



May 2026
Newsletter

www.penbodevets.co.uk/farm

Stay connected with Penbode Farm Vets



Join our email list and you'll receive updates on upcoming courses, practical farm-focused newsletters, and timely information to support the health and productivity of your livestock. Sign up to make sure you never miss the latest guidance, events, and resources from our team.



Only 15
tickets left

Penbode Farm Vets
**Summer
Ball**

20th June 2026

Location: Tetcott Village Hall,
EX22 6QX

Arrival: 7pm, Carriages at 1am

£50 per ticket, includes drink on arrival, two course meal and wine
After dinner tickets £20 (From 9pm)

Dress code: Black tie

Charity auction and live music by Reckless

Licensed bar



Penbode
Farm Vets Since 1840

For tickets or a table, please contact Jay:
jay.waylen@penbodevets.co.uk
01409 253418

FCN
THE FARMING
COMMUNITY
NETWORK

Raising money for



Tickets now on sale for **Our Summer Raffle** raising funds for The FCN.

Tickets can be purchased from any of our branches or from Jay at Market every Wednesday. **£1 a ticket.**

Prizes include:

Riverlife Café Voucher, £20 Beaumont and Bear Voucher, Voucher for four at Okehampton Golf Club, Voucher for Newton Abbot Races, Longhorn shearing clothing, Hexby shorts and much, much more.

The draw will take place at our Charity Summer Ball on the 20th June.

WHY MANAGE PAIN IN DAIRY CATTLE? THE CASE FOR METACAM® AND RIMADYL®

By Sally Ashford
Clinical Director,
Veterinary Surgeon
BVetMed DBR MRCVS



Pain and inflammation do more than affect animal welfare; they have measurable production consequences. When cows or calves experience pain, they often eat less, move less, and divert energy away from milk production or growth toward managing the inflammatory response.

This can lead to:

- Reduced milk yield
- Slower growth in calves
- Delayed recovery from illness or surgery
- Reduced fertility and reproductive performance

Two non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs)—Metacam® (meloxicam) and Rimadyl® (carprofen), are increasingly being used to address pain and support both animal welfare and productivity.

Metacam® provides anti-inflammatory, analgesic (pain-relieving), and anti-pyretic (fever-reducing) effects. It is widely used in cattle as a support alongside other medication, for conditions such as:

- Mastitis
- Lameness and foot lesions (cascade use)
- Calving-related trauma (cascade use)
- Dehorning and disbudding in calves
- Respiratory disease in young stock
- Diarrhoea (with oral rehydration therapy) in calves over a week old

Benefits on farm may include:

- Improved appetite and rumination in sick cows
- Faster recovery from illnesses or surgery
- Better mobility in lame animals
- Improved feed intake and growth rates in calves following stressful procedures

Studies have shown that when combined with antibiotic therapy for mastitis, Metacam can improve bacteriological cure rates by up to 32%, increase conception rates, and reduce culling risk by more than 40% compared to untreated cows.

In addition to its curative role, Metacam provides up to 72 hours of pain relief, supporting quicker recovery and improved mobility—an important factor when managing lameness or post-operative pain.

Rimadyl® works by inhibiting inflammatory mediators, helping reduce swelling, fever, and discomfort and is administered alongside treatment for infectious conditions, particularly mastitis or respiratory disease.

Common uses include:

- Acute mastitis
- Acute infectious respiratory disease
- Post-calving inflammation (cascade use)
- Lameness (cascade use)
- Supportive therapy for systemic infections (cascade use)

By reducing inflammation and supporting faster tissue repair, Rimadyl helps cattle recover more quickly, resume normal feeding behaviour, maintain weight gain and productivity.

It has a zero milk withdrawal, so is useful for lactating animals (N.B. where adjunct antimicrobial therapy is used, we will advise on correct withdrawals).



Economic Benefits for Dairy Farms

Although NSAIDs add a small treatment cost, their use can provide a strong economic return through improved health and productivity.

