AVS Congress 2018

By: Lizzie Lamb, Bristol and AVS Congress Committee Member

On the weekend of the 3rd-4th February 2018 nearly 300 veterinary students from across the UK gathered in Bristol for AVS congress. It took over 18 months to prepare for, and a committee of 22 students to organise the various aspects of the congress; from booking lecturers, organising the bar crawl, ordering food, arranging hosting and running the social media. I think I can speak on behalf of the rest of the organising committee that we had never appreciated how much work goes into a weekend like this before we got involved ourselves.

There were 4 streams covering small animal, equine, farm and exotics; all with preclinical and clinical lectures and practicals across the weekend. Highlights included equine tendon scanning, exotic animal handling, abattoir tour, practice using laparoscopic equipment, a debate on current hot topics in the farm industry and a CPR practical among others.

We also had keynote speeches from TV vet Steve Leonard and recent Bristol graduate Holly Ravenhall. Both talks were informative and inspirational, and we enjoyed hearing funny anecdotes from exotic and mixed practice veterinary work.

Friday evening saw all of the delegates travelling into central Bristol for a bar crawl up Park Street, made even better by the large bar tab provided by one of the sponsors. This was a great way to start to the weekend and we hope everyone enjoyed it as much as we did stewarding.

Despite the lack of sleep over the weekend, everyone was in high spirits at the AVS ball on Saturday evening. With this being my role on the committee I was so pleased that the evening was a success; with a three-course dinner, a performance from Bristol University Big Band “The Hornstars”, AVS president handover (congratulations to Dave) and some classic cheesy music to end the evening.

Although the weekend was not without its hiccups (the food order being cancelled at lunchtime Friday resulting in a mass exodus of committee members heading to Costco to buy 250 pizzas and breakfast for all of the delegates being a prime example); the hard work of all involved was evident as congress was pulled off without major event.

Overall, Congress 2018 was a huge success which is down to the hard work of AVS central committee, Bristol AVS congress organising committee, all of the speakers from the weekend and the enthusiasm of all of the delegates who travelled to Bristol. It was a really great event to have been a part of and has definitely been one of my highlights of my final year as a vet student.