



association of veterinary students
of great britain and ireland

JAVS Lite

The Journal of the Association of
Veterinary Students

October 2010

ABOUT AVS
all you need to know



Picture, Nottingham Veterinary School

CONGRESS AND SPORTS
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British Veterinary Association

The voice for veterinary students in Great Britain and Ireland

JAVS is sponsored and published on behalf of the Association of Veterinary Students by the BVA

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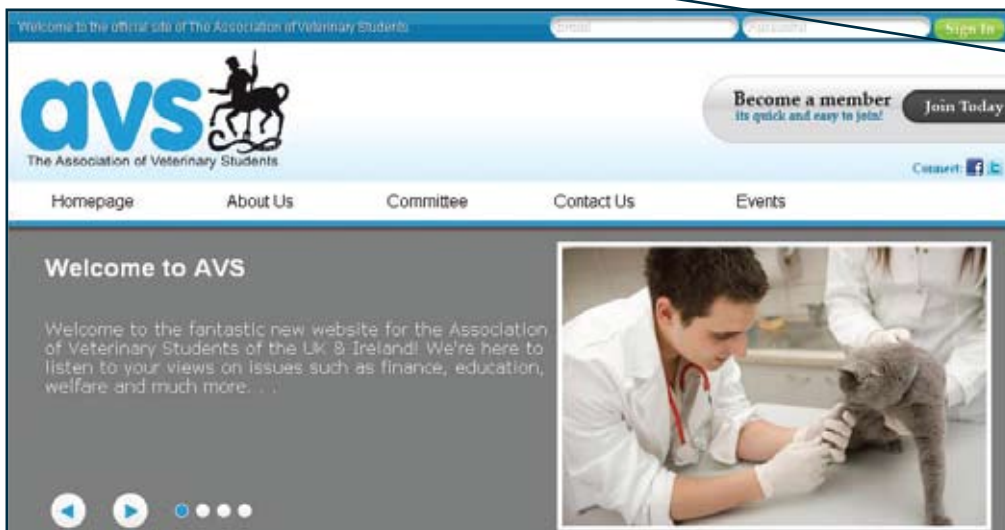
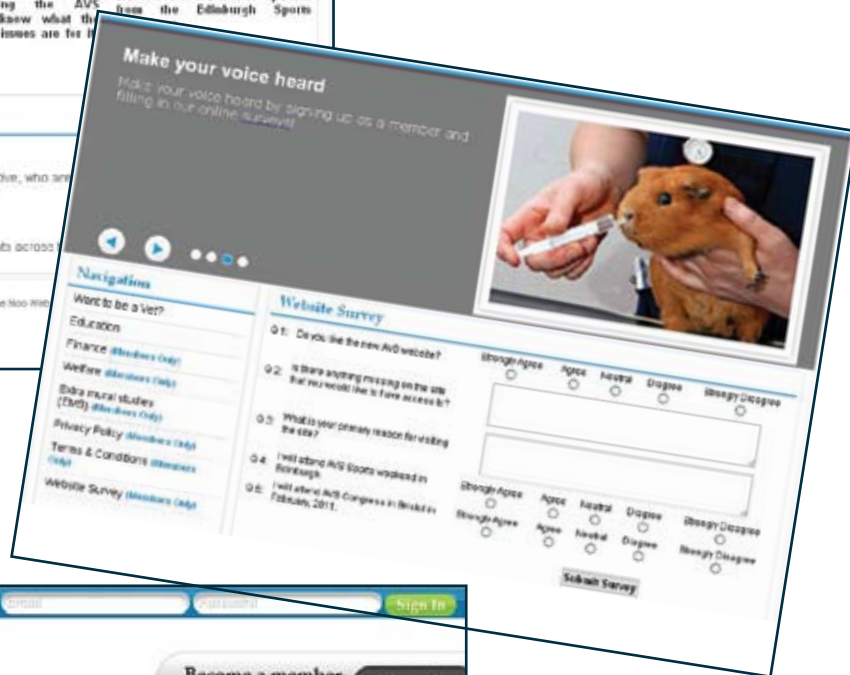
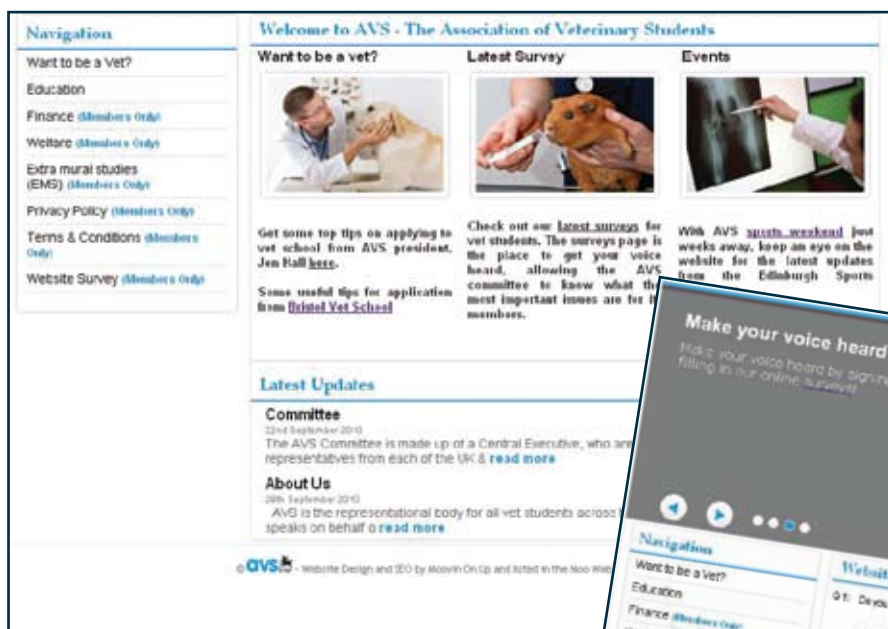
Same web address, brand new site

