



# CYMRUWALES NEWSLETTER

ISSUE SIX: SPRING 2026

A NATIONAL SHEEP ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION



Introducing NSA  
Cymru Team

NSA Welsh  
Sheep 2027

Next Generation Welsh  
Ambassadors

# Welcome to our NSA Cymru Newsletter.



**Helen Roberts**  
NSA Cymru Development Officer

**Following our Annual Meeting, we are pleased to announce the appointment of John Yeomans as Chair and Jacob Anthony as Vice Chair. We extend our sincere thanks to Caryl Hughes for her dedicated leadership over the past two years, and to Kate Hovers for her service as NSA Trustee. Tim Ward will now take on the Trustee role.**

As many of you know the sector will face many challenges this year with producers deciding to join Sustainable Farming Scheme (SFS) or remain with the Basic Payment Scheme (BPS) and lose 40% of their money. The schemes are now open, and the window will remain open until 15<sup>th</sup> May. This is after the Welsh elections which could mean a new government in the Senedd. As we understand it whichever party is in power, they will not be able to change the rules just like that and will probably just tinker around the edges going forward. Therefore, NSA Cymru would encourage you to think very carefully about what route you take and how it may impact your business for 2026 and beyond, seek advice wherever possible to make the right choice. As an industry we also face global challenges from imports of lamb, through trade deals which were made after Brexit, and it will be interesting to see how prices hold for this forthcoming season.

We have put in a comprehensive response to the tailing and castration consultation and await the outcome in the coming months.

If you visit the **Royal Welsh** this year you will see a major change as the former NSA Pavillion will be replaced with a Sheep Village “Cynefin” which will be launched by the RWAS & NSA. It will include trade stands and educational activities and is designed to showcase innovation and good practice to farmers, whilst helping the wider public to better understand sheep farming and the vital role it plays in shaping our landscape and heritage.

The popular NSA Bar and Restaurant will also form part of the new village, together with a new open air courtyard space offering a welcoming space for farmers and showgoers to meet and relax.

During the year we also have two major events NSA Scotsheep and NSA Sheep Event along with our Ram Sales see the dates to remember section of the newsletter for more details.

I look forward to catching up with Members old and new during 2026.

**Helen Roberts**  
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## NSA Cymru Top Team



The top team at NSA Cymru/Wales now comprises Chair John Yeomans and Vice Chair Jacob Anthony, along with Regional Development Officer, Helen Roberts. John and Jacob are both well known figures in Welsh farming.

John is married to Sarah and they farm at Llwyn y Brain, Adfa, about ten miles north of Newtown. Their adult sons include Tom, Jack and Joe who runs his businesses from the farm, so is able to help out when necessary.

The farm extends to 274 acres and rises to 1420 feet above sea level. John's dad, a Birmingham butcher, bought the original 68 acre holding in 1973. It had always been his dream to farm and he ran 23 cows with 200 ewes.

The present suckler herd is closed, as is the sheep flock. They run 70 plus Limousin and Belgian Blue suckler cross cows and a few pedigree Limousins. Some meat is sold direct from the farm and the business also sells a few bulls, store cattle and weaned calves.

There were 570 Beulah ewes tugged ready to lamb in and just under 200 ewe lambs. The ewes go to a Beulah ram and a Bluefaced Leicester ram to produce Welsh mules. They also have a some Texels and sell a few Bluefaced x Texel tups.

John's aim is to carry on with the good work of outgoing chair, Caryl Hughes, who 'will take some following'. He says: "NSA Cymru have a big job ahead representing Welsh farmers and particularly sheep farmers, working with, and talking to politicians as we move towards the Senedd elections in May.

**"The constant worry of threats from disease and also the overburdening of paperwork and red tape will be at the forefront of NSA Cymru's mind. However, an exciting partnership between NSA and the Royal Welsh Agricultural Society of the new Sheep Village on the showground will be a big positive for us to look forward to."**

Jacob Anthony says he's delighted to serve as vice chairman. He was part of the Young Ambassadors Programme in 2016.

And he adds: "Hailing from a mixed farm just outside Bridgend, with a particular passion and interest in the sheep sector. I am delighted to have been elected vice chair of NSA Cymru, and even happier that I will be doing this alongside the infectious new chair, John Yeomans, an incredibly well-respected farmer. "It's a huge privilege to have been given this role, as I personally have a great affinity with the NSA, as it is 10 years ago that I was fortunate enough to have been part of the 2016 Young Ambassadors programme.

