



## **TERMS & CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS**

Thank you for entrusting the care and attention of your pet to Shinfield Vets. Laid out below are our Practice Terms and Conditions. Some aspects of the Terms may not be relevant to you and we request that you ask for further explanation/clarification if required.

### **FEES**

All fees, diets and drug charges are subject to VAT at the current rate. Fee levels are determined by the time spent on a case and according to the drugs, materials, consumables and diets used.

You will receive a detailed fee note for every consultation, surgical procedure or transaction with us.

### **METHODS OF PAYMENT**

Accounts are due for settlement at the end of the consultation, the discharge of the pet or upon collection of diets/drugs. You may settle your account using:

- CASH
- CREDIT/DEBIT CARD - Switch, Solo, MasterCard, Visa, Delta and American Express

### **ESTIMATES OF TREATMENT COSTS**

We will happily provide a written estimate as to the probable costs of a course of treatment. Please bear in mind that any estimate given can only be approximate as often a pet's illness will not follow a conventional course. Estimates will remain valid for 30 days.

### **ACCOUNT SETTLEMENT TERMS**

Shinfield Vets operates a payment-at-the time-of-treatment policy. Consultations should be paid for at the end of each consultation and in-patient procedures should be paid for on collection of the patient. Should any account not be settled within 7 days, then a reminder will be sent with an additional fee of £12.50+VAT in respect of the administrative costs incurred. Should it be necessary

for additional reminders to be sent, further charges will be incurred. These however, may be deducted if payment is made promptly. After due notice in writing to you the client, overdue accounts will be referred to our solicitors and at this point a further surcharge of £250+VAT will be levied to the account in respect of legal costs incurred collecting the debt. Any cheque returned by our bank as unpaid, any credit card payment not honoured and any cash tendered that is found to be counterfeit will result in the original account being restored to the original sum with further charges added in respect of bank charges and administrative costs together with interest on the principal sum.

### **INABILITY TO PAY**

If, for any reason, you are unable to settle your account as specified, we ask you to discuss the matter, as soon as possible with a member of staff. Please note that instalments or part-payments of any account may only be sanctioned with the express permission of the Practice Manager Joanne Le'Burn or the Clinic Director Andrew Williams. If an outstanding balance is left on your account for any reason you will be expected to complete and sign an 'Acknowledgement of Debt' form which will detail the payment terms that you have agreed to abide by.

### **PET HEALTH INSURANCE**

Shinfield Vets strongly supports the principle of insuring your pet against unexpected illness or accidents. Please ask about insurance from any member of staff. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to settle our account and then reclaim fees from your insurance company. We are more than happy to complete claim forms for owners and do not charge an administration fee for this. We aim to complete insurance forms within 7 days of submission and will telephone to inform you when they are ready to collect. We do not send on insurance forms on behalf of owners.

**Direct Insurance Claims** – in exceptional circumstances the management may agree to make a direct claim from the insurance company on your behalf to cover the costs of a specific treatment. This option will only be available to existing clients and when a pre-authorisation has been obtained from the insurance company. Until the claim has been repaid in full to the practice the client will be liable for any outstanding balance on their account. Where management have agreed to a direct claim owners will be required to sign an 'Acknowledgement of Debt' agreement stating that you will pay any outstanding balance that remains 8 weeks after the direct claim was submitted to your insurance company.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

Consultations are by appointment only within normal opening hours as stated on the practice's website. Emergency appointments can be made at short notice and will be seen before routine appointments as deemed necessary by the duty veterinary surgeon. Out of hours cover will be provided by Vets Now Reading.

## **HOME VISITS**

We are committed to providing home visits when they are required. This service will be provided by prior arrangement only. An appropriate time of arrival will be agreed between the duty vet and owner. Home visits will incur an additional fee dependent on time of the day and distance of travel. Home visits can be paid in cash or by credit/debit card over the telephone the same day.

## **OUT OF HOURS COVER**

Outside our normal opening hours emergency cover is provided by Vets Now Reading. If you have a genuine emergency during the hours in which the practice is closed you should contact Vets Now Reading on the telephone number provided on the practice telephone answering machine message or the practice website.

Animals which are hospitalised at the practice outside normal working hours are checked and treated according to their clinical needs. High-dependency cases may require transfer to Vets Now Reading for intensive care; in this circumstance the owner will be responsible for arranging transport to Vets Now Reading.

## **REPEAT PRESCRIPTIONS AND EXAMINATIONS**

The general policy of this practice is to reassess an animal requiring repeat prescription at least every 6 months. This is necessary for the welfare of your pet and to meet legal obligations. The prevailing examination fee will be charged for that consultation.

## **WRITTEN PRESCRIPTIONS**

Under DTI regulations you may request written prescriptions for your pet's medications and these will be issued subject to a fee. However, you will be responsible for sourcing these medications from a suitable supplier and should bear in mind that any delay in the start of treatment may not be in the best interests of the welfare of your pet. In a circumstance where it is essential, in the animal's best interest, to begin treatment immediately then a written prescription will not be offered. This is most likely to be the case if the animal requires the administration of an injectable

medication where a delay in treatment would be unacceptable.

### **RETURN OF UNUSED DRUGS**

We are happy to accept unused medications back into the practice only for disposal. Drugs which have left the premises are no longer fit for resale and no refund can be given. Drugs purchased from any other supplier will not be accepted for disposal.

### **OWNERSHIP OF CLINICAL RECORDS**

Your pet's clinical records, including radiographs, ultrasound scan records and laboratory test reports remain the property of Shinfield Vets and will be kept under the terms of the Data Protection Act (1998). You are entitled to see the records on request and if necessary an appropriate appointment to view them will be made. Copies with a summary of the history will be passed, only on request of the owner, to another veterinary surgeon taking over the case. If you require a copy for your personal use, a charge will be made at the rate for administrative work.

### **OWNERSHIP OF RADIOGRAPHS AND SIMILAR DOCUMENTS**

The care given to your animal may involve making some specific investigations, for example taking radiographs or performing ultrasound scans. Even though we make a charge for carrying out these investigations and interpreting their results ownership of the resulting record, for example a radiograph remains the property of the practice. Copies of records can be provided if required but an administration fee may be charged.

### **COMPLAINTS AND STANDARDS**

We hope that you never have recourse to complain about the standards of service received from Shinfield Vets. However, if you feel that there is something you wish to complain about, please direct your comments, in writing, in the first instance to the Practice Manager Joanne Le'Burn.

### **VARIATION IN TERMS & CONDITIONS OF BUSINESS**

No addition or variation of these conditions will bind the Practice unless specifically agreed in writing and signed by A.D. Williams and R.A. Williams. Additionally, no agent or person employed by or under contract with the practice has the authority to alter these terms and conditions in any way.