The launch of the new AVS website is due to take place imminently, and we're working hard to get it launched by the target launch date, October 9. The new site has been totally redesigned, and the AVS committee has rewritten every section. One new addition is a members-only area. Current research such as the BVA/AVS student survey of 2007/8 has highlighted specific issues that students are most concerned about. The great response and depth of understanding that this survey gave the AVS committee has led to the creation of an online surveys page in the member's area through which we hope to get consistent and reliable representation of vet students views on current affairs and challenges facing the student body.

The AVS committee has recently defined three key areas of support, finance, education and welfare. These pages offer students a reference text for support services, as well as keeping members constantly updated as to the type and extent

of work that the AVS committee puts into representing the vet students of the UK and Ireland.

Log on to www.avs-uk.org.uk and let us know what you think.



New twitter page and facebook groups have recently been launched. Twitter page: [@AVS_UK_Ireland](https://twitter.com/AVS_UK_Ireland)

Facebook group: Association of Veterinary Students – AVS (UK and Ireland)

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From the editor of JAVS Lite

By Chloe Hannigan (4th Year, London – JAVS editor)

CONGRATULATIONS! You've done it; you have made it in to vet school, and are hopefully enjoying settling in and nursing a few challenged livers along the way!

Welcome to this, the first ever edition of *JAVS Lite*, a sister magazine to the *Journal of the Association of Veterinary Students (JAVS)*, the For those of you who are wondering what I'm talking about, *JAVS* is a magazine written by vet students, for vet students. It features a range of articles from recent extramural studies' experiences, topical issues within the veterinary profession, social shenanigans, and anything else. *JAVS Lite* has been created especially for first years as an introduction to the Association of Veterinary Students. We hope you will enjoy reading about what the AVS can do for you, not to mention some of the biggest events on the vet students social calendar!

