

VET**FUTURES**

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*Action Plan  
2016-2020*

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*Taking charge;  
Taking action*

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## Message from the Presidents

### Impact of Brexit

The in-depth work of the Vet Futures Action Group has taken place against the backdrop of uncertainty surrounding the referendum on UK membership of the EU, and this Action Plan was drafted before the referendum results were known. The Action Group has been mindful of the potential impact of Brexit but has been unable to plan for all eventualities, given the level of uncertainty.

The decision to leave the EU therefore raises many challenges and questions for the future of the UK veterinary profession, particularly in relation to regulation, education and workforce planning. The RCVS and BVA will now take stock of the decision and liaise closely with the UK's governments to ensure that the veterinary voice is heard as the UK embarks on the two-year negotiation to leave. The issues and actions set out in the Action Plan remain – and will inform those discussions – but, in many cases, the timeframes set out in this document are likely to alter significantly to take into account the impact of Brexit.

When we launched our report *Vet Futures – Taking charge of our future* in November 2015, we recognised that although a great deal of work had gone into the project at that point, we still had some way to go in terms of turning the report's 34 recommendations into actions.

So, we put out a call for volunteers to join an Action Group and were delighted to receive over 80 applications (see appendix A), from all corners of the profession. A group was put together that had the requisite experience and networks to bring alive the recommendations that fell under each of the six ambitions of the original report, and develop a workable plan of action.

Although the report's six ambitions – around animal welfare, vets' wider roles in society, mental health and wellbeing, careers, thriving businesses and leadership – each had their own distinct rationale and recommendations, in pulling together actions it became clear that several substantial workstreams cut across more than one area of focus. For example, the development of an online careers hub, both for those considering becoming a veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse, and those already within the professions, will assist with recognising vets' wider roles in society; improve the wellbeing of those who have reached a block in career progression; deliver the skills required by employers to ensure their businesses are sustainable; and, help develop tomorrow's leaders.

Several of these cross-cutting workstreams are outlined in the pages to follow. There are also plans for some more specific actions, which may address only one recommendation, or even part of a single recommendation, but are nonetheless important.

Vet Futures, while led by the RCVS and BVA, has been a collaborative process right from the start, and this phase has been no exception. In fact, from now on is where we really need the profession to pull together as a whole and start to make things happen. Some enabling organisations have been mentioned specifically in this document, but we would also welcome approaches and suggestions from others – organisations or individuals – who can help turn this Action Plan into reality.

This Action Plan is being launched at the Vet Futures Summit on 4 July 2016 and we look forward to engaging with the profession and its stakeholders in discussion at that event.

Finally, we would like to thank the members of the Action Group, those individuals who assisted us throughout the process (including those who gave constructive comments on the draft Action Plan), and the secretariat very much for their hard work, commitment and enthusiasm for the task of helping the profession take charge of its future.



**Bradley Viner**  
RCVS President

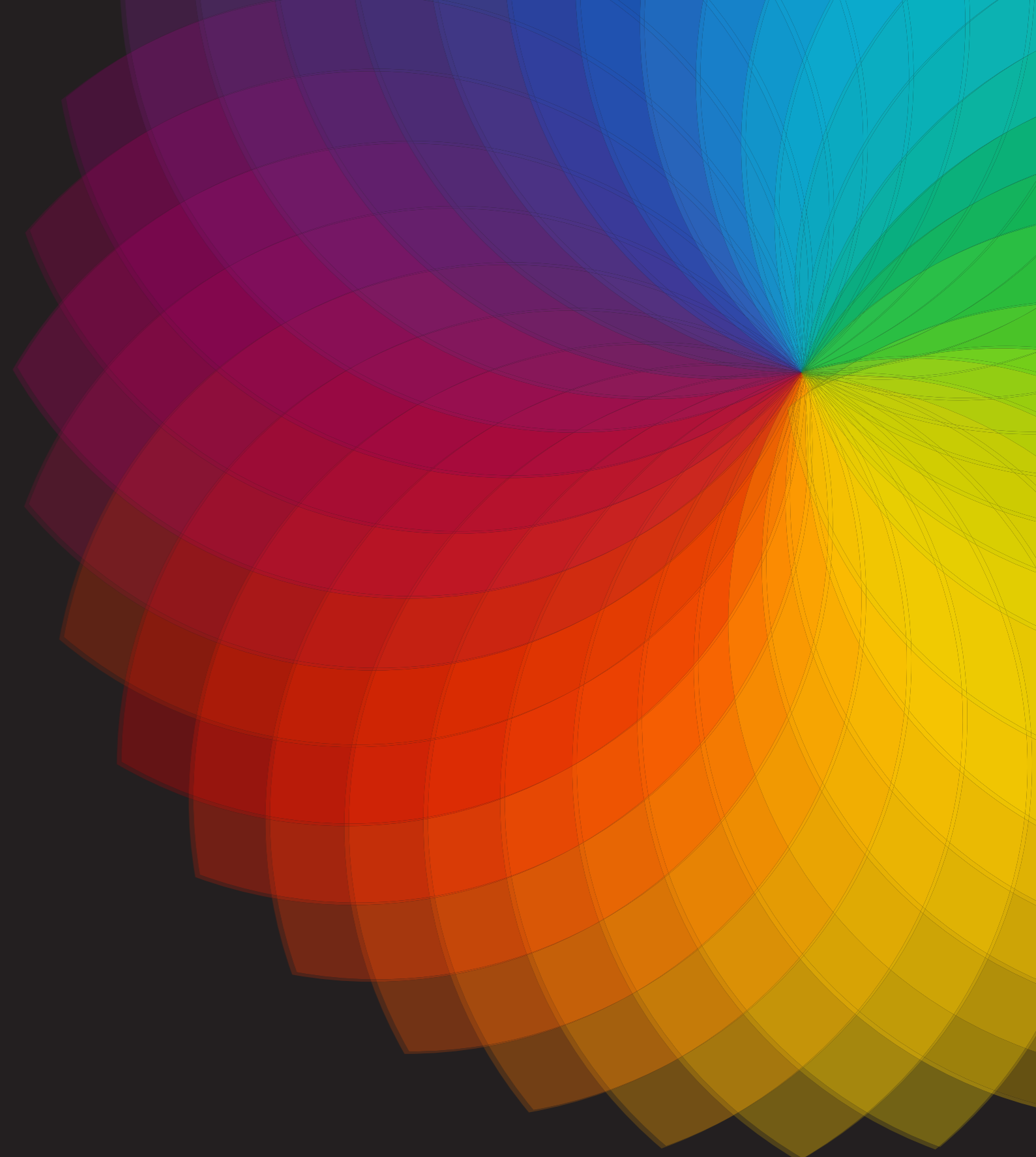


**Sean Wensley**  
BVA President

<b>Title</b>	<i>Vet Futures Action Plan 2016-20</i>
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# Introduction

**V**et Futures – *Taking charge of our future* was produced following a period of research and engagement and included 34 recommendations under six ambitions. The report was launched at BVA Congress within the London Vet Show on 20 November 2015.

It is recommended that this Action Plan is read alongside the report, as the Plan is intended as a working document and only includes summary information. It does not go into detail that has been covered within the report – for example, outlining the evidence base upon which the recommendations have been built.

The report is available online at [www.vetfutures.org.uk/resources](http://www.vetfutures.org.uk/resources) and hard copies can be requested from [info@vetfutures.org.uk](mailto:info@vetfutures.org.uk). A summary of the report's ambitions and recommendations can be found in Appendix B, and a summary of the actions, identifying which recommendations they meet, is on the pages to follow.

The purpose of this Action Plan is to draw out workstreams from the recommendations, sometimes grouping together similar activities under one broad action, at other times being more granular, depending on the nature of the task in hand. Some actions very closely map to single recommendations, where those recommendations were specific and lent themselves to direct action.

This Plan is organised by action rather than recommendation, and the recommendations that each action covers are highlighted accordingly. Although we have endeavoured to capture as many relevant actions as possible, this project is working to a time horizon of 2030 and so will, inevitably, evolve over time. This Plan focuses on the next five years (2016-20), although there is some staggering of actions in recognition of limited resources – see the 'Timeframes' indicated. We anticipate the need for regular horizon-scanning in order to ensure our recommendations remain relevant.

Already some of the recommendations outlined in November 2015 have been acted upon, with many veterinary organisations working hard to help us deliver on our ambitions – and indeed Vet Futures has inspired some new independent initiatives. Meanwhile, other recommendations from the report have taken lesser

or greater priority, according to changing external circumstances. So while this Action Plan will be launched at the Vet Futures Summit on 4 July 2016, accomplishing what it sets out will be a somewhat more fluid process than a snapshot of intended actions on a specific day may imply.

On the pages to follow, each action is summarised alongside a brief rationale, a sense of next appropriate steps and a rough timeframe. Information is given about who will be involved with taking forward action, and whose cooperation will be instrumental in supporting the delivery of the objective.

Finally, there is a sense of how success will be evaluated, although the detail here varies according to the nature and priority of the action. In addition to these specific measures, the RCVS and BVA will keep track of activity, monitor progress and evaluate success. Regular reports will be made back to the profession as activity unfolds.

A separate VN Futures Report will also be launched at the Vet Futures Summit on 4 July and will be available from the Vet Futures website.

## This Action Plan...

- Covers the first five years of the Vet Futures timeframe ie 2016-2020
- Outlines key actions based on the recommendations of *Vet Futures – Taking charge of our future* (November 2015)
- Is a living document that will evolve over time as priorities develop and the context changes (political, economic, societal), and we will continue to horizon-scan
- Acknowledges that much work has already been carried out by many organisations and individuals in striving to reach our ambitions, and much is yet to be done
- Recognises that although the RCVS and/or BVA will coordinate much of the activity, success will rely on the full support of the profession and those organisations and associations that represent it
- Invites feedback from anyone with a stake in the future of the veterinary profession – please email [info@vetfutures.org.uk](mailto:info@vetfutures.org.uk)

# Actions

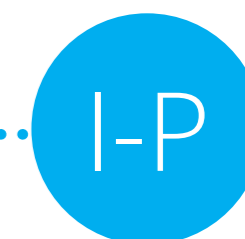
Summary of actions

A-H

This Plan focuses on those activities the Vet Futures Action Group feels are required to meet the ambitions of *Vet Futures – Taking charge of our future*. The table below summarises which recommendations from that original report are taken account of by the actions (principal ones are written in full, others referred to by number), and a short-form version of the overall ambition(s) it is set to meet. A full list of the original ambitions and recommendations can be found in Appendix B.

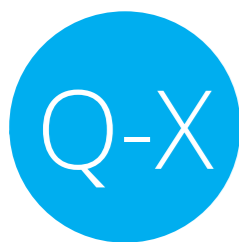
Action	Recommendations covered	Ambitions covered
<b>A: Animal welfare strategy</b>	<b>1.</b> Develop and promote an animal welfare strategy for the veterinary profession  <b>2.</b> Enhance moral reasoning and ethical decision-making in education, policy-making, practice-based research and everyday veterinary work	<b>One:</b> a leading force for animal health and welfare  <b>Two:</b> valued for our wider roles in society
<b>B: Guidance on animal welfare responsibilities</b>	<b>4.</b> Clarify and promote regulatory requirements and professional responsibilities relating to animal welfare  <b>Also 2</b>	<b>One:</b> a leading force for animal health and welfare
<b>C: Animal welfare research hub</b>	<b>3.</b> Explore options to develop an online animal welfare hub to better disseminate animal welfare research, evidence and tools, including the critical appraisal of common practices in the light of emerging evidence	<b>One:</b> a leading force for animal health and welfare
<b>D: Animal welfare coalition on the five welfare needs</b>	<b>5.</b> Develop joined up national campaigns on preventive health and the five welfare needs  <b>27.</b> Develop communications tools to improve consumer understanding of veterinary costs and fees, and promote the value of veterinary care  <b>Also 33</b>	<b>One:</b> a leading force for animal health and welfare  <b>Five:</b> thriving, innovative, user-focused businesses
<b>E: Strategic approach to veterinary research</b>	<b>9.</b> Work alongside 'traditional' funders of research and other stakeholders to adopt a more strategic, long-term outlook  <b>Also 24, 33</b>	<b>Two:</b> valued for our wider roles in society
<b>F: UK One Health coordination group</b>	<b>6.</b> Increase collaboration between veterinary and human health professionals and environmental organisations, in line with the One Health concept  <b>Also 7, 22, 23</b>	<b>Two:</b> valued for our wider roles in society

