



CYMRUWALES NEWSLETTER

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A NATIONAL SHEEP ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION



**Welsh Sheep 2025
– Farm Preview**

**NSA Bob Payne
2024 Award**

**NSA CYMRU /
WALES ARMM**

Welsh Sheep 2025 – Farm Preview



NSA Welsh Sheep 2025 is the highlight of the sheep farming calendar, with a full programme of activities to engage, inform and help address future challenges. The event will be at Tregoed farm, near Hay on Wye. There will be tractor rides to the higher ground, rising to 1200 feet above sea level.



Distinctive woolly-headed Romneys bobbing around distinguish the venue for NSA Welsh Sheep 2025. It is just 15 minutes from Hay on Wye and easily accessible from Wales, the Midlands and beyond, set against the spectacular backdrop of the Black Mountains.

The event will offer a professional update and the latest industry information, as well as a chance for sheep farmers to get together. High Country Romneys is a family partnership comprising Mum, Penny Chantler, and sons, Will and Sam Sawday.

Their focus is to breed rams to suit low input, sustainable systems. Penny considers hosting Welsh Sheep 2025 as an opportunity to 'showcase sustainability' in the face of environmental change.

The farming system was initiated by Penny and her late husband, Richard, 30 years ago. The 1500 ewe flock now comprises internationally renowned Romneys and RomTex.

The 600-ewe stud flock and 900 ewe commercial flock are reared on a forage based, outdoor lambing system, with the land rising to 1400 feet above sea level. The family describes the Romney as 'the ultimate in low input, maternal sheep'. The highly efficient animals thrive in all UK conditions, with proven worm resistance and an unbeatable performance off grass. The RomTex combines the New Zealand Texel's terminal traits to produce an easy lambing, exceptional good milking ewe. They rear very fast-growing lambs achieving better grades and killing out percentages. Cleaner heads and legs make them more suited to liveweight trading.

Underpinning the stud flocks are regular ram imports from some of New Zealand's best flocks. Highly detailed monitoring and data capture is key, backed by 30 years of performance recording with SIL (Sheep Imp Ltd), the New Zealand equivalent to Signet.

Will says: ***"We look at what the future challenges are and cost, weather and disease stand very proudly. "I think we can only manage what we have control of and reducing our reliance on upstream resources without heavily comprising yield seems like a no brainer. Derisking farm businesses across all sectors is a massive goal."***



"Taking out the big financial drains on sheep businesses makes farming a lot less stressful. Reducing labour frees up time to spend on other enterprises or to work off farm or even taking time off."

"Genetics can play a key part in addressing these factors and this style of breeding can enable thriving businesses."

Richard Chantler founded the flock 40 years ago, when he was head shepherd for Wye College, Kent. His Nuffield scholarship to New Zealand meant he studied very progressive stud flocks. The college's successful breeding programme using NZ Romney genetics improved the productivity and efficiency of British Romneys. The link to New Zealand has continued down the years, with Penny, Will and Sam continuing to make 'shopping trips' to source genetics.

High Country Romneys now includes the tenanted Tregoyd Farm, Brecon, and other smaller blocks of land in the Hay-on-Wye area. Little infrastructure, machinery and labour, combined with the geographical locations of the blocks of land means the sheep system needs to be simple and low input. This allows them to spend time on stud data management and ram sales as well as running their secondary enterprise - calf rearing. The farm takes batches of 170 calves through the Blade scheme and rears them on milk for 12 weeks until they go to a finisher. They have a small amount of part time help with the calves and just one loader tractor. Contractors are then utilised as much as possible. Sam says: ***“We want to be sat on tractors for as little time as possible and we want to be paying for them even less.”*** The three main groups of sheep are looked after by the brothers. Will takes responsibility for the performance recording and genetics. Sam heads up the calf rearing. Mum, Penny, ‘fills in the gaps’. She likes to share her deep knowledge of wool, having studied Textile Design at Leeds University. She is the southern region board member for British Wool, a quirk of the fact that while they farm in Wales the postcode is Hereford.



The farm tries to do its best environmentally. Stewardship schemes and grants are utilised as much as possible and regenerative practices are being adopted to improve soil and animal health. Practices that they believe will improve environmental and financial resilience.



The ram lambs are initially selected on raw performance and ebvs, with a big focus on the post weaning worm challenge. The latter determines the lamb's resistance and resilience to worms.