1. Maintaining Milk Yield

Inflammation and pain during diseases such as mastitis often reduce feed intake and milk production. By reducing inflammation and discomfort, NSAIDs help cows maintain appetite and milk yield, reducing production losses.

2. Faster Recovery

Animals that recover more quickly from illness require fewer repeat treatments, less labour, and experience fewer long-term productivity impacts.

3. Improved Calf Growth

In calves, pain relief after procedures such as disbudding are associated with improved feed intake and weight gain. Healthier, faster-growing calves reach breeding age sooner and enter the milking herd earlier or fatten quicker.

4. Reduced Culling Risk

Prolonged illness can lead to premature culling. Effective pain management can improve recovery rates and reduce the need to remove animals from the herd.

5. Welfare and Consumer Expectations

Dairy supply chains increasingly emphasise animal welfare. Demonstrating proactive pain management supports assurance schemes, retailer standards, and consumer trust.



Practical on-farm guidance

Plan pain control with your vet:

- Metacam® and Rimadyl® should always be used under veterinary guidance to ensure correct dosing, timing, and compliance with milk and meat withdrawal periods.

- Integrate NSAIDs into protocols for calving, disbudding, mastitis and respiratory disease rather than ad-hoc use.

- Target high-impact moments: single doses around difficult calving's, at dehorning, and with antibiotic therapy for respiratory disease can yield measurable welfare and production benefits.

Small interventions that reduce pain and inflammation can deliver meaningful benefits for both cattle and the bottom line.



AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

By Oliver Charlton

Veterinary Surgeon
BVSc MRCVS



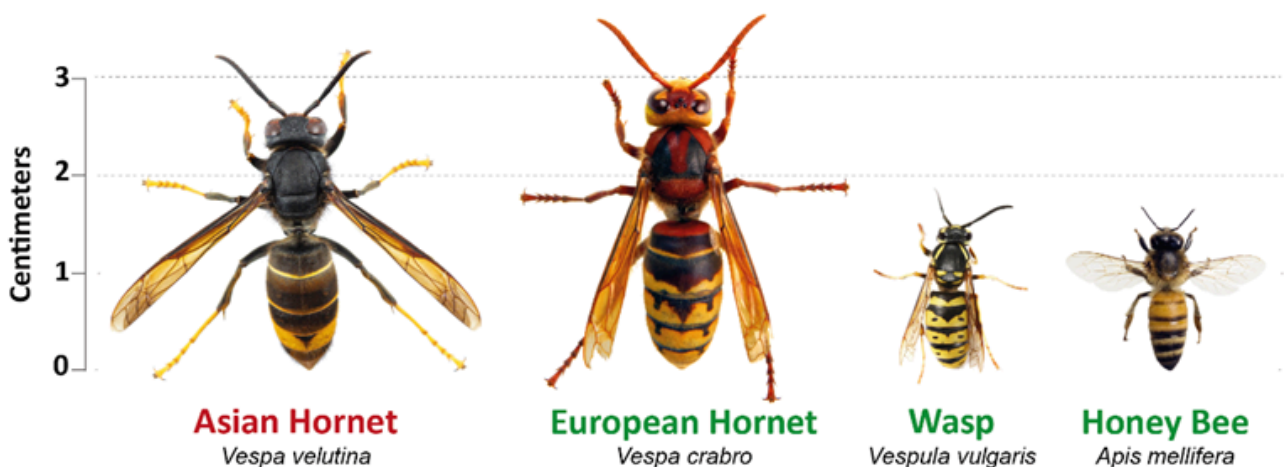
Yellow Legged Asian Hornet

The Yellow Legged Hornet (YLH) is an invasive species of hornet that has recently blown across the Channel to the South East (sound familiar?!) It is a very successful predator of insects, including many pollinators, such as the honey bee. They have the potential to have serious effects on plant pollination and biodiversity if they become established. The current target is still to eradicate them from the UK, which requires public awareness to report suspected sightings.

