

FOR WHEN THE TIME COMES -SAYING GOODBYE

EUTHANASIA & PET BEREAVEMENT

We all understand the joy of loving a pet, the companionship and loyalty they show us, but what happens when the time comes to say goodbye?

It is advisable to plan in advance what your personal preferences will be, then when the time comes nothing is left to chance. At the time of your pet's death, rational thoughts can be difficult, as you are coming to terms with the bereavement.

Euthanasia

If you know that your appointment is possibly for euthanasia, it is important to tell the receptionist when you telephone, so that we can arrange a suitable time for your appointment.

What will happen?

The vet will explain what will happen and will ask you to sign a form that gives permission to carry out the euthanasia.

Each person is an individual and some people prefer to stay and others prefer to leave their pet with us; it is best to do what you feel is right and manageable for you at the time. It is important for you to know that whether you are there or not, the euthanasia is always carried out with respect and compassion.

A veterinary nurse will usually hold your pet at the time of euthanasia in order to raise the vein but it is still possible for you to comfort your pet.

Usually an overdose of anaesthetic is injected into the vein, but in some cases, sedation may be required first.

The vet will listen to the heart with a stethoscope and will then confirm when your pet has 'passed away'.

Your pet may gasp afterwards, or may pass urine as the muscles relax, this is a perfectly normal response.

Once the euthanasia has taken place, please do not be afraid to ask either the vet or the nurse for your pet's collar and lead (where appropriate) or even a small sample of your pet's fur to keep in his or her memory.

What are my options when my pet passes away?

Contact the surgery and our staff will help you by making this difficult time easier for you by assisting with the arrangements.

Options available are:

Standard Cremation

This is a dignified, communal cremation with other pets but in their own individual cremation bag. No ashes are returned but if you wish we can also arrange a certificate of cremation to be sent to you.

Individual cremation

This is more expensive but it does ensure and guarantee that your pet is cremated individually and you will receive your own pet's ashes. The ashes are returned in a scatter box, casket or an urn.

Home Burial

You should contact your local authority to confirm that you are allowed to bury your pet in your garden before proceeding.

Legally a grave depth of 1.25 metres is required. If this is your choice, which unfortunately is not available to everyone, then a tree could be planted to commemorate the pet. Also available are Pet Memorial stones which are available from garden centres or Boulder craft - www.bouldercraft.co.uk Fully lined wooden coffins, cardboard or wicker coffins lined or unlined, are also available in various sizes from a number of internet sites.

Pet cemetery burial

This is probably the most expensive option, with headstones or gravestones similar to those in a human cemetery. To make these arrangements, you will need to contact the local Pet Cemetery.

Pet memorial & gifts

To help ease the pain of loss, creating a lasting memorial can offer a way to honour their memory and keep them close to you heart.

Personalized jewelry including engraving your pet's paw print and name on bracelets, pendants, charms, cufflinks, and keyrings.

Ornamental remembrance gifts such as Paw Print kits offer a lasting memory of your pet's paw print in a case with space for a photo to remember them by.

All available from the crematorium we use.

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SUPPORT FOR BEREAVEMENT

Grieving for the loss of a pet can be a very sad and difficult experience.

Feelings of despair, loneliness and depression can be overwhelming.

There may also be a sense of guilt and self-doubt particularly when a decision has been taken to euthanase a pet.

These feelings are normal and show how strong the bond was between your pet and yourself.

Sometimes it helps to share these feelings with someone who knows and understands what you are feeling.

Below are some contact details that may help you and give support and/or a sympathetic ear to you in your time of need:

- PET BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT SERVICE
THE BLUE CROSS
0800 096 6606
If it's easier to write your feelings down, email: pbssmail@bluecross.org.uk
- ANIMAL SAMARITANS
020 8303 1859
- Cats Protection Paws To Listen and Grief Support:
03000 121212 www.cats.org.uk/grief
- theralphsite.com
- THE SAMARITANS
01772 822022