



CYMRUWALES NEWSLETTER

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Welsh Sheep 2025
– Event Summary

Next Generation
reunion

FW Awards: 2025 Lifetime
Achievement Award

Visionary hosts draw crowds at NSA Welsh Sheep

A resounding success and much needed boost for morale summed up NSA Welsh Sheep Event 2025, held on the outskirts of Hay on Wye yesterday (Wednesday 21st May). Host farm, Tregoyd farm, is home to High Country Romneys and farmed by Penny Chantler with her sons, Sam and Will Sawday.

The event drew visitors from across the UK as well as several international visitors and provided inspiration for thousands of sheep farmers. They learned a little, did business, relished the latest innovations and couldn't fail to be impressed by the business model on display by High Country Romneys during the popular farm tour. It was also a much needed opportunity for farmers to get together in the early Summer sunshine, with the site refreshed after a night's rain.

NSA Cymru / Wales Chair Caryl Hughes paid tribute to the vision of landowner, Huw Evans-Bevan. She said he was determined to futureproof the Tregoyd Estate and make it ready to meet the demands of the 21st century. The 5,000 acre (2025ha) estate comprises woodland, moorland and farmland, with a mix of shooting, farming and conservation, as well as holiday accommodation.



Caryl summed up the event: **“It’s been a successful, innovative, informative and all round fantastic day. We had some great speakers and listening to the hosts discuss their future plans has really given us a boost, as well as hope for the future of our industry**

“There were great entries in the Next Generation Shepherd of the Year Competition and it’s been great to see so many young schoolchildren here as well as students. My take home message is that even though there is a lot of uncertainty in our industry, after a day like today I feel there is still a lot of positivity and an interesting future ahead.”



Children from local schools also attended the event, in a joint initiative with Powys County Council and Castell Howell Foods. The children unanimously praised the event as the ‘best school trip ever’ as they enjoyed all attractions and took part in cookery of delicious Welsh lamb.

Tregoyd Estate owner Huw Evans-Bevan welcomed visitors to the spectacular setting, with the backdrop of Hay Bluff an example of the stunning beauty of rural Wales, sculpted and preserved by the enduring resilience, innovation and excellence of Welsh farmers.

Huw praised High Country Romneys saying: “Penny, Sam and Will have brought vision, energy and fresh thinking to the heart of Tregoyd.

“Together they have developed an intellectual approach to sheep farming that is sustainable, environmentally respectful, yet practical. They have worked tirelessly on the development of their High Country Romney flock.

“They are flourishing as a breed and rightly so, bred for resilience, maternal ability and efficiency off grass, the breed is an ideal match for the diverse landscapes of the UK and especially the conditions we know so well here in Wales. It is exactly the kind of forward thinking we want to support here at Tregoyd.

“This approach is a progressive trend in the industry, one that values genetics and data along with a regenerative grazing system and the essential grit and hard graft farming requires.”

The host farmers were delighted with the ‘superb’ day. Will Sawday said they had loved having so many people at the farm, to celebrate the best of the sheep industry. The whole process had also helped to raise the profile of High Country Romneys and had been well worth the time and effort.



A final highlight of the event was the presentation of the **NSA Cymru / Wales Next Generation Shepherd** competition, sponsored by the Texel Sheep Society. Taking first place was Evan Turner who also took the award for the highest placed competitor aged under 21. Evan will now go on alongside second place competitor Mared Edwards to represent Wales in the national final of the competition that takes place next year at NSA Sheep Event 2026.

Welsh NSA Next Generation Young Shepherd of the Year Competition:



Sponsored by:



Competition results:

Best Trade Stand Competition
 Sheep Breed Society
 1st Texel
 2nd Suffolk
 3rd Lleyn and Badger Face

Indoor Trade Stands
 1st British Wool
 2nd NTS
 3rd Farming Connect

Outdoor Trade Stands
 1st Wynnstay
 2nd SJ Conveyors
 3rd J & C Griffiths

Wool On The Hoof
 1st Texel
 2nd Rough Fell
 3rd North Country Cheviots



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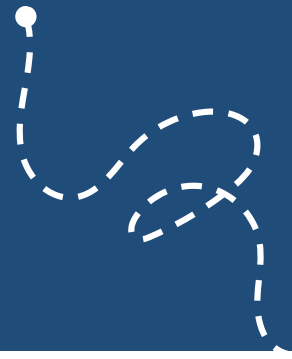
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NSA Cymru Alumni Visit Report



The Welsh NSA Alumni Ambassadors recently embarked on a two-day visit full of insight, innovation, and inspiration across South and Mid Wales.

