

# National Sheep Association

## Northern Region Annual Members Meeting



### MINUTES OF THE NSA NORTHERN REGION ANNUAL MEMBERS MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 1<sup>st</sup> FEBRUARY 2024, 7.00PM, Darlington Livestock Mart, DL2 2YH.

**Present:** Ted Ogden, Graham Wilkinson, Viv Lewis, Thomas Carrick, Eddie Eastham, Alan Alderson, Carl Stephenson, John Stephenson, Chris Adamson, Rebecca Wilson, Fiona Lovatt, Jenny Oglesby, Richard Oglesby, David Raine, Emily Symonds, Karl Pendlebury, George Fell, John Reed, Kenn Lumley, Dean Smile, Thomas Vickers, Geroge Donlan, Robert Cloughton, Heather Stoney-Grayshon, Kelly Armitage, Martin Brown, Charles Marwood, Deborah Whitcher, Phil Stocker,

Chair Viv Lewis welcomed everyone to the meeting.

- 1. Apologies for absence:** William Watson, John Geldard, Pam Pollock, Beth Phalp, Daniel Taylforth, Adam Watson, Greg Dalton
- 2. To confirm the minutes of the last ARMM on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023**  
The minutes had been available to view on the NSA website. Proposed as a true and correct record by Graham Wilkinson, seconded by Carl Stephenson. Signed by Chair, Viv Lewis.
- 3. To consider matters arising from the above minutes – None noted**
- 4. Chairman's Report – Viv Lewis**

In the first place I'd like to say thank you for attending tonight. It's great to see you here. 2023 was our North Sheep year and it did not disappoint. There were visitors from all over the country. It was not only a showcase for the industry, but it was also a platform for much interesting discussion, debate and meeting old friends.

For many, one of the highlights of the day was the farm tour, which gave visitors the opportunity to view the Woodman's Bradford House Farm. This traditional arable and livestock farm included fields with Mule, Texels and Blackface ewes and lambs. Visitors got the opportunity to learn how the farm is managed in conjunction with Chesters their hill farm. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the Woodman family once again for hosting us and being so accommodating in the run up to the event and on the day. I'd also like to thank the North Sheep volunteers, without their time and dedication North Sheep would not happen. This is a great example of sheep farmers getting together to give back to their industry.

But last year was not only North Sheep. Northern Region members had the opportunity to attend a number of other events organised by Chris, our capable Regional Manager. He organised a really interesting sheep farm diversification meeting at Junction 36 as our contribution to Love Lamb week. We looked at direct selling whether through box schemes, farm shops, farmers markets and online retailing. The take home message for me was that consumers want something convenient that is quick to prepare and easy to cook - lamb fits the bill.

John Geldart told us about how he built up his farm shop into a really successful enterprise, Rebecca Wilson gave us a high energy talk about how to use social media to your advantage and the father and daughter combo of Kevin Holiday and Vicky Slater entertained us with tales of school visits to their farm and their new venture into holiday pods.

We met Janet Hughes, Programme Director of Defra's Future Farming Programme at North Sheep and Westmorland show to discuss the Sustainable Farming Incentive. Some of our members have taken part in various pilots and told her very clearly where it works and more importantly doesn't work on their farms. I hope she got the message, but I'm not convinced.

In my view the Northern Region is in good fettle. Along with the stalwart members of the committee with whom we can't do without, two new younger members have joined us, bringing energy and new ideas which are very welcome. Rebecca Wilson who I mentioned a minute or so ago, is keen for us to reach out and team up with agricultural colleges. She is exploring ideas of how to do this thereby raising NSA's profile with the next generation of shepherds and supporting them at the same time. We also want to reach out to young people who don't have an academic bent and are unlikely to be seen at college but are skilled shepherds. We want to help them progress in sheep farming.

Alongside Rebecca, Richard Oglesby is our other new committee member. He is the Northern Region's representative for the Next Generation Ambassador Programme. It will be good to hear how he gets on. Richard is also part of the Breed for CH4nge project, looking at breeding sheep with a low carbon footprint by monitoring efficiencies and methane output and we look forward to hearing how he, and his flock get on. So, while the region is doing well, I wish I could say the same about the Government's agricultural transition. In my view we've had seven years of botched management. I'm not a policy maker, but it seems to me:

1. What you don't do is withdraw BPS until a functioning new scheme is up and running.
2. What you don't do is offer an ELM package that financially disadvantages those who have been in Stewardship for decades and that includes many of our members who farm in the uplands. They have been shortchanged so far.
3. What you don't do is allow multi nationals to continue with unfair trading practices

There is much more I could say about this, but I will stop now. To end I want to say thank you for having me and I have thoroughly enjoyed my 2 year stint as Chair and I leave you in the capable hands of Ted Ogden, your new Chairman.

## **5. To view the accounts for 2023**

### **NSA Northern Region Treasurers Report for Financial Year to 31st December 2023.**

A copy of the accounts was circulated at the meeting and before. Being a North Sheep year there was a healthy income from the event. This year's operating cost was £31,478.04 with a gross profit of £147,053.71 leaving an after-tax profit of £36,729.39. Retaining earnings of £50,733.86 are in the bank leaving a total capital and reserves for the Northern Region of £87,049.25. Proposed as a true and correct record by Carl Stephenson, seconded by John Reed. Signed by Treasurer, Ted Ogden.

## **6. Election/Re-approval of Officers:**

- a. **Chair** – Ted Ogden, proposed by Martin Brown, seconded by Thomas Carrick

**Ted Ogden took over Chairing the meeting from Viv Lewis.**

- b. **Vice Chair** – Graham Wilkinson, proposed by John Reed, seconded by Viv Lewis
- c. **Treasurer** – Viv Lewis, proposed by Rebecca Wilson, second by Alan Alderson
- d. **Representative to NSA English Committee** – Thomas Carrick, and Viv Lewis re-approve Rebecca Wilson proposed by C Stephenson, seconded by Graham Wilkinson

**7. TI Allinson Award**

Was awarded to John Stephenson presented by Alan Alderson

**8. Geoff Lawn Memorial Award**

Was awarded to Rob Cloughton presented by Viv Lewis

**9. Thanks To Heather Stoney-Grayshon**

John Reed & Thomas Carrick said a few words thanking Heather for her time as regional manager and Event organiser. C Adamson present Heather with a gift from the region.

**10. Any Other Business**

Chris Adamson reminded the room that "What makes a successful lambing talks" will take places at Skipton on 6<sup>th</sup> Feb and Cockermouth on the 19<sup>th</sup> Feb.

Ted Ogden read out a letter from the Barclays bank stating that a Business Debit Card form had to be completed for C Adamson (Regional Manager) to have a debit card for the region. He asked for a show of hands for and against this approval. For 32, against 0. The form was then signed by signotratires and posted to Barclays.

The meeting was followed by a presentation from Phil Stocker CEO of NSA on the on-going work being undertaken by NSA and George Fell Beef & Lamb sector council at AHDB.

Meeting closed 09.45pm

Signed: ..... (Chair)

Print: .....

Date: .....