The aim of both of these programmes is to identify ram lambs that don't need drenching and can grow well, despite being faced with a heavy worm challenge. The programmes are complicated. They entail constant weighing and monitoring and the collection of around 200 faecal samples from individual ram lambs. Blood IGA samples are also taken from these rams to improve accuracy. Lambing begins in April, with all the ewes out, having been on forage crops for two months. This is followed by grass rotations from the beginning of March until lambing.

About 1% assistance is required and if animals need to be brought in then they are culled. The recorded stud sheep are tagged and recorded at birth. The ewes and lambs are then bunched into big groups of 400/500 ewes, rotationally grazed through summer.

Data is regularly collected from weaning until Autumn, including regular weighing, back fat scanning, as well as the resistance and resilience programmes. Lambs that don't meet standards are sold store in local markets or finished to Farmers Fresh. The 900 or so are mostly fed on grass are sold from August through to March. Ram lambs that make the cut based on their performance data, ebvs and visual appraisal are wintered on grass and sold as shearlings privately off the farm.

The work is ongoing. The farm has been apart of Farming Connect's Welsh Sheep Genetics Programme. This funds the collection of additional data such as back fat scanning, FEC and IGA samples.

Further, it is funding them to put rams through a PAC chamber to measure methane output and measure carcass data from a CT scanner. DNA samples will also be taken to ascertain genomic breeding values to make current breeding values more accurate.

The overall aim is to produce genetically proven rams with the resilience required to adapt to a rapidly changing world. The family is continually working to adjust their sheep to a more sustainable system, well able to weather unpredictable environmental and economic change. We are pleased that Mayo Animal Health are a major sponsor of the event as we use the 4 in 1 Mayo boluses, pre tugging and pre lambing.

And it's important to enjoy the journey, from time to time sharing with others the joy of sustainable sheep farming. There are frequent farm visits and this year, of course, the main event is NSA Welsh Sheep 2025.

**21/05/25
Tregoyd Farm, Brecon**



Defaid Cymru 2025 - Rhagolwg Fferm



Digwyddiad Defaid Cymru NSA 2025 yw uchafbwynt y flwyddyn yng nghalendr ffermwyr defaid, maen cynnwys rhaglen llawn gweithgareddau i ennyn diddordeb, cyfarwyddo ag helpu mynd i'r afael ar broblemau'r dyfodol. Cynhaliwyd ar fferm Tregoed ger y Gelli Gandryll. Bydd teithiau tractor ar gael i gludo ymwelwyr i'r tir uchel, sy'n codi i 1200 troedfedd uwchben lefel y môr.



Y Romnys ben gwlanog nodedig yn neidio o gwmpas sy'n gwahaniaethu lleoliad Digwyddiad Defaid Cymru yr NSA 2025. Gyda cefndir ysblennydd y Mynyddoedd Du mae'r lleoliad 15 munud o'r Gelli Gandryll ac yn hawdd cyrraedd.

Bydd y digwyddiad yn cynnig diweddariadau proffesiynol a gwybodaeth ddiweddaraf y diwydiant yn ogystal â siawns i ffermwr defaid ddod at ei gilydd. Mae High Country Romneys yn bartneriaeth rhwng Penny Chantier a'i meibion Will a Sam Sawday.

Eu ffocws yw bridio hyrddod i weddu systemau mewnbwn isel a chynaliadwy. Mae Penny yn ystyried cynnal Digwyddiad Defaid Cymru 2025 fel siawns i 'arddangos cynaliadwyedd' yn wyneb newidiadau amgylcheddol.

Cafodd y system ffermio ei ddechrau gan Penny a'i diweddar briod Richard 30 mlynedd yn ôl. Mae'r praidd o 1500 o ddefaid menyw nawr yn cynnwys Romneys a RomTex rhyngwladol enwog.

Mae'r ddiadell o 600 o famogiaid gre a'r diadell o 900 o famogiaid masnachol yn cael eu magu ar system wyna awyr agored sy'n seiliedig ar borfa efo'r tir yn codi i 1400 modfedd uwchben lefel y môr. Mae'r teulu yn disgrifio'r Romneys fel 'y defaid mamol efo mewnbwn isel eithaf.' Mae'r anifeiliaid effeithlon iawn yma yn llwyddo ym mhob amod o'r DU, yn profi ymwrthedd i lyngyr a does dim gwell perfformiad ar laswellt gan unrhyw anifail arall. Mae'r RomTex yn cyfuno nodweddion tymhorol Texel's Seland Newydd i gynhyrchu wyna hawdd a mamogiaid efo digon o laeth. Maent yn magu wyn sy'n tyfu'n gyflym ac yn cyflawni gwell graddau a chanrifoedd lladd allan. Maent yn fwy addas i fasnachu pwysau byw diolch yw pennau a choesau glan.

