



# Evaluation of Vet Sustain: Executive Summary

By Human Behaviour Change for Life (HBCL), March 2025

This impact assessment report evaluates the effectiveness of Vet Sustain in advancing sustainability within the veterinary profession. It consists of three parts: developing a framework to assess Vet Sustain's impact; conducting research through a survey and interviews to gather data, then analysing the results using the framework; and interpreting the findings through various models and theories to gain deeper insights and explore strategies for enhancing Vet Sustain's impact.

The survey (251 responses) comprised open-ended and closed questions, across five sections: Demographics and context; Understanding and awareness; Actions and behaviour; Outcomes and impact; and Experience and satisfaction. Twelve interviews were conducted to explore key emerging themes in greater detail, with three participants selected from each of the following four categories: corporate partners, veterinary institutes and/or associations, course participants, and working group members.

## Key Findings

### 1. Increased knowledge and confidence

- 82% of survey participants reported increased confidence in discussing sustainability after engaging with Vet Sustain.
- 65% of respondents indicated a significant or moderate increase in awareness of sustainability challenges.

### 2. Positive behavioural and professional change

- Engagement with Vet Sustain leads to direct changes in veterinary practices, including improved waste reduction, carbon footprint tracking, and better use of medicines for parasite control.
- Vet Sustain's carbon literacy training is particularly influential, equipping professionals with practical tools and increasing their confidence in implementing sustainable practices.
- 55% of participants said that their involvement with Vet Sustain prompted them to take more action for the environment, animal welfare, or social wellbeing.
- 74% of participants agree that Vet Sustain will have a lasting positive impact on their work or approach to sustainability.

### 3. Impact on personal and professional networks

- Interviewees highlighted how Vet Sustain created a supportive professional community, encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing.
- The ripple effect extended to influencing discussions and fostering broader engagement with sustainability across multiple routes for change.

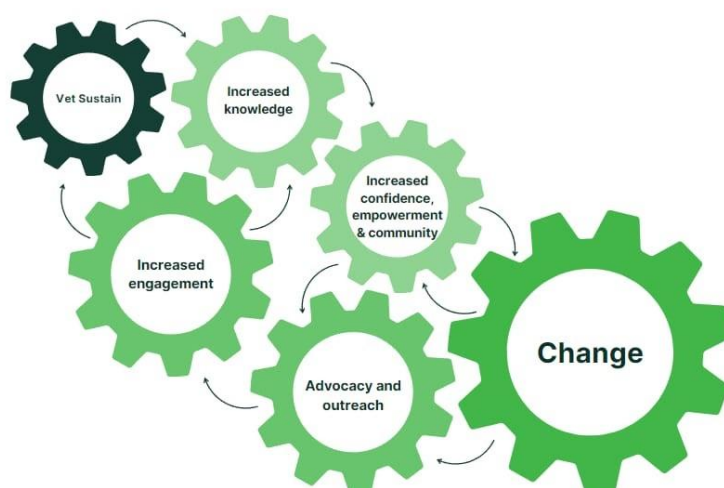
### 4. Barriers and challenges

- Time constraints, financial considerations, and lack of leadership support were identified as key barriers to implementing sustainable practices.
- Although many people identify a need to broaden Vet Sustain's reach beyond those already engaged in sustainability, the role of the organisation in up-skilling engaged professionals is significant and reflected in the diagram below.



## 5. Opportunities

- Strengthening partnerships with veterinary schools and professional associations will provide further routes to embedding sustainability.
- Providing more practical incentives, such as cost-saving benefits, and better understanding the engagement level of the audience could drive broader engagement.



The diagram illustrates how Vet Sustain drives impact. By providing resources, courses, and engagement opportunities, Vet Sustain increases knowledge, which boosts confidence, empowerment, and a sense of community. Increased confidence can also come directly from Vet Sustain if knowledge is already present. This confidence fuels advocacy and outreach, driving further engagement and creating a positive feedback loop between confidence and change. New recruits from advocacy may engage with Vet Sustain directly or gain knowledge through outreach. The cogs symbolize how Vet Sustain (small cog) drives broader change (large cog). The model aligns with Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where meeting psychological, safety, and social needs (through confidence and belonging) creates the foundation for action and change.

The findings were considered in terms of whether the vision, mission, goals, and objectives were met, and all were met, or partially met according to key performance indicators drafted. Linking the strategic approaches with findings indicated that the approaches are working to deliver change. Considering the data and analysis through the lens of behavioural models (including Stages of Change Model and COM-B), and impact assessment models (including APEASE, and SWOT analysis), further insights were provided especially regarding potential considerations for strategic approaches to increasing the impact of the organisation.

## Conclusion

Vet Sustain has become established as a key driver of sustainability within the veterinary sector, empowering professionals with the tools and confidence to integrate sustainable practices into their work. The organization has fostered a growing community of engaged professionals. While challenges remain in achieving wider systemic influence, the organization's strategic approach, coupled with targeted outreach and stakeholder collaboration, positions it well for long-term impact and growth. By addressing existing barriers, refining its strategic approach, and expanding its reach, Vet Sustain can further strengthen its role as a leader in sustainability within the veterinary profession.

