



National Sheep Association

South West Region

Minutes of the NSA SOUTH WEST REGION 48th ANNUAL REGIONAL MEMBERS MEETING

Held at Exeter Livestock Centre, at 7:30 on 19th February 2019

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from 3 participants

2. Minutes of last ARMM

The minutes of the last meeting were taken as a true and fair report

3. Matters arising - None

4. Chairman's report – Peter Derryman

The region has had a very busy 12 months of events, meetings and farm walks. The weather for the first ¾ of the year was very favourable for grass crops and sheep in general, however since the end of September it seems to be relentless rain right up to Storm Dennis arriving this weekend.

Managing sheep in these conditions we all know is challenging. Let's hope March brings some respite, lambs thrive on drier ground. Trade for the sector throughout has been relatively pleasing, with a very welcome lift at the present time. Let's hope it lasts so we can all benefit.

In mid-March we were invited to Bicton College's Lambing Sunday event which is attended by over 5000 people with promotional material and help from Leah Shanks AHDB, Alan Marshall of the Wool Board, Synergy Farm vets, Jessica Cross and Graham Hill. It was an opportunity to talk to the general public on the role and importance of sheep farming. I came away encouraged by the interest and appreciation that was shown. I am sure they don't all believe the anti-farming rhetoric in the media.

A large amount of time during the Spring and early Summer was spent organising and fine tuning our Sheep event this year to be held at Bryan and Liz Griffiths, Southcott Farm, Burrington. Thankfully one, if not the best to date which has been a huge boost to the SW region going forward. Well done to Sue our event organiser and Dave site manager, Ian and all the organising committee and anyone else that helped on the day. Adam Garthwaite came out on top in the Young Shepherd competition and will represent the SW at this year's event in Malvern. Thanks to Phil and the NSA team for their hard work on the day, hopefully a good number of new members were signed up and also for welcoming our overseas visitors. We had an entertaining time the following day showing the Americans around our own sheep. Thanks to all the sponsors, trade stands and especially Shearwell our main sponsor.

Our annual farm walk this year by kind permission of David and Richard Rossiter saw over 50 visitors make the journey to Burton Farm, Galmpton on the 4th August. We were trailered out to Bolt Tail to view the Exlana flock ewes, shearing ewes and ewe lambs that make use of the National Trust cliff grazing bordering the SW coast path. David talked us through the challenges of farming sheep in one of the most picturesque settings in the South West. We were then driven to Hope cove where the farm's fields border the sea front to view the Poll Dorset flock a month off lambing, then working our way home viewing the Suffolk ewes and ram lambs, and then into the buildings where shearing rams and ram lambs of all breeds were on display. The stock looked impressive in all departments and were a credit to David, Richard and staff. We finished with a cream tea kindly laid



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on by Ann. On behalf of all the visitors I would like to thank David and family for their time and generosity in putting on a very enjoyable day, very much appreciated by everyone.

Last year we had an old farmer shearing sheep for charity, this year two young farmers James Westcott who organised this year's Young Shepherd Competition and Ashley Persey both Culm Valley Young Farmers shearing 1135 of Alan's lambs in a 24-hour shearathon and raising £20150 for MS Society UK, well done.

A good crowd of regional members enjoyed a visit to Rothamstead research North Wyke facility, the new small ruminant facility is a pleasing commitment to research into sheep and to assess their impact on climate change. We look forward to further visits and reports on their work in the future and to update us on this debate which will be ongoing.

Congratulations to Matt and Neil Cole on winning the 'Sheep innovator of the year ' in the British farming awards for their work with Dartmoor farmers.

Dylan Laws from Devon and Alistair Hill, Somerset have been selected from the SW as our Next Generation Representatives for 2020.

Chris Adamson NSA activities and campaigns officer organised an NSA and wool board roadshow at Sedgemoor in September and in early December the NSA 'Setting the Sheep Farming record Straight' which was kindly hosted by Frome Livestock market and attracted an audience of over 140. Howard chaired the evening which included presentations from Ellie Phipps, Leah Shanks AHDB and Gareth Jones from the Wool board, following a lively Q & A and refreshments the audience was better informed how to respond to the anti-farming rhetoric. These events were replicated throughout the Country.

I would like to thank our regional committee for their input at meetings over the last two years, which Howard, Alan and myself have taken forward to English committee. I feel NSA work will be relentless going forward with the challenges we face; no doubt Ellie will fill us in.

The work Phil Stocker and team put in on our behalf and the support they get from people like Bryan and Kevin is becoming more important by the day. This includes countering negative media which is raised time and again at our regional meetings. NSA as you will have noted are quick to counter with press statements and where at all possible TV and radio interviews, it is pleasing to see levy bodies and numerous other organisations are making themselves heard. These efforts must be maintained.

From the region we wish George Eustice well in his new role, to have someone as Secretary of State who has a good knowledge of the industry and the implications of falling into a WTO situation are welcome. NSA will no doubt look forward to working with him and his team this year.

Finally, many thanks to Ian who has made my job easy, he is a great asset to the region and also Sue, Dave and Howard. I wish Howard well and I am sure he will do a great job and hope he enjoys it as much as I have over the last 2 years.



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5. Treasurer's report and presentation of accounts

Sue Martyn thanked Bryan and Liz Griffiths for hosting the Sheep Event this year and noted that the profits from this form the majority of our regional income and are intended to support all the regional activity for 2 years which usually runs to between £8,000-£10,000 per year

This year we made £24,000 profit from the event which should stand us in good stead until 2021.

6. Election of Officers and Committee for 2020

Chairman: elected Howard Tratt - proposed by Sue Martyn and seconded by Emily Gascoigne.

Vice Chair: elected Olly Matthews - proposed by Howard Tratt and seconded by Gareth Beynon.

Committee: En bloc proposed by Robert Bartlett and seconded by Bryan Griffiths.

New Committee members

Philip Goscomb – proposed by Pete Delbridge and seconded by Jake Chisholm

Gareth Beynon – proposed by Emily Gascoigne and seconded by Olly Matthews

Richard Rossiter – proposed by Mary Julie Cornish and seconded by Pete Delbridge

Chris McWhirter – proposed by Bryan Griffiths and seconded by Howard Tratt

Nick Harding – proposed by Alan Derryman and seconded by Gareth Beynon

7. Election of Representatives for the Board of Trustees

Reapproved Pete Delbridge – proposed by Peter Derryman and seconded by Ian May.

8. Election of Representatives for English Committee

Reapproved Peter Derryman and Howard Tratt and elected Olly Matthews proposed by Ian May and seconded by Bryan Griffiths.

9. AOB

None

The evening continued with interesting presentations from Ellie Phipps, NSA Communications officer, Phil Hadley – AHDB International Market Development Director and Bryan Griffiths – NSA Board Chairman.

Thank you to all those who attended.



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