

Aldeburgh Vets Terms & Conditions of Business

Thank you for entrusting the care of your pet(s) to Aldeburgh Vets. This document contains our Terms & Conditions. Some aspects of the terms may not be relevant to you. Please ask for further explanation or clarification if required.

Registration & Contact Details

- We must maintain accurate records of our clients and patients. In order to do this we will periodically ask you to confirm registration and contact details.
- If your details change, please inform us so we can ensure our database is up to date and that you receive appointment and treatment reminders.

Data Protection

- Aldeburgh Vets, take your privacy very seriously and take great care to comply with our obligations under the Data Protection Act and to protect your personal information including any financial details that you provide. Aldeburgh Vets will only use your personal information in order to liaise with you regarding the healthcare of your pets.
- We may need to disclose or share your personal information with regulatory authorities for the purpose of fraud prevention and/or to comply with any legal or regulatory requirement. If you have any questions about the way Aldeburgh Vets uses your personal information, please write to the Practice Manager, Aldeburgh Vets, Hall Farm Lane, Saxmundham Road, Suffolk, IP15 5JD.
- From time to time it may be necessary for Aldeburgh Vets to use the details you have provided in order to advise you about products important to your animal's welfare and of potential interest as a pet owner.

Legislation relating to Veterinary Care

- Aldeburgh Vets will endeavour to provide veterinary services in accordance with reasonable standards as specified in the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons and Veterinary Nurses.
- Guidelines are available at www.rcvs.org.uk.
- Veterinary Surgeons at Aldeburgh Vets can only give advice, diagnose and prescribe therapies for patients that are 'under their care'.

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- Being 'under the care' of a veterinary practice means that the veterinary surgeon must know what is going on with the patient in order to make an informed decision about it.
- A patient cannot be considered to be under the vet's care if there has been no physical examination; which means that a vet cannot prescribe a prescription only medicine to a patient if they have **only** conducted a consultation over the telephone or via the Internet.
- However, if a patient has been prescribed a prescription-only-medicine for a long-term medical condition, the client can acquire more medicine without the patient having to be examined every single time.
- Every repeat-prescription request needs to be authorised by a veterinary surgeon before it can be dispensed.
- Legally, the maximum period of time a vet can prescribe a prescription-only-medicine without having re-examined the patient is 6 months.
- The minimum period of time between examinations is not legally defined. This is determined by the prescribing veterinary surgeon.

Supply of medicines for therapeutic purposes

- Aldeburgh Vets will offer to supply virtually all of the veterinary medicines that have been prescribed for your pet.
- Aldeburgh Vets will also provide written prescriptions if you wish to obtain prescription-only-medicine from another veterinary surgeon, or pharmacy. Please bear in mind that delay in the start of treatment may not be in the best interest of the welfare of your pet.
- Aldeburgh Vets will charge to provide a written prescription.
- Aldeburgh Vets can only provide a written prescription for animals under our care. Aldeburgh Vets will charge to examine all ongoing medical conditions should the client wish to acquire a written prescription or not.
- Aldeburgh Vets can also supply prescription-only-medicines if presented with a prescription from another veterinary surgeon.

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Supply of medicines for preventative Healthcare purposes

- Aldeburgh Vets uses prescription-only-medicines (veterinary surgeon category ie POM-V) in order to prevent and resolve internal (worms) and external (fleas, ticks, mites, lice) parasites. Prescription-only-medicines treat a greater range of parasites more quickly and safely than non-prescription products. They often combine internal and external parasite in a single product.
- In order for Aldeburgh Vets to dispense Prescription-only preventative healthcare products, patients must be under the care of the practice.
 - Being ‘under the care’ of a veterinary practice means that a Prescription-only preventative healthcare products **a veterinary surgeon** must have examined the patient in order to *prescribe and then dispense* Prescription-only preventative healthcare products.
 - Aldeburgh Vets understands that many clients are unwilling to pay for a veterinary consultation in order to acquire Prescription-only preventative healthcare products.
 - Aldeburgh Vets therefore offers a free of charge ***New Patient Consultation*** with a veterinary surgeon in order to comply with the Veterinary Medicine Regulations.
 - However, if the client wishes to discuss multiple medical problems during this consultation, that extend beyond the scope of prescribing preventative healthcare, Aldeburgh Vets reserves the right to charge for this consultation.

