



## Sustainability Policy

At Copthorne Vets, we are committed to promoting sustainable practises to minimise our environmental impact and contribute to a healthier planet. We recognise that our work can have both direct and indirect effects on the environment, and we strive to integrate sustainability into all aspects of our clinic's activities. This sustainability policy outlines our commitment and the actions we will take to achieve our goals.

### Energy Efficiency:

- a. We will prioritise the use of energy-efficient equipment and lighting throughout our clinic. When purchasing new equipment or upgrading existing ones, we will consider energy consumption ratings and opt for models that meet or exceed industry efficiency standards.
- b. Our staff will be trained on energy-saving practices, including drying washing outside, conserving heat and turning off lights, equipment, and appliances when not in use. We will encourage the use of natural lighting whenever possible.
- c. To reduce energy wastage during non-operational hours, we will use timers to control heating.

### Waste Management:

- a. We are committed to implementing a comprehensive waste management system that minimises waste generation and ensures responsible disposal. This includes good stock control to minimise out-of-date products. Our clinic will establish clear guidelines for waste separation, recycling, and composting.
- b. We will strive to reduce paper consumption by implementing electronic client and patient forms and digital documentation systems. Where paper is necessary, we will encourage the use of recycled and responsibly sourced paper products.
- c. Hazardous materials, such as medical waste and pharmaceuticals, will be handled and disposed of in strict compliance with local regulations and industry best practises. We will partner with certified waste management companies to ensure proper disposal and prevent any negative environmental impact.
- d. To minimise single-use items, we will explore alternatives such as reusable or biodegradable products for patient care, cleaning, and administrative purposes. Additionally, we will provide recycling bins in convenient locations throughout the practice to facilitate proper waste separation and encourage recycling.

### Anaesthetic Gases

- a. We recognise that anaesthetic gases, while essential for patient care, can have adverse environmental effects. We are dedicated to implementing strategies that

minimise the use of these gases, ensuring their responsible use without compromising the quality of care we provide to our patients.

- b. We will invest in anaesthetic equipment and technologies designed to enhance the efficiency of gas delivery systems.
- c. Training will be provided on the proper use of anaesthetic equipment, emphasising gas-saving techniques and the importance of monitoring gas flow rates to avoid unnecessary wastage.
- d. We will explore and promote the use of alternative anaesthetic options, such as local anaesthetics and non-inhalation anaesthetics, where appropriate and effective.
- e. All anaesthetic equipment is serviced annually and checked prior to use to ensure there are no faults or leaks.
- f. Patients are intubated for medical procedures with cuffed endo-tracheal tubes unless contra-indicated.
- g. Annual monitoring of anaesthetic pollutants in operating areas is conducted.
- h. Appropriate scavenging of anaesthetic gases is maintained.

#### **Water Conservation:**

- a. We will monitor and minimise water usage within our clinic by adopting water-efficient practices such as low-flow taps, toilets, and water-saving equipment.
- b. We will regularly check for leaks and promptly repair any identified issues to prevent water waste.
- c. We will educate our staff on water conservation practices, such as turning off taps when not in use and reporting any water-related concerns promptly.
- d. In outdoor areas, we will prioritise the planting of drought-tolerant plants, as well as harvesting rainwater, to minimize water usage.

#### **Sustainable Procurement:**

- a. We are committed to sourcing environmentally friendly products and services. When procuring supplies, medications, and equipment, we will give preference to those with recognised eco-labels or certifications indicating their sustainability attributes.
- b. We will actively engage with our suppliers to understand their environmental policies and practices. We will encourage them to reduce packaging waste, use eco-friendly materials, and minimise the carbon footprint associated with transportation.
- c. Whenever possible, we will support local suppliers and businesses that share our commitment to sustainability. By doing so, we aim to reduce emissions related to transportation and contribute to the local economy.

- d. In addition to product considerations, we will also evaluate the lifecycle impacts of the items we procure. We will prioritise products that are durable, repairable, recyclable, or made from recycled materials.

#### **Education and Awareness:**

- a. We will provide comprehensive training and education to our team on sustainable practises. This includes regular updates and reminders on energy and water-saving techniques, waste management protocols, and sustainable procurement guidelines.
- b. Through our client interactions, website, social media channels, and newsletters, we will actively promote sustainable pet care practises and responsible pet ownership including preventative healthcare and prophylactic parasiticide assessments. We will provide information on eco-friendly pet products, sustainable diets, and environmentally conscious pet waste disposal.

#### **Transport**

- a. We encourage employees, where possible, to walk or cycle to work, and offer the cycle to work scheme as an employee benefit.
- b. Car sharing is advocated when multiple employees are attending the same training events.
- c. We aim to reduce the frequency of deliveries by using a limited number of suppliers and bulk buying whenever possible.

#### **Continuous Improvement:**

- a. Appointment of a sustainability champion to develop, implement, and monitor our sustainability strategy and initiatives and to act as a dedicated advocate for sustainability within the practice, promoting awareness and engagement among the team, actively encouraging suggestions to improve sustainability.
- b. We are committed to setting measurable sustainability goals and regularly monitoring our progress. We will endeavour to identify areas for improvement and implement appropriate measures. This will include calculating and reducing our carbon footprint and working towards Investors in the Environment Accreditation.
- c. We will regularly review and update our sustainability policy to incorporate emerging best practices and technologies. We will stay informed about advancements in sustainable veterinary care and adapt our practises accordingly.

As an integral part of our core values, this sustainability policy will guide our decision-making processes, encourage responsible practises, and foster a culture of environmental stewardship within our team. Together, we can reduce our environmental impact and create a more sustainable future for ourselves, our furry companions, and the planet we share.

Reviewed October 2023