

Heene Road Vets Terms and Conditions of Business

Thank you for entrusting the care of your animal to Heene Road Vets. Our terms and conditions are detailed below. By accepting these conditions you confirm that you are over 18 years of age.

Fees

Fees are payable at the time of treatment and you are liable for any fees incurred during the diagnosis and treatment of your pet, even if your pet is brought to us on your behalf by a third party such as a relative, friend or neighbour. All fees are inclusive of VAT. Fees are determined by the time and expertise spent treating our patient and according to the medicines, materials, consumables and diets used. A detailed fee note is available for every consultation, surgical procedure and transaction with us. Drugs, dressings or diets ordered from Heene Road Vets should be paid for at the time of collection.

Estimate of treatment costs

We will happily provide a written estimate as the probable costs of a course of treatment.

Please bear in mind that any estimate given can only be approximate as often a pet's illness will not follow a conventional course. We will endeavour to contact you on the telephone numbers you have provided to notify you of any significant increase to the original estimate should this arise, but if we are unable to contact you we will treat your pet as is necessary to prevent pain and suffering.

Methods of payment

Accounts are due for settlement at the end of the consultation, the discharge of the pet or upon collection of diet or drugs. You may settle your account using:

- Cash
- Cheque (if accompanied by guarantee card and is within guarantee limits)
- Credit/debit card – Switch, MasterCard, Visa, Delta
- BACS (Bankers Automated Clearing Services)

We will accept, in some cases, relevant vouchers subject to their validity.

Settlement terms

Should the account not be settled within 14 days, a reminder will be sent with an additional accounting fee in respect of the administrative costs incurred. Should it be necessary for additional reminders to be sent, further charges will be added. After due notice to the client, overdue accounts will be referred to our Debt Collecting Agency and further charges will be levied in respect of costs incurred in collecting the debt. Any cheque returned by our Bank as unpaid, any credit card payment not honoured and any cash tendered that is found to be counterfeit will result in the original account being restored to the original sum with further charges being added in respect of bank charges and administrative costs together with interest on the principal sum. You will be kept informed of any increase to your account whilst your pet is an inpatient, in order for you to ensure funds are available for settlement of the account at the time of discharge, or upon completion of treatment. If, for any reason, you are unable to settle your account as specified, you must discuss the matter as soon as possible with the veterinary surgeon in charge of your pet's case.

Pet Health Insurance

Heene Road Vets strongly supports the principle of insuring your pet, including third party cover, against unexpected illness or accidents. Whilst we cannot advocate any specific insurance, any of our staff would be happy to offer general advice and give leaflets on the subject. Please be aware that it is your responsibility to settle our account and then reclaim fees from your insurance company. You will need to complete your part of the insurance form first; the veterinary surgeon will then complete the appropriate part of the insurance form & forward it to the insurance company. For any claims over £100 there is no charge for this service. For claims under £100 there is currently a small administrative fee of £6.60. In certain circumstances, for exceptionally large claims, the practice may allow a direct claim from the insurance company. This must be sanctioned by the vet & only on production of the claim form & payment of the excess. You will be expected to contact the insurance company if payment is delayed & ultimately the responsibility of payment is still yours. Payment may be demanded at any stage after four weeks have elapsed from completion of treatment when pursuing a direct claim.

Complaints and standards

Heene Road Vets is accredited by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons which means that we have to achieve and maintain certain standards and we strive to provide an excellent standard of care for our clients. However, we appreciate that things can sometimes go wrong, and if you have a problem or cause for dissatisfaction, please inform us at the time in order that we may try to rectify the situation without delay. If you feel that the problem cannot be rectified and you would like to make a formal complaint, please notify us in writing within 6 months. Please address the complaint to the Practice Manager who will send you an acknowledgement letter, and an estimation of investigation and response time.

Ownership of records

Case records, including radiographs and laboratory investigations remain the property of Heene Road Vets and will be retained by the company, despite a charge being made to the client for these investigations to be undertaken and the results interpreted. Copies and a printed history will be passed to another veterinary surgeon taking over the case upon request.

Out of hour's policy

Please note that Heene Road Vets **does** offer appointments on a Saturday morning. In the event of an emergency, dial 01903 200187 and if we are outside of our usual opening hours, an answering machine will give you the details of the telephone number for the emergency veterinary service. From 21st December 2009 our out of hours service has been provided by Worthing Emergency Vets, based at Grove Lodge Veterinary Surgery, Upper Brighton Road, Worthing, West Sussex, BN14 9DL. You will be expected to transport your animal to the nominated surgery for treatment. Please note that any treatment given to your pet outside of our normal surgery hours will incur an increased fee.

Cancellation and non-attendance of appointments

Twenty-four hours' notice of cancellation is required. We reserve the right to charge 50% of the normal fee for the work booked where less than 24 hours' notice is given or for non-attendance of the appointment. We would respectfully ask that clients allow plenty of time to book appointments for non-urgent work in order that we may offer you a convenient date and time to suit your individual requirements.

Prescription policy

We can provide Prescription Only Medicines (POM) or we can issue you with a written prescription to take to an alternative vets or pharmacy if you do not wish to purchase the medication from Heene Road Vets. The veterinary surgeons are only allowed to issue prescriptions for animals registered under their care. It is our policy that animals receiving long-term medication should be re-assessed every 3-12 months (or as per veterinary instruction) depending on the animal's condition to ensure continued well-being. There will be a reduced consultation fee, "health check" levied for this, in addition to any medication prescribed after examination.

General

Heene Road Vets will contact you by letter, phone or e-mail to advise you of the progress of inpatients, reminders for any preventative health aspects due for your pet, outstanding accounts, current practice promotions, etc. Please advise us if you have a preference to how we contact you. We will send reminders for vaccinations when they fall due, but cannot take responsibility for lapsed vaccinations. It is the owner's duty to ensure vaccinations are up to date.

Variations in terms of trading

No addition or variation of these conditions will bind the practice unless it is specifically agreed in writing and signed by the Practice Director. No agent or persons employed by, or under contract with, the Practice has the authority to alter or vary these conditions in any way.