<b>G: Online careers hub</b>	<b>7.</b> Promote and celebrate the wider roles of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses outside clinical practice within the veterinary profession and to the general public, starting with school-age children, both to help recruit future veterinary surgeons and nurses, and to develop a better informed public  <b>8.</b> Make a broader range of extramural studies (EMS) opportunities available to veterinary students including (non-veterinary) business, public policy and international fields  <b>17.</b> Ensure that veterinary undergraduates are provided with career 'roadmaps' and encouraged to undertake relevant work experience as part of EMS  <b>19.</b> Create a one-stop-shop for careers advice and support to promote diverse career opportunities  <b>20.</b> Explore how we can encourage a more diverse profession (in relation to ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender etc) including reviewing the application and selection process for UK vet schools  <b>21.</b> Improve outreach to, and careers advice for, schoolchildren to better communicate the realities and opportunities of a veterinary career  <b>22.</b> Develop a public-facing awareness campaign to raise the profile of wider veterinary roles (including public health, research, government, industry and academia)  <b>Also 25, 32</b>	<b>Two:</b> valued for our wider roles in society  <b>Four:</b> a broad range of diverse and rewarding career paths
<b>H: Review student recruitment, selection and support</b>	<b>7.</b> Promote and celebrate the wider roles of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses outside clinical practice within the veterinary profession and to the general public, starting with school-age children, both to help recruit future veterinary surgeons and nurses, and to develop a better informed public  <b>11.</b> Review the approach to recruiting and selecting veterinary and veterinary nursing students to ensure adequate support, improve wellbeing and manage expectations  <b>20.</b> Explore how we can encourage a more diverse profession (in relation to ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender etc) including reviewing the application and selection process for UK vet schools  <b>21.</b> Improve outreach to, and careers advice for, schoolchildren to better communicate the realities and opportunities of a veterinary career  <b>Also 31</b>	<b>Two:</b> valued for our wider roles in society  <b>Three:</b> confident, resilient, healthy and well-supported  <b>Four:</b> a broad range of diverse and rewarding career paths



<b>I: Review outcomes for graduates</b>	<p><b>2.</b> Enhance moral reasoning and ethical decision-making in education, policy-making, practice-based research and everyday veterinary work</p> <p><b>7.</b> Promote and celebrate the wider roles of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses outside clinical practice within the veterinary profession and to the general public, starting with school-age children, both to help recruit future veterinary surgeons and nurses, and to develop a better informed public</p> <p><b>8.</b> Make a broader range of extramural studies (EMS) opportunities available to veterinary students including (non-veterinary) business, public policy and international fields</p> <p><b>15.</b> Help veterinary professionals to work with uncertainties, and develop reflective practice, starting with undergraduates</p> <p><b>16.</b> Explore and consult on a sustainable structure for the veterinary degree, including the viability of limited licensure, allowing veterinary students to focus their studies and specialise during the veterinary degree</p> <p><b>17.</b> Ensure that veterinary undergraduates are provided with career 'roadmaps' and encouraged to undertake relevant work experience as part of EMS</p> <p><b>20.</b> Explore how we can encourage a more diverse profession (in relation to ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender etc) including reviewing the application and selection process for UK vet schools</p> <p><b>25.</b> Enhance business and finance skills amongst veterinary professionals through education, EMS and continuing professional development (CPD)</p> <p><b>31.</b> Explore ways to develop the next generation of veterinary leaders including by identifying and nurturing talent, and providing them with the skills and opportunities to succeed</p> <p><b>32.</b> Develop and communicate clear routes to a wide range of leadership roles</p> <p><b>Also 20, 32</b></p>	<p><b>One:</b> a leading force for animal health and welfare</p> <p><b>Two:</b> valued for our wider roles in society</p> <p><b>Three:</b> confident, resilient, healthy and well-supported</p> <p><b>Four:</b> a broad range of diverse and rewarding career paths</p> <p><b>Five:</b> thriving, innovative, user-focused businesses</p> <p><b>Six:</b> exceptional leadership</p>
	<p><b>8.</b> Make a broader range of extramural studies (EMS) opportunities available to veterinary students including (non-veterinary) business, public policy and international fields</p> <p><b>17.</b> Ensure that veterinary undergraduates are provided with career 'roadmaps' and encouraged to undertake relevant work experience as part of EMS</p> <p><b>Also 25</b></p>	<p><b>Two:</b> valued for our wider roles in society</p> <p><b>Four:</b> a broad range of diverse and rewarding career paths</p>

<b>K: Support for overseas graduates</b>	<p><b>13.</b> Develop support for overseas-graduated veterinary surgeons working in the UK, who may not have benefited from the same undergraduate support as UK students</p>	<b>Three:</b> confident, resilient, healthy and well-supported
<b>L: Veterinary workforce study</b>	<p><b>18.</b> Undertake a veterinary workforce study to assess the rewards, recognition and working conditions of vets and veterinary nurses, and the drivers of low and unequal pay</p> <p><b>Also 28</b></p>	<b>Four:</b> a broad range of diverse and rewarding career paths
<b>M: Communicating veterinary fees and value</b>	<p><b>27.</b> Develop communications tools to improve consumer understanding of veterinary costs and fees, and promote the value of veterinary care</p>	<b>Five:</b> thriving, innovative, user-focused businesses
<b>N: Support the Mind Matters Initiative</b>	<p><b>10.</b> Deliver a coordinated, well-funded and evidence-based approach to mental health and wellbeing for the veterinary team</p> <p><b>12.</b> Deliver peer support and/or mentoring in all UK vet schools and improve support for vets post-graduation</p> <p><b>14.</b> Develop tools and services to help veterinary employers make working environments more supportive for everyone</p> <p><b>Also 15</b></p>	<b>Three:</b> confident, resilient, healthy and well-supported
<b>O: Focus on reflective practice</b>	<p><b>2.</b> Enhance moral reasoning and ethical decision-making in education, policy-making, practice-based research and everyday veterinary work</p> <p><b>15.</b> Help veterinary professionals to work with uncertainties, and develop reflective practice, starting with undergraduates</p> <p><b>Also 34</b></p>	<p><b>One:</b> a leading force for animal health and welfare</p> <p><b>Three:</b> confident, resilient, healthy and well-supported</p>
<b>P: Online mentoring</b>	<p><b>12.</b> Deliver peer support and/or mentoring in all UK vet schools and improve support for vets post-graduation</p> <p><b>34.</b> Develop lifelong learning in leadership, including mentoring and targeted leadership programmes, in particular for groups underrepresented in leadership (eg women and people from minority ethnic groups)</p> <p><b>Also 15</b></p>	<p><b>Three:</b> confident, resilient, healthy and well-supported</p> <p><b>Six:</b> exceptional leadership</p>



<b>Q: Veterinary leadership programme</b>	<p><b>31.</b> Explore ways to develop the next generation of veterinary leaders including by identifying and nurturing talent, and providing them with the skills and opportunities to succeed</p> <p><b>32.</b> Develop and communicate clear routes to a wide range of leadership roles</p> <p><b>34.</b> Develop lifelong learning in leadership, including mentoring and targeted leadership programmes, in particular for groups underrepresented in leadership (eg women and people from minority ethnic groups)</p> <p><b>Also 12, 17</b></p>	<b>Six:</b> exceptional leadership
<b>R: Innovation symposium</b>	<p><b>24.</b> Establish a business and innovation hub to showcase new technologies, services and business models, celebrate the innovators and ensure appropriate regulatory underpinnings are in place</p>	<b>Five:</b> thriving, innovative, user-focused businesses
<b>S: Review regulation of new veterinary technologies</b>	<p><b>23.</b> Review the regulatory framework for veterinary businesses to ensure a level playing field, enable a range of business models to coexist, ensure professionalism in commercial settings, and explore the implications for regulation of new technologies (eg telemedicine)</p> <p><b>Also 4</b></p>	<b>Five:</b> thriving, innovative, user-focused businesses
<b>T: Consult on mandatory practice standards inspection</b>	<p><b>26.</b> Explore whether practice standards inspection should be compulsory</p>	<b>Five:</b> thriving, innovative, user-focused businesses
<b>U: Strategy for regulating allied professionals</b>	<p><b>28.</b> Consider whether and how allied professionals might be regulated as part of the vet-led team</p> <p><b>Also 4, 6</b></p>	<b>Five:</b> thriving, innovative, user-focused businesses
<b>V: Consult on the representation of the profession</b>	<p><b>30.</b> Explore options for bringing greater coherence to the support and representation of the veterinary profession</p>	<b>Six:</b> exceptional leadership
<b>W: Vet Futures Europe</b>	<p><b>33.</b> Look to develop a proactive veterinary-led EU/global agenda where the UK can lead in public health, education, regulation and improving standards</p>	<b>Six:</b> exceptional leadership
<b>X: VN Futures</b>	<p><b>29.</b> Encourage veterinary nurse leaders to develop a report and recommendations which are directly relevant to veterinary nurses and their future, and complementary to the Vet Futures report</p>	<b>Six:</b> exceptional leadership



The actions



A: Animal welfare strategy	
Deliver the actions in the BVA animal welfare strategy <i>Vets speaking up for animal welfare</i> , including developing tools and strategies to assist veterinary surgeons in assessing and promoting animal welfare and ethical decision-making, and developing a list of specific animal welfare problems in each sector and a work programme to address them	
Rationale	<p>The need to champion the veterinary profession's role in safeguarding and promoting animal welfare has been a strong theme throughout the Vet Futures project, and animal welfare is repeatedly cited as a priority for lobbying and representation activity for veterinary surgeons.</p> <p>In February 2016, BVA launched an animal welfare strategy for the profession, <i>Vets speaking up for animal welfare</i>. The strategy defines the veterinary profession as an animal-welfare-focused profession and provides a framework to help veterinary professionals advocate good animal welfare outcomes for all animals. The strategy sets out 30 actions under six priority areas as building blocks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Animal welfare assessment</li><li>• Ethics</li><li>• Legislation</li><li>• Advocacy</li><li>• Education</li><li>• International</li></ul> <p>The ultimate aim of the animal welfare strategy is for the veterinary profession to contribute to solutions for real-world animal welfare problems. The next stage is to work closely with partners to identify and address specific animal welfare issues across different animal sectors.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Coordinate a timetable for the delivery of actions set out in the strategy, including the development and dissemination of tools and resources for the profession on animal welfare assessment, ethics and advocacy</li><li>• In consultation with BVA divisions and the wider profession, develop a list of specific animal welfare problems on which to develop policy positions</li></ul>
Timeframe	The timeframe for delivering specific actions within the BVA animal welfare strategy varies from immediate priorities to be delivered in 2016 to longer-term priorities to be delivered within the next two to three years.
Who?	BVA to lead on delivery, working with other relevant veterinary associations, the Veterinary Schools Council (VSC), NGOs, UK governments and government agencies.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The actions in the animal welfare strategy are delivered and BVA develops policy positions on a range of animal welfare problems to inform campaigns</li><li>• The strategy is disseminated and widely understood and supported within the veterinary profession</li><li>• Veterinary professionals report feeling confident to address animal welfare problems (to be measured via the RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Profession or BVA Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey panel)</li></ul>

B: Guidance on animal welfare responsibilities	
Develop and disseminate guidance on veterinary professionals' responsibilities in relation to animal welfare, including issues relating to the <i>RCVS Code of Professional Conduct</i> , other legislative responsibilities, and information relating to common concerns raised	
Rationale	The <i>RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons</i> was fully reviewed and updated in 2011, and the content continues to be reviewed on an ongoing basis by the RCVS Standards Committee. Animal welfare features throughout the supporting guidance to the <i>Code</i> , but more could be done to draw together a strong and supportive statement for veterinary surgeons in relation to their responsibilities. Learning points can be drawn from common concerns raised both by and about veterinary professionals in relation to animal welfare, and reference should be made to the BVA animal welfare strategy, which defines the profession as an animal-welfare-focused profession.
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RCVS Standards Committee to consider how best to reflect strong statements on animal welfare in the supporting guidance to the <i>Code</i></li><li>• Consult with the wider profession on the inclusion of animal welfare statements</li></ul>
Timeframe	Review to be undertaken in 2017-18 with new guidance published, as appropriate, by the end of 2018.
Who?	RCVS Standards Committee to lead on the review in consultation with the profession and its representative bodies, RCVS Knowledge and RCVS Specialists.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Level of engagement with the consultation</li><li>• Delivery of new guidance within the timeframe</li><li>• Feedback on the new guidance and number of times it is viewed online</li><li>• Veterinary professionals feel confident in making a stand on animal welfare issues (to be measured via RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Profession or BVA Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey panel)</li></ul>



# James Yeates



**Vet Futures is a clear chance for us as a profession to take control of our future. We can sit back and complain about changes that face us; or we can decide what type of profession we want to work in, and drive those changes.**

And that goes further than just our profession. We can decide what role we want in society: what sort of industries we want to support, what types of social change we want to drive.

*Vet Futures – Taking charge of our future* was an excellent piece of work. It is a series of aspirations to serve us well wherever our future takes us. What it needed was people within and supporting the profession to step up to realise those ambitions. Our work as an Action Group has been to convert ambitions to actions.

It has been great to work with such leading lights of the profession, knowing that they are only a small proportion of what makes us vibrant, optimistic and dynamic.