They differ from our European Hornet in a few ways:

- The YLH is slightly smaller
- The YLH is darker, but still with a yellow band on its abdomen
- The YLH's legs are yellow (the end half)

This comparison taken from an APHA info sheet illustrates the differences



If you see something you expect is a YLH (or its nest) then please report it, preferably with a photo if possible and safe (use the zoom!). There is an app for this, called 'Asian Hornet Watch' which can be found for apple or android, with information for identifying, and for reporting sightings.

Alternatively there is an email address: alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk or speak to us and we can direct you on how to report

Nests

Primary nests can be very small, and normally low level. Secondary nests later in the summer will be big and high up. They are essentially made of paper maché, much like a wasp nest.



YLH don't tend to be too vicious if undisturbed, but stings could be fatal in severe cases if a nest is disturbed.

Keep your eyes peeled!

MEET THE TEAM

By Kate Forgan

Veterinary Surgeon

BVetMed MRCVS



We are delighted to welcome Kate Forgan back to the Penbode Team. Many of you may remember Kate from her years at our Stratton branch.

What is your favourite type of visit?

A 'problem solved' visit is invariably the most rewarding. Whether attending a complicated calving or a ewe with tangled twins, the aim is the same - assess the situation, make a sound judgment and take prompt, appropriate action. The stakes are high, but so too are the rewards. The joy of seeing a healthy dam alongside her newborn, after a difficult procedure, never grows old.

In farming, outcomes are not always ideal, as some cases present significant challenges. However, ensuring that every possible intervention has been attempted and knowing that the animals have received a high standard of care, provides a strong sense of value and purpose. Farmers take great pride in the care of their livestock, my role as a farm vet is to uphold and support that standard when it matters most.

What is your favourite surgical procedure to perform?

I enjoy a wide range of surgical procedures. A good 'stitch up' for wound repair can be very satisfying, although fortunately traumatic injuries requiring surgery are not especially common. One memorable case involved performing reconstructive surgery on a heifer that had suffered severe facial trauma from a shear grab. Despite the extensive injury, some careful and creative suturing led to a successful closure and the heifer recovered well from her unplanned nose job.



What is your area of special interest?

In my new position with Penbode, I will be doing a significant amount of on-call work, which adds immense variety to my role as no shift is ever the same. However, I also place importance on maintaining daytime responsibilities such as routine fertility visits and proactive health planning. Both allow for regular interaction with clients and livestock, which is essential for collaboration, working towards the shared goal of improving health and productivity. Trust is fundamental to the relationships between farmers and vets, which is often built over years of shared experience across routine and emergency work.

What are you looking forward to developing throughout this coming year?

I am looking forward to spending more time on farm and building rapport with both new and reacquainted clients. There are several familiar faces within the Penbode team which has made my return feel like I never left. With future generations entering the profession, I hope to share my experience with new colleagues, recent graduates, and apprentice vet techs, contributing to the wider team's ongoing growth and development.

AWARD FOR HOLSWORTHY APPRENTICE WHO DOESN'T LET DYSLEXIA HOLD HER BACK

By Jorja Snook-Bevis



Jorja Snook-Bevis, who is part of our Vet tech team, was named Vet Technician Apprentice of the Year by Harper Adams University at its Apprentice of the Year Awards.

Jorja, 21, is studying for a Livestock Vet Technician Higher Level 5 Apprenticeship with Harper Adams and combines work-based learning at Penbode Vets with online studies and blocks of study sessions at the university in Shropshire.

She joined Penbode Vets as a VetTech in 2023 and her role involves working alongside its farm vets to monitor livestock health and welfare on client's farms and deliver services such as vaccinations, parasite control and cow mobility scoring. She embarked on her apprenticeship two years ago and is due to graduate this autumn.