Return of unused medicine

- Aldeburgh Vets will accept unused medications for disposal free of charge.
- Legally Aldeburgh Vets cannot offer a refund on any medicines which have left the premises as these are no longer deemed fit for resale. This is because Aldeburgh Vets cannot guarantee the conditions under which they were stored.
- Drugs purchased from another supplier will be accepted for disposal subject to a charge.

Out of Hours Service

- Aldeburgh Vets is open Monday to Friday from 8:00 am to 6:00pm and Saturday 8:30am to 12:00pm.
- Outside of these hours all emergencies are transferred to the care of MiNight Vet Veterinary Hospital in Melton, Woodbridge.
- If your pet requires emergency treatment call our usual number (01728 598 111) and follow the instructions.
- Patients which are hospitalised outside our normal working hours, will be checked and treated according to their clinical requirement.
- High dependency cases will be referred to MiNight Vet Veterinary Hospital in Melton, Woodbridge for continuous monitoring. Clients are responsible for arranging transport of their pet back and forth from the premises.

Consent

- In accordance with the RCVS Code of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Surgeons, Aldeburgh Vets will ask for signed consent for
 - All procedures involving admission to the clinic
 - The use of medications in species for which they were not licensed. For example using dog and cat medicines in rabbits and rodents.
 - The use of medications in conditions for which they were not licensed. For example using a heart medicine to treat a kidney for which no licensed product exists.
 - Permission to euthanase your pet

Charges

- All fees, food, reception sales and drugs are subject to VAT.
- Fees are calculated according to the time, risk and skill require to perform a veterinary procedure.
- A price list showing the cost of our most common services is displayed in our waiting room. You will receive an itemised receipt for all transactions.
- All prices quoted, whether on our price list or in an estimate, are inclusive of the current rate of VAT.

Estimates of charges

- Most medical presentations can be resolved using a range of options. We will provide an estimate of the approximate cost of each option.
- Please note that medical care involves significant uncertainty and therefore unforeseen costs may occur. However, we will endeavour to inform you of any additional costs and explain why these have arisen as soon as practically possible.
- All estimates are valid for 30 days.

Expectations about payment

Unless otherwise specified, payment is expected

- After each consultation or
- When your pet is discharged or
- When you collect any pre-ordered medicine or food.

You may settle the account using cash, credit card/debit card or online BACS transfer. Personal cheques are not accepted.

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Pet Health Insurance

- Aldeburgh Vets strongly supports insuring your pet against the unexpected costs due to illness or accident.
- Please ask us for details about the different types of insurance policy.
- Unless otherwise specified, you are expected to settle your account and then reclaim fees from your insurance company.
- Aldeburgh Vets will complete their portion of the insurance claim in a timely manner assuming we have all the relevant information to do so.
- Aldeburgh Vets will not charge to complete insurance forms whereby the client has settled their account and is reclaiming fees from the insurance company.
- Aldeburgh Vets will facilitate payment directly from some, but not all insurance companies, subject to the following terms
 - This option is not guaranteed and remains subject to approval by the directors, Brian Faulkner or Jess Bartman.
 - Aldeburgh Vets reserve the right to refuse payment directly from an insurance provider we perceive as consistently slow to pay or represents a high risk of non-payment.
 - Because direct insurance claims involve significantly more administration as well as a delay in payment to the practice (often up to several months), Aldeburgh Vets will charge an administration fee when payment is being made directly from an insurance company. This fee is currently £15. This fee is payable to the practice upon signing this agreement. This fee will apply once per condition claimed per calendar year.
 - Should Aldeburgh Vets agree to accept payment directly from an insurance provider, clients are expected to provide us with all the relevant documents to enable us to do this within 14 days of incurring the charges. Should these documents not be provided within 14 days after request, Aldeburgh Vets reserves the right to withdraw the offer of payment directly from the insurance provider and the client will be invoiced for the outstanding amount.
 - The client is expected to pay the balance of their excess when the insurance claim is submitted to the insurance provider.

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Unsettled accounts

- Any account not settled within 14 days will be sent a reminder.
- Should the account remain outstanding beyond 30 days, Aldeburgh Vets reserves the right to refer any unsettled accounts to our debt collecting agency, unless otherwise agreed.
- Should the account remain outstanding beyond 30 days, Aldeburgh Vets reserves the right to de-register the client and their pets.
- Any further costs incurred in collecting the debt will be added to the balance.
- Any cheque returned by our bank as unpaid, any credit card payment not honoured and any cash tendered and found to be counterfeit will result in the original account being restored to the original sum with further charges added in respect of bank charges and administrative costs.