During this work, I have certainly realised that many of the key members of the profession are so keen to progress it – nobody seems to want to just sit back and reap the benefits of being part of such a trusted and respected profession. Those who are ambitious are not just ambitious for themselves, but for all vets.

As a vet, you cannot just wring your hands about an animal's disease progression – you take control, work out what's the best and then work to achieve it. And I've

seen that many vets think like that about society and the profession, too.

The report also proved – what perhaps we already knew – that the profession really cares about animal welfare. It came through loudly in the report and was the first ambition – before concerns about business sustainability and our own welfare (which are both very important, too). Some of those involved in animal care need to develop new attitudes and behaviours, but with

**It has been great to work with such leading lights of the profession, knowing that they are only a small proportion of what makes us vibrant, optimistic and dynamic.**

a welfare-focused veterinary profession at the helm, they should be a dying breed.

Vet Futures provides a solid foundation. The trick to maintaining its momentum will be ensuring that the Action Plan keeps on track and developing a mechanism to ensure that new ideas keep coming up. The Vet Futures work should coordinate these, and keep them on track, in order to avoid duplication and maximise what we can all achieve together.

## C: Animal welfare research hub

**Engage the whole veterinary profession in the BBSRC-funded UK Animal Welfare Research Network (AWRN), including signposting and disseminating information, and encouraging input**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The Vet Futures report called for the creation of an online animal welfare hub to better disseminate animal welfare research and tools. At the end of 2015, the University of Bristol announced the launch of the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)-funded UK AWRN, led by Mike Mendl, Professor of Animal Behaviour and Welfare at the University. The network aims to bring together UK animal welfare researchers and those in related disciplines with professionals from across the sphere, including industry bodies, charities and government.</p> <p>The network aims to share best practice and knowledge through workshops and associated events, identifying research gaps and areas where increased focus could strengthen and support UK animal welfare research. To foster skills and collaboration, the network will facilitate mentoring and training opportunities for early career researchers.</p> <p>An AWRN website has also been launched (<a href="http://awrn.co.uk">awrn.co.uk</a>). One of its aims is to provide a hub of knowledge to inform the public and other stakeholders about the challenges, strengths and achievements of animal welfare research in the UK. Input from AWRN members and other stakeholders in animal welfare will be essential to make this a 'go to' resource for both the public and animal welfare professionals.</p> <p>The Action Group recommends that rather than reinventing the wheel by setting up a new hub (<i>Vet Futures – Taking charge of our future</i>, recommendation 3), members of the profession who have a research interest become engaged with the network, and help to make the website a valuable and well-used resource for the rest of the profession and the public.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engagement with the AWRN to identify how best to promote to the profession</li><li>Assist the AWRN in its communications effort to the profession</li><li>Identify two to three key areas where veterinary input would be useful within the AWRN, and facilitate this</li></ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Communication with the profession has already begun, particularly through veterinary media. Further engagement should begin immediately with support for the ongoing development of the website during 2016.
<b>Who?</b>	BVA to provide communications and other support, as appropriate, to the University of Bristol and BBSRC, as part of the delivery of the BVA animal welfare strategy. Other veterinary organisations (including BVA divisions and the Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law Veterinary Association (AWSELVA) and NGOs to provide additional support and input.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Veterinary engagement with the network</li><li>Veterinary-focused tools and resources hosted by the network are well used by the profession</li></ul>



## D: Animal welfare coalition on the five welfare needs

**Establish an 'animal welfare coalition' of the veterinary profession and major NGOs providing veterinary services to promote the five welfare needs by agreeing joined up seasonal campaigns aimed at the companion animal-owning public (including communicating owners' responsibilities to provide for the healthcare of their animals) and exploring a simple logo similar to the 'five a day' healthy eating concept**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>There are many strong voices for animal welfare in the public arena but often those messages can be fragmented and disjointed. Strong alliances and coalitions on key messages and campaigns have proved to work well. For example, the collective campaign to introduce compulsory microchipping for all dogs in the UK was hugely successful, in part because of the single, strong and coordinated message coming from the veterinary profession and major NGOs. In addition to changing legislation there is also an opportunity for consistent messaging and a collective voice to reach the general public in order to change behaviour.</p> <p>Framing animal welfare messages in terms of the five welfare needs is now widely recognised by professionals working with animals, but it is not clear whether the message fully resonates with the public. The Action Group recommends that the veterinary profession and charities providing veterinary services work together as an animal welfare coalition to agree joined up seasonal campaigns aimed at the companion animal-owning public and based around the five welfare needs. The campaigns should include communicating owners' legal responsibilities to provide for the healthcare of their animals.</p> <p>The coalition should also consider developing a simple shared logo to promote the five welfare needs, starting with a focus on companion animals, in order to unite the veterinary profession, NGOs and government behind a single concept that could significantly increase the clarity of communication to the general public.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bring together key stakeholders for a roundtable discussion to understand what is possible and agree a way forward</li> <li>Consider how campaigns can be achieved in a devolved context</li> <li>Discuss the potential for a single simple logo and agree a design (based on existing designs)</li> <li>Develop a programme of communications activity</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Launch the coalition in November 2016 to coincide with the 10-year anniversary of the Animal Welfare Acts in England, Wales and Scotland.
<b>Who?</b>	BVA to initiate the coalition with the major NGOs providing veterinary services (including Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA), People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA), Blue Cross), relevant veterinary associations and the four UK governments and their stakeholder groups; thereafter, joint ownership.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A successful launch of the coalition with good media coverage and social media activity</li> <li>Support from UK governments for the initiative, via the Chief Veterinary Officers (CVOs)</li> <li>Individual campaigns receive high levels of media and social media coverage</li> <li>Public understanding of the five welfare needs increases (as measured by the PDSA Animal Wellbeing (PAW) reports)</li> </ul>



## E: Strategic approach to veterinary research

**Develop a more strategic approach to veterinary research, to ensure its long-term viability and funding**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>In a Vet Futures survey veterinary surgeons cited 'research' as the second most important area where they can make a contribution, behind 'animal health and welfare'. The Vet Futures report also found that veterinary research has the potential to play a major role in addressing challenges such as inefficiencies in the food-chain, national food security, mitigating the impact of animal disease, improving food animal welfare and tackling climate change.</p> <p>However, the report also found that veterinary research was in need of a more strategic approach to ensure its long-term viability and funding. This is essential to ensure that the veterinary profession remains evidence-based, continues to develop, can attract the brightest and the best, and is considered seriously alongside other medical professions, so that it can play its part in One Health and other initiatives.</p> <p>In November 2015, the Veterinary Schools Council Research Committee (VSCRC) arranged a meeting to bring together key stakeholders with the aim of articulating a vision for UK Veterinary Research 2020 and beyond. Strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities were discussed, and the meeting led to a number of actions, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The CVO UK establishing a steering group (time-limited) with the aim of ensuring that a coordinated approach is being taken towards developing a strategy for veterinary research in the UK</li> <li>BBSRC establishing an Animal Health Strategy Group</li> <li>A Training and Development Subcommittee of the VSCRC being established to support veterinary research training</li> <li>The Wellcome Trust and the VSC funding an evidence-gathering project to establish how many vets are engaged in research and to identify the factors that prevent them undertaking research careers</li> <li>Professor James Wood working with BBSRC on accessing funding from the International Development Budget to support veterinary research initiatives</li> <li>An Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine (EBVM) Working Group being established (chaired by Professor Neil Gorman) to establish how best to coordinate and support case-based companion animal research in the UK, which will coordinate with RCVS Knowledge</li> </ul>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is proposed that the VSCRC leads on this initiative with full engagement with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), funders, industry and the wider veterinary research community</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Many of these initiatives are ongoing. However, some have defined end points, for example, the VSC EBVM Working Group will produce a report in 2017 and the evidence-gathering project will be completed by July 2017.
<b>Who?</b>	VSCRC to lead on this initiative, working with other key veterinary research funders and influencers, including Defra, the devolved administrations, Wellcome, BBSRC, BVA, other veterinary associations, RCVS, RCVS Knowledge, UK Biological Research Institutes, scientific journal publishers and the pharmaceutical and agricultural industries.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information on the number of vets engaged in research and the factors that influence career choices</li> <li>Funding is secured for a range of research training initiatives</li> <li>An agreed career roadmap for veterinary researchers is rolled out</li> <li>An increase in the number of vets engaged in research</li> <li>Feedback from stakeholders (Defra, funders etc) that the UK veterinary research capability is improving</li> <li>An increase in the number of grants awarded for veterinary research</li> </ul>



F: UK One Health coordination group	
Establish a UK One Health coordination group linking the leading organisations in the veterinary, medical and environmental fields in the UK and utilising their networks to disseminate information, research and tools to foster collaboration in practice, education and policy	
Rationale	<p>One Health is not a new concept but it is one that sometimes struggles to gain traction with busy professionals. Anecdotally, medics view it as a veterinary concept, and others within all professions view its international dimension – taking an inter-professional approach to tackle complex global challenges – as being of less relevance to their daily lives as vets or doctors practising in the UK. The aim here is to improve liaison and collaboration between the veterinary and allied professions towards One Health aims, in order to foster and facilitate the approach whereby professionals ‘think globally and act locally’. This will be achieved by increasing veterinary involvement, professional representation and leadership in One Health issues and campaigns (for example, the O’Neill Review on Antimicrobial Resistance, work to control Ebola and efforts to address human and animal abuse).</p> <p>In the US the veterinary and medical professions have come together under the banner of the One Health Initiative to “unite human and veterinary medicine” with the leading organisations across the sectors playing a role. At an international level the One Health Platform exists to forge those same links. Meanwhile, at a UK level no such initiative or platform exists to coordinate the existing work and provide opportunity for new ideas and connections to flourish.</p> <p>The Action Group recommends that BVA reaches out to key stakeholders in the medical and environmental fields, through its One Health Working Group, to coordinate work and facilitate collaboration in the area of One Health.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collate information on existing One Health networks, such as the recently-established One Health Veterinary Students Group, and non-veterinary-led events, and field veterinary representatives to ensure input</li><li>• Liaise with colleagues at the representative and regulatory bodies, and educational establishments in human health (for example, through the Medical, Dentistry and Pharmacy Schools Councils) to ensure that there is inter-professional engagement with One Health networks and events, and gauge appetite for UK-wide coordination</li><li>• BVA divisions to provide One Health examples and success stories from their sectors</li><li>• Consider organising a UK One Health conference to bring together all the key organisations and develop shared priorities and outcomes</li></ul>
Timeframe	In 2016, engage with medical and environmental organisations and carry out a gap analysis of networks and events to develop a plan for engagement from 2017 onwards.
Who?	BVA to take the lead in engaging with UK medical and environmental organisations, such as the British Medical Association (BMA), British Dental Association (BDA), Royal Pharmaceutical Society (RPS), King’s Fund, Zoological Society of London (ZSL), Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and environmental NGOs. Within the veterinary sector key stakeholders are likely to include VSC, RCVS, BVA divisions, CVOs, the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD), the National Office of Animal Health (NOAH) and the European Medicines Agency (EMA).
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Key medical and environmental organisations engage with a UK One Health coordination effort</li><li>• Veterinary attendance is secured at all high-impact One Health events and in key One Health networks, alongside representatives from medicine, dentistry, pharmacy and environmental bodies</li><li>• Case studies of One Health activity at local and national levels are collected and disseminated</li><li>• Consideration to be given to working with the Network for Evaluation of One Health around evaluation of the project</li></ul>



Simon Doherty

*“That the veterinary professions are clear and assertive about their wider roles in society, including in public health and environmental sustainability, and the critical importance of our scientific expertise is recognised and valued both within our professions and by the public”*

Ambition 2 of *Vet Futures – Taking charge of our future*, pertaining to veterinary professionals’ wider roles in society.

Last year, it was my privilege to serve as the President of the BVA Northern Ireland Branch, during which time I had the opportunity to become fully immersed in the early stages of the Vet Futures project. When the call went out for applications to join the Vet Futures Action Group, I had little hesitation in preparing my application.

I qualified from the University of Glasgow Veterinary School in 2000 and, since then, have enjoyed a roller-coaster of a career – taking in general practice in Scotland and at home in Northern Ireland, two years setting up Veterinary Northern Ireland (VetNI), seven years in the world of diagnostics, research, commercialisation and regulatory studies at the Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute (AFBI), and a spell as business development director of a biotech company, before taking up my current professional role as an animal health consultant for UK Trade & Investment (UKTI).

Alongside that, I have enjoyed many representative roles on the committees and councils of BVA and several other professional bodies, as well as being involved in training and education, careers mentoring and as a trustee of livestock development charity, Send a Cow. I can honestly say that I’ve enjoyed every step

along the way... so you can perhaps understand a little bit of my frustration when people continue to say to me, “I’m sure you must miss being a vet”.

