

The Vets at Home Way

Welcome guide for Vets joining our network

Vets at Home

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Vets at Home

– A note from Vets at Home

Welcome to Vets at Home. We are really pleased to have you as part of our network of professionals, delivering the best standard of pet and client care.

The work we do is simple to describe, but as you know, not simple to deliver. We help families say goodbye to much-loved pets at home, with kindness, clinical care, calm communication and respect for the significance of the moment.

For many families, the appointment you attend will be one of the hardest experiences they have had with their pet. They may be frightened, unsure and grieving, as well as battling guilt, even if they are certain that the time has come.

The words used, the pace set, and the way they felt could stay with them for years afterwards.

That is why this booklet exists.

It is here to explain how we work, what we ask of you, and the standard of care families should receive when they book through Vets at Home.

It is not here to remove your clinical judgement. You are the veterinary surgeon and your clinical autonomy is paramount.

But it is here to make sure that, wherever a family is in the country, and whichever vet attends, the Vets at Home experience feels consistent, compassionate and professional.

This booklet forms part of the Terms of Engagement between Vets at Home Ltd and each veterinary surgeon who works through our network. By joining the network or accepting an appointment, you confirm that you have read, understood and agree to follow it.

Vets at Home

– Who we are

Vets at Home provides compassionate at-home euthanasia and aftercare support for pets and their families.

Our role is to bring together the different parts of the experience so families do not have to manage everything alone. We handle enquiries, bookings, payments, crematorium liaison and administration. Our vets perform the procedure; everything else is taken care of for you.

We are not trying to make end-of-life care feel corporate or transactional. Quite the opposite. Our aim is to make a difficult day feel as supported and smooth as possible.

We believe that how things end matters.

That applies to the pet, the family, the veterinary professional attending, our support team, and the crematorium partners who help us complete the care after the appointment.

Vets at Home



What families expect from us

Families usually come to us because they want their pet's euthanasia to be carried out somewhere familiar.

As such, they may want their dog on their own bed, their cat in their favourite sunny spot, outside if the weather allows, or their pet surrounded by the people who have loved them most. They may have had a difficult experience in a clinic before. They may simply want privacy, peace and time. We want to try and accommodate their wishes as much as clinically possible.

When a family books Vets at Home, they are not just booking a procedure. We want to provide:

- a clear arrival time for your attendance
- calm and respectful communication
- clear explanations
- no unnecessary rushing
- professional clinical care
- sensitivity to the emotional weight of the moment
- respect for their home
- respect for their pet's body after death
- clear aftercare arrangements
- joined-up communication between Vets at Home, the vet and the crematorium partner

We know every family is different. Some want to talk whereas others won't. Some want every detail explained. Some want only the essentials. Some have children present. Some have other animals in the home. Some are relieved to see you. Some are devastated. Most are a mixture of many things.

Your role is to read the room, lead gently, and make the family feel they are in safe hands.

Vets at Home

Your role in the network

As a Vets at Home network vet, you are an independent veterinary professional. You are not an employee of Vets at Home.

As an independent veterinary professional, you are responsible for your own tax, National Insurance, VAT affairs and any other statutory payments arising from the fees you receive.

As an independent veterinary professional, you choose which appointments you wish to offer availability for. There is no exclusivity, and you are not expected to accept every appointment.

When you do accept an appointment, we ask that you treat it as a commitment to the family, the patient, Vets at Home and any aftercare partners involved.

Your role is to:

- attend the appointment at the agreed time
- provide appropriate veterinary care
- follow the Vets at Home euthanasia protocol unless there is a clear clinical reason not to
- explain any clinical decisions clearly to the family
- decide whether euthanasia is appropriate
- decline or stop the procedure if it is not clinically or ethically appropriate to proceed
- communicate promptly with the family and Vets at Home if anything changes
- maintain your own professional standards, insurance, registration, medicines and records
- respect the relationships Vets at Home has with families, practices and crematorium partners

You are representing Vets at Home when you attend.

That does not mean you lose your independence. It means the family should feel that the service is joined up, thoughtful and consistent.

We know there may be occasions when you are running late. Please communicate this to the central team so they can update both the customer and the cremation partner.

Even arriving just a few minutes late without communication can get things off to a difficult start for an already emotionally charged appointment. Good communication prevents this.

Vets at Home

Benefits of being part of the Vets at Home network

Being part of Vets at Home is about more than the appointments we send your way.

As our network grows, we are increasingly able to use our collective buying power to negotiate benefits that can support you not only in your Vets at Home work, but in your wider veterinary business too.

