

## **NEW YEAR, NEW PUP?**

It is said that people worry about how much weight they will gain between Christmas and New Year when what they should actually worry about is how much weight they will gain between New Year and Christmas! Now the New Year is upon us it is time we had another look at our pets' weights. All too often we fail to notice the insidious increase in our pets' waistline as the years go by.

I recently was called to a local public house to visit Vera, a bulldog, who had resided there, with the publican, for 7 years. Vera had slipped one icy morning and was struggling to get up again and the owner felt unable to lift her. The reason for this soon became clear because Vera had ballooned in size since I had last seen her. We moved Vera onto a stretcher and transported her to the surgery. Further tests showed she had ruptured her cruciate ligament in her stifle (knee). This had become weakened due to her obesity and the slip on the ice had caused it to rupture. Poor Vera had to undergo an operation and many weeks of recuperation before she could walk properly again. She had to be kept in a cage without any walks and after this go for physiotherapy to get the leg moving again. All this was a direct result of her being overweight!

Veras' owner admitted to me that the dog had developed the habit of creeping into the pub to receive tit-bits from the customers and was also rather partial to finishing off any left over meals! No wonder she had become overweight. She is now on a strict diet and is slowly regaining her waistline. However any pet can become overweight. It does not have to live in a pub. Just a few too many calories a day will pile on the pounds. So as we enter the New Year make a resolution on your pets' behalf to make sure it does not end up like poor old Vera! Less food and more exercise is the simple answer but if in doubt do contact your Veterinary Surgeon who can advise you further. Then hopefully your dog will gain a new lease life of life and will be just like a pup again!



Vera!