There is a widespread preconception – even from within our own profession – that, to be a ‘proper’ vet, you have to be in clinical practice. It has been really enlightening, through my appointment to the Vet Futures Action Group, to learn about the journeys many practising and non-practising vets have taken during their careers, and the roles they have played in society, using many of the skills and attributes that brought them to our profession in the first place. It has been great to receive such widespread support for the Vet Futures initiative from many of the stakeholders we’ve spoken to, and to have the endorsement of many of our allied associations; in particular, it has been a pleasure to share this journey with the veterinary nurses as they explore their VN Futures.

Of course, there are days when I miss driving around the countryside working directly with farmers and their livestock. But I am passionate about what the UK veterinary profession and, indeed, the wider animal health industry, has to offer – both within these islands and at a global level – such as expertise in areas including One Health and the control of pandemic diseases, and knowledge and experience in emerging sectors such as aquaculture... as well as all of the services being offered by the arm of the profession in clinical practice!

It would be my hope that veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses up and down the country will read the Vet Futures report and this Action Plan, and the VN Futures report, and reflect on how they can each contribute to the successful development of our professions in the months, years and decades ahead.

G

G: Online careers hub

Create an online veterinary careers hub, to include careers advice for school students and veterinary undergraduates, extramural studies (EMS) opportunities, and career development guidance for vets at all stages in their careers

Rationale	<p>Many of the recommendations of the report touched on the need for greater clarity, quality and quantity of careers information, for a range of audiences, including school students and those who advise and influence them, through undergraduates, who may be seeking non-clinical EMS opportunities (for example, business, finance, policy and overseas), to veterinary professionals looking for avenues to develop their careers or opportunities to change their career paths.</p> <p>The development of an online hub, as a portal for gathering together or signposting to this information, should help better measure expectations of those entering the profession, improve awareness of the greater range of veterinary roles available and encourage diversification, provide clear career paths and stimulate EMS and continuing professional development (CPD) providers to develop relevant learning opportunities.</p> <p>In addition, careers materials should be reviewed and developed with an eye to ensuring that potential students, their parents and careers advisors will have a clear picture of the realities of life at vet school and the career paths that may follow. This ought to reduce some of the dissonance between expectation and reality that can cause stress in later life.</p> <p>Public promotion of the hub will also help us to meet the objective of raising public awareness of the wider roles that veterinary surgeons play in society. Promotion of the hub will be accompanied by activities such the recruitment of careers ambassadors, talks at events such as the Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons (SPVS) Final-year Seminar, and the social media communication of some of the hub's resources (such as case studies).</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VSC, veterinary associations and vets working in wider roles to meet and develop career roadmaps and case studies, informed by existing research around career choices and suitability</li><li>• BVA, RCVS and VSC to review currently available postgraduate programmes, such as One Health-related MSc courses, and those that enable vets to change the focus of their careers (for example, from clinical to non-clinical or vice versa) and ensure they are clearly signposted from the hub</li><li>• BVA, RCVS and VSC to meet with providers of independent careers advice, such as the National Careers Service, widening participation teams/outreach teams and the allied professions to discuss the provision of accurate and useful careers advice in schools</li><li>• BVA, the British Veterinary Nursing Association (BVNA) and others to develop up-to-date schools packs</li><li>• RCVS to update its Walks of Life careers materials</li><li>• VSC to develop resources (for example, a massive open online course (MOOC)) for school leavers on the veterinary degree, associated opportunities, and where it can lead</li><li>• See also action J regarding the review of EMS and the development of additional opportunities</li><li>• VSC to clarify what non-clinical EMS opportunities are available to students across the vet schools</li><li>• VSC and RCVS to liaise on the potential of an up-to-date non-clinical EMS database</li></ul>
Timeframe	Roundtable to consider responsibilities and funding to take place during autumn 2016.



Who?	BVA to coordinate, with specific activities allocated as per 'Next steps' above, for example, to RCVS, the Association of Veterinary Students (AVS) or VSC. Stakeholders to include UK governments, careers advisors, potential students etc.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review feedback from users of the online hub</li><li>• Number of times the MOOC is undertaken and feedback on its effectiveness</li><li>• Number of applicants who go on to work in non-clinical or not primarily clinical roles as vets</li><li>• Review data from RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Profession (every four years) on where vets are working and their answer to the question 'if you had your time again, would you still become a vet?'</li><li>• Increased profile for vets working in non-clinical roles</li><li>• Increased ease of transfer from clinical roles to non-clinical and back again</li><li>• A network of workplaces where qualified veterinary surgeons returning to work can see practice, including non-clinical roles</li><li>• An accurate and well-used non-clinical EMS database</li></ul>



H: Review student recruitment, selection and support

Review the approach to recruiting and selecting veterinary and veterinary nursing students to ensure adequate support, improve wellbeing and manage expectations, and to create a more diverse workforce ready to embrace a variety of career opportunities

Rationale	<p>The need to review the recruitment and selection of veterinary students was identified within a number of Vet Futures ambitions. Under the wellbeing ambition the report called for an approach that ensured adequate support for vulnerable students from the start. In the careers section it set out an ambition for young people from diverse backgrounds (in relation to ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender etc) to aspire to join the veterinary professions. Within the ambition on wider veterinary roles the report called for better promotion of non-clinical career pathways in order to recruit future veterinary surgeons.</p> <p>A review of recruitment and selection is also pertinent to leadership, career satisfaction, managing expectations and ensuring that the profession is able to respond to the challenges that society sets in the future.</p> <p>Activity in this area is already underway, with careers materials and communications activities for school-aged children in the pipeline, activities at each vet school related to the 'widening participation' agenda, and plans for a regular VSC conference on supporting students. However, more is required. The Vet Futures report highlighted the high levels of stress in veterinary students, and anecdotally we are aware of problems among VN students. At the same time the professions still lack diversity in terms of gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic background.</p> <p>On student wellbeing and support it is not a question of selecting out people who may have a mental health issue, but better enabling all potential students to make an informed decision about whether a veterinary course is right for them (and which one), and better supporting them once they are enrolled.</p> <p>A review of the process will help us to focus on delivering improved support through the transition into, and out of, veterinary school, and understand how we can better encourage a more diverse profession interested in a wide range of career opportunities.</p>
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Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Review and share best practice across the vet schools and non-veterinary universities in terms of successful widening participation initiatives and support activities</li><li>Update and disseminate the RCVS Walks of Life materials for schools and careers advisors to help potential students better understand the selection and recruitment processes</li><li>Review what is currently happening in terms of recruitment and selection in the medical professions, via the Medical Schools Council (MSC) Selection Alliance, including student support and occupational health, to help identify where we could learn from them</li><li>Review current student support provision in the UK veterinary schools and initiatives for promoting student wellbeing, including a review of the AVS survey of wellbeing measures, to identify where there may be best practice, and equally where there may be gaps in support for students</li><li>Undertake a similar survey in veterinary nursing colleges</li><li>Via the proposed Mind Matters Initiative international network, gather information about best practice in overseas veterinary schools</li><li>Promote a culture change whereby time set aside for hobbies, sports and creative activities is properly valued and encouraged both by peers and university staff, as is mixing with students on other, non-veterinary courses</li><li>Encourage uptake of undergraduate communications training – both inter-professional and with clients</li><li>Work collaboratively to ensure student wellbeing conferences are well attended across the veterinary schools</li><li>Consider an event similar to the SPVS Lancaster Final-year Seminar at an earlier point in the veterinary degree</li></ul>
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Timeframe	Audit and data-gathering to be carried out by mid-2017, with a view to recommendations being made to the relevant organisations (VSC, AVS, RCVS, BVA etc) to be carried out from the 2018-9 recruitment process onwards.
Who?	To be led by the RCVS, working very closely with VSC, AVS, BVA and employers.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In five years' time, reprise the Vet Futures survey among students asking them about their views on the support they receive</li><li>Evidence of improved diversity</li><li>Gather data via BVA Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey panel and RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Profession around recent graduates' intentions to stay in the profession</li><li>Consider tracking a cohort of graduates to understand their career paths over time</li><li>Review RCVS data on those lost to the profession</li><li>Carry out a similar survey now with VN students and repeat in five years' time</li></ul>



Clare Allen



**I have wanted to be a vet all of my life... (well, apart from when I wanted to be a princess in my really early years!). But my identity as a vet has continued to evolve and change throughout my education and career. My veterinary career so far, then, has not been typical. But that is because, I would argue, there is no such thing as a 'typical' veterinary career. After almost 10 years in equine ambulatory practice, latterly as a solo practitioner, like many others in the profession, I found the work-life challenge of being on call 24/7 hard to manage with the needs of my growing family. Which is how I stumbled into teaching. However, instead of being a temporary career diversion while my kids were little, veterinary education has, rather unexpectedly, become my passion and my calling, which led me to a PhD in education.**

My doctoral thesis, inspired by my own career path, looked at how vet students made their career choices, and how we could help to prepare them for more diverse future careers in veterinary medicine. Not too surprisingly, this made me realise that we needed to have some idea of what the future of the profession might look like, and maybe even guide that future through the challenges that we are facing. That is when I started to advocate for the veterinary profession to pay attention to where we were heading, and be proactive about shaping that pathway. So, when I heard about the Vet Futures project I was on board immediately, and was hugely encouraged and excited that British vets were leading the way on this. I attended one of the roadshows, read the report, and was excited to apply for and be accepted onto the Action Group. That excitement has continued as I have worked with a group of amazingly talented and motivated individuals, who

also care passionately about steering our profession into the future mindfully.

The membership of the Vet Futures Action Group is a true demonstration of the diversity of career paths that veterinary medicine can offer: from key roles in clinical practice and animal welfare; to careers in One Health, education, business and innovation. This made my job of promoting diverse, sustainable career paths for future members of the profession relatively easy within the Group, since we had all lived some of those opportunities first-hand. But we want to be sure that our experience is passed on to others. So our discussion of actions and priorities have focused on practical solutions for supporting all members of our profession, from potential applicants, to students, and established members of the profession looking for the next opportunity or challenge to fit their changing life circumstances. The idea of a careers hub therefore, emerged quickly, although we kept expanding it as we thought about all of the different people it could benefit. The key will be to make it accessible to all of those people, and to promote and maintain it adequately. I am also proud of our recommendations to conduct a workforce review of the profession, and to review the purpose of EMS, and outcomes for graduates. All of these will have important implications for creating sustainable, diverse career options for graduates in the future.

Now I look forward to seeing how others in veterinary medicine respond to these actions, and help to take them forward. After all, these actions and recommendations will only succeed with the engagement and enthusiasm of all of those within our great profession.

I: Review outcomes for graduates

Develop clarity around the outcomes required by graduates for their future veterinary careers, and use this to inform a review of Day-one Competences

Rationale	<p>It is not easy to predict what activities a vet will be performing in 15 years' time but there is no doubt that the job will be very different from that of today – not least because of the changing structure of veterinary practice, the impact of new technologies and the need to broaden the scope of veterinary careers, in order to maximise vets' impact on society at large.</p> <p>Furthermore, while the importance of clinical content in the veterinary curriculum should not be diminished, skills such as adaptability, critical reflective practice and innovation should be considered as important for future vets. This should benefit not just individual graduates, but the development of the profession as a whole.</p> <p>It is also important that we address the current disconnect highlighted by Vet Futures research between the expectation of students and the reality of the veterinary career, and the feeling of recent graduates that the skills accumulated at university have not necessarily prepared them well for the job in hand.</p> <p>Much has changed in veterinary curricula in recent years, including the addition of key professional skills, such as communication, ethics and business competencies, but this is variable and there is a need to examine exactly what are the desired outcomes. At the same time, it is clearly not appropriate to simply keep adding to the existing veterinary curricula. Instead, once new competences have been agreed, this should give the vet schools scope to explore innovative educational strategies – and it is important that the RCVS is encouraging of this. Within this context, curricular models that allow species tracking should be considered, which may lead to discussions of limited licensure, as per the original Vet Futures recommendation.</p> <p>A review of Day-one Competences has been carried out relatively recently, but this perhaps was not challenging enough and did not look far enough ahead to address the issues raised by Vet Futures. It is therefore recommended that a further, more wide-reaching review is carried out to establish the key outcomes required by undergraduate education.</p> <p>This review will go on to inform accreditation criteria for UK veterinary schools, resulting in changes to the curricula.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Working party to be set up</li><li>• Seek buy in from key stakeholders</li><li>• Form a consultative group to collate evidence and ideas around desired veterinary graduate outcomes</li><li>• Map the likely future needs against the current educational system</li><li>• Make recommendations for change</li></ul>
Timeframe	<p>This project will take time and should not be hurried – the impact of change could be far-reaching and should be carefully considered.</p>
Who?	<p>A working party to be set up led by the RCVS, the VSCEC, AVS and employers.</p>
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of meaningful recommendations for change</li><li>• Longer term, research around the impact of the changes</li></ul>



Liz Mossop



**My motivation to become a member of the Vet Futures Action Group was the desire to be part of something with a real potential to have an impact on the profession I love. As a teacher at Nottingham Vet School (but very much a general practitioner at heart) I am very lucky to be involved with educating the vets of the future, and I strongly believe it is important that veterinary educators engage with the profession in all contexts and ensure the graduates we are producing are appropriately equipped for the wide range of roles and opportunities available.**

Of course this is a real challenge – after all, the veterinary degree has been five years long for many years, but the amount of veterinary knowledge has exponentially increased in that time! Veterinary teaching has changed hugely in order to accommodate this and ensure graduates don't just know enough information, but have appropriate practical and professional skills to be able to deal with what they don't know. Having said that, I don't think any of the schools would claim to have a perfect curriculum, and we are always changing and innovating to provide the best possible experience for our students, in the challenging environment that is higher education today.