We'd love you to get in touch and let us know about your own experiences, both vet and non-vet related. The best article by a fresher will be published in the next issue of *JAVS*, and to encourage/bribe you to get writing, the winner will receive a lovely polo shirt (male or female) generously supplied by Joules Clothing (RRP £45, and pictured below). If you're interested, head to the *JAVS* section of the AVS website (www.avs-uk.org.uk), which is well worth a look, and stay updated with all things AVS-related. Deadlines will be passed on to you by your AVS reps.

If you have any questions or comments, or even a cracking idea for an article, do not hesitate to get in contact by e-mailing javseditor@hotmail.com, or get hassling your local AVS reps! Alternatively, join us on Facebook and let us know your thoughts. Look forward to hearing from you, and hope to see most of you at AVS Sports Weekend in November!

Chloe Hannigan



Chloe Hannigan



Contribute to *JAVS* to be in with a chance of winning one of these Joules polo shirts



Overseas travel grants 2011

The BVA operates a range of grant programmes for overseas study, details of which are listed below. If you would like to receive an application form or need further information then please contact:

Helena Cotton, BVA, 7 Mansfield Street, London W1G 9NQ
Tel: 020 7636 6541 Email: helenac@bva.co.uk or visit the BVA overseas or student centre sections of www.bva.co.uk

BVA OVERSEAS TRAVEL GRANTS 2011

Veterinary undergraduates can apply for travel grants to support projects in developing countries in 2011. The awards are worth up to £500 each and a maximum of four grants is available. Applicants should be attending a veterinary school in the UK and must be student members of the BVA. They should be in their clinical years and be undertaking a developmental project which will be of benefit to the country concerned. The project should be the applicant's own.

TAWS/BVA OVERSEAS TRAVEL GRANTS 2011

The World Association for Transport Animal Welfare and Studies (TAWS), with the BVA, offers travel grants, worth up to £500, for projects involving working transport animals or animals used for draught work.

DONKEY SANCTUARY OVERSEAS TRAVEL GRANTS 2011

The Donkey Sanctuary has also joined forces with the BVA and awards grants to support veterinary undergraduates visiting a project site in Mexico, Ethiopia, Egypt, Kenya or India.

HARRY STEELE-BODGER MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP 2011

This BVA scholarship is in memory of Henry W Steele-Bodger, BVA President from 1939 to 1941. The scholarship is intended to assist a visit by an individual to a veterinary or agricultural school or research institute, or another course of study approved by the governing committee. The award is open to graduates of the veterinary schools in the UK and Ireland who have been qualified not more than three years, and to penultimate and final-year students. Applicants must be members of the BVA. The sum available for the 2011 award is expected to be about £1100.

Applications for the BVA, TAWS and Donkey Sanctuary grants must be received by 21 February 2011, while those for the Harry Steele-Bodger Memorial Scholarship must be submitted by 11 April 2011.

www.bva.co.uk

Welcome from the AVS President

By Jennifer Hall, AVS President

WELCOME to vet school. I hope you enjoy the next few weeks of freshers parties and are excited about embarking on the next five or six years. I'm sure you are also a little nervous too, but let me assure you, choosing a career in veterinary medicine and science is truly a fantastic path to take. I'm heading to the end of my time at vet school, and I can safely say this profession provides incredible camaraderie and support for its fellow members.

The Association of Veterinary Students (AVS) is just one of those support bodies. AVS is the representative body for all vet students

across the UK and Ireland. It is the AVS which speaks on behalf of students to the powers that be in the veterinary world – the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), the British Veterinary Association (BVA), Defra and many more with whom we are closely affiliated. If you want your opinions to be heard on political, educational, welfare or financial issues, then it is the AVS you need to speak to.

Getting in touch

You can contact us in different ways; via your AVS reps (look out for them on the AVS notice board at your school; they will probably



Jennifer Hall is at Nottingham vet school

be around to talk to you in the next few weeks) or via our website where members' login allows you to access questionnaires seeking your personal opinion on current issues. You can also raise issues on our Facebook page, and seek help from fellow veterinary students.