Public liability insurance

We have negotiated access to public liability insurance for Vets at Home vets for £250 per year.

We know that setting yourself up to work independently comes with additional costs, so wherever we can use the scale of our network to make those costs more manageable, we will.

Free buying group membership

You can also access free membership of our veterinary buying group, giving you significant discounts on medications and consumables.

We have focused particularly on securing excellent prices for the medications and consumables most commonly needed for home euthanasia appointments.

However, the benefit is not limited to your work with Vets at Home. You can also use the buying group to purchase medications and consumables you need for your own veterinary business.

And there is more to come

As the Vets at Home network grows, we will continue looking for opportunities to use our collective scale to create further benefits for the vets who work with us.

These may change and develop over time, but our aim is simple: where being part of the network gives us greater buying power or access to opportunities, we want our vets to benefit from that too.

Full details of how to access these benefits will be provided as part of your onboarding.

Vets at Home

> *"Animals do not betray. They do not exploit. They give everything and ask only for food and kindness in return."*
>
> — Richard Adams

Clinical autonomy and professional judgement

It is important to us that you know your clinical autonomy is paramount at all times.
You are responsible for your own clinical decisions, your own professional judgement and your own compliance with RCVS expectations.

Our protocol is important, and we expect it to be understood and followed as the normal Vets at Home approach. However, no written protocol can replace the judgement of the veterinary surgeon present with the patient.

There may be situations where you need to adapt what happens because of the patient's condition, the family's needs, safety, welfare, medication response, vascular access, or another clinical factor. Where you depart from the Vets at Home protocol, we ask that you:

- have a clear clinical reason for doing so
- explain the reason to the family in plain language
- bring the client with you in the decision to avoid alarming them
- document the reason afterwards
- let Vets at Home know if the departure from protocol was significant

Protocol gives consistency. Clinical judgement protects the patient. Communication protects the family's trust.

Vets at Home

Our euthanasia protocol

Our standard Vets at Home approach is a two-stage euthanasia protocol. This means:

.1 sedation first
.2 euthanasia once the patient is appropriately sedated

The purpose of this approach is to reduce distress, minimise unnecessary handling and create as peaceful an experience as possible for the pet and family.

For most families, sedation is also emotionally important. It allows them to see their pet become calm and settled before the final injection. It gives them time to stroke, talk, hold, sit close, or simply be present.

The usual final agent is pentobarbital, administered by an appropriate route once the patient is suitably sedated and you are satisfied that it is appropriate to proceed.

We recognise that there may be clinical situations where a different approach is appropriate. For example, if a patient is already deeply moribund, peaceful, and not distressed by IV access, you may judge that direct IV administration without prior sedation is the kindest option.

If that happens, you must explain your reasoning to the family before proceeding.

A suggested wording might be:

> "Normally, our approach is to give sedation first, so that pets are deeply relaxed before the final injection. In [pet's name]'s case, they are already extremely peaceful and very close to passing. I think trying to give sedation first may involve more handling than is kind to them. My recommendation would be to proceed directly, but I want to explain that clearly and make sure you are comfortable with what I'm suggesting."

If the family asks for sedation after that explanation, we would usually expect you to return to the standard two-stage approach unless there is a clear welfare or safety reason not to.

We recommend you place an intravenous catheter in the majority of cases to prevent accidental perivascular injection that may cause patient distress and prolonged euthanasia. Where IV access is difficult, please use your clinical judgement.

Do not continue repeated attempts at venous access where this is becoming distressing, impractical, or likely to damage the family's experience. There are circumstances where an alternative route may be more appropriate once the patient is adequately sedated or anaesthetised.

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Depending on the individual case, this may include routes such as intracardiac, intrahepatic, intrarenal or another clinically appropriate route, used only where you are satisfied that it is humane, lawful, professionally appropriate and in the patient's welfare interests.

Families should be kept appropriately informed, but technical difficulties should be explained calmly and in plain language rather than through an alarming running commentary. Be honest about what is changing, reassure the family about their pet’s comfort and explain the next clinical step.

A suggested wording might be:

> "Sometimes, especially when pets are very poorly, their circulation can make this part take a little longer. [Pet's name] is deeply sedated and peaceful, and I'm going to choose the kindest route from here."

After the final injection, please confirm death by appropriate clinical assessment, including auscultation.

Once death is confirmed, use gentle language.

For example:

"They have passed now. I'm so sorry."

The aim is to protect the pet's welfare and the family's experience.

