

Local Veterinary Surgeon Dan Flynn from Balmoral and Commons Brae Vets is back to answer your questions about problem pet issues. If you have a question you'd like the vet to write about send it to askdanthevet@gmail.com

I was told recently that microchipping your pet is to become compulsory, could you please Clarify.

From next year when you go to apply for a dog license through your local council, you will be required to provide a microchip number. The dog-tag system will remain in place but with this extra information on the council system they will have more success finding stray and lost dogs. When a dog is found it can have lost its collar and/or identification tag. The microchip however has been implanted under the skin, between the shoulder blades, and is with the pet for life.

The 'Dogs Trust' charity with their continued support to encourage responsible pet ownership have provided vets with free microchips. This is only available for the next few months.

Once microchipped your pet will have a unique number. It is this number that will show on the microchip scanner. The person who inserts the microchip will register your details with a the microchip company, who will hold your name, address and contact details along with a description of your pet on their database. You should receive a letter from the company to confirm your details and describe a way that you can edit your details should they change. It is important to notify the company of any changes to your address or phone number.

I encourage microchipping of dogs and cats. It gives great peace of mind -if your pet gets lost or stolen your contact details can be easily retrieved from scanning the animal with a microchip scanner and putting the microchip number into the database that holds all the owners information. All Veterinary surgeons and animal shelters have microchip scanners to read the microchip.

Are there any problems with getting your pet microchipped?

The procedure is very similar to an injection and is very quick and usually painless. Like all injections some animals will show some resentment, however a treat or a cuddle after the injection will help. The most important thing is that the person inserting the chip is properly trained and experienced.

Microchips are implanted under the skin between the shoulder blades.

Occasionally they can move under the skin from the original insertion point to a point further down the body, or it may migrate entirely out of the animal's body. It is therefore advisable to get your animal scanned periodically, to locate the microchip. You can request a scan when you visit your local veterinary surgeon. Sometimes the microchip can be felt just under the skin of your animal-this does not cause any discomfort.

When a stray animal arrives at a shelter or veterinary practice, it is scanned for the presence of a microchip. If a microchip is found we can phone a central

database with the microchip number. The company will usually ring the owner and tell them where their animal is. This system has made many of our clients happy and relieved owners-it is always a pleasure to reunite a lost or stolen pet with its owner.