



# media *release*

Wednesday 13 March 2013

## **AHT'S CRUFTS CYCLING CHALLENGE SMASHES TARGET!**

**A 400 mile cycling challenge to support the Animal Health Trust's (AHT) cancer research raises more than £1,000 for the veterinary charity**

AHT vets, scientists and fundraisers took turns cycling on the AHT stand at Crufts to raise awareness of, and vital funds for, its cancer research.

An ambitious target of 400 miles (100 miles a day) was set. Through hard work, determination and passion, the AHT team managed to cycle over 500 miles in total, smashing the target and raising much-needed donations.

Over the four days, 15 staff members including: Dr Mark Vaudin, Deputy Chief Executive, Dr Andrew Waller, Head of Bacteriology and Sue Murphy, Head of the Small Animal Centre, took turns to pedal for the cause.

The cyclists were supported by numerous volunteers, armed with fundraising buckets and Canine Ambassadors, to help raise awareness about cancer in dogs. The Canine Ambassadors included: Bedlington Terriers, Bull Mastiffs, Cocker Spaniels, German Shepherds, Great Danes, Italian Spinoni, Labrador Retrievers, Leonbergers, Papillons, Red Setters and a Pug called Colin!

AHT experts were also on hand in the Kennel Club's 'Breeding for the Future' zone to offer advice and answer queries from dog owners. Scientists and clinicians from the Kennel Club Genetics and Cancer Centres, along with representatives from the genetic services team and seasonal canine illness (SCI) research group, offered support to dog breeders and owners in making responsible breeding choices and improving the health of their pets.

Dr Mark Vaudin said: "Crufts is a great place to raise awareness of the vital work of the AHT, and this year we had a particular focus on our cancer research. With one in four dogs developing some form of cancer in their lifetime, it's important that we tell people about the disease, and raise funds for our on-going cancer research projects.

“Everyone taking part did an amazing job. It’s a great achievement to have exceeded our initial target by cycling over 500 miles at Crufts. To raise more than £1,000 on top of that is the icing on the cake, and I would like to thank everyone that donated to the cause at Crufts.”

The AHT’s Crufts stand was kitted out with two professional road bikes. One was a Victoria Pendleton series bike, which the gold medallist signed in person when she visited the AHT stand on Friday 8 March to wish the AHT team well on their challenge. The signed Pendleton bike will feature as a raffle prize, at the AHT Dogs Sportive cycling event on Sunday 4 August being held at Lanwades Park, home of the AHT. Raffle tickets will be available from the AHT shortly.

The Dogs Sportive, in association with The British Cycling Club and the Newmarket Cycling Club, will offer three cycling routes of 25, 50 or 80 miles and will boost the appeal to raise £20,000 for the AHT’s cancer research. If you are interested in taking part, please contact [fundraising@aht.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@aht.org.uk) or call 01638 555648 for more details.

**Ends**

**For further information, please contact:**

Katherine Lawson, AHT press office, 01638 751000 ext 1572

Pictured with Victoria Pendleton is Miss Maire O’Brien, Fundraiser for the AHT. Please credit all images to the Animal Health Trust.

**Additional notes:**

- The Animal Health Trust is an independent charity, employing over 200 scientists, vets and support workers. It aims to improve the health and welfare of horses, dogs and cats through research. It also provides specialist referral services and continuous education to vets