



**MINUTES OF NSA CYMRU WALES REGION ANNUAL REGIONAL MEMBERS  
MEETING AT BUILTH WELLS 4<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2025**

**Chair- Caryl Hughes**

**Present in room and via Teams.**

John Yeomans

Sue Williams

Paul Wozencraft

Emily Jones

Linda Davies

Sean Jefferys

Margaret Dalton

John Richards

Llew Thomas

Jane Smith

John Lloyd

Ian Coldrick

Gaina Morgan

David Pittendreigh

Gwynne Davies

Bleddyn Davies

Kevin Parry

**In Attendance:** Helen Roberts, Phil Stocker and Andrea Calvesbert

**1. Apologies** Mary Gittins, Elain Gwilym, Erina Rogers, Tim Ward, Gwilym Pugh, Penny Chantler, Lesley Wickham, James Draper, Ernie Richards, Will & Sam Sawday

**2. To Confirm the Minutes of last AGM held 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024.** - The minutes were confirmed by all those present.

**3. To consider matters arising from the above.** - None

**4. Chairman's Report** Ladies and gentlemen fellow NSA members and the esteemed guests it has been my honour to stand as regional chair for 2024, a role that I didn't think I was qualified for but I would like to thank you all for allowing me the opportunity to do this and for your support throughout the year. NSA Cymru continue to represent the views of farmers and especially sheep farmers across Wales on various committees, groups and at government. This is important part of the role NSA plays, and I can assure you that everywhere we go we try and get our voices represented and heard. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the individuals on this committee that take the time to represent the region on these committees and at events, whether that be in the winter fair, Royal Welsh in roundtable meetings or in associated events that we've been invited to. I look forward to hearing later from our chief veterinary officer on developments on the bluetongue virus and his thoughts on the Gwaredu scab programme and recent developments in dip disposal. Our work with the Wales Vet Centre has developed further with the regions investment and I urge you all again to get involved in the programme. We had a great insight into the testing being done and available at our last regional meeting.

As have mentioned the region has had a very busy year attending loads of events and I would like to extend a thanks to Farming Connect for allowing us to join with them on some of the events and also a thanks to the hosts for allowing NSA to promote ourselves at their venues.

Conversations have been held about the building here at Showground and hopefully keep you updated on further developments as they move along but as we have said in our statement for Royal Welsh 2025 things will be the same as they have been.

Since our last meeting Helen and I joined up with the some of the Wales delegates of the Next Generation group down in the Senedd in Cardiff which was an opportunity to promote NSA to the to the members of the Senedd and to allow albeit brief conversations with some key members of the Senedd that do fight the corner for Agriculture and rural issues in the Senedd and we look forward to being able to develop some of those relationships further in the future.

We have furthered our links with Wales Young Farmers by supporting them in some competitions and events and this is something I think we need to develop on as a region in the future to build momentum on the younger generation of Welsh sheep farmers.

Looking forward we obviously have the sheep event in May that I am sure you are all looking forward to it and huge thanks must go to our hosts and Helen for putting everything together for what is set to be a fantastic event again this year.

A huge thank you again to all the individuals that represent NSA Cymru throughout the year and a huge thank you to Helen for all our hard work.

Lastly, a thank you to you the members of the region who take the time to attend our meetings and support the region throughout the year. Without you we would not be able to share grass root and honest opinions on behalf of the membership.

**5. To review the accounts for 2024.** The accounts showed a large loss this year which is due to the funding of the Enferplex testing as agreed in the year. The accounts show our continued support to sponsor the Royal Welsh and Winter Fair. The accounts always show a loss in the year we do not run an event. We are looking at a Next Generation reunion later this year.



NSA Cymru Accounts  
Dec 2024.xlsx



Cymru Balance Sheet  
for ARMM 2024.xlsx

## **6. To appoint Officers for the coming year.**

It was proposed to leave all officers in place for another year.

- a) Chair – Caryl Hughes
  
- b) Vice Chair – John Yeomans
  
- c) Treasurer - Helen Roberts was proposed by those present with Tim Ward proposed as Vice Treasurer.
  
- d) Secretary/Regional manager - Helen Roberts was proposed by those present.
  
- e) Committee Names of the committee were read out.

f) To confirm nominations to NSA Board for 2025.  
Nominations for Board where Paul Wozencraft, Caryl Hughes and Kate Hovers.  
Policy & Technical committee John Lloyd  
F& GP committee Margaret Dalton together with John Yeomans  
These nominations were accepted by those present.