Kepak, Merthyr Tydfil

The day began early for some of the cohort, travelling down to Merthyr Tydfil where we were warmly welcomed by Dr Julie Finch, Agriculture Governance and Compliance Manager at Kepak.

Kepak is a major player in the red meat industry, evolving from its humble Irish roots into a UK-wide business with a strong commitment to sustainability, animal welfare, and innovation. Dr Finch and her team gave us a fascinating insight into the company's development, governance, and day-to-day operations. Our comprehensive tour of the flagship Merthyr site offered a rare behind-the-scenes look at the entire production process – from livestock intake and slaughter through to butchery, packaging, and labelling of lamb and beef products.

The honesty and openness of the tour were greatly appreciated, providing opportunities for plenty of questions and discussion about how the company balances efficiency, animal welfare, and food safety.

Several Kepak staff members also delivered insightful presentations on their specific areas of expertise, including sustainability, livestock procurement, animal health and welfare, food safety controls, traceability, customer requirements, and the use of EID/passports within the supply chain. The visit was highly recommended by all the cohort members as a must-see for anyone wishing to better understand the entire red meat supply chain – from farm to finished product. Our sincere thanks go to Dr Julie Finch and the entire Kepak team for their generosity, time, and hospitality.



Welsh Veterinary Centre, Aberystwyth

Our afternoon took us west to Aberystwyth, where we visited the Welsh Veterinary Centre. We were greeted by Dr Phil Thomas, who provided a fascinating overview of the centre's history, purpose, and its critical role in supporting animal health and disease surveillance across Wales.

During the visit, we learned about the badger collection and testing project, and were given the opportunity to observe the post-mortem facilities. One particularly rewarding moment was seeing where last year's NSA Cymru funding had been used – the Enferplex testing kits for iceberg diseases. Staff demonstrated how this technology enables multiple disease tests to be run simultaneously, improving efficiency and accuracy.

The cohort found it particularly encouraging to see how our contributions were being actively used to support research that benefits farmers and the wider industry. It was an afternoon of meaningful engagement, practical learning, and genuine pride in the progress being made at the centre.

That evening, the group came together for dinner, joined by guest speaker Prys Morgan. Prys delivered a candid and inspiring talk on his career journey, his role within Kepak, and his honest reflections on the future of the red meat and agricultural sectors in Wales. His insights prompted lively discussion and left us all with much to think about – diolch yn fawr, Prys, for sharing your time and experience with us.

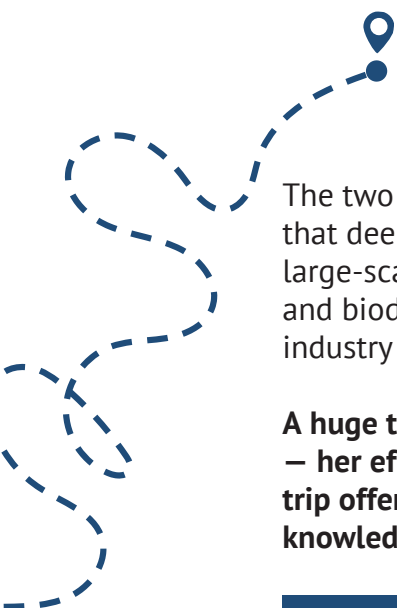
AberInnovation & IBERS, Aberystwyth University

Friday morning began with a short trip to Gogerddan, part of Aberystwyth University's research estate, where we visited the state-of-the-art AberInnovation facility. CEO Rhian Hayward led us on an engaging tour, explaining how AberInnovation provides a collaborative environment for start-ups, researchers, and entrepreneurs to develop ideas that could transform the agri-food and biotech sectors.

We were introduced to one of their exciting current projects, LanoTech, founded by Clodagh Weingart, which focuses on using lanolin extracted from wool as an alternative protein source in animal feed, potentially reducing the industry's reliance on soya. This project sparked great interest among the cohort, many of whom had previously seen lanolin as a by-product during ambassador visits to British Wool in Bradford. Early trials using lanolin in chicken feed are already showing promising results, pointing to a sustainable new use for an underutilised resource.

Next, we were joined by Mark Needham, who explained how the IBERS (Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences) facilities make use of the university's diverse range of landscapes to test plants under various environmental conditions. Dr Hannah Vallin then shared details of her innovative research using DNA sequencing of sheep faeces to determine the plant species animals are grazing on. Her work highlighted how understanding grazing behaviour can inform biodiversity management and sustainable land use.