Vets at Home

Quality of life and behaviour euthanasia

By far the majority of the work we do is quality of life euthanasia.

These are usually cases where a pet is elderly, terminally ill, in pain, declining, no longer able to enjoy normal life, or where the family and their primary veterinary practice have already reached the point where euthanasia is the kindest option.

However, Vets at Home also undertakes behaviour euthanasia.

Behaviour euthanasia appointments require particular care.

They may involve pets who are aggressive, fearful, unpredictable, highly aroused, difficult to handle, or unsafe around unfamiliar people. They may also involve families who feel guilt, grief, fear and shame, as well as sadness.

These appointments must be approached with the same dignity and compassion as any other euthanasia appointment.

The fact that a pet is behaviourally dangerous does not mean they are less loved.

It does mean that safety planning is essential.

You do not need to take any appointment that you do not feel comfortable doing. You will be aware before offering your availability if it is a behaviour euthanasia.



Vets at Home

Behaviour euthanasia and aggressive pets

Where an appointment involves behaviour euthanasia, or where we are aware of a significant aggression risk, the central Vets at Home team will spend additional time discussing safety with the client before the appointment.

This will usually include a clear conversation about:

- the pet's known triggers
- whether the pet is safe with strangers
- whether the pet has bitten before
- whether the pet is safe to approach
- where the appointment should take place
- how the pet will be contained before you arrive
- whether the pet should be muzzled before you enter
- whether pre-appointment medication has been prescribed
- what the family should and should not do while waiting for you

In some behaviour cases, the client may already have been given oral pre-appointment medication by their own veterinary surgeon. Common examples may include gabapentin and/or trazodone, although the exact medication and instructions will depend on the prescribing vet, the patient, and the clinical circumstances.

Where medication has been supplied by another veterinary practice, the client should administer it only as prescribed and instructed for that pet.

Vets at Home may help clarify the appointment plan, but the prescribing responsibility remains with the prescribing veterinary surgeon, who won't be you.

The client will usually be asked to muzzle the pet before you enter the room or approach the pet. It will always be at your discretion whether that muzzle is removed.

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For the dignity of all pets, our preference is to proceed to the final injection without a muzzle where it is safe and appropriate to do so. However, your safety comes first.

The owner will be made aware in advance that removal of the muzzle is your decision.

A suggested wording might be:

> "I know everyone would prefer [pet's name] not to need the muzzle for the final part if we can safely avoid it. I'll assess the situation when I arrive, and if I feel it is safe to remove it, I will. If I don't feel it is safe, we will keep it in place. That decision is about keeping everyone safe, including [pet's name]."

Please do not feel pressured to remove a muzzle because the family is upset.

Equally, where it is safe to remove it, doing so can be a meaningful act of dignity for the family and the pet.

Use your judgement.

If you arrive and feel the situation is unsafe, you may pause, change the plan, ask the family to adjust the environment, request that the pet is better contained, or decide not to proceed.

If you cannot safely proceed, contact Vets at Home as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.

Vets at Home

When not to proceed

Clinical autonomy also includes the right and responsibility not to proceed.

There may be cases where a family has booked euthanasia but, when you arrive, you do not feel euthanasia is clinically or ethically appropriate at that time.

This could include situations where:

- the patient is not suffering in a way that makes euthanasia appropriate
- there are reasonable treatment or palliative options the family has not understood
- the family appears uncertain or divided
- consent is unclear
- there are concerns about ownership or authority to consent
- the patient's welfare would be better served by a different plan
- there are safeguarding, behavioural, legal or safety concerns
- the information available does not support euthanasia as an appropriate welfare-led decision.
- you are not satisfied that proceeding would align with your professional obligations

If you decide not to proceed, the family still needs care.

They may be upset, embarrassed, angry, relieved, confused, or all of these at once.

Please explain your reasoning calmly and respectfully. Avoid making the family feel judged. Most families are doing their best with the information and emotional capacity they have in that moment.

A suggested wording might be:

> "I completely understand why you have called us, and I can see how much you care about [pet's name]. Having assessed them today, I do not feel euthanasia is the right clinical step at this moment. I want to talk you through why, and what I think the next options are."

If euthanasia does not proceed on welfare or clinical grounds, please inform Vets at Home as soon as possible so we can manage the family's booking, payment, aftercare arrangements and any follow-up communication.

Vets at Home

Communication with families

Communication is part of the care.