The education theme runs through most of the Vet Futures recommendations and so I have had the task of advising and discussing a range of ideas with the other Action Group members. This has been stimulating and challenging at the same time, and part of my role has included collecting information from all the schools

about curricular content on several of the key topics, including the teaching of ethics, teamworking, reflective practice, career planning and information on the wide range of peer support systems now in place across the schools.

It has been a great opportunity to demonstrate the different approaches used and also to identify where action points can help to consolidate and enhance areas of the curriculum. It has also been exciting to consider how we might predict the content of the future veterinary Day-one Competences, especially in the context of the One Health agenda. I am not sure we will manage to make the crystal ball function correctly, but I think we can have a very good try!

The action I am proudest of is the careers hub. Career planning and employability is something I am passionate about and it will be great to bring together expertise and ideas from across the profession, to try to really engage students and vets with the huge range of opportunities which are out there. There was a strong feeling of agreement on this action point right from the beginning of our meetings, and this was definitely not the case for all areas! Several of us within the Group have had slightly 'alternative' careers, and we felt it was very important that the veterinary degree is seen as a starting point for everything from general practice to specialisation to research, academia, business and a whole lot more.

I will watch with interest as the action points take shape and hope very much to be a continuing part of the Vet Futures initiative.

J: Review of extramural studies

Undertake a review of the purpose and relevance of EMS, including non-clinical EMS

Rationale	<p>The scope and structure of the veterinary degrees offered by the UK veterinary schools continues to develop. Against this backdrop it is important that the purpose of EMS is reviewed and clarified, together with the details of its implementation, to ensure that it remains necessary, useful and effective. In particular, it is important to review the outcomes that are required from EMS, and how these might be achieved in the context of different models of veterinary education.</p> <p>Meanwhile, some of the non-clinical skills that EMS can deliver, and the exposure it can bring to a wide range of veterinary career opportunities, including those outside clinical practice, are not being effectively exploited.</p> <p>There is no doubt that some aspects of EMS are hugely valuable to students, however, with increasing costs and ever-more crowded veterinary curricula it will be important to consider the time required.</p> <p>EMS has been previously reviewed several times by the RCVS and a further independent review is currently being planned.</p> <p>Once the review is complete, and assuming EMS in some form continues, the careers hub mentioned at Action G will assist in providing greater access to a range of non-clinical EMS opportunities.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Form an independent group to examine and make recommendations as to the future shape of EMS and how it can be supported. The group will include students, educators and employers. The review should be very broad and should consider EMS's function within modern curricula and look at the requirements for EMS at different points in the veterinary course</li><li>Develop a survey tool for undergraduates and recent graduates to scope their views</li><li>Seek input from veterinary professional associations about the purpose and outcomes of EMS and what kinds of opportunities can be provided for students</li><li>Develop a set of recommendations</li></ul>
Timeframe	This is to be defined.
Who?	This action will be led by the RCVS Education Department in conjunction with the VSC, AVS, BVA, BVA divisions and employers.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engagement with the process</li><li>Development of a workable set of recommendations</li><li>Ongoing review of the effectiveness of EMS for students and employers</li></ul>



K: Support for overseas graduates	
Develop specific support for overseas-graduated veterinary surgeons working in the UK	
Rationale	<p>With the RCVS annually registering more overseas graduates than UK graduates, and overseas graduates currently making up more than 32% of the UK-practising Register (RCVS Register data, May 2016), it is more important than ever that a structure is in place to ensure that overseas graduates are well supported. There is currently a lack of information about the extent to which overseas graduates are supported during their veterinary degrees, but the additional stress of a transition to a new country and a new way of working means that they may be more vulnerable, even if they have been well supported as students. They also may not be familiar enough with the UK veterinary landscape to choose an employer that will be supportive.</p> <p>The RCVS, BVA and the Veterinary Defence Society (VDS) currently run a course for overseas veterinary graduates which covers the UK system, professionalism, CPD, how to get the job you want, communications skills etc. Mental health is touched on briefly as part of a presentation about Vetlife.</p> <p>Around 100 graduates go through this course each year – a drop in the ocean compared to the 800+ overseas graduates who register with the RCVS annually.</p> <p>There is other support available, through individuals and organisations, but nothing comprehensive. There is an opportunity for improved engagement, as all overseas graduates come physically to the RCVS to register in small groups, twice weekly.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop more structured support for overseas graduates prior to them entering the UK, such as online courses and webinars</li><li>• Set up well-run and supportive web-based discussion groups dedicated to overseas graduates</li><li>• Increase engagement from overseas graduates at meetings and events currently well attended by UK graduates</li><li>• Improve access to the current overseas graduate course by putting it on more often, increasing the mental health element, and offering travel grants to those who can demonstrate a need</li><li>• Consider a ‘foster university’ for overseas graduates, or a virtual ‘alumni centre’ for them</li><li>• Provide more education to overseas graduates about the realities of veterinary life in the UK (such as cost of living, job opportunities, career pathways) so that they can make an informed choice</li><li>• Consider the development of a specific section on the Professional Development Phase (PDP) for overseas graduates, which considers communications, ethics and cultural reflection</li><li>• UK vet schools to consider the development of a course to support RCVS Statutory Membership candidates</li><li>• Encourage and support employers of large numbers of overseas graduates to run their own courses</li><li>• Develop a video for all overseas graduates as part of their registration process</li></ul>
Timeframe	Some specific actions can happen quickly over the next year to two years; culture change will take longer.
Who?	This action will be led by the RCVS, working with BVA, VDS and employers.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement with specific activities (ie course attendance, use of tools, etc)</li><li>• Culture change to be measured via surveys and other research</li></ul>



Helena Diffey

**“Only half of recent graduates say their career has matched expectations,” revealed a survey from the Vet Futures project in 2015. As a student on the verge of beginning my career in the veterinary profession, this was a pretty distressing statistic to find out. I think this is why Vet Futures was so timely and this Action Plan so essential; the profession cannot afford to fail the next generation of vets.**

How people gain satisfaction in their careers is clearly different for each individual. However, I can't help thinking that underlying the frustrations of young vets is a profession not ready for the millennial generation to which I belong. A generation with very different expectations of life and work, we desire careers with diversity, flexibility and challenge. Many of the actions in the Plan relate to issues within the veterinary profession itself. These are extremely important to tackle as they are very real problems to those at all stages in their careers. Young vets, in particular, will struggle to progress without adequate mentoring and support, or viable opportunities to take a career break or to change direction.

Us millennial vets are also more acutely aware of how globalised our world is, with a strong sense of moral duty to make a positive impact. In my opinion, the global issues we face today, such as antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and food and environmental security, present the most exciting opportunities for the veterinary profession now and in the future. As a profession we need to work with other sectors and disciplines to extend our influence into areas of animal health and welfare

beyond the veterinary practice. Our profession should be capitalising on the strengths and capabilities of the fantastic next generation of vets, not apologising for a lack of career options and letting them go.

During the process of developing the Vet Futures Action Plan I have been fascinated to learn about innovative technologies on the near horizon that will undoubtedly completely change the way vets practise. UK veterinary education is already on the cutting-edge of science, nevertheless our Action Plan includes the consideration of different ways of training the veterinary workforce, in the interests of creating a wider role in society for the profession and improving career satisfaction.

**Us millennial vets are also more acutely aware of how globalised our world is, with a strong sense of moral duty to make a positive impact.**

I strongly believe that providing more choice and freedom for students to explore areas of personal interest during their training will, further to having a positive impact on wellbeing, create a more diverse, dynamic and resilient profession. Students need to be encouraged and rewarded, not least be given the time, for innovative and creative thinking. This is what will see us well into the future.



## L: Veterinary workforce study

**Undertake a veterinary workforce study to assess the rewards, recognition and working conditions of vets and veterinary nurses, and the drivers of low and unequal pay**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Qualitative research undertaken as part of Vet Futures identified some concerns about the impact of inadequate earnings for vets on the long-term profitability and sustainability of the profession, as earnings for vets were felt to be too low in comparison to that of other similar professions, and to be falling.</p> <p>The Vet Futures report recommended a workforce study be undertaken. The objective will be a well-designed, comprehensive study of the UK veterinary workforce that describes working conditions of vets across the profession accurately, and begins to identify the drivers of low and unequal pay, and predictors of profitability. Factors to be considered in terms of salaries include demographics, the role of external factors such as pet insurance, and the review of Schedule 3 of the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966.</p> <p>The study should include some quantitative research and also some in-depth qualitative work, for example, around how practices set their salaries for staff in all roles. It should learn from existing projects such as the SPVS salary surveys, BVA Voice of the Veterinary Profession surveys, the BVA Working Group on workforce issues and the RCVS Survey of the Veterinary Profession and Survey of the Veterinary Nursing Profession, but be sharp in its focus and comprehensive in its reach.</p> <p>The study should inform a set of recommendations for the professions, including, if appropriate, salary benchmarking.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>BVA workforces issues Working Group to develop specification and scope for the study, in collaboration with stakeholders</li> <li>Identify academics and/or institutions to undertake the study, and consider engaging an MBA student to carry out research to complement the main study</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Scoping in 2016, with the study to be undertaken during 2017.
<b>Who?</b>	BVA to lead the project with input and support from RCVS, BVNA, SPVS, VPMA, Government Veterinary Surgeons (GVS), the Major Employers Group (MEG) and recognised research organisations in the field, for example, the Institute for Employment Studies.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Response rate to study</li> <li>Subsequent action plan developed and delivered</li> <li>Salaries help the profession remain both attractive and sustainable</li> </ul>



## M: Communicating veterinary fees and value

**Develop communications materials to explain veterinary fees and value to the general public**

<b>Rationale</b>	The Vet Futures omnibus survey found that the profession is well trusted (94% of the general public trusts the profession generally or completely) and that 70% of animal owners rated their vet positively for value for money. However, veterinary surgeons report that they struggle with client communications and a perception that vets are expensive. The mantra that there is no NHS for animals is well rehearsed but more engaging communications tools that can be easily shared via social media are required to disseminate the key messages to a wider audience.
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undertake research to identify key information to be disseminated, including focus groups to investigate public understanding of veterinary fees and costs</li> <li>Establish where data is currently held – for example, SPVS salary, fee and profit surveys, and BVA Voice of the Veterinary Profession survey findings – and where there are gaps</li> <li>Develop public-facing communication tools, such as infographics</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Launch new materials during National Pet Month 2017 at the latest.
<b>Who?</b>	BVA and the RCVS working with SPVS, the Veterinary Practice Management Association (VPMA) and major employers, as well as in consultation with consumer organisations, such as Which?
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use and sharing of the tools and information</li> <li>Reduction in complaints to RCVS about veterinary fees and costs</li> <li>Repeat the 'Trust' survey in spring 2018 (three years on) to assess whether views have changed</li> </ul>

N

N: Support the Mind Matters Initiative	
Continue to support the RCVS Mind Matters Initiative to address mental health and wellbeing issues in the veterinary team	
Rationale	<p>The report called for the delivery of a coordinated, well-funded and evidence-based approach to mental health and wellbeing for the veterinary team. It also encouraged the delivery of peer support or mentoring in all UK vet schools and the improvement of support for graduates leading to profession-wide support mechanisms. The development of tools and services to help veterinary employers make working environments more supportive for everyone was also seen as desirable.</p> <p>Much of this work is largely already underway through the work of the Mind Matters Initiative (MMI), which is driven by the RCVS and guided by a Taskforce comprising representatives from many of the veterinary associations. It is recommended that Vet Futures keeps MMI under review and works with the RCVS to consider what will happen at the end of the five-year funded period (ie end 2019). A particular focus on better identifying risk factors and triggers for stress and mental ill-health is recommended, together with an assessment of which interventions work.</p> <p>We will be looking to identify a change in attitudes to mental health, together with a supportive culture where help is readily available and individuals feel they can seek it. We are also looking towards the development of a culture where individuals who have suffered with stress or mental ill-health can see a realistic route back into the profession, if that is what they choose.</p>
Next steps	<p>MMI is 18 months into a five-year programme, with ongoing actions including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of a ‘managing mental health in the workplace’ course. In addition, encouraging the take up of broader line management courses that are already provided</li><li>• Encouraging practices to take the SPVS/MMI wellbeing audit and enter the SPVS/MMI Wellbeing Award for practices – and identifying, via winners, ‘beacon practices’ that can inspire other practices to take a proactive approach to health and wellbeing</li><li>• Encouraging a greater focus on supportive working environments as part of the Practice Standards Scheme, for example, a ‘Team and Professional Responsibility Award’</li><li>• Development of courses to help build resilience and resourcefulness in veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses</li><li>• Setting up an international network of those involved in mental health in the veterinary profession so that ideas and inspiration can be shared</li><li>• Organising a conference for those involved in research into veterinary mental health, with the objective of mapping what data is available and what’s in the pipeline and how this can best inform interventions, and also identifying gaps for MMI-funded research</li><li>• Ongoing roll-out of mental health awareness training</li><li>• An audit of the impact of the RCVS Professional Conduct system on the mental health of those involved</li><li>• For more information about MMI and the planned work programme, please email Project Director Lizzie Lockett, on <a href="mailto:lizzie@vetmindmatters.org">lizzie@vetmindmatters.org</a></li></ul>
Timeframe	<p>Activities are ongoing; MMI was launched in 2015 and has secured funding until 2019. A review process to consider its future scope and funding will start in early 2018.</p>



