

## **Newsletter April 2010**

We are extremely pleased to announce the return of Jim from his successful row across the Atlantic. He is now back at work, with as far as I am aware no great urge to do anything quite as ambitious (crazy) in the near future! I believe he is still taking sponsorship money for anyone feeling generous.

Turn-out now looks to be here after a particularly hard winter, the milder air has brought a resurgence of 'bugs' with a rise in the cases of pneumonia and environmental mastitis. A longer than expected winter has brought about a straw shortage on some farms, lack of straw generally means a wetter, dirtier bed and normally that will mean more disease.

We are continuing with our sequence of farm walks and discussion meetings with Dairy Co. over the next few months. On the 18<sup>th</sup> May we will be meeting to discuss Management of the dry cow with special attention to body condition scoring. Then on the 15<sup>th</sup> June we will discuss Heifer rearing and worming strategies. These will be daytime meetings starting at 11.30 with lunch provided. The venues are yet to be confirmed but please call to book your place when we will give you further information. If anyone would like to host a meeting then please let us know.

After much deliberation between Clare and myself we have taken the decision to increase our charge for out of hours visits. Instead of the £15 + vat blanket charge we will now charge £22 + vat for out of hours and £15 within normal hours. The reason for this is the increased amount of travelling we have to do working out of hours as calls cannot be grouped together for emergencies. This is our first fee price rise since we began trading in January 2004, whilst in this period, the cost of fuel has nearly doubled in price!

T.B. testing has been somewhat of a challenge this year, mainly due to the change in testing intervals for some parishes. We have appreciated your understanding in arranging tests, we have tried to suit all needs with assistance of several locums over the past few months. We hope things will settle down shortly and our diary will once again be more flexible.

As usual we will be taking a stand at the North Somerset Show on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> May. We look forward to seeing you all there for a cup of tea and refreshments.