Equine News: September 2026

Is your horse needle shy?

Injecting horses who are needle shy causes stress to horses and owners and increases the risk of injury to horse, handler and vet.

Desensitisation training help make the procedure calmer and safer for everyone.
Before getting started, ensure your horse is in a calm, quiet environment. If possible, have an experienced helper to hold onto your horse for you. Remember short, regular sessions focusing on 1-2 steps at a time are better than one continuous session so as not to overwhelm your horse.

Step 1: First, get your horse used to having you touch and rub their neck around the area of the injection site. When your horse stands still, remove your hand and offer a reward. Repeat this process until your horse is standing calmly every time.

Step 2: Next, begin raising the vein like the vet would by putting pressure on the skin with your thumb (don't worry if you're not in the exact right spot, as long as you're somewhere near). Again, once your horse is standing calmly, immediately remove your hand and offer a reward. Then repeat until your horse is calm every time.

Step 3: You can now begin to introduce an empty syringe (the blunt end of a pen works just as well). Begin by gently holding the syringe against your horse's neck, without pushing. Again, if the horse stands calmly, remove the syringe and offer a reward, repeating the process until your horse is standing calmly each time.

Step 4: Once your horse if comfortable with this process, begin applying some pressure with the syringe, simulating how a vet would push a needle into the neck.
When you feel you can comfortably complete all steps with your horse it may be helpful to have someone your horse doesn't know as well to carry out the process.

The aim is to make each step small enough to allow your horse to process what's happening without becoming overwhelmed. This method can also be used alongside clicker training, where a "click" is given before the reward. This tells the horse that their current behaviour is what we wanted.
If you feel your horse is getting too frustrated, return to the previous step and finish the session on a positive. It's important to remember that every horse is different and while some may be able to move between steps within a matter of days, others may take much longer.

If at any stage you feel your horse is becoming dangerous, stop immediately and allow them to calm down.
As always, if you have any questions or concerns, give our reception team a call and they will book you in for a consultation with one of our vets.

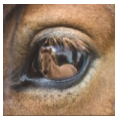
Wolsingham Show

Image credit: Paul Dobson Photography

We enjoyed a great weekend of showjumping at the Wolsingham Show. Scott Mitchell Veterinary Care sponsored the Newcomers' British Showjumping class on the Sunday.

Our vet, Sally Booth, who was at the showground all weekend looking after the veterinary needs, was on hand to present the prizes.

Old friends October and November 2026 open to all horses over 15 years old £205 inc VAT



- Twice annual zone visit & health check (Autumn and Spring)
- Full standard blood profile (ACTH included for horses on treatment only)
- Dental including sedation
- 10% off vaccination and selected long term medication
- Annual worming plan including 3 worm egg counts and reminders (excluding winter and tapeworm testing and treatment)

Rebecca's Return

We were delighted to welcome Equine Veterinary Nurse Rebecca back to SMVC in July after she spent 6 months working as a foal nurse in Newmarket. We all missed her and were very grateful to Clare who stepped in to help provide cover during her absence.

"At the beginning of the year I had the opportunity of taking on the role as a foal nurse at Rossdales Equine Hospital for their 2026 breading season, which has been a goal of mine since I was a student veterinary nurse.

I gained valuable experience, developing my nursing skills further and got to see a variety of interesting cases.

I love everything foals but my favourite and the most rewarding cases were the recumbent sick foals ('bed babies'). They required very intensive around the clock nursing and monitoring, usually involving intravenous fluids & medications, nutrition and intranasal oxygen therapy. As they got stronger, we would stand them out of the bed for periods of time gradually, to eventually progress them onto nursing from the mare. I loved seeing the foals develop every day and especially when the mares would encourage their baby!

On occasions we also helped on the adult ICU and yard. The nurses have a lot of responsibility for inpatient care so it was great to get involved in that. I am grateful to have had the opportunity, I learnt so much that I can bring back with me to our patients at SMVC! It was a pleasure to be a part of their team, they were very welcoming and supportive throughout the season. My time at Rossdales will remain with me through my nursing career!"

Zone visits September and October

Zone 1A (CA8, NE46-47, NE49) Zone 1B (NE44, DH8) - Mon 7th Sept, Mon 5th Oct

Zone 2 (NE19, NE45 & NE48) - Mon 14th Sept, Mon 12th Oct

Zone 3 (NE1-7, NE12-15, NE18, NE20, NE22-30 & NE61) - usually Sally - Thurs 3rd Sept, Thurs 1st Oct usually Liz—Mon 21st Sept, Mon 19th Oct

Zone 4 (NE8-11, NE16-17, NE21, NE31-43- Mon 28th Sept, Mon 26th Oct

Zone 5 (DH1-7, DH9) - Tues 22nd Sept, Tues 20th Oct

Zone 6 (DL 12-16) - Tues 29th Sept, Tues 27th Oct

Zone visits offer a reduced price visit of £24 for one owner and £12 for more than one owner at same yard for planned routine veterinary work.

We are able to offer this service by mapping the most efficient route around the calls – therefore it is not possible to specify a time or vet for a zone visit. Appointments must be booked by 1pm on the Friday before visit.

Next Dental Clinic: Wed 30th September

Dental clinics are held monthly at the surgery, usually with Euan who holds a certificate in Advanced Practice focussed on equine dentistry. The dental clinic allows us to work more efficiently and so we are able to pass on that saving to you with reduced price routine dentistry.

Dental clinic routine dental inc. sedation £78 inc. VAT

Dental clinic dental plus diastema flush and sedation £100 inc. VAT

Terms and conditions: Payment must be made at the time of treatment. Please arrive at your allocated time and collect your horse promptly after treatment.

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