Families do not need you to perform grief counselling, but they do need you to be clear and kind. Before the procedure, please explain:

- what will happen
- what sedation is for
- what the family may notice as their pet relaxes
- when the final injection will be given
- that death is usually peaceful
- that there may be natural reflexes or changes after death
- how you will confirm death
- what happens next

Use plain language.

For example:

> "The first injection is to help [pet's name] become deeply sleepy and relaxed. Once they are fully settled, I'll give the final injection. I'll talk you through it as we go, and there is no rush."

Some families want detail. Others want the minimum. Let them guide the level of explanation, but do not leave them in the dark.

After the procedure, please allow a quiet moment where appropriate.

Central support will have already arranged the aftercare with the family before attending and you will know what has been arranged and agreed. Before leaving, please make sure the family understands what happens next with aftercare, particularly if a crematorium partner is collecting from the home.

Vets at Home

The appointment journey

Every home is different, but the family should feel that you have a calm structure.

Arrival

When you arrive, introduce yourself clearly and gently.
Check you are at the correct address and confirm the pet's name.

Settling in

Ask where they would like the appointment to take place.

Where possible, let the pet remain where they are most comfortable.

Avoid unnecessary movement unless needed for safety, access or clinical reasons.

Assessment

Before proceeding, satisfy yourself that euthanasia is appropriate and that proceeding aligns with your professional judgement.

This assessment may be brief, especially where the case history is clear and the patient's condition is obvious, but it should still happen.

Explanation

Talk the family through what will happen.

Do not assume they remember what they were told by the support team. In grief, people often retain very little.

Sedation

Follow the standard Vets at Home two-stage protocol unless there is a clear clinical reason not to.
Give the family time where appropriate. Ideally the owner will stay with the pet for this part of the procedure.

Final injection

When the patient is ready, explain that you are going to give the final injection.
Some families want to watch. Some do not. Some want to hold their pet. Some prefer to step away at this moment. Support their choice where safe and appropriate.

Vets at Home



Confirmation of death

Confirm death professionally and calmly, including auscultation. Use gentle language. For example:

"They have passed now. I'm so sorry."

Aftercare

Explain what will happen next.

If the family is using cremation arranged through Vets at Home, the crematorium partner will usually be responsible for collection and onward care.

If the family is keeping their pet at home for burial, or making their own arrangements, please make sure they are clear about what has been agreed.

Protecting the home

After death, please place an absorbent pad beneath the pet's hindquarters where possible, to protect the family's flooring, bedding or furniture from any post-mortem leakage.

If you cannot safely or comfortably move the pet yourself, please explain the purpose of the pad and leave it with the family so they can place it if they wish.

This is a small detail, but it can make a significant difference to how the family remembers the appointment.

Please ensure you take away all your clinical sharps, medications and consumables for later disposal. Do not leave anything in the home.

Vets at Home

Children and other pets

Some families will have children present. Some children will be quiet. Others may have lots of questions or ask very direct things that adults find difficult. Where you feel able to answer, please do so gently and honestly, using language that fits the child's age and the family's tone.

You do not need to over-explain or take over from the parent or carer. Before speaking directly to a child, it can be helpful to ask how the family has explained what is happening. Please avoid describing the procedure in front of children as "putting [pet's name] to sleep".

Young children can take this language literally and may become worried that they, or someone they love, could die when they go to sleep. Clear, simple words such as "die", "died" and "dead" are usually less confusing.

Child Bereavement UK advises against using phrases such as "gone to sleep" because children may associate ordinary sleep with dying and develop anxieties around bedtime.

A gentle explanation might be:

> **"The medicine will help [pet's name] die peacefully. Their body will stop working, and they won't feel pain or be frightened."**

We would usually ask families not to have other pets in the room during the procedure itself. This helps keep the room calm, allows you to remain focused and avoids having to manage another animal's behaviour while carrying out the procedure.

However, one of the benefits of home euthanasia is that companion pets can come into the room afterwards.

Where appropriate, please encourage the family to allow other pets to see and smell the deceased pet after the procedure. This gives them an opportunity to investigate what has changed and may help reduce searching behaviour afterwards.

A suggested wording might be:

"If you have other pets in the house, it can be helpful to let them come in afterwards, provided it is calm and safe to do so. They may sniff, look, stay close or show very little reaction. All of those responses are normal."

Please use your judgement. If another pet is distressed, aggressive or disruptive, the family may need to manage this differently.

When an appointment does not go perfectly

Some appointments are more clinically challenging than others. Veins may be difficult. Circulation may be poor. Sedation may take longer than expected. Additional sedation may be needed. The patient may be collapsed, dehydrated, oedematous, extremely frail, behaviourally unsafe, or anatomically difficult.

