President’s Introduction

I can safely say that my year as SPVS President has been tiring but immensely enjoyable. I was honoured to be asked to take up the post and it has given me opportunities to experience things that I wouldn’t otherwise have done. My personal highlight (apart from Congress of course!) has to be my week as a VIP guest in Malawi with Mission Rabies, seeing the charity in action; something I’ll never forget.

SPVS has enjoyed an excellent relationship with VPMA this year and the two organisations are continuing to work well together for the benefit of both. We also have good relationships with many of the other veterinary organisations with regular Joint Officer meetings being held which help to build trust and aid communication.

It is impossible to reflect on 2016 without mentioning Brexit and here, again, SPVS has played its part, feeding in to the BVA Brexit Working Group particularly in the area relating to workforce issues which has been a regular topic of discussion amongst our members.

As you will know, at Congress last year an agreement was signed between SPVS and Veterinary Insights to deliver our surveys which we know are some of the benefits that our members value. The new Profitability Survey was launched and data has been collected from practices throughout the year; the results and comments will be part of a presentation at Congress. Building on this we have launched some new CPD courses aimed at helping improve profitability and plan to develop additional tools for our members in 2017.

SPVS Council is a dynamic place that generates lots of good ideas for initiatives that will benefit our members; unfortunately not all of these come to fruition, often due to time constraints of our volunteer councillors. I’m delighted to announce therefore that, after much discussion and careful thought, it has been agreed that a new senior member of staff should be employed to help oversee the running of the society; to drive things forward and allow SPVS to function in a more businesslike, efficient and effective manner for the benefit of all the members.

As I step down as President I must thank my Officers and Council members as well as the team in the SPVS office for all their hard work during the year; I couldn’t have done my job without their help. I’m leaving a society that continues to be in good shape in the very capable hands of Brian Faulkner and am looking forward to supporting him as SVP over the next year and especially to seeing the new Executive Manager role develop.

Stephanie Writer-Davies, SPVS President

Practice Life

Practice Life has continued to be a well appreciated member benefit in collaboration with the VPMA. The last four issues have been full of relevant, interesting articles as well as updates on what the societies are doing for their memberships. We’re looking forward to another year of evolution and welcome contributions from members on any topics that affect veterinary business owners and managers. 2017 will also bring a new and improved Practice Life website.

www.spvs.org.uk
SPVS Annual Report 2016/2017

SPVS Wellbeing Awards
SPVS launched the SPVS Wellbeing Awards in partnership with RCVS Mind Matters at SPVS/VPMA Congress 2016.

The intention was to celebrate those practices that could demonstrate they were looking after the health and wellbeing of their employees. We also wanted to share some of their initiatives and practices with others.

We had an excellent response and the winners in each of the 3 categories (determined by size of practice) will be announced at this year’s Congress.

Details of the winners and of some of the other entries that were commended by the judges will be available on the website after Congress together with details about next year’s awards.

www.spvs.org.uk/wellbeing

Support for younger vets
The Lancaster seminar continues to be an integral part of the SPVS calendar. Helping to prepare the final year vet students for their first few weeks, months and years in practice is at the heart of our core values. Final year students attended the 3 day seminar from every university and the seminar was supported by RCVS, BVA, BSAVA and VDS.

2017 is an exciting year for the seminar as it marks its 30th anniversary. We are looking forward to hosting a gala dinner on the Saturday night and welcoming back 1987 delegates, speakers and vets and Lancaster supporters from over the last 30 years to mark this important occasion.

The seminar was organised by Catriona Curtis in 2016 with invaluable input from the SPVS secretariat.

SPVS also supports younger vets and students with our popular CV reading service, telephone support and the 5 to 15 years qualified lunch at Congress.

Networking
Golf Day
This event (sponsored by Hazlewoods, Dickinsons Financial Management and VIA) was attended by 52 players, with Martha Cannon winning the Crooked Putter Trophy. The Golf Day will continue in 2017 and all participants are welcome.