Who?	<p>RCVS funds and leads MMI, working with a Taskforce that includes representatives of BVA, BVNA, VPMA, VSC, VDS, SPVS, AVS, British Association of Veterinary Nursing Students (BAVNS) and Vetlife.</p>
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Specific criteria for each of the activities carried out, for example, engagement in tackling mental health and wellbeing across all areas of the profession; widespread uptake of courses provided by MMI and others; positive feedback from courses and events</li><li>• Employment data, for example, churn rate, calls to employee assistance programmes, absenteeism</li><li>• Intervention data, for example, calls to Vetlife Helpline, concerns raised with RCVS, RCVS Health Protocol cases numbers, Vetlife Health Support case numbers</li><li>• Ad hoc surveys and data gathering</li><li>• Aim for a wellbeing ‘champion’ in each workplace to distribute information on health and wellbeing</li><li>• All employers making use of regular employee reviews and giving structure to this process</li><li>• Consistent and readily available access to occupational health consultant network/counselling network</li><li>• Positive engagement with the Professional Conduct audit and a clear set of recommendations that can be considered by the RCVS</li></ul>



O: Focus on reflective practice	
Develop improved support around what it means to be a veterinary professional, and how critical reflective practice is, and aim to reduce the 'blame culture' within the profession	
Rationale	<p>Alongside the work of the Mind Matters Initiative, the Action Group has particularly highlighted developing reflective practice as a key priority action. This action will also help address the recommendation around helping veterinary professionals to work with uncertainties, and develop reflective practice. A key source of stress for recent graduates is the transition from university life to the uncertainties of being in practice.</p> <p>Equipping students with the skills required to manage such uncertainties, and to develop their own reflective skills as part of developing resilience, was a clear recommendation from the Vet Futures report. The aim is to improve career satisfaction, reduce stress, and change fear of failure and poor performance into a more positive emphasis on reflective learning. A reduction in blame culture will also be required in order to allow this process to happen.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of a subsidised resilience training session for all recent graduates</li><li>• Piloting of a workshop using audio veterinary histories to explore reflective practice (currently underway with the University of Newcastle)</li><li>• Learning more about reflective practice from the medical profession, Balint Society, hospital-based Schwartz rounds and narrative medicine projects, to understand if something similar can be set up</li><li>• Improving engagement with the RCVS Student Experience Log so that reflective skills can be learned right from vet school</li><li>• Extend the PDP to include more reflective opportunities</li><li>• Encourage more people to sign up for Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice (CertAVP) A modules to encourage reflective practice and to take up the CertAVP in Veterinary Primary Care</li><li>• Encourage practices offering EMS to involve students in discussions around any critical events (for example, unexpected medical or surgical complications, serious complaints, accidents or anaesthetic deaths)</li><li>• Encourage the development of a 'Checklist' approach within the profession, which should result in a better safety culture and improve team working</li><li>• Draw together details of current projects on reflective practice to ensure they are accessible to the profession</li><li>• Develop proposals for a new RCVS CPD policy to focus more on outcomes, which will encourage reflective practice</li></ul>
Timeframe	Some specific actions can happen quickly over the next year to two years; culture change will take longer.
Who?	This action will be led by the RCVS, working with BVA, other veterinary associations, VDS, Vetlife, MMI and the University of Newcastle.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement with specific activities (ie course attendance, use of tools etc)</li><li>• Culture change to be measured via surveys and other research</li></ul>



Mary Thomson

**It was with some trepidation that I attended the first Vet Futures Action Group meeting earlier this year. A bit like the first day in a new job. Will the others like me? How will my background equip me for the work of the Action Group? But these worries were short lived. I've enjoyed every minute of our meetings and have met some fantastic people.**

My primary area of work with Vet Futures is health and wellbeing. Fortunately, through my roles in general practice, as a director of Vetlife and as an RCVS Postgraduate Dean, I am in regular contact with people who are experts in this area. I hope that, with the help of these contacts, we have created an Action Plan that will be embraced by the profession and will truly make a difference over the next few years.

As a practitioner I was particularly concerned that health and wellbeing should not just become a tick-box on a practice standards list. Through Vet Futures I am committed to taking positive steps to improve the health and wellbeing of the whole veterinary team. As a profession we are responsible for setting and upholding standards of animal welfare. We can only do this if we look after our own wellbeing and look out for our colleagues. A change in culture resulting in a more confident, resilient, healthy and mutually-supportive veterinary team will not happen overnight, but is essential to ensure a bright future for our great profession.

So what have I been doing so far? At our first meeting we hit the ground running, considering each of the recommendations of *Vet Futures – Taking charge of*

*our future* and looking at where there were areas of mutual interest. So, for example, some of my health and wellbeing objectives have common ground with careers and education. We also identified some of the organisations and individuals who are likely to be key to progressing the work of Vet Futures.

The second meeting was an engaging day of presentations from August Equity, Defra, VSC and VDS. Representatives from each organisation gave their thoughts on the Vet Futures recommendations and suggested areas where they could develop ideas further and implement actions. Our discussion lasted well into the evening and we agreed that, while we might not have all the answers by July, we will certainly have a framework for action which will develop the answers.

Between the meetings I have been talking to many individuals and organisations, and, as meeting number three drew near, I began to feel the pressure a little. With the Vet Futures Summit fast approaching a tough morning was spent trying to thrash out how best to structure the big event. This gave me much food for thought and to be honest I have met so many people who would make excellent speakers that I have had a difficult time with the decision-making process.

I hope the wellbeing section of the Action Plan reflects the fantastic input from many willing volunteers keen to improve the future of our profession. I would like to thank everyone who has helped so far. It is never too late make your contribution to the future of our great profession: many hands make light work and the more we all get involved, the bigger the difference we will make.



## P: Online mentoring

**Develop an online veterinary mentoring system to address matters such as personal development, mental health and leadership, and consider other mentoring and peer support options**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The importance of peer support has been well documented in sectors as diverse as the military and law, and is already proving valuable in some of the UK veterinary schools.</p> <p>Via MMI, a trial in Northern Ireland is in development. Meanwhile the Action Group felt that a consideration of how the principle of peer support might be broadened out to the profession at large would be important, including the extent to which this ought to be at a workplace or professional level (taking account of issues such as confidentiality/anonymity). Not only is it likely to be a key tool in helping to build resilience, but it will also help to develop the potential leaders of tomorrow.</p> <p>An online model is favoured as this will overcome issues of confidentiality and geographical isolation. There are likely to be benefits in having access to a mentor working in the same professional domain but not employed by the same organisation, although such a model would aim to supplement, rather than replace, the encouragement of in-practice support systems.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and trial an online mentoring platform, which includes online training and supervision for the mentors</li> <li>• Consider training the PDP Postgraduate Deans so that they can take a greater pastoral role</li> <li>• Approach vet school alumni societies to see if they would be willing to consider running peer support programmes for their graduates, perhaps linking with reunions (and using these to gauge appetite for such support)</li> <li>• Talk to Vetlife about the possibility of developing the role of the Vetlife Helpline volunteers so that they can provide more of an ongoing support role</li> <li>• Develop a 'buddying' system for those veterinary surgeons and VNs going through the RCVS complaints process – possibly organised via VDS – ensuring such buddies are properly trained</li> <li>• Build keep-in-touch schemes for those having a career break/returning to work</li> <li>• Engage with the VSCRC which is establishing a mentoring system for vets with an interest in research</li> <li>• Develop better guidance for employers on the employment and development of new graduates, linking to existing resources, such as the British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) PDP resource, where appropriate</li> <li>• Encourage vets to take up the CertAVP module on coaching and mentoring</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Immediate start.
<b>Who?</b>	RCVS to lead (via MMI with input from the Fellowship), working with VSC, AVS, BVA and divisions, employers and Vetlife.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate of uptake for online mentoring model – both mentors and mentees</li> <li>• Engagement with the peer support process, drop-out rates for supporters, review vet school experience of peer support as part of review of recruitment and selection process</li> <li>• Evaluation of various mentoring and peer support schemes</li> </ul>



## Q: Veterinary leadership programme

**Develop a veterinary leadership programme**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The Vet Futures report suggested that, to date, the profession had given leadership insufficient focus – concerns had been raised over the number of vets and vet nurses stepping forward for leadership roles and the report found that mechanisms to identify tomorrow's leaders were lacking. Although there are events and short courses available, there is a requirement for a more sustained programme. The report set out an ambition for a diverse range of leadership opportunities to exist throughout the profession, from government, research, academia and politics to business and industry.</p> <p>The Vet Futures Action Group recognises the benefits for every individual in developing leadership skills, whether they are in a formal leadership role or not. The Action Group therefore recommends that a veterinary leadership programme should be developed using the NHS Leadership Academy Healthcare Leadership Model, which describes leadership behaviours and helps users across a whole variety of roles to see how they can develop as a leader. The model helps users to understand how their leadership behaviours affect the culture and climate that they, their colleagues and teams work in.</p> <p>The programme should also act as a catalyst for the development of other lifelong learning opportunities around leadership.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw on the example of the NHS Leadership Academy Healthcare Leadership Model to develop a fully worked up proposal for a programme for the veterinary professions (vets and vet nurses) that could be delivered easily, for example, via a MOOC</li> <li>• Develop plans to recruit and support mentors</li> <li>• Consider evaluating the 'change capability' of the profession to inform how the programme is developed and marketed</li> <li>• Explore options to secure joint funding from key organisations and companies to set up the programme</li> <li>• Explore options for exporting the programme to other countries (particularly English-speaking countries), for example, through achieving an internationally-recognised accreditation</li> <li>• Consider how existing CPD in leadership and soft-skills training can complement the programme</li> </ul>
<b>Timescale</b>	Scoping for the project proposal and requests for funding support to be undertaken during 2017, with a view to launching the programme during 2018.
<b>Who?</b>	BVA and the RCVS, working in particular with the RCVS Fellowship, to develop the project proposal in consultation with employers (across the whole profession – clinical practice, government, academia etc), external accrediting bodies and current CPD providers, and work with potential funders to assess the appetite for such a programme.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programme is successfully developed and attracts funders</li> <li>• Attendance on the programme and at other leadership opportunities</li> <li>• Feedback on the programme</li> </ul>



# Huw Stacey



**As a keen supporter of the Vet Futures project, I was delighted to be selected to join the Action Group tasked with transforming the vision and ambitions of the report into ideas and initiatives that could be actioned in the real world. The report had identified gaps in the way our profession approaches the issue of leadership, so I knew that taking on this ambition would be a particular challenge.**

The first question I needed to answer for myself was 'What is leadership?' This in itself is difficult to answer, since, while there is a wealth of material written on the subject, there is no clear definition. Some authors highlight the personal traits of successful leaders, while others look at positions, behaviours or social processes.

*"Leadership is like the abominable snowman whose footprints are everywhere but who is nowhere to be seen"* – Bennis & Nanus (1985)

The model that has been widely adopted in human healthcare is that of distributed leadership. In this model, leadership is recognised as a dynamic situational behaviour that anybody can exhibit independent of job title, rank, prior experience or qualifications. In a given situation any individual can act as a leader, and there is no one individual who is suited to assuming the role in all situations.

*"Leadership may be considered as the process (act) of influencing the activities of an organised group in its efforts towards goal setting and goal achievement"* – Stogdill (1950)

There are a few well-established veterinary leadership

programmes, such as the Veterinary Leadership Institute in the United States, but we have also looked to the medical profession where extensive research and development has already taken place.

Vets have, as a sweeping generalisation, a pretty clear idea of what constitutes professional development and unsurprisingly it stems from the vocational nature of our work – CPD is about gaining more knowledge or more skills to enhance our ability to look after the animals entrusted to our care.