Inability to Pay

- If you are unable to settle your account we ask that you discuss the matter as soon as possible with a member of staff.
- We do not offer payment plans as payment for treatment is expected at the time. Instalments or part payments of any account may ONLY be sanctioned with the permission of a director, Brian Faulkner or Jess Bartman. In other words, whilst receptionists and vets can relay requests for credit, please do not expect them to be able to make such agreements themselves.

Complaints about the standards of care and service provided

- Please note that the last thing we wish to do at Aldeburgh Vets is to cause you or your pets any undue distress. If this happens, we would like to reassure you that any upset or distress caused is not intentional.
- However, if you feel that the standards of care, service and value for money you received from Aldeburgh Vets weren't satisfactory, please contact one of the directors; Brian Faulkner or Jess Bartman.
- Whilst almost all client frustrations and concerns can be resolved informally, should you feel that your issue has not been resolved to your satisfaction by the directors at Aldeburgh Vets you may wish to raise your concern with the RCVS using the link below. Please be aware of the following when doing so;

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- <https://animalowners.rcvs.org.uk/concerns/i-want-to-raise-a-concern-about-a-veterinary-surgeon/>

- Please note; the RCVS only gets involved in complaints relating to the *professional conduct* of a veterinary surgeon (eg fraud, dishonesty) as opposed to accusations of negligence – unless the instances of negligence are sustained or represent a standard that would make the veterinary professional unfit to practice.

- This means that the RCVS does not get involved in complaints about charges.

- The RCVS offers a Client Mediation Service: <https://www.vetmediation.co.uk>

Standards of conduct expected of our clients

- Just as clients are entitled to expect appropriate standards of care, service and value for money from us, the directors and staff are entitled to expect appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour whilst serving our patients and our clients.

- Aldeburgh Vets' definition of 'appropriate' standards of conduct and behaviour is as follows; clients are not entitled to speak to us or treat us in a manner that would be considered inappropriate should we do the same to them. This includes
 - Swearing
 - Aggressive, abusive or intimidating behaviour towards members of staff.
 - Defamation on social media without drawing our attention to a concern.

- Should such instances occur, Aldeburgh Vets reserves the right to de-register the client and their pets.

Healthcare Plans

Aldeburgh Vets offers two Healthcare Plans; one that helps clients save money on preventative healthcare and one that helps clients save money should your pet become ill.

Aldeburgh Vets Preventative healthcare plan

Entitlements

- An annual booster
- 12 months of internal and external parasite cover
- Other discounts
 - 50% off microchipping
 - 25% off Kennel Cough

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- 10% off neutering
- 10% off dentistry
- 10% off food

Prices and Payments

- Prices vary depending on the species and size of your pet.
- Animals will be charged according to their predicted weight if not fully grown
- Each contractual period entitles the pet owner to their pet's annual requirement of preventative healthcare products and services listed above.
- This cost will be spread over a 12 month period
- You can gain an extra 5% discount by paying for the full year in a single payment.
- The first month's payment is taken at the time of signing up to the scheme
- Payment is made by direct debit over the next 11 months
- Each period will have a specific start and renewal date. The start date begins on the date on which the first payment arrives into the Aldeburgh Vets' bank account.
- This contract can be initiated at any time however products and services will not be dispensed or administered until the first payment has been received
- The contract will continue on a rolling annual basis from the date of this agreement until such time as it is terminated in accordance with the terms below.
- In the event of any monthly payment being unpaid one month after it has become due Aldeburgh Vets may terminate this agreement.
- Aldeburgh Vets reserve the right to increase the monthly payment at its discretion provided that it gives the client at least one months' notice in writing.

Termination of this agreement

- The client may terminate this agreement by giving a minimum of two months' notice in writing to Aldeburgh Vets, (Hall Farm Lane, Saxmundham Road, Suffolk, IP15 5JD), provided that all monthly payments up to the termination date have been received to cover the total value of the Services received by the Pet Owner prior to the termination date.
- If at the termination date, the total payments already received from the Pet Owner do not cover the total value of the products and services already received for the corresponding 12 month period, an additional charge will be payable to Aldeburgh Vets by the Pet Owner to cover the shortfall against the full retail cost of the services/products already received within the corresponding 12 month period by the Pet Owner.

