the Schwartz Rounds initiative at Liverpool. He helped organise a further ten rounds, inviting RCVS presidents to speak as storytellers to students, as well as helping to bring Schwartz Rounds to BSAVA Congress in 2025, the first time a veterinary conference had hosted a Schwartz Round.

In April 2026, Rob co-authored the first published research investigating the experience of veterinary professionals attending Schwartz Rounds in clinical practice. The research demonstrated that attending Schwartz Rounds empowers vulnerability amongst staff, enables compassionate action and offers insight into the wider organisations in which they work.

Rob was promoted to Senior Lecturer in Primary Care and his Schwartz Rounds research formed the basis of his Master's degree and allowed him to obtain Senior Fellowship of the HEA.

His nominator wrote: "Rob saw a dire need for this compassionate endeavour in the veterinary community and was determined to ensure as many members of the school, and wider profession, could benefit from attending. He has been a staunch advocate for Schwartz Rounds ever since."





Presentation of Student Community Award

Lharanya Somasundaram

Lharanya is a final-year veterinary student at the Royal Veterinary College, graduating in summer 2026. Her journey through veterinary medicine has been defined by a commitment to widening participation, inclusion, and community engagement within the profession. Her passion for creating accessible pathways has been a consistent thread throughout her life, shaped largely by her own experiences and challenges in navigating her way into the profession.



Seeking a way to continue her efforts at university, she came across the newly-founded Animal Aspirations team. She joined the student organisation in 2021, during the first year of her degree, and quickly became a key contributor to its mission of inspiring and supporting children to pursue veterinary and animal-related careers. In 2022, she was appointed its Junior Vice-President and went on to become President in 2023, a role she held for two consecutive years. As President, she led the largest team in the organisation's history while expanding its reach across multiple veterinary schools, including Harper and Keele and at the Universities of Lancashire, Surrey, and Liverpool.

A key focus of her leadership was strengthening the connection between students and the wider veterinary profession, ensuring that outreach moved beyond aspiration toward tangible access, mentorship, and a sense of belonging. She collaborated with individuals and major organisations to develop initiatives that provided meaningful exposure to diverse veterinary pathways, while also advocating for inclusivity on larger platforms, such as within institutional committees and parliamentary policy discussions. Under her leadership, Animal Aspirations delivered a record number of opportunities and engaged with over 4,500 children each year.

Her nominator is fellow Animal Aspirations member and RVC vet student Shreevarshini Mandradiar. She said: "Lharanya's leadership has resulted in clear, measurable and lasting impact across the veterinary student community. Under her presidency, Animal Aspirations achieved its highest-ever levels of student engagement, and the record was broken again the following year, reflecting her ability to inspire participation, trust and sustained involvement. She expanded the team to its largest size in the organisation's history and successfully supported the establishment and growth of multiple national teams, ensuring our reach extended far beyond a single institution."



Presentation of Collaboration Award

Dr Shereene Williams BVM BVS MRCVS

The inaugural RCVS Collaboration Award has been given to an international scheme that aims to improve global access to veterinary medicines.

The global Essential Veterinary Medicine List (EVML) for food-producing animals is a collaboration between the World Veterinary Association (WVA) and Brooke, a UK-based international equine welfare charity. It aims to give individual veterinarians, as well as local/regional authorities, national governments and other organisations, access to a comprehensive list of veterinary medicines and what they can treat. This practical resource supports countries in addressing critical gaps in access to quality veterinary medicines and vaccines, enabling veterinarians to better safeguard animal health and welfare around the globe. This collaborative project is led by Dr Shereene Williams MRCVS, Global Animal Health Advisor at Brooke.

Shereene's commitment to improving animal welfare was shaped by her childhood experiences in Sri Lanka, where she witnessed first-hand the challenges faced by animals and communities in low- and middle-income countries. Her early involvement in rabies control programmes and rural community farming initiatives further inspired her to pursue a career in veterinary medicine.

In the award application, Dr Laura Skippen, Global Head of Animal Health and Welfare at the Brooke, said: "The global EVML is a blueprint for countries to adopt and adapt based on local priorities and disease prevalence. It is the product of incredible global veterinary expertise and a shared commitment to improve animal welfare.

"This project is unique in its global, collaborative approach involving veterinary professionals from all backgrounds and valuing their expertise in their specific part of the chain of service provision. From academics, World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) antimicrobial experts and epidemiologists, to practitioners working on large scale commercial farms, and those veterinarians delivering last-mile animal healthcare to smallholder farmers. This inclusive collaboration has fostered mutual learning and produced a powerful tool that improves access to essential medicines and addresses a major One Health challenge: antimicrobial resistance."





Presentation of RCVS Knowledge Awards

The Plowright Prize

The Plowright Prize is a £100,000 award given every two years to an individual working in Europe or the Commonwealth who has made a significant contribution to control, management or eradication of infectious diseases of animals. The prize is made possible thanks to a generous gift to RCVS Knowledge from the estate of Walter Plowright, widely regarded as one of the world's most eminent veterinary virologists. His work to develop a tissue culture vaccine against rinderpest was key to eliminating the disease – one of only two infectious diseases that have been fully eradicated.

Professor Katie Hampton

Katie Hampson is a Professor of Public Health and Disease Ecology and a Wellcome Trust Senior Research Fellow at the University of Glasgow. Professor Hampson leads a long-term study tracking rabies transmission in Tanzania through contact tracing and whole genome sequencing, and she collaborates with local and national governments and civil society from a range of countries to conduct implementation research on One Health approaches to surveillance, dog vaccination and last mile access to lifesaving post-exposure vaccines. Her research into rabies has been used to support global and national policies and for the dissemination of best practices. She works with partners across Latin America, Asia and Africa to address both fundamental and applied questions.