Social events


The AVS also provides you with two of the greatest social events of the veterinary student calendar. Firstly, AVS Sports Weekend in November; a lively weekend involving sports, pub crawls and club nights – it has to be done at least once during your time at vet school! Edinburgh is hosting this year's event and more details can be found on page 5.

In second term, our event is AVS Congress, a calmer event involving a weekend of interesting lectures, debates and a chance to meet the AVS committee at our AGM, with a sensational black tie ball on the Saturday night. In 2011, the Congress will be held at Bristol, and if you don't fancy 'Sports', then this is definitely up your street. To find out more about each event, read on in your *JAVS Lite*!

Have a brilliant first year at vet school and look out for AVS as we continue to represent you over the coming year.

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Who do you think we are?

By Myfanwy Hill, junior Vice-President (4th Year, Bristol)

THE AVS is a specialist division of the British Veterinary Association (BVA) that exists to represent the views of vet students throughout the UK and Ireland – and that includes you. It is run for (and by) veterinary students to represent your interests. We make sure that the student voice is heard on matters ranging from mental health to student debt, AND we organise some of the best socials you will ever go to!

What can we do for you?

AVS represents almost all veterinary students and aims to improve undergraduate education through student liaison, mainly by bringing veterinary students together on a regular basis. We do this largely through our uni reps; each univer-

The aims of the Association of Veterinary Students are:

- To promote the interests of Veterinary Students in GB and Ireland
- To further links between veterinary students in different veterinary schools, both within the Association and outside

sity has two AVS reps who also belong to their student 'vet soc'. They act as a bridge between the universities, and are able to take issues back to the main committee, and seek opinion from their own student body on matters that concern AVS. This is particularly important when we do the AVS Survey.

The AVS survey is conducted every three years to identify trends in the student population, and highlight emerging or declining problems such as student debt, and funding for extramural studies. We use this

information to guide our activities and focus our efforts on improving life for all vet students.

In addition to the uni reps, the committee has a welfare representative and an executive committee, which link the students with other areas of the profession. They frequently attend meetings with the British Veterinary Association (BVA), and occasionally with the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS), with the explicit aim of ensuring that our opinion is considered when creating policy that concerns us.

WHO ARE WE?

The AVS committee is made up of around 25 vet students. Each vet school has two student representatives, who are elected by the individual vet school, plus the executive committee, which is elected at our AGM that takes place at AVS Congress (in February).

President

The President represents the AVS at BVA Council meetings, and is the public spokesperson for AVS. The President chairs all AVS committee meetings and moves matters affecting students on by gathering representative information, with the help of the AVS committee and advice from the BVA.

Secretary

This two-year position involves organising meetings, writing minutes and representing the AVS at engagements the President can't attend. The Secretary sits on BVA

Council, and has as strong an influence as the President in terms of voicing opinions within the BVA.

Junior Vice-President

The JV-P is the 'president-in-training', as it were; they help and support the President and represent the AVS on the BVA's Members Services Group (MSG), which decides what services the BVA will offer to its members.

Treasurer

The treasurer looks after our accounts and is responsible for all AVS money!

Senior Vice-President

As 'last year's President', the role of the SV-P is to use their experience to provide advice and guidance to the AVS committee.

Welfare rep

The welfare rep works on issues

affecting student welfare, and is the AVS spokesperson on animal welfare issues, representing the AVS at BVA Animal Welfare Foundation events.

Javs editor

Responsible for producing *JAVS*, sourcing articles for each edition and promoting and circulating the journal around the vet schools.

Web editor

The web editor is responsible for keeping the AVS website up-to-date, and its promotion among vet students. The AVS website can be found at avs-uk.org.uk

IVSA Rep

The IVSA Rep is the President of the UK chapter of the International Veterinary Students Association, and ensures efficient liaison between the two bodies.

Help us to help you!

How can you get involved? Firstly, make sure you join AVS! Most vet societies sign you up automatically when you join, but not all do so check with your Vet Soc reps. Once that's sorted all you need to do is have fun and join in; come along to our socials, get to know your AVS reps, take part in the surveys and events, and maybe even stand for a position. Who knows, you may find yourself writing this column for JAVS in a few years time!

