

BVDA Presidents Report 2021

What a year it has been since my 2020 Report, which I have just re-read (and is still available on the website).

As you will have noticed the 2020 AGM had to be cancelled, along with most other associations and societies due to the global pandemic and the inability to hold meetings face to face. The AGM 2020 was to have seen a vote held on adopting a new Constitution to improve the running of the BVDA – this will now take place at the virtual AGM 2021 on 31/3/21, as published in an email to members at the beginning of the year. We have added a clause to the proposed new Constitution to officially allow a 'virtual' AGM in future years – for this year we are relying on the temporary amendment of the Companies Act to hold a virtual AGM.

We also had to cancel our annual pre BSAVA Scientific Day, which our members and sponsors find so useful and informative. However thanks mainly to Chris Allen as the driving force, we partnered with The Webinar Vet to hold possibly the first ever parallel stream one day virtual dental meeting in September. Thanks to the enthusiastic participation from our speakers and sponsors this was an outstanding success in terms of delegate numbers on the day for the live event and also the many from the UK and around the world who have watched the recordings at leisure. We could never have reached so many with a face to face meeting. In the future we are considering that when we can hold face to face meetings again, we will likely live stream them as well.

The practical dry labs we had planned for BSAVA Congress had to be postponed – but not cancelled. We had hoped to hold them in 2021 in Manchester, but these will now be in 2022 in Manchester, and possibly wet labs. “Watch this Space”! We now have a good level of communication and dialogue with the BSAVA and remain an 'affiliate group' to our mutual benefit.

During the last 12 months we have sold (for a nominal sum) the elderly BVDA dental machines to Nottingham Vet School to refurbish and use for their undergraduate dental training. We donated the remaining hand instruments to Bristol Vet School for the same purpose, and gave guidance on teaching dentistry. We have tried to encourage Nottingham, Bristol and Cambridge to co-operate in the teaching of dentistry to undergraduates and share equipment. The Lockdowns did result in a loss of contact, something we hope to take up again as life returns to normal during the coming year.

The Lockdowns and the difficulties of working in practice over the last year also took their toll on the discussions with the BVNA to take the Oral Care Nurse (OCN) program to the next level. These discussions will hopefully resume soon.

The move to offer a Membership category without the Journal of Veterinary Dentistry (JOVD) has been popular, especially when membership will now give free access to all twelve 2021 Talking Teeth webinars. We have held discussions with the publishers and agreed that they will not impose a near doubling of the price of supplying the JOVD, and are currently negotiating with them to supply the number of copies we actually need, rather than setting a figure based on historic need, which is costing the BVDA an unnecessary expense.

Another success story for the BVDA has been the resumption of the Talking Teeth meetings as virtual live webinars, free to members, with the recordings being available to members on our website. These meetings were the brainchild of Alix Freeman and she has organised a monthly series throughout 2021. We are very grateful to all the speakers for their time.

I am also grateful to Chris Allen our Social Media Co-ordinator for setting up the Facebook page nearly two years ago. It has proven incredibly popular with over 2500 users and there are posts

almost daily. It is becoming the number one place worldwide to ask for help on dental cases, and is a great way for the BVDA to advertise our Talking Teeth webinars and Virtual Conference.

So.... as I approach the AGM where I will retire as President after 2 years, did I achieve everything in my initial letter to members in 2019? Nope – but we have a much more vibrant BVDA now with a growing and younger membership, and more than a few overseas members. We have a much improved balance sheet, which will allow us to run practical courses in the future safe in the knowledge we can cover unexpected costs. We have an incredibly enthusiastic committee who have many ideas for building on the past successes of their predecessors to make the BVDA a powerful force in the education of vets nurses and owners, and push veterinary dentistry to the fore, for the benefit of our patients. I have been very privileged to work with such a talented committee, and know I leave the BVDA in safe hands.