Dr Vallin also discussed her long-term study on the Soay Sheep of St Kilda, linking this research to potential applications for conservation and upland farming in Wales. Our final stop was the IBERS Plant Research Centre, where we saw cutting-edge technology being used to monitor and manage crop health. One particularly impressive demonstration showed how advanced imaging and mapping systems had detected potato blight over a week before it became visible to the naked eye, enabling early intervention and preventing major losses. We also explored the site's camera and drone facilities, which demonstrated how precision agriculture is transforming crop management and improving efficiency.



The two days were filled with learning, collaboration, and forward-thinking ideas that deepened our understanding of the Welsh and UK agricultural sectors. From large-scale meat processing and animal health research to agri-tech innovation and biodiversity science, the visits showcased the strength and diversity of the industry today.

A huge thank you goes to Helen for her outstanding organisation and coordination – her efforts made it possible for us to visit such varied and impactful sites. The trip offered invaluable opportunities to reconnect as a cohort, exchange knowledge, and explore the future of sustainable agriculture together.

Diolch yn fawr iawn i Helen am ei gwaith trefnu a chydlynu rhagorol – gwnaeth ei hymdrechion gwneue hi'n bosib i ni ymweld â safleoedd amrywiol ac effeithiol. Cynigiodd y daith gyfleoedd amhrisiadwy i ailgysylltu fel carfan, cyfnewid gwybodaeth ac archwilio dyfodol amaethyddiaeth gynaliadwy gyda'n gilydd.

NSA stalwart celebrated at prestigious industry awards

Well-known and respected former NSA Chair, Margaret Dalton was honoured prestigious Farmers Weekly Awards as she was presented with a much-deserved Lifetime Achievement Award.

Margaret has farmed at Gelligarneddau near Lampeter in West Wales for the more than 60 years. She has been a fantastic advocate for agriculture and a role model for young people. As part of NSA Cymru / Wales Margaret has taken on many roles and has been a leading voice on many farming policy issues.

Helen Roberts, NSA Cymru / Wales Development Officer was delighted to hear that Margaret had received the award. Helen says:

“Margaret is so deserving of this award not just through her farming activities but the help she gives to the wider community and especially NSA, she has been the face that has met and greeted exhibitors to many NSA Welsh Sheep events and played a pivotal role in making these events successful for the region. Well done Margaret from all at NSA Cymru.”

All at NSA congratulate Margaret on this outstanding achievement.





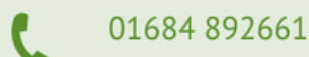
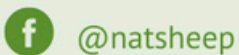
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Ymweliadau Fferm gyda Cyswllt Ffermio *Farm Visits with Farming Connect*



Roedd NSA Cymru yn falch o gymryd rhan mewn cyfres o ymweliadau fferm a gynhaliwyd gan Farming Connect, gyda'r digwyddiad olaf yn cael ei gynnal gan Cadeirydd NSA Cymru, Caryl Hughes. Dysgodd y mynychwyr am brofiad Caryl o dreialu bolysau am y tro cyntaf, a sut y gwnaeth hyn wella perfformiad ei ŵyn Cymreig. Roedd pob ymweliad wedi'i fynychu'n dda ac yn cynnig cyfle gwych i gysylltu â chyn-aelodau ag aelodau newydd.

NSA Cymru was pleased to take part in a series of farm visits hosted by Farming Connect, with the final event held at the home of NSA Cymru Chair, Caryl Hughes. Attendees learned about Caryl's experience trialing boluses for the first time and how this improved the performance of her Welsh lambs. Each visit was well attended and provided a great opportunity to connect with both longstanding and new members.



Y Ffair Aeaf

Dewch i'n gweld ni!

Welsh Winter Fair

Come and See Us!



Bydd NSA Cymru yn arddangos yn y Ffair Aeaf, gan noddi'n falch y dosbarthiadau **bridiau mynydd a brodorol**, cystadlaethau **trinwyr ifanc**, a'r categorïau **CFfl**.

Dewch i'n gweld ni yn **Standin 339-EX2** am **roddion** a **sgwrs Nadoligaidd** gyda chyd-aelodau. Rydyn ni'n edrych ymlaen at weld wynebau cyfarwydd a chrosawu rhai newydd!

NSA Cymru will be exhibiting at the Welsh Winter Fair, proudly sponsoring the **hill and native breed classes**, **young handler** competitions, and **YFC** categories.

Visit us at **Stand 339-EX2** for **giveaways** and a **festive catch-up** with fellow members. We look forward to seeing familiar faces and welcoming new ones!



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