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- Aldeburgh Vets may terminate this agreement by giving the Pet Owner a minimum of one months' notice in writing to that effect, provided that all Services which have been paid for in advance have been supplied or will be supplied prior to the termination date.
- No notice period is of course required in the unfortunate event of your pet's death. Where the monthly payments in advance do not cover the cost of the Services received by the Pet Owner up to and including the termination date, an additional charge will be payable to Aldeburgh Vets by the Pet Owner to cover the shortfall. Where the monthly payments are in excess of benefits products and services already received by the Pet Owner, the balance will be assigned as credit on the Pet Owner's account. Any products which have already been removed from the practice cannot be refunded.

General conditions applicable to this agreement

- For the purposes of the Contracts (Rights of Third Parties) Act 1999 this agreement is not intended to, and does not, give any person who is not a party to it any right to enforce any of its provisions.
- Aldeburgh Vets shall only be liable for any loss or damage suffered by any Pet Owner which is a reasonably foreseeable consequence of a breach of this Agreement. However it is the Pet Owner's responsibility to attend the practice in order to receive the products and services
- Aldeburgh Vets will endeavour to send reminders for the pet's annual vaccination and 6 month check appointments. However Aldeburgh Vets shall not be liable for any loss or damage suffered by any Pet Owner if they do not actually receive a reminder for their pet's annual vaccination.
- No refund for unused and unclaimed products services will be given
- For the avoidance of doubt, Aldeburgh Vets retains absolute discretion as to the combinations and brands of specific medications and treatments offered under the terms of this agreement. It is the pet owner's responsibility to decide if the combinations and brands of specific medications and treatments on offer suit their particular circumstances. For the avoidance of doubt, Pet owners are unable to pick and choose which combination and brands of medications and treatments they wish to receive under this scheme.

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Aldeburgh Vets Unlimited free consultations plan.

This plan includes

- Unlimited free consultations with the vet or the nurse

This plan does **NOT** include

- Medicines
- Out of Hours Consultations
- Diagnostics, surgery or any therapeutic procedure
- Neutering

Prices and Payments

- Each contractual period entitles the pet owner to the entitlements listed above **ONLY** for the pet named in the contractual agreement.
- Each plan represents a commitment to a 12 month period
- The first month's payment is taken at the time of signing up to the scheme
- Payment is made by direct debit over the next 11 months
- Each period will have a specific start and renewal date. The start date begins on the date on which the first payment arrives into the Aldeburgh Vets' bank account.
- This contract can be initiated at any time however access to the entitlements listed above will not occur until the first payment has been received
- The contract will continue on a rolling annual basis from the date of this agreement until such time as it is terminated in accordance with the terms below.
- In the event of any monthly payment being unpaid one month after it has become due Aldeburgh Vets may terminate this agreement.
- Aldeburgh Vets reserve the right to increase the monthly payment at its discretion provided that it gives the client at least one months' notice in writing.

Termination of this agreement

- The client may terminate this agreement by giving a minimum of two months' notice in writing to Aldeburgh Vets, (Hall Farm Lane, Saxmundham Road, Suffolk, IP15 5JD), provided that all monthly payments up to the termination date have been received to cover the total value of the Services received by the Pet Owner prior to the termination date.

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- If at the termination date, the total payments already received from the Pet Owner do not cover the total value of the services already received for the corresponding 12 month period, an additional charge will be payable to Aldeburgh Vets by the Pet Owner to cover the shortfall against the full retail cost of the services/products already received within the corresponding 12 month period by the Pet Owner.
- Aldeburgh Vets may terminate this agreement by giving the Pet Owner a minimum of one months' notice in writing to that effect, provided that all Services which have been paid for in advance have been supplied or will be supplied prior to the termination date.
- No notice period is of course required in the unfortunate event of your pet's death. Where the monthly payments in advance do not cover the cost of the Services received by the Pet Owner up to and including the termination date, an additional charge will be payable to Aldeburgh Vets by the Pet Owner to cover the shortfall. Where the monthly payments are in excess of benefits products and services already received by the Pet Owner, the balance will be assigned as credit on the Pet Owner's account. Any products which have already been removed from the practice cannot be refunded.
- No refund for unused and unclaimed products services will be given