She was nominated for the award by one of her lecturers at Harper Adams for overcoming barriers to learning and always making a conscious effort to improve, as well as showing a passion for her role and the animals she works with.



Jorja, who grew up in Holsworthy and lives on her family smallholding where she has her own herd of four pedigree Hereford Cattle, said she finds writing and spelling challenging but fulfils the requirements of her course by compiling visual reports instead of written ones.

Jorja said: "Winning the award is amazing and I'm so proud that my family were at the ceremony to watch me receiving it.

"I struggle with spelling and writing, but I haven't let that stop me and I've found different ways to deliver my coursework. I submit photos and videos as evidence that I've completed certain tasks, which tick all the boxes for the course requirements and is much easier for me than writing a report. I've received positive feedback from my lecturers who say they look forward to receiving my updates.

"I've really enjoyed doing the apprenticeship. I grew up around livestock, so I already had some of the skills needed to be a VetTech, but studying for my apprenticeship has helped me develop professional as well as practical skills and it's been great for my personal development too.

"I'm lucky to be part of the Penbode team because everyone here is so friendly and supportive and I love my job. It's great to work with farmers to help them improve the welfare of their animals, and it's very rewarding that they trust me to do the best for their livestock."

This was the first year that Harper Adams University has held an awards event for its apprentices, and awards were presented to students across rural and food production sectors.





BLOWFLY RISK

By Matilda Herridge-Nowell
Veterinary Surgeon
BVetMed MRCVS

As temperatures begin to heat up we must start to plan ahead for the fly season. **The National Animal Disease Information Service** (NADIS) has released a Blowfly update that we have moved from low to medium Blowfly strike risk.

Blowfly strike is caused by mainly green bottle flies. Adult flies lay eggs on the coat or fleece of animals; particularly dirty back ends or rotting/infected areas such as footrot lesions. Within a day the eggs hatch out into larvae (maggots) which develop and feed on the skin and tissue of the animal. This causes significant damage and if severe enough or not treated promptly it can result in death or euthanasia on welfare grounds. From as little as 24 hours from the fly laying its eggs you can start to see damage. This just goes to show you how fast fly strike progresses and how important it is to check your stock closely at least once per day.

When it comes to strike prevention is absolutely better than cure. There are multiple products available, all vary slightly in how long they protect for and if they also protect against or treat other parasites such as lice and ticks. Common products such as 'CLiK®' work to prevent blowfly strike for up to 16 weeks, but does not protect against or treat lice and ticks. If you find maggots on your animals there are some products available that will treat the infestation itself. Speak to your vet at the time for advice on how best to tackle the problem.

Fly strike is less common in goats and cattle, but certainly not unheard of. It can still be worthwhile treating for flies.

Call your local branch to speak to a vet in more detail.



Holsworthy Market


A reminder that a member of our team
will be at the
Holsworthy Market every Wednesday
Between 10am -12pm

We are pleased to be supporting the
Holsworthy Market Health Hub where
the market nurse will be availble
between 8am-10am and 12pm - 4pm at
the Penbode Hut



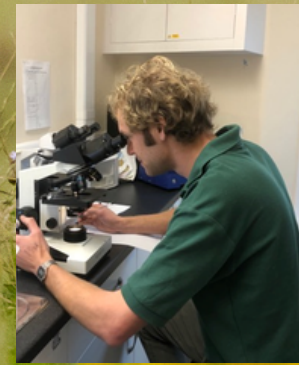
Penbode Farm Vets Taster Day

For those aged between 15 and 18



The day will include a mix of practical and theory sessions. It will give those interested in a career as a farm vet an insight as to what it entails.

There will be no charge for this event. However, places are very limited, we are therefore asking all those interested to apply for a space on the taster day by sending a letter of interest to jay.waylen@penbodevets.co.uk. Applications close on Friday 30th May



**Thursday 23rd July 2026
at our Bradworthy Branch
10am - 3pm**