Mae mewnfudiad aml o hyrddod o breiddiau orau Seland Newydd yn tanategu'r praidd gre. Mae monitro manwl iawn a chipio data yn allweddol a gefnogir gan 30 mlynedd o recordio perfformiad efo SIL (Sheep Imp Ltd.) cyfatebol yn Seland Newydd i Signet.

Dywed Will: ***“Edrychem ar beth yw heriau'r dyfodol a'r costau, mae'r tywydd a chlefyd yn amlwg. Meddyliaf allwn ymdopi efo beth sydd o dan ein rheolaeth yn unig ac mae lleihau ein dibyniaeth ar adnoddau allanol heb gyfaddawdu'n drwm ar gynnyrch yn amlwg iawn i mi. Mae lleihau risg i fusnesau ffermio ar draws yr holl sectorau yn gol anferthol.***



“Mae tynnu'r pwysau ariannol allan o'r busnes defaid yn gwneud ffarmio yn llawer llai dirdynol. Mae lleihau'r gwaith yn rhyddhau amser i wario ar fentrau eraill neu i weithio oddi ar y ffarm neu hyd yn oed cael gwyliau!

“Gall geneteg chwarae rhan allweddol wrth fynd i'r afael â'r ffactorau hyn a gall y math hwn o fridio galluogi busnesau ffyniannus.”

Sefydlodd Richard Chantler y ddiadell 40 mlynedd yn ôl, pan oedd yn brif fugail Coleg Gwy, Caint. Roedd ei ysgoloriaeth Nuffield i Seland Newydd yn golygu ei fod yn astudio heidiau gre blaengar iawn. Fe wnaeth rhaglen fridio lwyddiannus y coleg gan ddefnyddio geneteg NZ Romney wella cynhyrchiant ac effeithlonrwydd British Romneys. Mae'r cysylltiad â Seland Newydd wedi parhau dros y blynyddoedd, gyda Penny, Will a Sam yn parhau i wneud 'teithiau siopa' i ffynonellau geneteg.

Mae High Country Romneys bellach yn cynnwys Fferm Tregoed, Aberhonddu, sy'n cael ei thenantio, a blociau llai eraill o dir yn ardal y Gelli Gandryll. Mae ychydig o seilwaith, peiriannau a gwaith, ynghyd â lleoliadau daearyddol y blociau o dir yn golygu bod angen i'r system ddefaid fod yn syml ac yn isel ei mewnbwn. Mae hyn yn caniatáu iddynt dreulio amser ar reoli data gre a gwerthu hyrddod yn ogystal â rhedeg eu menter eilaidd - magu lloi. Mae'r fferm yn cymryd sypiau o 170 o loi drwy'r cynllun Blade ac yn eu magu ar laeth am 12 wythnos nes iddynt fynd at besgydd. Maen nhw'n cael ychydig bach o help rhan amser gyda'r lloi a dim ond un tractor llwythwr. Yna defnyddir contractwyr cymaint â phosib. Dywed Sam: ***“Rydyn ni eisïau eistedd ar dractorau am gyn lleied o amser â phosib ac rydyn ni eisïau talu hyd yn oed yn llai amdany'n nhw..”***

Mae'r brodyr yn gofalu am y tri phrif grŵp o ddefaid. Mae Will yn cymryd cyfrifoldeb am gofnodi perfformiad a geneteg. Mae Sam yn mynd i fagu lloi. Mam, Penny, 'yn llenwi'r bylchau'. Mae hi'n hoffi rhannu ei gwybodaeth ddofn am wllân, ar ôl astudio Dylunio Tecstilau ym Mhrifysgol Leeds. Hi yw aelod bwrdd rhanbarth y de ar gyfer British Wool, sy'n rhyfeddod o'r ffaith mai Henffordd yw'r cod post tra'u bod yn ffermio yng Nghymru.



Mae'r fferm yn ceisio gwneud ei gorau yn amgylcheddol. Mae cynlluniau stiwardiaeth a grantiau yn cael eu defnyddio cymaint â phosib ac mae arferion adfywio yn cael eu mabwysiadu i wella iechyd yr anifeiliaid a'r pridd. Cred y bydd yr arferikn hyn yn gwella gwydnwch arianol ag amgylcheddol.



