



Ark Vet Centre

Equine Newsletter



☀ August 2023 ☀

Welcome to the August newsletter, We hope you have been enjoying the busy show season! Its certainly been a mixed month of weather with some very wet weather and some warm weather too which has meant the laminitic cases are continuing. We have also been doing a few more dentals to get older horses ready for autumn. This month we will be discussing vettings as we have seen a slight increase in the numbers we have been doing recently.

Vettings

A vetting is a thorough clinical examination, assessing the horse's suitability for your intended use. It is not a guarantee of the horse's future soundness, but is intended to help you make an informed decision before purchasing a horse.

Vettings are made up of 5 standard stages which include:

Stage 1: General clinical examination: This is a thorough examination of the whole horse at rest, including feeling all four limbs and back, an assessment of conformation, listening to the heart and lungs with a stethoscope and examining the horse's eyes in a dark stable with an ophthalmoscope.



Stage 2: Initial Trot Up: This includes observing the horse at walk and trot in hand as well as flexion tests on a hard, level surface in a straight line. The horse is also backed up a few paces and turned on a tight circle. The vet may also observe the horse trotting on a small diameter circle on a firm surface to detect more subtle lameness if it is safe or appropriate to do so.

Stage 3: Strenuous Exercise: This stage is usually performed seeing the horse ridden, but horses can be seen at the lunge if ridden exercise is not possible



(e.g. an unbroken horse). It involves assessment for lameness and of the heart and respiratory systems during a period of exertion.

Stage 4: Rest: This involves a period of rest in the stable following exercise to allow any potential stiffness to become apparent. The heart and respiratory systems are also monitored as they return to resting levels. The horse is also monitored for any evidence of vices such as crib biting and windsucking.



Stage 5: Final Trot Up: This stage involves a trot up in hand to observe for any exacerbation of more subtle lameness that was not evident initially.

Based on the findings of the examination, the vet will form an opinion on the horse's suitability for its intended use. The findings and opinion can be discussed with the purchaser either over the phone or in person if the purchaser is present for the vetting.

A 2 stage vetting can also be performed at the purchaser's request however there are limitations with a 2 stage vetting and certain conditions may not be picked up which may have been revealed during the course of a full five stage prior to purchase examination.

Blood samples may be taken at the time of the vetting if requested. These are stored for 6 months and may be tested if concerns arise after purchase to ensure the horse had not been administered any substances such as sedatives, pain killers or anti-inflammatories in order to mask certain conditions at the time of the vetting. Further diagnostic tests such as x-rays, ultrasound scans or endoscopy may also be performed at the purchaser's request.

Strangles tests may also be required if the new horse is going on to a livery yard, and may be either a blood test or a guttural pouch wash.