Snowscene
A group of 50 (including 35 delegates) were treated to some excellent and thought provoking CPD provided by Martin Whiting a member of the RCVS DC and also a lecturer at the RVC and Clive Elwood of Davies Veterinary Specialists whilst also enjoying some of the best skiing conditions ever experienced on Snowscene during March in a week of sunshine and powder in Tignes, France. The somewhat eclectic, rabbit warren of a hotel produced delicious food for us and the spa provided relaxation of tired legs after long days on the slopes. Great company, convivial surroundings and stimulating lectures – what more could you ask for!
SPVS responded to several consultations, some as SPVS alone and some as a contributor to other veterinary organisations eg BVA, RCVS, BSAVA, where a combined voice would have more effect. These include: The non-commercial movement of pet animals, Review of animal licensing establishments, Brexit, RCVS CPD reflective learning and the BVA governance review.

SPVS also is involved in many other working groups such as on antimicrobial resistance, RCVS Practice Standards Scheme, VetXML and many more.

Council greatly appreciates the contributions of members who respond promptly to requests for input on consultations, which often have a short lead-in time. This is especially valuable when members have specific knowledge which may not be represented on Council.

In 2017 we are excited to be partnering with Vet Trust and running the non-clinical stream at their annual conference in Stirling. At least 15 regional events will take place around the country as well.

Our two focus days on Technology and The Practice Team were well attended and we look forward to the inaugural Focus on Practice Profitability day in 2017.

After a number of successful years working together we would like to thank Zoetis for all their input and support of our CPD programme. From 2017 Bayer will be our new headline sponsor alongside Royal Canin and we look forward to working with them.

CPD and Focus Days were led by Catriona Curtis in 2016.

Fellow associations and other relationships

SPVS is enjoying good relationships with our fellow associations and has worked on some projects with BVA, BSAVA, BCVA and BEVA particularly closely and as already mentioned, our relationship with VPMA has been very positive this year. The SPVS President or another representative of the society have been guests at the congresses of BSAVA, BEVA, BCVA, BVNA, AVSPNI and BVA at the London Vet Show and also at RCVS Day.

As usual the society has supported the VDS recent graduate reunions and there has been a SPVS representative at each event and councillors also helped with the VDS training session at the Lancaster Seminar as well as attending other VDS CPD days both to support the VDS and promote SPVS.

Consultations and working groups

SPVS/VPMA Regional CPD and Focus Days

In 2016 15 CPD courses took place around the country. Over 350 delegates attended and the events were all well received. 5 courses were run in the North of England and Scotland building further on our presence in these regions. Our events in partnership with BVNA and AVSPNI respectively continue to go from strength to strength.

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Discussion List

The email discussion list continues to be popular with over 500 topics covered in the last year. These topics range widely from canine epitheliomatous lymphoma to recruitment and flooring recommendations to sebaceous adenitis. There is always someone who has encountered a similar problem who is ready to help with advice, practical solutions and moral support - as well as bad puns!

Membership

Membership has again remained stable over the year with members leaving comfortably replaced by 186 new members in 2016.

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<th>Category</th>
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<td>Full Members</td>
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<td>Associate Members</td>
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<td>Honorary Members</td>
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<td>Recent Graduates</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL MEMBERS</strong></td>
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SPVS remains in a healthy position financially, but it is worth pointing out that this is the first full year of accounts for SPVS Ltd, and some anomalies have been thrown up by amounts carried forward into the current financial year. The income for the y/e 2015 includes the final dividend from the Joint Events Company, and once this is stripped out, income for 2016 is broadly similar to the previous year.

Council meeting expenses are 2.5% higher than last year, but the apparent increase in Presidential costs is due to amounts carried forward from the previous year. Similarly General Expenses are distorted by donations to the VBF and payments to the UEVP being carried forward. This figure also includes the set-up costs of the new surveys platform.

Peter Brown, SPVS Treasurer

Benchmarking and Surveys

This year saw the launch of the SPVS Profitability Survey, which gives practice owners a valuable insight into their financial performance and how they compare with other practices around the country. The results will also help us as a Society to develop resources aimed at improving practice profitability.

Our existing surveys have not been forgotten either. We have been working on a new online platform for our Fees and Salaries Surveys, which will provide a quicker turnaround for results and make it easier to see how your practice figures compare with others. First up will be the the Fees Survey which will be launched in January.

Are all your (financial) ducks in a row?