Mae'r ŵyn gwryw yn cael eu dewis i ddechrau ar sail perfformiad amrwd ac ebvs, gyda ffocws mawr ar yr her llyngyr ar ôl diddyfnu. Mae'r olaf yn pennu ymwrthedd a gwydnwch yr oen i lyngyr.

Nod y ddwy raglen hon yw nodi ŵyn gwryw nad oes angen eu drensio ac sy'n gallu tyfu'n dda, er eu bod yn wynebu her llyngyr trwm. Mae'r rhaglenni'n gymhleth. Maent yn golygu pwyso a monitro cyson a chasglu tua 200 o samplau ysgarthol o ŵyn hwrdd unigol. Mae samplau gwaed IGA hefyd yn cael eu cymryd o'r hyrddod hyn i wella cywirdeb. Mae'r ŵyna yn dechrau ym mis Ebrill, gyda'r mamogiaid i gyd allan, wedi bod ar gnydau porthiant am ddau fis. Dilynir hyn gan gylchdroadau glaswellt o ddechrau mis Mawrth tan wyna.

Mae angen tua 1% o gymorth ac os oes angen dod ag anifeiliaid i mewn yna cânt eu difa. Mae'r defaid gre a gofnodwyd yn cael eu tagio a'u cofnodi adeg eu geni. Yna caiff y mamogiaid a'r ŵyn eu rhoi mewn grwpiau mawr o 400/500 o famogiaid, a'u pori'n gylchdro drwy'r haf.

Cesglir data'n rheolaidd o ddiddyfnu tan yr Hydref, gan gynnwys pwyso rheolaidd, sganio braster cefn, yn ogystal â'r rhaglenni ymwrthedd a gwydnwch. Mae ŵyn nad ydynt yn cyrraedd y safonau yn cael eu gwerthu mewn marchnadoedd lleol neu eu pesgi i Farmers Fresh.

Mae'r tua 900 sy'n cael eu bwydo'n bennaf ar laswellt yn cael eu gwerthu o fis Awst tan fis Mawrth. Mae ŵyn gwryw sy'n gwneud y toriad yn seiliedig ar eu data perfformiad, ebvs a gwerthusiad gweledol yn cael eu gaeafu ar laswellt a'u gwerthu'n breifat oddi ar y fferm fel defaid dau ddant.

Mae'r gwaith yn mynd rhagddo. Mae'r fferm wedi bod yn rhan o Raglen Geneteg Defaid Cymru Cyswllt Ffermio. Mae hyn yn ariannu casglu data ychwanegol fel sganio

cefn braster, samplau FEC ac IGA.

At hynny, mae'n eu hariannu i roi hyrddod drwy siambr PAC i fesur allbwn methan a mesur data carcass o sganiwr CT. Bydd samplau DNA hefyd yn cael eu cymryd i ganfod gwerthoedd bridio genomig i wneud gwerthoedd bridio cyfredol yn fwy cywir.

Y nod cyffredinol yw cynhyrchu hyrddod sydd wedi'u profi'n enetig gyda'r gwytnwch sydd ei angen i addasu i fyd sy'n newid yn gyflym. Mae'r teulu'n gweithio'n barhaus i addasu eu defaid i system fwy cynaliadwy, sy'n gallu ymdopi â newid amgylcheddol ac economaidd anrhagweladwy. Rydym yn falch bod Mayo Animal Health yn un o brif noddwyr y digwyddiad gan ein bod yn defnyddio bolysau 4 mewn 1 Mayo, cyn hwrdda a chyn wyna.

Ac mae'n bwysig mwynhau'r daith, o bryd i'w gilydd gan rannu llawenydd ffermio defaid cynaliadwy ag eraill. Mae ymweliadau fferm yn digwydd yn aml ac eleni, wrth gwrs, y prif ddigwyddiad yw Defaid Cymru NSA 2025.

21/05/25
Fferm Tregoed, Aberhonddu



21/05/25
Tregoed Farm, Brecon



Advance ticket sales

General Information

Admission cost at entrance
Tickets - £20

Payment by card will be accepted. However, we advise bringing cash as well.
NSA members Free (on production of current membership card, one free entry)
Agricultural students free on production of student union card
Children under 16 free

International visitors free on production of passport
Pre purchase of tickets is available for groups of 10 or more (Available up to the 1st May 2025). Please contact the organiser for details helen@nationalsheep.org.uk



NSA WELSHSHEEP
2025



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NSA Bob Payne 2024 Award



Image: Llew Thomas (right) with David Pittendreigh (left)

The NSA Bob Payne 2024 Award for an unsung hero will be presented to David Pittendreigh at next year's NSA Welsh Sheep. The award is specially selected from the many volunteers and officeholders who are at the heart of the work of NSA.