You may know that things are not going exactly as they usually do. If you remain calm, measured and confident, the family is much less likely to feel that anything is "going wrong". In many cases, nothing is going wrong. The appointment is simply taking more time, more adjustment or more skill than usual.

This is your Swan moment. Under the surface, you may be thinking hard, adjusting your plan, reassessing your route, or managing your own frustration. Above the surface, the family needs calm.

You may need to think carefully and adjust your clinical plan. Continue to communicate calmly and honestly, reassuring the family about their pet's comfort while explaining any material change in approach.

Please avoid phrases such as:

"This isn't working."

"I can't get a vein."

"This is difficult."

Instead, try:

> ""Sometimes when pets are very poorly, their circulation can make this part take a little longer. [Pet's name] is peaceful, and I'm going to take my time and choose the kindest way to continue."

Or:

> "I'm going to adjust my approach slightly now. [Pet's name] is settled, and this is still very peaceful for them..."

Do not continue repeated attempts at IV access where it is not going well.

Your clinical judgement is there to protect the patient.

Vets at Home

Consent forms and compliance

The consent form is signed before you arrive at the appointment and you will receive a copy of the signed consent form before attending. Please check that you have received it and keep a copy for your own records.

It's worth having a few paper consent forms in your bag just in case there has been a reason it has not been completed beforehand. This is rare, but a backup plan is always sensible.

Consent forms are important not just operationally, but also for your own record-keeping and inspection readiness. VMD-related medicines inspections may ask to see appropriate records, including consent and controlled drug records.

Vets at Home manages the consent process centrally, but you remain responsible for your own clinical decision-making and professional record keeping.

In practice, for Vets at Home appointments:

- the central team manages booking, payment and consent paperwork before the appointment
- you should check you have received the consent form before attending
- you should still satisfy yourself that the decision remains appropriate when you arrive
- you should keep your own appropriate clinical and medicines records
- you should record any significant departure from standard protocol
- you should record if euthanasia does not proceed and why

Where consent is unclear, where there is family disagreement, or where you have concerns about authority to consent, please pause and use your professional judgement.

If you need operational support, contact Vets at Home.

Vets at Home

Medicines, equipment and controlled drugs

You are responsible for supplying the medications, consumables and equipment required to perform the procedure safely and professionally.

This includes appropriate PPE, stethoscope, consumables and all required medicines.

You are also responsible for:

- safe storage of medicines
- safe transport of medicines
- controlled drug compliance
- accurate drug usage records
- appropriate disposal
- maintaining your own registration and practice requirements
- ensuring you have the necessary licences, inspections and permissions for your operating model

Vets at Home may make negotiated wholesaler or buying group rates available to network vets where possible, but responsibility for medicines remains with you.

Please do not accept an appointment unless you have the required medicines, equipment and legal/regulatory arrangements in place to complete it properly.



Vets at Home

Safety and risk management

Your safety matters.

You are never expected to put yourself at unreasonable risk.

You may decline a visit before accepting it, and you may abort or pause a visit if you feel unsafe.

Risks may include:

- aggressive or distressed animals
- unsafe home environments
- intoxicated, threatening or highly volatile people
- unsafe access or parking
- concerns about handling
- concerns about controlled drugs security
- any situation where you feel the appointment cannot be completed safely

If a risk emerges before or during an appointment, please contact Vets at Home as soon as it is safe and practical to do so.

If there is an animal bite or other injury, please seek appropriate medical attention.

You are expected to use your professional judgement and training at all times.



Vets at Home



Presentation, discretion, well-known clients and gender requests

Families invite us into their homes at a deeply private moment.

Please dress professionally, either in scrubs or smart casual clothing.

Please do not wear branded clothing from another veterinary practice while attending a Vets at Home appointment.

If you use a vehicle carrying branding for your own business, a veterinary practice, or a cremation provider, please park out of direct sight of the client's home where practical.

This is not about hiding who you are. It is about preserving discretion, avoiding confusion and protecting the neutrality of the Vets at Home service.

Very occasionally, a family may request a male or female vet.

Where this happens, we will include that request on the appointment information.

We respect these requests because we are entering someone's home, and the family may know how their pet responds differently to male or female vets.

However, we cannot always guarantee that a vet of the requested gender will be available.

If you see a gender request on an appointment and you are not the requested gender, you are still welcome to offer availability. In some circumstances, helping the pet and family with an available vet will be better than not being able to help them at all.