Speaking of the Plowright Prize, Professor Hampson said: “I am truly delighted to be awarded the Plowright Prize. I am excited about being able to leverage the award to support communities directly affected by rabies and to mobilise action on dog vaccination.

“I hope the prize will accelerate progress towards rabies elimination. The funding will support operationalisation of transboundary One Health plans to sustain and expand rabies-free zones through scaling best practices in East Africa and Southeast Asia.”



Antimicrobial Stewardship

This award recognises teams who have improved responsible antimicrobial prescribing using recognised quality improvement methods.

Winner: Gower Veterinary Surgery, Linnaeus

The practice team audited their use of cefovecin and found that it was frequently used without clear rationale. Additionally, only 71% of cases used the correct dosing. After introducing prescribing guidance, overall use fell by 83% and all remaining prescriptions were appropriately justified and 100% correctly dosed.

Jennifer Robertson, lead veterinary surgeon at Gower Veterinary Surgery, Linnaeus said:

“We are incredibly proud to receive this award. It means a great deal to Gower Vets and reflects the hard work that has made it possible.

“This award is especially meaningful because the work behind it has helped us improve clinical quality and deliver better outcomes.”

Quality Improvement to Lead Organisational Change

This award celebrates organisations who are working with local teams and using QI theory to embed change.

Winner: Vets Now

The Vets Now team audited the organisation’s emergency practices and found that the monitoring of fluid therapy for dogs with acute haemorrhagic diarrhoea syndrome (AHDS) was inconsistent. They introduced new guidelines which saw the recording of fluid calculations increase from 8.7% to 40%, with a decrease in fluid-related complications and antibiotic use.

Lucy Leicester, veterinary surgeon at Vets Now, said: “We are incredibly proud to see our clinical teams recognised for their proactive contribution to quality improvement.

“The comprehensive resources provided by RCVS Knowledge... informed our audit approach and helped our teams achieve meaningful change in support of high-quality clinical care and animal welfare.”



Quality Improvement in Practice

This award celebrates veterinary teams who have implemented QI techniques to drive improvement.

Winner – Medivet

The team at Medivet carried out a baseline audit that revealed high wastage of propofol caused by over-preparation for anaesthetic induction across multiple practices. The introduction of standardised, evidence-based changes caused the overall propofol wastage to drop by 15.6% demonstrating a clear improvement in sustainability and anaesthetic efficiency.

Dr Rhian Littlehales, veterinary surgeon at Medivet, said: “We are incredibly proud to receive this award from RCVS Knowledge. This project demonstrated how collaborative quality improvement can deliver meaningful benefits for patient safety, environmental sustainability and clinical practice at scale.”



Guest Speaker

Professor Sir David Spiegelhalter OBE FRS

Sir David Spiegelhalter is Emeritus Professor of Statistics at the University of Cambridge.

He was elected Fellow of the Royal Society in 2005, awarded an OBE in 2006, and knighted in 2014 for services to medical statistics.

From 2016 until 2023, he was Chair of the Winton Centre for Risk and Evidence Communication. The Centre, based in the Department of Pure Mathematics and Mathematical Statistics in Cambridge, was dedicated to improving the way that quantitative evidence is used in society.

From October 2007 until December 2018, he was the Winton Professor for the Public Understanding of Risk in the Statistical Laboratory, Centre for Mathematical Sciences, University of Cambridge. There, he helped create a website called Understanding Uncertainty which aimed to help improve the way that uncertainty and risk are discussed in society and show how probability and statistics can be useful and entertaining.

He was President of the Royal Statistical Society for 2017-2018 and has been a Non-Executive Director of the UK Statistics Authority since 2020.

He is a regular media commentator on statistical issues, including during the Covid crisis. His bestselling book, *The Art of Statistics*, was published in 2019, and *The Art of Uncertainty* followed in 2024.

His career media highlights include appearing on Desert Island Discs in 2022, and in 2011 coming 7th in an episode of BBC1's Winter Wipeout.





RCVS Fellowship Day 2026

Save the Date

Thursday, 26 November 2026 | 09:15 to 17:30
One Great George Street, London

Guest speaker:

Professor Sarah Cleaveland OBE FMedSci FRS

*Professor of Comparative Epidemiology, Institute of Biodiversity,
Animal Health and Comparative Medicine, University of Glasgow*

Cost: £85.00 early bird rate/
£99.00 from 1 October 2026



About One Great George Street

This Edwardian, Grade II listed building was designed by the eminent Scottish architect James Miller, who was also responsible for The Daily Telegraph Building on Fleet Street and Adelaide House near London Bridge. It serves as the headquarters of the Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE), the world's first professional engineering body.

Monday, 25 October 1910, marks the date the foundation stone was laid. In 2010, ICE celebrated 100 years since that event with a commemorative centenary time capsule and plaque.

The front and side elevations, as well as the entrance hall and the area beneath the main dome, are constructed from Whitbed Portland Stone. One Great George Street is a steel-framed structure - the second ever erected in London after the Ritz Hotel in 1905. Significant thought was given to the names of the function rooms, all dedicated in remembrance of eminent engineers with particular connections to the Institution or engineering history.

The building was first used as a commercial conference and events venue in the early 1980s. It was notably hired for the filming of *Reds* and *Gandhi*, which were both released in 1981. At that time, it was known as 'The Civils Conference Centre', being relaunched as One Great George Street in 1991.

Soon after, the venue hosted its first significant conference, for the Association of Project Management. The first wedding here took place in 1989. Since then, the building has continued to grow and evolve, keeping pace with the times while maintaining its traditional foundation.



Notes

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Notes

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#RoyalCollegeDay