THE BVA/AVS SURVEY

The BVA/AVS Survey was first conducted in 1996, and has been carried out every three years since then. The results of the last survey were revealed in 2009. Covering a wide range of topics from finance to mental wellbeing, the survey allows the AVS to form a representative opinion on the things that affect veterinary students.



Newly elected AVS committee members following the AGM on February 7: (back row from left and up the stairs) Myfanwy Hill, junior vice-president (Bristol); Leanne Forde, Liverpool rep; George Giles, website editor (Nottingham); John Vernon, Edinburgh rep; Emily Peat, Bristol rep; Lucy Jerram, RVC rep; Lucy Bright, International Veterinary Students' Association rep (Nottingham); Anna Briggs, marketing officer (Nottingham); Chris Ogden, welfare rep (Nottingham); Joanna Shelmerdine, Liverpool rep. (middle row from left) Naomi Fitzgibbons, Nottingham rep; Adam Swallow, on-tour rep (Liverpool); Nicola Eisenhauer, Bristol rep; Becky Marr, Edinburgh rep. (front row from left) Emma Sinclair, senior vice-president (Edinburgh); Jennifer Hall, president (Nottingham); Marie Killerby, Cambridge rep; Katie Fitzgerald, treasurer (Nottingham); Nicola Reynolds, secretary (RVC). Also elected was Chloe Hannigan, editor of the Journal of the Association of Veterinary Students (RVC)

AVS Sports, Edinburgh, November 5 - 7

By John Vernon (AVS Sports Weekend organiser, Edinburgh)

AVS 'Sports Weekend' is an age-old annual tradition during which the vet schools meet up for a weekend of sporting fun, socialising and sobriety (just kidding, in fact it's quite the opposite), with lashings of fancy dress (as the pictures show).

Each vet school takes their turn to host Sports Weekend – one of the most memorable events on the vet student social calendar, and, following the huge success of this event in London last year, I want to tell you how Edinburgh promises to deliver yet another unforgettable (depending on how much you've had to drink) weekend of inter-vet school sports, laughs and debauchery!

How will Edinburgh deliver?

We will be kicking the weekend off with a night in the Student Union, where the music's good and the drinks are cheap. There will be lashings of pizza on offer before we dance the night away; this is just what everyone needs, as most people will have had a long journey to Edinburgh.

With live bands, followed by a good mix of 'cheesy' party and mainstream music, the party will go on later into the night than most Sports Weekends, thanks to the fact that most of our students living close by. This also means no long bus journey at the end of the night



Fancy dress is a popular part of Sports Weekend



to the back of beyond, only to get lost trying to find the bus the next morning. What more could you ask for?!

On Saturday, the festivities starting around lunch time with plenty of fun and games for everyone to get stuck into, as, for a change, we've made the sports part of the weekend at least equal to the drinking part! As well as the usual rugby, hockey and football (five-a-side events), we have lined up a lot more to see and do, that will

require no skill or stamina, just raw enthusiasm.

We invite you to test your strength in our mini-Highland Games. See how long you can hold onto our mechanical sheep (yes, that's right, sheep!) or if you can out sumo your mates. And, of course, no trip to Scotland would be complete without a ceilidh! If you don't know what that is, find the nearest Scottish person and hold on tight!

Once you've spun yourself silly in whichever way you see fit, we

will head back into the centre of Edinburgh, and start to make our way around the capital's numerous quality drinking establishments.

After seeing the highlights of Edinburgh, (making sure that you kiss Greyfriars Bobby along the way), we will take you to City night club, one of Edinburgh's largest venues. Here you can rave the night away with students from other vet schools as one big multi-coloured explosion of random fancy dress and outrageous dance moves, before ending the night in a big circle with arms round each other singing along to some epic tune, most likely by The Proclaimers (well, we are in Edinburgh!) It's the kind of thing dreams are made of.