The idea of spending valuable development time and budget on something as vague and nebulous as 'leadership' would undoubtedly be alien to many, in the past myself included. This is a great shame, as effective leadership has been shown in human medicine to improve wellbeing, morale, engagement and clinical service provision .

The NHS Leadership Academy has developed a research-based Healthcare Leadership Model, which the Action Group suggests is a good place to start when thinking about a veterinary leadership programme. This type of course could be delivered as a MOOC so that it is freely available to all in the profession whether they are business owners, assistants, students, vets or nurses.

If the profession is to fulfil its stated ambitions of being confident, resilient, healthy, valued, influential and in control of its own destiny, then it will be essential to instil in all of its members an awareness of the importance of effective leadership, and to provide them with the resources and opportunities to develop these skills.

R: Innovation symposium	
Organise a biennial symposium to showcase new technologies from within veterinary and related fields	
Rationale	<p>The digital veterinary market is nascent, however, the innovation 'revolution' is on the horizon for the profession. It is important to showcase innovation at an early stage that can be adopted by the profession, and new technologies which are nearer to market, in order both to enable the profession to become comfortable with them, and to inspire members of the profession to pursue day-to-day clinical innovation.</p> <p>In order to encourage innovation and entrepreneurship, and to ensure the profession becomes comfortable taking advantage of opportunities presented by digital developments, it is essential that leadership is shown. The profession must move away from conservatism and embrace change and, if those organisations in leadership positions, including RCVS and BVA, are able to demonstrate this it will help to engender a positive culture across the profession.</p> <p>The Action Group recommends that a biennial symposium, supported and promoted by key organisations within the veterinary profession and the fields of human medicine/technology, will provide opportunities to showcase innovation, celebrate the innovators and inspire the profession.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Confirm scope/structure of innovation symposium/summit</li><li>• Consider working with existing events, such as the Royal Society of Medicine (RSM) Medical Innovations Summit and SPVS Technology Day</li></ul>
Timeframe	Planning for the first symposium during 2017, with a view to holding it in 2018.
Who?	The RCVS to jointly lead on developing the scope for the symposium, working alongside suitable partners, such as BVA and other veterinary associations, the RCVS Fellowship, RCVS Knowledge, universities (veterinary and non-veterinary), relevant start-ups and blue-chip companies, industry, relevant human medical organisations (for example, healthcare accelerators, start-up hubs and communities of practice, such as Health 2.0).
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Event attracts appropriate speakers and support</li><li>• Number of, and feedback from, delegates</li></ul>



Kimberley Schiller



**We have always had to respond to change, both external and internal; it is not something that can be halted. So why address it now? The Vet Futures report highlighted, in no uncertain terms, that not only are we “cautious of change” as a profession, but the change that we are faced with has picked up momentum and is accelerating us toward a somewhat uncertain future.**

We are faced with an ever-changing business landscape of veterinary practice. The continued consolidation of the veterinary market combined with innovation, both clinical and digital, is changing the face of medicine. Vet Futures supports us to become part of this change, allowing vets and vet nurses to shape the journey and help position the professions for continued success.

For me, this experience has been incredibly rewarding but not one that is entirely unfamiliar. As a vet working outside the profession in an ‘alternative career’ as a Management Consultant at Accenture, the majority of my day-to-day work is based around preparing my clients for the change that they face, either due to choice and innovation or because they simply have to ‘catch up’ with competitors or the outside world. What the Vet Futures report has captured is that we are somewhere between these two driving forces of change. While there are elements that are beyond our control (for example, new regulatory requirements, increasing demand for a higher level of customer service and continuing feminisation of the profession), we are also driving much of this change ourselves and contributing first-hand by innovating to drive the change we experience (for example adoption of new surgical techniques, new business models and use of new technologies).

The diversity in experience of the Vet Futures Action

Group has been instrumental in how we, as a group, were able to approach this challenge. How change is perceived is often impacted by the ‘lens’ through which we examine it. Tackling the key themes of the report from multiple views has allowed us to draw parallels between our profession and others. For example, as we make our first foray into telemedicine, it is prudent to learn lessons from NHS colleagues who have been using it for the last decade.

Single organisations, like the NHS, are often able to cascade change using a top-down approach to the individuals within. Ultimately, we are not a single ‘business unit’ but a collection of unique businesses. To ensure we move forward as a cohesive collective profession it is important for us to personally own, as individual veterinary professionals, the day-to-day decisions that will successfully shape our future in 2030. Vet Futures sets out the foundations for that ownership.

There is great opportunity to look forward to. Many of the changes we experience offer solutions to problems that we encounter. Personally, what excites me the most is the recognition by Vet Futures of the need to drive veterinary innovation. Having worked in the digital (human) healthcare space for much of the last decade, I eagerly anticipate the wave of ‘digital’ that is going to disrupt the currently nascent veterinary innovation space. I look forward to implementing an innovation symposium to help highlight veterinary innovation. By beginning to showcase how to apply both disruptive technologies and new clinical practices to our profession, I hope we encourage ourselves to not only embrace this kind of change but to become the driving force of innovation amongst our One Health colleagues, which we are uniquely positioned to do.

**S: Review regulation of new veterinary technologies**  
**Undertake a review of the regulatory issues relating to new technologies with a view to establishing a framework to encompass future innovations**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>The Vet Futures report highlighted that there is “no limit to the impact that technological advances may have on the veterinary profession”, from genomic sequencing and Big Data, to new diagnostic tools, including those for remote diagnosis, and genetically modified organisms. New technology brings a new set of questions for veterinary ethics and regulation, and the profession has recently debated issues such as ‘treating as far as we should, not as far as we can’.</p> <p>It has been recognised by the RCVS for some time that innovations in delivering healthcare in the veterinary sector will require changes to the regulatory framework to ensure animal health and welfare remain front and centre. It is also essential that new technology that may improve access to veterinary care (for example, financially or geographically) is not stifled, and that a positive and creative environment for the development of new technology is developed.</p> <p>Work in this area has already been started by RCVS Standards Committee and an evidence-gathering exercise will commence towards the end of 2016.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• RCVS Standards Committee to develop a timetable for the review, to ensure maximum consultation with stakeholders</li></ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Consultation to run from the end of 2016.
<b>Who?</b>	RCVS Standards Committee to lead the review, working with RCVS Science Advisory Panel, RCVS Knowledge, the RCVS Fellowship and VSC, in consultation with industry and the wider profession.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement with consultation</li><li>• Appropriateness of subsequent regulatory guidance when dealing with ‘real-life’ scenarios – to be measured via RCVS Advice team and RCVS concerns process</li></ul>



## T: Consult on mandatory practice standards inspection

**Consult the profession, the government, the animal-owning public and other relevant professions on whether practice standards inspection should be mandatory**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>For a voluntary scheme, engagement with the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme remains high, with over half of the UK's practice premises now under its ambit.</p> <p>However, the voluntary raising of standards can only take the profession so far, and there have been calls from both the profession and the public for some form of mandatory inspection.</p> <p>Although maintaining minimum practice standards equivalent to the Core Standards of the RCVS Practice Standards Scheme is included in the <i>Code of Professional Conduct</i> for both veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses, the College has no power of entry for inspection of those standards.</p> <p>At its March 2016 meeting, RCVS Council agreed that some form of mandatory practice standards should be considered, along with powers of entry to inspect.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RCVS Council to develop options for implementation, in concert with Defra</li> <li>RCVS to consult with the profession around most feasible options</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Will be included in the RCVS Strategic Plan 2017-19.
<b>Who?</b>	This will be led by the RCVS and the Practice Standards Group, working with Defra and consulting with the wider profession and the public.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engagement with the consultation and support for recommendations</li> <li>Pending outcome of consultation, relevant legislative changes to be achieved so that powers of entry can be afforded and enable some form of mandatory standards to be launched</li> </ul>



## U: Strategy for regulating allied professionals

**Develop a strategic plan for regulating allied professionals**

<b>Rationale</b>	<p>Although both the title 'veterinary surgeon' and acts of veterinary surgery are protected by law, there are various exemptions to this, allowing those such as veterinary nurses, farmers and other animal keepers, and some other groups holding specific qualifications, to carry out minor acts of veterinary surgery.</p> <p>Meanwhile, other groups are offering a range of animal health services, some in close concert with veterinary professionals, others not.</p> <p>There is a concern that public interest is not best served by a fracturing of the veterinary services market and that cohesion and improved regulation would be of benefit to animal health and welfare. At the same time, it is recognised that changes to the regulation of acts of veterinary surgery will have a profound impact on the role of veterinary surgeons in the future.</p> <p>Defra has recently led the Review of Minor Procedures Regime (RMPPR) project looking at minor animal health procedures that don't have to be carried out by vets, and reviewing how they should be controlled in the future to make sure that the people carrying out these procedures are properly trained and regulated. The project has taken evidence across a wide range of areas, including animal health and welfare, animal breeding, and training and education. In addition, the RCVS is currently leading on activity to consider options for regulating allied professionals as part of a vet-led team, through exemption orders to the Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966 (VSA) and/or as associates of the RCVS. At the same time, a full review of Schedule 3 to the VSA, which affects veterinary nurses, is underway.</p> <p>The Action Group recommends that these key pieces of work are brought together into a strategic plan, in full consultation with the veterinary and allied professions.</p>
<b>Next steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A working group led by the RCVS is already underway, developing proposals for further consultation with veterinary and allied professions</li> <li>Coordinate with Schedule 3 Review</li> <li>Coordinate with Defra and devolved administrations</li> </ul>
<b>Timeframe</b>	Both reviews are underway and the first round of new associates of the College would be ratified at the AGM in 2017, should the review indicate this is appropriate.
<b>Who?</b>	The RCVS is leading on both the regulation of allied professions project and the Schedule 3 Review in close consultation with Defra, BVA and other veterinary associations, representatives of allied professionals, and, ultimately, in consultation with animal owners and keepers.
<b>Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agreement within the veterinary and allied professions</li> <li>Acceptance of new proposals by Defra and RCVS Council (for proposed new associates of the College)</li> <li>Support for changes from groups representing animal owners and keepers</li> <li>Clarity and confidence for the public and the profession about how veterinary-related services are regulated</li> </ul>



V: Consult on the representation of the profession

Consult with the wider veterinary profession on how the profession is represented and supported

Rationale	<p>The leadership ambition of the Vet Futures report outlined a desire for the leadership of the veterinary profession to be less fragmented, with organisations cooperating more and competing less. The qualitative research for the project highlighted a need for stronger and more unified representation, support and leadership.</p> <p>Much work has already begun in relation to the way BVA and other veterinary associations provide representation and support for the profession. BVA's Governance Review has kick-started an exploration of different organisational and funding models for the profession's representative bodies. Through a Working in Partnership statement of intent there is already a strong commitment to work together for the good of the whole profession and to consider if there are better ways of working. BVA, BSAVA, British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA), British Cattle Veterinary Association (BCVA) and SPVS are currently working with an external consultant to model different options.</p> <p>The way the profession is represented is a discussion that is of importance to all veterinary surgeons, and so the next stage of the process must include consultation with the wider profession to better understand what they want and need from their professional bodies.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>BVA, BSAVA, BEVA, BCVA and SPVS to complete exploratory work on alternative organisational and funding models for the profession</li><li>Undertake wider consultation with the profession</li></ul>
Timescale	Report on alternative organisational and funding models by autumn 2016, followed by wider consultation.
Who?	BVA, BSAVA, BEVA, BCVA and SPVS are leading on the project in consultation with other divisions, and with input from the RCVS.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Options are developed for consultation with the whole profession to improve representation and support for the profession</li><li>Vets report feeling well supported and well represented by their professional bodies</li><li>The profession is able to speak with a strong voice on key issues</li></ul>

W: Vet Futures Europe

Consider whether Vet Futures might provide a useful framework for the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe

Rationale	<p>We have recently outlined the Vet Futures project to colleagues within the Federation of Veterinarians of Europe (FVE) to investigate how something similar may be implemented at European level.</p> <p>The process could not only provide the FVE with a strategic framework for proactivity, but also catalyse individual member states to address issues at either a national or joined-up level.</p> <p>A meeting took place at the FVE offices in Brussels in May 2016 with representatives from six countries, and the Vet Futures ambitions resonated well.</p> <p>A presentation was made to the General Assembly (GA) in June 2016, where the concept of a European Vet Futures was received very positively.</p>
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A meeting to take place in September (Rome), with the same group who met in May, to develop a plan for a session at the November 2016 FVE GA</li><li>Decisions on how Vet Futures Europe will be taken forward to be made at that November meeting (Brussels)</li></ul>
Timeframe	TBC pending November meeting.
Who?	FVE will lead this project, with input from RCVS/BVA where appropriate.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Engagement with the project from as many member states as possible at the November FVE GA meeting</li><li>Development of a Vet Futures Europe report that helps shape a proactive agenda for the veterinary profession in Europe</li></ul>



Daniel Hogan

**My current role is Operations Manager at Dick White Referrals. Starting my career as a veterinary nurse in a variety of roles, and moving to senior management positions, I have always been passionate about the profession and my role within it, but felt that the nursing profession was under-valued and lacked recognition for the important roles RVNs play. I also believed that this attitude towards RVNs restricted our full potential.**

Having not previously been engaged with the RCVS and other professional organisations, I felt it was time to play a more proactive role in influencing the future of our profession and joined the Vet Futures and VN Futures projects. Immediately it was clear that a large amount of work had already been started, but there was still a substantial task ahead of us.