The central team will manage the conversation with the family where needed.

Vets at Home

Well-known clients and public figures

Very occasionally, you may attend an appointment for a well-known client, public figure or celebrity. They must be treated with exactly the same dignity, privacy and compassion as any other family.

It is never appropriate to ask for photographs, selfies, autographs, social media follows, personal introductions or anything else unrelated to the appointment. It is also not appropriate to mention the appointment publicly, share details with others, or discuss the family outside what is genuinely necessary for the care being provided.

A well-known person experiencing the loss of a much-loved pet is still simply a grieving pet parent in their own home.

They may already be used to people intruding into their private life. Our role is to do the opposite. We are there to protect the privacy of the moment, keep the experience calm, and make sure their pet receives the same care, respect and dignity we would offer to any other family.

If you recognise a client, please continue the appointment naturally and professionally. Do not make their identity part of the conversation unless they choose to raise it themselves.

Vets at Home

Aftercare and crematorium relationships

Aftercare is not an add-on. For many families, what happens after death is just as important as the appointment itself.

Vets at Home works with crematorium partners across the country. Wherever possible, we aim to work with small, family-run and local providers who share our values around dignity, communication and care.

These partnerships matter. They allow us to offer families a complete service, from the first phone call through to collection, cremation and ashes return.

They also allow us to support local businesses who understand the emotional weight of this work.

As a network vet, we ask that you respect these relationships. That means:

- do not undermine crematorium partners in front of families
- do not redirect families to alternative providers unless clinically, practically or ethically necessary
- do not use a Vets at Home appointment to promote your own cremation relationship or business
- do not make separate aftercare arrangements with the family unless this has been agreed
- tell Vets at Home promptly if there is an issue with a crematorium collection, communication or family expectation

If you have a concern about a crematorium partner, communicate honestly and sensitively without speculating or causing unnecessary alarm. Report the concern to Vets at Home immediately so that it can be investigated and the family appropriately supported.

You are not expected to remove or transport the deceased pet.

You are also not expected to wait with the family until the crematorium partner arrives, unless you choose to do so at your own discretion.

The central team will have clarified with the family when they would like their pet collected.

Sometimes collection is arranged straight after the appointment. Sometimes the family asks for more time at home first. Either is completely normal.

In very rare circumstances you may be asked to take away the deceased pet if you have the facilities to do so. This is not our normal protocol but occasionally, if we cannot secure a cremation partner in time, but the procedure still needs to go ahead for the pet's welfare, we may ask. You will know this before attending the appointment, and of course, you can say no. In those circumstances, the appointment may be allocated to a vet who can help with transport.

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Where collection is arranged shortly after the appointment, the crematorium partner may wait discreetly nearby so that the family is not hurried or interrupted. They will not approach the home until Vets at Home confirms that the appointment has finished.

That is why it is important that you message Vets at Home when you leave the appointment. Once we know you have left, we can let the crematorium partner know that they are okay to go in.

This small message matters.

We have had a situation where the vet had left and gone home, while the crematorium partner was still waiting nearby because they assumed the appointment was still in progress.

Just as we respect your time, we ask that you respect theirs.

A simple message is enough:

"I've left [pet's name]'s appointment now."

That allows the central team to coordinate the handover properly.

To the family, this is one joined-up service.

To make that happen, every handover matters.

If you see the cremation partner as you leave, please still let the central team know that you have finished. We want to know you are OK and safely on your way home.

Vets at Home

> *"Animals do not betray. They do not exploit. They give everything and ask only for food and kindness in return."*
>
> — Richard Adams

Appointment allocation and availability

We aim to allocate appointments fairly, transparently and quickly.

Every vet offered an appointment has already met the professional, clinical and regulatory standards required to work with Vets at Home. Allocation then considers timing, proximity, availability and the individual needs of the family and pet.

Families often contact us at moments of urgency or distress. They need clear updates, not long silences while we search for the perfect match.

Specific-time appointments

If a client requests a specific time, the appointment will be published with that exact time.

The first vet to offer availability for that specific time will usually be assigned the appointment.

Flexible or "anytime" appointments

Where a client has flexibility, the appointment may be published as an "anytime" request.

In these cases, there will usually be a 5-minute response window where vets can submit available times.

After that window:

- available times are presented to the client
- the client selects their preferred time
- if more than one vet offers the same time, the first vet to offer that time will usually be assigned the appointment

Where there is a material mileage difference to the customer, we may select the closest vet where that is in the customer's best interests.

If you can offer several times, please include this clearly when responding.