NSA Cymru / Wales Region Development Officer Helen Roberts says: *"I am delighted David has won this award. Since knowing David, he has always been willing to help in any way he can with the running of NSA Cymru Region and NSA Welsh Sheep. His knowledge of the industry is second to none and there is no one more deserving of this accolade."*

David farms near Llandysul, Ceredigion, and has made a lifetime contribution to the sheep industry from his early days in Scotland and nearly 50 years in Wales. He received a diploma from the North of Scotland College of Agriculture in 1962 and then began as a shepherd on the Black Isle in the Scottish Highlands. There, he was responsible for 600 North Country Cheviots before moving to the Scottish border and a flock of 1500 Scottish Blackface sheep. Lower land prices in Wales prompted David to buy a farm in Llandysul in 1971. He became one of the pioneers of flock recording in Wales and, with five other breeders, formed the Llanwenog Group Breeding Scheme in 1979.

He established his North Country Cheviot (NCC) flock with 50 ewes bought from his former employer on the Black Isle and then helped to found more than 50 flocks in Wales and the Borders. His help and guidance was invaluable and his NCC Welsh Breeders Club now has its own breed sale at Usk, Monmouthshire.

David became President of the NCC Sheep Society in 2009-10 and was proud to invite and host many of his fellow breeders from Scotland to the breed's first AGM in Wales and to the dinner and flock visits. In 2015 he was awarded the much-coveted Michael Peters Quaich Award for his lifetime contribution to the breed and the Society.

The respect he is held in as a judge has taken him to many shows, from the Royal Cornwall to the Orkneys, including the

Royal Welsh and Royal Highland. He has exhibited widely and has sold at the NSA Wales and Border Ram Sale on a regular basis. David is also a past NSA Cymru Chairman and continues to work tirelessly for the NSA and the sheep industry.

NSA Cymru / Wales Region Chair Kate Hovers adds: *"I am delighted that David has won this award. He is a lifelong supporter of NSA and the whole sheep industry. He is a voice of reason and encouragement, who can be depended on to always help without fuss or expectation of recognition. He is a true unsung hero."*

Note: David will be presented with his award at NSA Welsh Sheep, to take place on Wednesday 21st May 2025 at Tregoed Farm, Brecon, by kind permission of Penny Chantler and sons Sam and Will Sawday.

Wales NSA Officers



Caryl Hughes
Regional
Chair



John Yeomans
Regional Vice
Chair



Helen Roberts
Regional
Development Officer



Jane Smith
Wales & Border Ram
Sales Executive Director



Tim Ward
Regional
Treasurer



INTERNATIONAL PAVILION, ROYAL WELSH SHOW GROUND

TUESDAY 4TH FEBRUARY 2025 11:30AM

Open to members and non-members

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To confirm the minutes of the last ARMM held 4th March 2024 (Available on NSA website)
3. To consider matters arising from the above
4. Chairman's Report
5. To review the accounts for 2024
6. To appoint officers and secretary for 2025 / 2026
 - a) Chairman
 - b) Vice Chairman
 - c) Treasurer
 - d) Secretary
 - e) Committee
 - f) Confirm Nominations for NSA Board of Directors, Finance & General Purposes & UK Finance & Scrutiny committee
7. To confirm Secretary's Remuneration and expenses which were set at the last Regional meeting
8. To consider any other business

12:00 NSA Update – Phil Stocker

12:30 – 13:15 Lunch

Afternoon Programme

13:15 – 14:15 Richard Irvine, Chief Veterinary Officer for Wales Dr Irvine joined the Welsh Government in March 2023 having been UK Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer and policy Deputy Director for Global Animal Health in the UK Government. A highly experienced veterinarian, Richard has worked in the profession for more than 25 years and brings with him a wealth of knowledge and expertise, with a background in animal health and welfare, trade policy, as well as science and state veterinary medicine. Richard has previously spent time in a clinical mixed veterinary practice in South Wales. He has also held different roles leading animal health surveillance and science programmes at the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA).

14:15 – 15:00 John Richards Hybu Cig Cymru -Producer and Processor Lead - 'Securing a prosperous future for the sheep sector in Wales'.

15:00 Close



To attend and confirm numbers for refreshments contact Helen Roberts on
helen@nationalsheep.org.uk or 07976 803066



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