So, get excited about meeting new people, having a great laugh with friends and doing some memorable things on and off the pitch at AVS Sports, Edinburgh! We can't wait to see you next month for the most anticipated weekend of the vet school calendar. It's going to be legend – wait for it, wait for it, wait – ary! Booyah!!

See you in Edinburgh.

*The AVS Sports Edinburgh 2010
Organising Committee.*

AVS Congress, Bristol, February 4 - 6, 2011

By Nicola Eisenhauer (AVS Senior Rep, Bristol)

AVS Congress is a little less active than AVS 'Sports', yet is an amazing weekend, with a good mix of academia, social networking and, of course, epic nights out!

What is AVS congress?

Congress is a weekend event that gives students from across the eight vet schools (UK and Ireland) the opportunity to get together to participate in a series of practical sessions and seminars, socialise and vote at the AVS AGM. It begins on a Friday evening with a traditional

bar crawl through the host city. At the end of the night, the delegates return home with a host student, with whom they stay for the weekend.

The main event kicks off on Saturday morning for a day of lectures, practical classes and seminars based around a central theme. Delegates usually get to pick their main choices of practical sessions prior to arrival, and the congress committee tries to accommodate as many of the delegates' top choices as possible. There are lots

of opportunities for questions and discussions throughout the day, as well as the chance to form lasting friendships with peers from other vet schools.

On the Saturday evening, all delegates, lecturers, guests and speakers get together for a black-tie ball – a perfect end to a very busy day! During the ball, there are speeches given by the outgoing President of the AVS as well as the President of the BVA, before the partying resumes until the early hours!



During this year's AVS Congress, which was held in Liverpool from February 5 to 7, students were encouraged to consider the wide variety of alternative options available to them after graduation. Here, students attend a practical session to help them to get to grips with various pieces of equipment used in physiotherapy

The AGM

AVS Congress culminates with the annual general meeting. As a society, the AGM is an important opportunity to communicate with our members about our activities over the past 12 months, as well as revealing what the committee plans for the future. It marks the end of the committee year, with the official presidential hand-over, and the chance to elect new members on to the central committee.

Positions within the committee generally come up either annually or biannually (depending on their term length), and most are available for any member of AVS to run for. The positions available, and their job specifications, are available before you arrive at Congress, giving everyone a chance to see if their ideal role is up for grabs! If you feel you'd like to make a difference as our next Welfare rep or would love to try your hand as the next JAVS editor why not give it a go?

AVS members vote for who they would like to see fulfil a given role. So, even if you don't fancy running for a position yourself, you should still vote for the candidate you'd most like to see in action – it's a bit like a local election! The AGM relies heavily on support from its members, so if you feel passionate about the AVS and what we do, please come along and make your vote count. Who knows – you could be the next AVS president-in-the-making!

'I really should know, but I don't'

Like AVS sports, Congress is hosted by a different vet school each year.

The theme of AVS Congress 2011 will be, 'I really should know that but I don't . . .', so you can expect to see those topics you cover briefly a vet school but wish you knew more about! The programme will include suturing practicals, horse dentals, what to do if you suspect a cruelty case, opportunities to work abroad, how to deal with insurance claims, and what to do if a wildlife casualty appears on your doorstep.

We're aiming for a predominantly practical congress, so there will be plenty of hands-on classes to get stuck into. We are also planning a large 'careers fayre' at which the BVA's major specialist divisions

will be represented, including those for small animals, cattle, horses, exotic species, as well as the Society for Practising Veterinary Surgeons, the Royal Army Veterinary Corps, The Association of Government Veterinarians and The Association of Vets in Industry.

The fayre will be ideal for students who know which line of work they're aiming for, but would like more information on how to reach their goal, as well as those who haven't quite decided what area of veterinary medicine they'd like to work in.

The weekend will begin on Friday night with a bar crawl through Bristol city centre, ending at one a great club. The Saturday will be based entirely at Langford, our clinical campus, in order to utilise the facilities, and to give external students the chance to visit the site. At the end of the day, students will return to their hosts' houses to get ready for one of the biggest balls ever at congress! It promises to be an amazing night with live bands, DJs and much more . . .

