

Activities report to NSA Board August 2018

This report refers to main activities since the May 2018 meeting.

Activities are presented under a set of common headings

Tech and policy

NSA UK P&T Committee

The UK P&T committee met in Birmingham on 6th June for their 2nd meeting of 2018. The meeting started with a presentation and discussion with Jane King CEO of AHDB and David Peace, Chairman of Hallmark Veterinary Services Ltd regarding the proposed sale of MLCSL to Hallmark. There had been considerable unrest from industry about this move and the idea of a scrutiny committee made up of industry bodies was proposed. (Following this AHDB, under the independent chair of Andrew Loftus, has facilitated an industry group, NSA included, and the intention is to set up not a Hallmark scrutiny committee but an industry scrutiny committee that would aim to position itself to oversee all carcass classification services). UK P&T then went on to discuss our response to welfare, transport and live exports, the response we have yet to submit on price reporting, receive updates on a wide number of policy subjects, and discuss the reviewing of our policy papers to ensure they are up to date. The meeting finished with a presentation from Joanne Briggs on her recent industry trip to NZ. Next P&T meeting is 4th Sept.

Brexit

We are awaiting progress with negotiations with the EU although nothing is yet known or decided except that Ministers and Govt officials do understand aspects and values of our industry more than they had done. The activities have now moved on to consultations on the future of farm support and transitional support arrangements with Englands Health and Harmony consultation having closed (with some 44,000 responses), Scotlands Stability and Simplicity consultation is now open, and Wales' Brexit and our Land consultation recently opened. NSAs work on the future of farm support has been well accepted and used and many positions align with our basic thinking. However no detail is clear and there could be differences when we get to that level. The first draft of the Agriculture Bill, expected in July has now been delayed until after the summer recess – probably September.

The UK Livestock Brexit Group continues to meet monthly and is an effective group that has been formally recognised by Defra and the devolved nations. Of late it has been aiming to encourage the devolved nations to work together for the UK industry, something that is seeing progress to an extent. A lot of work is being done on understanding trade flows, dealing with trade disputes, export certification and other subjects relating to trade.

NSA is also part of the cross sector NFU chaired Brexit group. The Northern Ireland meeting was attended by Edward Adamson and an outcome was a joint industry position that was taken to the PM by Minette Batters, and a letter to the media on the importance of food production in the UK.

NSA is a member of 2 Defra farming round tables relating to Brexit, and is communicating closely with administrations in all devolved nations where appropriate. In Wales we are part of the evidence gathering and scenario setting Brexit group, and the land management group and have recently taken part in a consultation on the impacts of Brexit on the mental health of sheep farmers (in preparation for the effects of change).

NSA has become part of a new APPG on farming and Brexit, hosted and chaired by Julian Sturdy MP. This group has met twice so far and is working on an evidence paper that will be used in the Parliamentary debates around the Agriculture Bill drafts.

Trip to New Zealand.

The group who took part in this visit have met twice since to try to keep momentum up. Despite a wide range of activities being pushed by NZ it has recently been agreed that we will work on two themes – sharing information/knowledge/experiences on 'permission to eat lamb'; and building a body of evidence on actual carbon footprints of lamb production. From a UK end this work is to be led by AHDB. The British contingent feel strongly that there is so much uncertainty over Brexit and so much to be done this end that we cannot commit to anything else.

TSE controls

In June Defra called a meeting with the aim of agreeing the change to ageing sheep in relation to carcass splitting. This was based on previous negotiations that led to an intention to implement an end of May cut off date, before which lambs would not need to be mouthed at all, and after which mouthing would be allowed. There was

unfortunately a dispute during this meeting with LAA/IAAS and AIMS attacking the NSA and NFU for conducting negotiations without their involvement. After a short period for things to calm down NSA has picked the baton up again and produced a new paper that has full industry organisation support, that starts again at an end of June date (where we started some 2.5 years ago). This paper was submitted to Defra on 27th July and a further meeting requested.

Sheep and LFAs

Our Hill and Upland report continues to be used where at all possible to make the case for the importance of upland sheep farming. This case seems to be being increasingly accepted and indeed cited by our Sec of State as an example of where funding is needed and justified. It takes us into the subject of what type of sheep farming really delivers good environmental outcomes and what are/what is the value of public goods. It seems to be widely accepted amongst upland sheep farmers and others that it is traditional sheep farming that is most appropriate, using hill breeds, extensive grazing, and connected with the stratified system. Our work on heritage breeds is intended to support this view, creating a market demand for the types of breeds associated.

The Black Mountains Land Use Partnership, chaired by Phil Stocker, now has all the strands of its SMS project underway. Some 300 ha of bracken has been cut and flailed, with some being rolled, and aerial spraying of some 50ha is being planned with local consultations underway. Peatland work for year 1 is complete with restoration and some grip blocking. On the visitor management side several school visits have been done, a local ambassadors programme held, and a survey into the skills needs of local businesses. The partnership held an exhibition in the Senedd, and had a visit by HRH Prince of Wales near Cwmyoy. In addition it took a stand at the RWS where we had the opportunity of an in depth meeting with Hannah Blythyn WG Environment Minister. On a wider partnership basis we are holding a sheep scab meeting in the region on the 14th August and planning a graziers engagement event in the autumn.