For example:

"Available 9am, 10am or 11am. Could also do anytime between 8am and 12 noon if that helps."

Vets at Home



Saying no

A prompt "no" is genuinely helpful.

It allows us to move quickly, update the family, and avoid unnecessary delays.

Please do not ignore a broadcast if you already know you are unavailable.

A quick decline is part of good network communication.

Difficult-to-fill appointments

If no vet is available within around 20 minutes of an appointment being published, we will update the client and explain that we are actively working to secure a vet but that nobody is confirmed yet.

As new options become available, we will present them to the client on a rolling basis.

We will not wait indefinitely for one perfect match if another good option is available.

The aim is to be fair to vets, clear with families and responsive during emotionally difficult moments.

Vets at Home

Fees, mileage and payments

Vets are paid a fixed fee for each completed appointment. You will be told the applicable fee before accepting an appointment.

Pet Size	Standard Hours Mon–Fri, 8am–5pm Last appointment: 4.30pm	Standard Out of Hours Mon–Fri, 5pm–10pm; any day 6am–8am; all weekends & bank holidays Last appointment: 9.30pm evening / 7.30am morning	Enhanced Overnight 10pm–6am, every day Last appointment: 5.30am
Small animal, up to 10kg	£140 + VAT	£185 + VAT	£210 + VAT
Medium, up to 25kg	£147 + VAT	£192 + VAT	£217 + VAT
Large, up to 50kg	£158 + VAT	£203 + VAT	£228 + VAT
Extra large, 50kg and above	£168 + VAT	£213 + VAT	£238 + VAT
Giant, 80kg and above	£179 + VAT	£224 + VAT	£249 + VAT

Mileage

Every work related mile is paid to and from the appointment.

Mileage is paid at 55p per mile and calculated by Vets at Home using Google Maps. Eligible mileage includes travel from your home or registered operating base to the first Vets at Home appointment, between consecutive Vets at Home appointments, and from the final Vets at Home appointment back to your home or operating base. Personal detours and journeys relating to unrelated work are not reimbursable. Mileage is calculated by Vets at Home, so you do not usually need to submit mileage claims. Where parking, bridge tolls, tunnel tolls or similar journey-specific costs are directly linked to a booked appointment, these may be reimbursable if recorded clearly with receipts or screenshots where possible. Normal vehicle operating costs, fuel, ULEZ, congestion charges, fines, penalties and general motoring costs remain your responsibility unless agreed otherwise.

Statements and payments

Statements are sent automatically every Monday for the preceding week's work. Payments are made automatically into your bank every Tuesday.

Vets at Home

Cancellations and non-proceeding appointments

We understand that cancellations in this work can be emotionally sensitive. Sometimes a family changes their mind, postpones, books elsewhere or no longer wishes to proceed. At other times, the pet sadly passes away before the appointment can take place.

We try to balance fairness to the vet, who has held time and may have turned down other work, with compassion for the family, who may be dealing with the sudden loss of their pet.

Client cancellation more than 24 hours before the appointment

If a client cancels more than 24 hours before the appointment, no cancellation fee is due to the vet.

Client cancellation within 24 hours where the pet has not passed away

If a confirmed booking is cancelled by the client with less than 24 hours' notice, and the cancellation is not because the pet has already passed away, the vet may claim a cancellation fee of £83.33 + VAT (£100).

This recognises that you have held the time, may have turned down other work, and may have prepared for the appointment.

Client cancellation within 24 hours because the pet has passed away

If the pet sadly passes away before the appointment, and this happens within 24 hours of the appointment time, the cancellation fee is discretionary. Our preference in these circumstances is to refund the client in full.

We feel this is usually the kindest and most appropriate outcome for the family, particularly where they have just lost their pet sooner than expected.

However, we also recognise that you may have held the time, turned down other work, planned your day around the appointment, or already prepared for the visit. For that reason, we will be guided by you.

If you choose not to claim the cancellation fee, we will refund the client in full.

If you do wish to claim the cancellation fee, Vets at Home will honour that and pay you £83.33 + VAT (£100), and instead of issuing the customer a full credit, give them a partial credit.

There is no judgement either way. We simply ask that you let us know promptly so we can communicate clearly with the family.

Vets at Home



Where you attend but euthanasia does not proceed

If you attend a confirmed appointment and, on welfare or clinical grounds, it is agreed not to proceed with euthanasia, you will still receive a fixed attendance fee of £83.33 + VAT (£100) plus mileage.

This reflects the time and professional assessment involved, while recognising that medications and consumables have not been used.