**"It was something that gave me great confidence, new ideas and a better understanding of how important organisations like the NSA are in giving sheep farmers a voice."**

## Tîm NSA Cymru



Mae tîm NSA Cymru/Wales bellach yn cynnwys y Cadeirydd John Yeomans a'r Is-gadeirydd Jacob Anthony, ynghyd â'r Swyddog Datblygu Rhanbarthol, Helen Roberts. Mae John a Jacob yn ffigurau adnabyddus ym myd ffermio Cymru.

Mae John yn briod â Sarah ac maen nhw'n ffermio yn Llwyn y Brain, Adfa, tua deg milltir i'r gogledd o'r Drenewydd. Mae eu meibion Tom, Jack a Joe yn rhedeg ei fusnesau o'r fferm, felly maen nhw'n gallu helpu pan fo angen.

Mae'r fferm yn ymestyn i 274 erw ac yn codi i 1420 troedfedd uwchben lefel y môr.

Prynodd tad John, cigydd o Birmingham, y daliad gwreiddiol o 68 erw ym 1973. Roedd ffermio wedi bod yn freuddwyd iddo erioed ac roedd yn cadw 23 o wartheg a 200 o famogiaid.

Mae'r fuches sugno a'r ddiadell yn gaeedig. Maen nhw'n cadw dros 70 o wartheg sugno croes Limousin a Belgian Blue ac ychydig o Limousins pedigri. Mae rhywfaint o gig yn cael ei werthu'n uniongyrchol o'r fferm ac mae'r busnes hefyd yn gwerthu ychydig o deirw, gwartheg stôr a lloi wedi'u diddyfnu. Roedd 570 o famogiaid Beulah wedi'u hyrddio'n barod i wyna ac ychydig o dan 200 o wŷn benyw. Mae'r mamogiaid yn mynd at hwrdd Beulah a hwrdd Wyneblas Leicester i gynhyrchu miwl Cymreig. Mae ganddyn nhw hefyd rai Texels ac maen nhw'n gwerthu rhai hyrddod Wyneblas x Texel.

Nod John yw parhau â gwaith da'r cyn-gadeirydd Caryl Hughes, a fydd 'yn cymryd rhywfaint o ddilyniant'. Dywed: "Mae gan NSA Cymru waith mawr o'n blaenau yn cynrychioli ffermwyr Cymru, yn enwedig ffermwyr defaid, gan weithio gyda gwleidyddion a siarad â nhw wrth i ni symud tuag at etholiadau'r Senedd ym mis Mai.

**“Mae'r pryder cyson ynghylch bygythiadau gan glefydau, llwyth o waith papur a rheoleiddio yn flaenoriaeth i NSA Cymru. Fodd bynnag, bydd partneriaeth gyffrous rhwng NSA a Chymdeithas Amaethyddol Frenhinol Cymru ar gyfer y Pentref Defaid newydd ar faes y sioe yn beth cadarnhaol mawr i ni edrych ymlaen ato.”**

Dywed Jacob Anthony ei fod wrth ei fodd yn gwasanaethu fel is-gadeirydd. Roedd yn rhan o Raglen y Llysgenhadon Ifanc yn 2016.

Ac mae'n ychwanegu: "Yn dod o fferm gymysg y tu allan i Ben-y-bont ar Ogwr, gyda diddordeb a brwdfrydedd penodol yn y sector defaid. Rwy'n falch iawn o gael fy ethol yn is-gadeirydd NSA Cymru, a hyd yn oed yn hapusach y byddaf yn gwneud hyn ochr yn ochr â'r cadeirydd newydd, John Yeomans, ffermwr uchel ei barch.

"Mae'n ffraind enfawr cael y rôl hon, gan fod gen i gysylltiad personol â'r NSA, gan mai 10 mlynedd yn ôl y bûm yn ddigon ffodus i fod yn rhan o raglen Llysgenhadon Ifanc 2016.

**“Roedd yn rhywbeth a roddodd hyder mawr i mi, syniadau newydd a gwell dealltwriaeth o ba mor bwysig yw sefydliadau fel yr NSA wrth roi llais i ffermwyr defaid.”**

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**North East Wales is the venue for NSA Welsh Sheep 2027 and it will be hosted by the Roberts family of Ty Draw, a Golden Grove estate farm at Llanasa near Holywell.**



Mathew Roberts and his father, David, farm beef and sheep on around 600 acres. Mathew's wife, Sian, and their children are very much part of the farm. They won the NFU Cymru/NFU Mutual Welsh Livestock Champion of the Year Award 2024.