Both Action Groups contained a fantastic mix of professionals from an array of backgrounds with a variety of experience, but the real challenge was capturing everybody's thoughts and ideas and placing them within the context of a working document; a challenge I hope we have met.

It was fantastic to see that everyone shared the same passion for the profession and, more promisingly, that the veterinary nursing profession could address its own issues separately.

VN Futures hosted several evening meetings to meet RVNs from around the country to obtain



feedback about their priorities for the future and discuss what were felt to be the biggest issues in the profession. The response was incredible and covered a range of practical, current and future issues. More importantly, we discussed where we wanted our profession to be!

Initially I was apprehensive that the ambitions were too big and not manageable and I had a genuine concern that it was the same issues being addressed by the same organisations. We have, however, engaged with people from across the entire veterinary and veterinary nursing professions and, crucially, those outside the veterinary world.

Many in the VN profession are unhappy and we would be naive to assume everything is perfect. Whether it is low salaries, poor working conditions, lack of training opportunities, disappointing progression routes, absence of support from the employer, or a lack of recognition for the work that we do, we now have an opportunity to make a change.

So I truly believe that both the Vet and VN Futures plans will modernise and develop our professions for the better and, importantly, that we will achieve this within a credible timeframe.

I urge everyone who works in the veterinary team to engage with the action plans. This is our profession and our opportunity to contribute to its future.

X: VN Futures	
Develop a VN Futures project	
Rationale	The Vet Futures project aimed to encompass the whole veterinary team but it became clear as it progressed that there was scope for the veterinary nursing profession to develop its own VN-centric report and action plan. The aim will be to empower veterinary nurses to take charge of their own professional future.
Next steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Support the VN profession in developing and delivering their report and action plan</li><li>Ensure the VN Futures Action Plan and the Vet Futures Action Plan can work coherently together, and that any synergy is fully exploited</li></ul>
Timeframe	The VN Futures Report and Action Plan will be presented at the Vet Futures Summit on 4 July 2016. Actions within it will have their own timeframes.
Who?	VN Futures is led by the RCVS Veterinary Nurses Council and the BVNA. It has an Action Group that includes representatives from the practising arm of the VN profession, VN students, practice management, VN education and employers.
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Delivery of the Action Plan on 4 July 2016</li><li>Specific evaluation measures for actions in the plan will be outlined within it</li></ul>



Appendices

Appendix A:  
Vet Futures Action Group

The Vet Futures Action Plan was developed by the Vet Futures Action Group, which comprises:

<b>Dr Clare Allen MA VetMB PhD MRCVS</b>	Senior Teaching Associate for Curriculum and Innovation in the Department of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Cambridge
<b>Helena Diffey</b>	Senior Vice-President of the Association of Veterinary Students UK and Ireland (AVS)
<b>Dr Simon Doherty BVMS MRCVS FRSB</b>	Owner and Director of Blackwater Consultancy and animal science expert for the Agri-Tech Organisation of UK Trade & Investment (UKTI)
<b>Daniel Hogan RVN</b>	Operations Manager at Dick White Referrals
<b>Dr Liz Mossop BVM&amp;S PhD MRCVS</b>	Associate Professor of Veterinary Education and Sub-Dean for Teaching, Learning and Assessment at the School of Veterinary Medicine and Science, University of Nottingham
<b>Gudrun Ravetz BVSc MRCVS</b>	BVA Junior Vice-President and Chief Veterinary Officer for Denplan Pet Health Plans
<b>Dr Kimberley Schiller BVetMed BSc (Hons) MRCVS</b>	Manager, Accenture Consulting
<b>Dr Huw Stacey BVetMed DipAS(CABC) MRCVS</b>	Director of Clinical Services at the Pets at Home Vet Group (PAHVG)
<b>Dr Mary Thomson BVMS MRCVS</b>	Veterinary surgeon in Devon, Vetlife Board member and RCVS Postgraduate Dean
<b>Dr Chris Tufnell BSc (Hons) BVMS MRCVS</b>	RCVS Vice-President and Director of Coach House Vets, a small animal and equine practice in Berkshire
<b>Dr Bradley Viner BVetMed MSc(VetGP) DProf MRCVS</b>	RCVS President and Principal of Blythwood Vets, a group of small animal practices in North West London
<b>Sean Wensley BVSc MSc Grad.DMS MRCVS</b>	BVA President, Senior Veterinary Surgeon for Communication and Education at PDSA and honorary lecturer in animal welfare at the University of Nottingham
<b>Dr James Yeates BVSc BSc DWEL DipECVS(AWBM) PhD MRCVS</b>	RSPCA Chief Veterinary Officer, a visiting Fellow at the University of Surrey and an honorary lecturer at the University of Bristol

Their full biographies are available at [vetfutures.org.uk/vet-futures-action-group](https://vetfutures.org.uk/vet-futures-action-group)

They were supported by the Vet Futures secretariat, which comprises:

<b>Sally Burnell</b>	Director of Policy, Media and Strategy, BVA
<b>Hannah Jordan</b>	Policy Officer, BVA
<b>Lizzie Lockett</b>	Director of Strategic Communications, RCVS

# Appendix B: Summary of ambitions and recommendations

Vet Futures – *Taking charge of our future* was published in November 2015. It is available at [www.vetfutures.org.uk/resources](http://www.vetfutures.org.uk/resources). For ease of reference, its ambitions and recommendations are reproduced here.



*A leading force  
for animal  
health and  
welfare*

1. Develop and promote an animal welfare strategy for the veterinary profession
2. Enhance moral reasoning and ethical decision-making in education, policy-making, practice-based research and everyday veterinary work
3. Explore options to develop an online animal welfare hub to better disseminate animal welfare research, evidence and tools, including the critical appraisal of common practices in the light of emerging evidence

4. Clarify and promote regulatory requirements and professional responsibilities relating to animal welfare
5. Develop joined up national campaigns on preventive health and the five welfare needs

*Valued for our  
wider roles in  
society*

6. Increase collaboration between veterinary and human health professionals and environmental organisations, in line with the One Health concept
7. Promote and celebrate the wider roles of veterinary surgeons and veterinary nurses outside clinical practice within the veterinary profession and to the general public, starting with school-age children, both to help recruit future veterinary surgeons and nurses, and to develop a better informed public

8. Make a broader range of extramural studies (EMS) opportunities available to veterinary students including (non-veterinary) business, public policy and international fields
9. Work alongside 'traditional' funders of research and other stakeholders to adopt a more strategic, long-term outlook

*Confident,  
resilient, healthy  
and well-  
supported*

10. Deliver a coordinated, well-funded and evidence-based approach to mental health and wellbeing for the veterinary team
11. Review the approach to recruiting and selecting veterinary and veterinary nursing students to ensure adequate support, improve wellbeing and manage expectations
12. Deliver peer support and/or mentoring in all UK vet schools and improve support for vets post-graduation

13. Develop support for overseas-graduated veterinary surgeons working in the UK, who may not have benefited from the same undergraduate support as UK students
14. Develop tools and services to help veterinary employers make working environments more supportive for everyone
15. Help veterinary professionals to work with uncertainties, and develop reflective practice, starting with undergraduates

*A broad  
range of diverse  
and rewarding  
career paths*

16. Explore and consult on a sustainable structure for the veterinary degree, including the viability of limited licensure, allowing veterinary students to focus their studies and specialise during the veterinary degree
17. Ensure that veterinary undergraduates are provided with career 'roadmaps' and encouraged to undertake relevant work experience as part of EMS
18. Undertake a veterinary workforce study to assess the rewards, recognition and working conditions of vets and veterinary nurses, and the drivers of low and unequal pay
19. Create a one-stop-shop for careers advice and support to promote diverse

- career opportunities
20. Explore how we can encourage a more diverse profession (in relation to ethnicity, socio-economic background, gender etc) including reviewing the application and selection process for UK vet schools
21. Improve outreach to, and careers advice for, schoolchildren to better communicate the realities and opportunities of a veterinary career
22. Develop a public-facing awareness campaign to raise the profile of wider veterinary roles (including public health, research, government, industry, and academia)

*Thriving,  
innovative,  
user-focused  
businesses*

23. Review the regulatory framework for veterinary businesses to ensure a level playing field, enable a range of business models to coexist, ensure professionalism in commercial settings, and explore the implications for regulation of new technologies (eg telemedicine)
24. Establish a business and innovation hub to showcase new technologies, services and business models, celebrate the innovators and ensure appropriate regulatory underpinnings are in place

25. Enhance business and finance skills amongst veterinary professionals through education, EMS and continuing professional development (CPD)
26. Explore whether practice standards inspection should be compulsory
27. Develop communications tools to improve consumer understanding of veterinary costs and fees, and promote the value of veterinary care
28. Consider whether and how allied professionals might be regulated as part of the vet-led team

*Exceptional  
leadership*

29. Encourage veterinary nurse leaders to develop a report and recommendations which are directly relevant to veterinary nurses and their future, and complementary to the Vet Futures report
30. Explore options for bringing greater coherence to the support and representation of the veterinary profession
31. Explore ways to develop the next generation of veterinary leaders including by identifying and nurturing talent, and providing them with the skills and

- opportunities to succeed
32. Develop and communicate clear routes to a wide range of leadership roles
33. Look to develop a proactive veterinary-led EU/global agenda where the UK can lead in public health, education, regulation and improving standards
34. Develop lifelong learning in leadership, including mentoring and targeted leadership programmes, in particular for groups underrepresented in leadership (eg women and people from minority ethnic groups)

# Appendix C: Glossary

<b>APHA</b>	Animal and Plant Health Agency
<b>AVS</b>	Association of Veterinary Students
<b>AWRN</b>	Animal Welfare Research Network
<b>AWSELVA</b>	Animal Welfare Science, Ethics and Law Veterinary Association
<b>BAVNS</b>	British Association of Veterinary Nursing Students
<b>BBSRC</b>	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
<b>BCVA</b>	British Cattle Veterinary Association
<b>BDA</b>	British Dental Association
<b>BEVA</b>	British Equine Veterinary Association
<b>BIS</b>	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
<b>BMA</b>	British Medical Association
<b>BSAVA</b>	British Small Animal Veterinary Association
<b>BVA</b>	British Veterinary Association
<b>BVNA</b>	British Veterinary Nursing Association
<b>CEFAS</b>	Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science
<b>CertAVP</b>	Certificate in Advanced Veterinary Practice
<b>CPD</b>	Continuing professional development
<b>CVO</b>	Chief Veterinary Officer
<b>Defra</b>	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
<b>EAEVE</b>	European Association of Establishments for Veterinary Education
<b>EBVM</b>	Evidence-based Veterinary Medicine
<b>EMA</b>	European Medicines Agency
<b>EMS</b>	Extramural studies
<b>FVE</b>	Federation of Veterinarians of Europe
<b>GVS</b>	Government Veterinary Surgeons
<b>MBA</b>	Master of Business Administration [degree]
<b>MEG</b>	Major Employers Group

<b>MMI</b>	Mind Matters Initiative
<b>MOOC</b>	Massive open online course
<b>MSc</b>	Master of Science [degree]
<b>MSC</b>	Medical Schools Council
<b>NGOs</b>	Non-governmental organisations [generic]
<b>NHS</b>	National Health Service
<b>NOAH</b>	National Office of Animal Health
<b>PAW report</b>	PDSA Animal Wellbeing report
<b>PDP</b>	Professional Development Phase
<b>PDSA</b>	People's Dispensary for Sick Animals
<b>RCVS</b>	Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons
<b>RMPR</b>	Review of Minor Procedures Regime
<b>RPS</b>	Royal Pharmaceutical Society
<b>RSM</b>	Royal Society of Medicine
<b>RSPB</b>	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
<b>RSPCA</b>	Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
<b>SPVS</b>	Society of Practising Veterinary Surgeons
<b>VDS</b>	Veterinary Defence Society
<b>VMD</b>	Veterinary Medicines Directorate
<b>VN</b>	Veterinary nurse
<b>VPMA</b>	Veterinary Practice Management Association
<b>VSA</b>	Veterinary Surgeons Act 1966
<b>VSC</b>	Veterinary Schools Council
<b>VSCEC</b>	Veterinary Schools Council Education Committee
<b>VSCRC</b>	Veterinary Schools Council Research Committee
<b>ZSL</b>	Zoological Society of London

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