

Petplan Equine Vet of the Year

In 2008 Petplan Equine, in association with Horse & Rider magazine, sponsored a new award at the prestigious Animal Health Trust Equestrian Awards, which recognise the outstanding achievements made by horses, riders, owners and trainers throughout the equestrian world.

The Petplan Equine Equestrian Vet of the Year Award reflects both Petplan Equine's involvement with the veterinary profession and the huge contribution made by local vets to the equine community.



Owners and riders all over the UK were invited to send in nominations for the award. A short list of three finalists was then drawn up and the winner selected by an independent panel consisting of Jo Whittaker, brand manager for Petplan Equine; Alison Bridge, editor-in-chief of Horse & Rider magazine; David Stickels, head of fundraising for the AHT, and David Dugdale, president of the British Equine Veterinary Association (BEVA).

The inaugural winner of the award was Andrew Dobson of The Barn Equine and Large Animal Practice in Great Wakering, Essex. He was nominated by a number of his grateful clients and their glowing testimonials impressed the judges enough to give him the edge over his closest rivals for this coveted title.

"This award is intended to recognise the amazing hard work and commitment of people within the equine veterinary profession and those who provide outstanding service to horse owners," explained Jo Whittaker. "We received some very strong nominations and all three finalists are clearly exceptional vets. Andrew Dobson was nominated by a number of his clients and they all stressed his professionalism and devotion to the horses in his care and how he regularly goes beyond the call of duty in making sure that both horses and owners are given the very best treatment."

Suzy Dorey was among the clients to nominate Andrew: "When I came across Andy I realised that he was an old fashioned type of vet and had the time and patience to deal with the horses and just as importantly the clients. I cannot recommend Andy highly enough and would like to see him given recognition of some sort for being a dependable, down-to-earth vet."

The 37 year old qualified in 1999 and for the last four and a half years has run his own practice. His involvement with horses evolved from a desire to work with large animals and the outdoor life it would bring.

Andrew said: "I am absolutely stunned. I'm so honoured and amazed to have received the Petplan Equine Vet of the Year award. I really enjoy what I do and would like to thank all my clients, Petplan Equine, the Animal Health Trust and Horse & Rider for their support."

Last year marked the 20th anniversary of the Animal Health Trust Equestrian Awards and Petplan Equine. Since 1994 when the Petplan Charitable Trust was founded it has raised over £5 million, almost £500,000 of which has been donated to the AHT to fund research and development.