**Mathew says: “We’re very proud and honoured to be asked to host the event and as a family we’re looking forward to it.**

“We’re positive about the future of farming and would like to take people around our farm to show what can be done to secure the future. Some things happen for a reason and it’s how we deal with those changes and progress.”

Mathew is upbeat about the future of farming, with the proviso that adaptability is key. It doesn't pay to get stuck doing things the same way. Fear of change doesn't let a business grow and thrive.

The business is tightly controlled, in terms of costs and livestock management. The approach is a legacy of having lost a big acreage of rented land, together with a large lambing shed in 2009. They have since taken on more land, with the emphasis on sustainability.

Three hundred cattle are fattened annually, grazed through the summer and housed from September to finish by the end of the year. Targets need to be met because their shed doubles as lambing accommodation.

Lamb is produced from a flock of 1,450 Texel-cross ewes, tugged with Texels and Beltex cross rams. Suffolk yearling ewes, less prone to mastitis, were successfully introduced for the first time last year after a bout of mastitis in the Texel-crosses.

The majority of the 2,400 lambs produced annually are supplied to Pilgrim's UK, Llanidloes, at an average liveweight of 44kg, producing a 21 kg carcass at an E or U grade and a small number are sold from 8 to ten weeks at St Asaph Market.

Concentrate use for pregnant ewes has been reduced and fertiliser reduced thanks to reseeded and lime applications. All feed, apart from ewe concentrates and lamb creep meal is produced on-farm. Red clover plays a significant role, both grazed and conserved.

Fodder beet is important, with acreage grown now 18 acres, the majority lifted and fed to the cattle, but also harvested to feed to ewes at lambing. Barley is grown on the farm and rolled for cattle. Beef is supplied on a dairy beef scheme to Morrisons and Sainsbury's.



# SHEEP EVENT

UK sheep farming: A positive future

Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2026



Seminars | Workshops | Sheep breed societies | Competitions | Technical & policy updates | Environment & conservation | Trade stands | Demonstrations

Three Counties Showground, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR13 6NW

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# Introducing our Next Generation Welsh Ambassadors for 2026



**Nerys Lewis from Monmouth currently works part time on the family beef and sheep farm spanning 250 acres owned and a further 200 rented, they have 55 suckler cattle and lamb 800 ewes.**

Nerys has a very active part in the management and husbandry of the livestock, from all day-to-day jobs as well as pre lambing MOTs and very involved taking time away from her job to lamb as well as contract lambing on other farms.

She has lambed for mostly the same farms for 5 years now where she understands their systems and is left in sole charge and to manage staff around her. Although lambing is a busy time of year it is definitely one of her favourites within the sheep sector, the rewards for your hard work really does pay off. Nerys also does all the admin and cross compliance for the business at home.

Commenting on the first ambassador trip “We had a brilliant trip to North Wales starting with some Axe throwing and getting to know that some are rather better than others at throwing axes. We networked along with attended the Wool Testing lab - being the only lab in the Northern Hemisphere, also meeting with industry leaders including Dewi Jones from Innovis and Phillipa Page having a chance to discuss issues and upcoming challenges for the industry , finishing off we had a tour around the Coed Coch farm Ltd enterprise.

**It was a brilliant chance to meet other keen young sheep farmers, all being from different backgrounds and having different systems at home. It was great to ask questions of different key people in the sheep section and I’m looking forward to the next stage after lambing.”**

# Introducing our Next Generation Welsh Ambassadors for 2026



Rowan Gear from Bridgend says his current involvement with the sheep sector would be building up his own flock of ewes. This all sparked from growing up on a fish farm and the need to graze around the pounds, as not coming from a farming background this is where his passion for sheep farming and agriculture grew from. He has built up the flock of breeding ewes from the age of around 15 and still continuing to build this flock up while studying. Now graduated from university Rowan is ready to scale this sector into a larger business.

When not at home or studying he works on a 3500 acre arable and sheep farm where he has worked for the last 4 years and in the last few years has been heavily involved in the sheep enterprise making decisions and undertaking management practices. When he came home from New Zealand in December, he continued the role as shepherd for the flock. Rowan has been extremely fortunate that before his travels to New Zealand he sat down with the business owners of the farm, with these individuals seeing potential in him and his work ethic he was offered a contract farm agreement with them.

**Rowan commented - What an honour and fantastic opportunity it is to be a NSA next generation ambassador especially for Wales, involving myself in the sessions over the next 12 months I cannot wait for!**

Our first session kicked off in North Wales, on a Sunday afternoon in the St Georges hotel based in Llandudno. For me this was probably one of the most exciting as I was eager to meet the other ambassadors from Devon to Aberdeen, to get to know each other and exchange information over the coming sessions.