So if this sounds like your kind of weekend, put the date in your diary now. Don't miss out – it's going to be HUGE! And don't forget to stick around for the AVS AGM if you fancy running for a position on the AVS committee, or offering your support to some of the candidates in the running.



British Veterinary Association (BVA), the benefits of student membership

YOU have joined vet school at an excellent time, because from this study year (2010/11), BVA membership is free for students in their first year of university. This not only extends your support network by joining a national association at the forefront of the profession, but also provides tangible services and benefits. You can:

- Gain access to the highly regarded publications, *Veterinary Record* and *In Practice* – both excellent sources of information that will keep you up-to-date with the latest developments in veterinary practice and policy.

- Receive free extramural studies (EMS) insurance. That is, a free personal accident, liability and hospital cash insurance package for all student members of BVA while involved in curricular activities.

- Enhance your knowledge through a range of other free and discounted professional guides and resources, including EMS and veterinary medicines guides.

- Benefit from member-only access to our websites, www.bva.co.uk and www.bvapublications.com.

- Choose from a wide-range of other services, such as the free legal-advice line, a mediation and representation service and significant discounts with insurance providers.

Saving money

In your subsequent years at university, the BVA membership fee is greatly reduced for student members. Where a full-fee paying graduate member pays £270 in 2011, a student will only pay £36. The BVA also offers the facility to pay monthly by direct debit, so the outgoing can be as little as £3 per month.

Help with student life

Every three years, the BVA and the Association of Veterinary Students

(AVS) conduct a student survey to gain an insight and feedback into the financial, social and educational factors that affect the veterinary student population.

The BVA/AVS student survey shows it is not always easy being a part of the veterinary student population. Results from 2008 survey show:

- One in three students considered themselves as being in a difficult or severe financial situation.

- More than half had suffered from stress, and over a fifth from depression.

Undoubtedly some stress can be attributed to spiralling debts but there can be a wide-range of contributory factors.

There are ways to cope with student stress and one way is to interact with peers who can provide support. The AVS provide students the opportunity to do this with student events, and the opportunity to share knowledge and experiences through mediums such as JAVS.

International links

Support from the BVA helps all students to be a part of the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA), which currently has over 35,000 student members in 50 countries. The aim of the IVSA is to raise the overall standard of veterinary education worldwide by increasing international and intercultural exchange of ideas and knowledge. Alongside organising an annual international congress, the IVSA is also actively involved in organising student exchange programmes.

The BVA also offers four travel grants to students each year. The travel grants all have a relevance to research and the improvement of animal welfare, especially in the developing world. Each grant has a different application process and the winner for each will be decid-



ed by the BVA's Nominations and Award Group.

Abi Collinson, a 2009 recipient of the Harry Steele-Bodger Memorial Travel Scholarship, undertook a project researching the feasibility of provision of a community-based animal healthcare system in the region surrounding Kharekhari village, Rajasthan, India.

The system involved training one person in each village in basic animal healthcare, and that person then acts as a first point of contact for any problems, as well as acting as a conduit to educate the community on the benefits of good husbandry, hygiene and preventative healthcare. Abi's full report can be found on the BVA's website (www.bva.co.uk). Information on the 2011 grants will be available this month.

Benefits of membership

As a BVA member, you can;

- Be part of a national association that represents the voice of the veterinary profession.

- Influence critical decisions.

- Help formulate policy.

Lastly, all that is left is to welcome you into vet school. The years ahead promise to be both challenging and rewarding. Enjoy them.

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- Recent graduate support

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Vet Record Careers



Veterinary Record has now started publishing careers articles, both in the print journal and online. This new resource contains articles aimed at helping you make those vital careers choices when looking for a job. Content covers areas such as preparing a CV, finding the right first job, features, tips, news and interviews on employment and educational issues, and on personal and professional development.

Find out more at:

vetrecordcareers.com



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