**7. Secretary's Remuneration.** It had been agreed at a previous committee meeting that the annual amount would increase to £8,500 per year plus expenses and travel at 45ppm.

**8. To consider any other business** A regional newsletter had been produced to promote the meeting via email and sponsored by Shearwell.

The Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 11.55 and thanked those for attending.

The sheep industry should brace against very different times, the NSA Wales/Cymru Conference heard at its annual meeting. The call came from a range of perspectives, the NSA CEO, the Welsh Government Chief Veterinary Officer and Hybu Cig Cymru/Meat Promotion Wales.

NSA Chief Executive, Phil Stocker, told sheep producers and other professionals gathered at the Royal Welsh Showground that record lamb prices prevailed, but were coupled with higher costs and uncertainty over support. He outlined the political challenges, explaining that agriculture had previously been able to arrest or minimize political change through effective lobbying.

But he warned: "All the signs are now that this is very, very different. Although there is a lot we can do to try and make sure, we can make our case clearly, I think the general direction is set.

"Food production is wanted but is going to be expected to stand on its own two feet and will be rewarded for providing things that cannot be recouped through the marketplace, such as landscape, wildlife, nature, carbon sequestration and those sorts of things.

"Food production as an enterprise is going to be without the cushions that it has relied on for many, many decades. We must ramp up what we are doing, we are going to have to think about where we can reduce the costs and where we can optimize our income.

"We have got to reduce waste; we have got to try and use our genetics by using efficient and effective sheep. We need to make sure we get the genetics right, so they grow to an optimum level and probably first and foremost we need to make sure the health of those sheep is optimized."

Mr Stocker also outlined changes made at NSA head office. He is taking steps to spread responsibility, so that the organization is not overly dependent on the chief executive. Newly developed premises will better enable teamwork.

Dr Richard Irvine, Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales, outlined to the meeting that the Wales Animal Health and Welfare Framework sets the ambition for Wales to have healthy, productive, animals which have a good quality of life, supporting a thriving rural economy and environment. A core principle of the Framework is 'Prevention is better than cure.'

He said the sheep industry in Wales is facing both opportunities and challenges, not least busy times to keep disease out of flocks and tackle diseases when they occur. He outlined a number of issues relating to sheep health and welfare, productivity and sustainability. These included sheep scab and sheep dip disposal, as well as the threat from other diseases present in different parts of the world. Closer to home this included Bluetongue, a midge-borne disease - meaning it is not transmitted directly from animal to animal.

Dr Irvine stressed: “Bluetongue is a clear and present threat to the health and welfare of our sheep and cattle, but it does not pose a risk to public health, nor to food safety. It is crucial that all keepers maintain high levels of biosecurity and vigilance to keep disease out and report any suspicion of notifiable disease to APHA immediately”.

The Welsh Government is working in partnership with industry and stakeholders to ensure Wales has exemplar standards of animal health and welfare.

John Richards Hybu Cig Cymru/Meat Promotion Wales felt that the current preoccupation with the US and tariffs was not a threat to Welsh lamb. China could potentially pose problems on world markets as such a big net importer of protein. Addressing the topic, securing a prosperous future for the sheep sector in Wales, he explained the importance of the very strong demand from the EU market taking 95% of sheep meat exports.

And he stressed: “That will continue to be there. We have got very loyal and very longstanding relationships with those markets. They want that product, they know our product, they respect our product and so it’s a good market.”

The conference was also an opportunity to meet the new Chief Executive of Hybu Cig Cymru – Meat Promotion Wales (HCC). José Peralta has more than 25 years in the UK meat industry at managing director level. His most recent role was as Chief Operating Officer of Puffin Produce. He led the development of the Pembrokeshire Creamery milk bottling plant.

Wales Cymru Chair, Caryl Hughes, said NSA is working with the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society with regard to the development of a new sheep building on the showground. She confirmed it will be ‘business as usual’ for 2025.

And she added that NSA Cymru would continue to represent farmers and especially sheep farmers across Wales on various committees, groups and at government level. Joining Wales delegates of the Next Generation group at the Senedd had been a great opportunity. It had also facilitated brief conversations with key members of the Senedd, relationships that would be further developed. Caryl added that support for Wales Young Farmers was also important, so building future support.