On Monday the 9th February 2026 we got straight into our first session of having a tour of the wool testing authority. This was a fascinating experience with it being the only wool testing site based in the northern hemisphere. That afternoon we then rolled into a talk with Dewi Jones from Innovis explaining exactly what Innovis do and what they set out to achieve, where we absorbed valuable knowledge of the sheep breeding genetic sector.

Having fantastic lunches and meals throughout the activities on our final day we set out to Coed Coch estate, where we met with Philippa Page a specialist sheep vet for a fascinating in-depth talk. Afterwards we then had a tour with Rhys Williams of the estate where they run 2000 Romney ewes on an outdoor lambing system as well as doing some work with Farming Connect. Already eager to get into our next session in May down in Somerset!



## Evan Turner on his trip to Paris Show.

The competition then focused on practical shepherding, using an EID reader to sort three sheep into a different pen from others. We went onto foot trimming, very different as using a turnover crate, and adapting to how they trim feet as different to the UK. Next body scoring lambs and carcass weight live and dead. Finishing off with electric fencing.

The highlight for myself was coming 2nd in Europe.

**Thank you to the NSA for the opportunity to compete in Paris as a European next generation shepherd.**

From travelling abroad for the first time, meeting new people with the same interests and competing on an international level was invaluable. The competition presented several challenges, from overcoming the language barrier to adapting to differences in sheep farming across the British Isles and Europe. The breeds, livestock characteristics and handling practices varied significantly from those familiar to me. Preparing was difficult as many elements of the competition were unknown in advance.

During the event we completed a questionnaire, which was on a range of questions, about general farm management. Then there was a selection of ten different sheep breeds which we had to name, these breeds are different to ours.

**I would encourage other young shepherds to enter competitions within the NSA to create chances and opportunities to experience shepherding in a multitude of areas. For me the experience was invaluable.**

Thanks to Pickstock Foods for sponsoring this competition for NSA.



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\*Terms and conditions apply.



## New Role at NSA Wales & Border Ram Sales

A familiar face at the NSA Wales & Border Ram Sales, Helen Fairclough-Watling, is stepping up to a new role. Helen will be supporting Executive Director, Jane Smith, in the significant job of organising the sales, which are an important economic driver in Mid Wales. She has been working at the sales for more than 20 years, having first been asked by the late George Hughes to work on the arrivals and exit gates. It was a natural progression to then work with the tup taxis, on the admin desk and generally multi-tasking over the three days of employment at the main sale each September. Helen is delighted to take on a more senior role:

**“I’m honoured to have been asked to shadow and support Mrs Jane Smith in her role as ram sale organiser and everything else in between!”**

She and her husband farm a beef and sheep enterprise on the outskirts of Newbridge-on-Wye. She farms at home and previously worked with her parents, but has always had part-time seasonal jobs, in catering, stewarding at the Royal Welsh Show and with the gate staff at the NSA Wales & Border Ram Sales. Helen returned home to farm after obtaining a degree in Agriculture with Animal Science from Aberystwyth University. She also lectured at Coleg Powys’s Brecon campus at the Brecon site until the agriculture department closed. Over the years, she has been an active member of Howey YFC and Future Farmers of Wales. Currently, Helen serves on the Newbridge-on-Wye playgroup and Friends of Newbridge-on-Wye school committees.

# DIGWYDDIADAU / EVENTS



**10  
JUNE**

## **NSA SCOTSHEEP**

Wedderlie Farm, Gordon,  
Berwickshire, TD3 6NW



**12  
JUNE**

## **Grassland Event**

Cwmbrynich Farm, Defynnog,  
Brecon, LD3 8SS



**28  
JULY**

## **NSA Sheep Event**

Three Counties Showground,  
Malvern, WR13 6NW



**3  
AUGUST**

## **Early NSA Ram Sale**

Brecon Livestock Market, Warren  
Road, Brecon, LD3 8EX



**21  
SEPTEMBER**

## **NSA Wales and Border Ram Sales Main Sale**

Royal Welsh Show Ground, Builth  
Wells, LD2 3SY



**19  
MAY 2027**

## **NSA Welsh Sheep**

Ty Draw, Llanasa, Holywell,  
CH8 9NE



More details on [welsheep.org.uk](http://welsheep.org.uk) or contact Helen Roberts [helen@nationalsheep.org.uk](mailto:helen@nationalsheep.org.uk) 07976 803066