Please inform Vets at Home promptly so we can manage the family's refund, follow-up and any aftercare changes.

Vets at Home

Confidentiality, client relationships and trust

Trust is central to the Vets at Home network.

When you attend a Vets at Home appointment, you may be introduced to families, veterinary practices, crematorium partners and other service providers through us.

We ask that those relationships are respected.

Client and patient information shared with you for a Vets at Home appointment must only be used for the purpose of delivering that appointment.

Each party must comply with applicable data protection law. Client information supplied by Vets at Home may only be used to deliver the appointment, complete any required clinical records, and manage any related clinical, regulatory or insurance matter. It must not be used for marketing, unnecessary personal contact or to seek future work. Vets at Home is responsible for the central booking record, while the vet remains responsible for any clinical record they are professionally required to create and retain.

Please do not contact families directly outside what is necessary for the appointment, unless agreed with Vets at Home.

Appropriate direct contact may include:

- letting the family know you are running late
- letting them know you are nearby
- clarifying a practical access issue
- dealing with an immediate clinical or safety concern

General booking communication, payment communication, aftercare arrangements and follow-up should be managed by Vets at Home unless otherwise agreed.

To ensure that every family receives consistent and timely support, follow-up is coordinated by the Vets at Home central team. Any necessary clinical follow-up with the attending vet will be arranged through us.

We also ask that you do not solicit or accept direct work from families, practices, crematoriums or partners introduced to you through Vets at Home, unless you already had a genuine prior relationship with them.

This is not designed to restrict your career.

It is designed to protect the trust and goodwill that makes the network work for everyone.

Vets at Home

Vet wellbeing

This work can be deeply meaningful.

It can also be emotionally heavy.

You may be walking into grief several times a week. You may be supporting families in crisis. You may be managing complex clinical situations in unfamiliar homes, often alone, sometimes out of hours.

Please do not ignore the effect that can have.

If an appointment stays with you, if you feel distressed, if you feel unsafe, if a family interaction has shaken you, or if you are finding the work heavier than expected, please speak up.

You can contact the Vets at Home central team. We may not always have the perfect answer, but we will listen and help you find support where we can.

You can also contact Vetlife, which provides free, confidential and independent support to the veterinary community. Vetlife Helpline is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, on 0303 040 2551.

Asking for support is not weakness.

In this work, it is part of staying safe, steady and able to keep doing the job well.

Speaking up and helping us improve

We want to be the vet's favourite network.

We will only get there by listening.

If there is anything we can do to improve your experience of working with us, we want to know.

We have already made changes to how we work based on feedback from vets in our network.

We expect to keep doing that.

If something is clunky, unclear, frustrating or avoidable, please tell us.

If something worked well, tell us that too.

The best version of Vets at Home will be built with the vets who are doing this work on the ground.

Vets at Home

Leaving the network

We understand that circumstances change.

You may decide that this work no longer fits your life, your clinical interests, your availability or your wellbeing.

If you wish to leave the network, please let us know in writing.

Either you or Vets at Home Ltd may end the working relationship by giving written notice. In serious cases involving safety, professional status, conduct, quality of care, confidentiality or legal compliance, Vets at Home may pause or end access to the network immediately.

We also ask that you tell us promptly if:

- you are no longer permitted to practise
- your RCVS status changes
- your insurance changes
- your medicines or premises arrangements change
- you are no longer able to safely or legally provide this service
- you need to pause availability for a period of time

If you leave, we ask that you continue to respect client confidentiality, partner relationships and any appointments already completed through Vets at Home.

Ending the relationship does not affect payment for appointments properly completed before the relationship ends. Any future appointments already accepted should still be completed unless otherwise agreed with Vets at Home.

Vets at Home

Final thoughts

This work asks a lot of the vets who do it.

It asks for clinical skill, emotional steadiness, patience, good judgement and the ability to walk into a family's grief without making the moment about yourself.

It is not always easy.

But when it is done well, it can change how a family remembers the end of their pet's life.

They may not remember every word. They may not remember every clinical detail.

But they will remember whether they felt rushed.

They will remember whether their pet was treated gently.

They will remember whether they felt judged or supported.

They will remember whether the room felt calm.

They will remember whether the final act of care felt like care.

That is what we are trying to protect at Vets at Home.

Thank you for being part of it.

Visit Website

Call Directly

Vets at Home

For every person who has loved an animal, and carried the weight of that love to the very end.

Vets at Home

Please note, all prices and fees correct at time of publication October 2026