Sheep and arable

Our work in producing the report 'The role of sheep in lowland rotational arable farming' still proves timely, in line with many comments being made by Ministers and farming commentators, and has also led to a small number of research/development opportunities. On-going 2-year research project in collaboration with Brown & Co., AHDB, Organic Research Centre (ORC) and Frontier Agriculture Ltd., investigating the benefits of sheep grazing within arable rotations for both the sheep and the arable farmers. Protocols have been established and the trial started in to June/July this year. This project will have our involvement and will be funded through iSAGE (innovation for sustainable sheep and goat production in Europe) research project with the results contributing as an innovative case study (WP4). Linking in to this, we have also been approached by Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) after the last SARIC meeting to collaborate in similar on farm trials to those described above.

Work with Woodland Trust. NSA and Woodland Trust launched our joint Sheep and Trees booklet at Sheep 2018 with the Woodland Trust sponsoring the event and running two workshops during the day. The booklet is available and will be promoted via the SF magazine and other routes.

Genetic & knowledge transfer

An update on the DEFRA funded "UK Sheep Genetic Improvement Scoping Study" will be given as the results and findings become complete. We held a good workshop at the NSA breed society forum in May that provided valuable input to the project.

Work with SCOPS. NSA is now delivering paid-for services for SCOPS, managing its new website and communications work. Little money is changing hands initially, as this is a trial – and there is a natural cross-over with NSA activity and it is beneficial for us to be linked to and to support responsible messages on anthelmintic use and the positive work of SCOPS. The work is being absorbed by the NSA communications team and will be reviewed in time.

Technology Transfer. An update on this heading will be provided in detail in the next Board report.

Sheep Health and Welfare:

The heatwave has led to the risk of BT having reduced. Only a handful of new cases have been identified in France over recent weeks. Still no clinical symptoms are evident in any cases in France which leads to an assumption that the risks may not be high.

The last quarter has seen a national exercise with a simulated Foot and Mouth Disease being conducted (Exercise Blackthorn). It has been a useful exercise involving all agencies and for NSA it has raised two key issues – 1 the movements reporting databases are not able to inform adequately in order to get in front of any disease outbreak; and 2 the 'Core Group' needs to be reviewed with a greater recognition that organisations (and not individuals) are

a valuable part. The reason that organisations have been pushed out is due to a fear that they will lobby and not think or work as part of a team. A full appraisal of the exercise is due soon.

While welfare has featured large in policy positions, with Michael Gove leading the charge for higher welfare standards leading to premium markets, NSA has been making the case that welfare has a good foundation in most sheep farming systems (extensive, able to display natural behaviour) and that the focus and opportunity is sheep health – investing in sheep health through future farm support programmes will lead to efficiency and productivity gains, better carbon footprints, and better welfare too. This view is gaining favour and the two main areas of welfare focus externally are live exports and non-stun slaughter. NSA is proposing a live exports assurance scheme to take ownership of regulatory compliance and impose our own practical/acceptable standards. For non-stun slaughter we are advocating limited trials to demonstrate recoverable stun. In June NSA met with MP Theresa Villiers to discuss her opposition to live exports. This gave the opportunity to provide a more practical insight to the export situation as well as inform that not all Halal slaughter is non stun.

Sheep scab work continues - A tele conference facilitated by Defra and the AHWBE between industry and the Env Agency took place about dip disposal permitting fees. While we are looking at options to reduce costs we have also written to the CVO pointing out the contradiction between environmental and animal health regulations and policy, requesting a waiving of charges until solutions are found.

The subject of antibiotics use continues as a high priority and feeds into much of our work. This subject was a major theme at Sheep 2018.

Our relationship with Moredun is undergoing change. The NSA Board has been consulted with and a new position is being negotiated. There will be positives from this change, such as greater joint activities and an input from NSA into the direction of Moredun's work, but we also have one negative change that hard copies of the Moredun technical bulletins will not continue to be circulated to NSA members, these being routinely available via the website only.

There has been no recent progress on decisions over the release of Lynx into Kielder, however we are aware of a national park meeting on this subject and the notes for this meeting look as though the NP are raising questions. There has been no official word from Natural England although the informal signs are encouraging. No announcements have been made on the release of Lynx although it appears that the process is on hold. Without getting carried away this currently looks like a short term success for our work. We are keeping up the pressure. where we can and have done recent press releases as well as magazine articles (recently in the Scottish Field) where the opportunity arises.

Sheep worrying/attacks:

Our work on sheep worrying and dog attacks continues. This Spring's focus on a social media campaign received substantial attention and has been a success.

NSA took part in a Sheepwatch UK conference in June, playing a leading role, and following this we had a presence at the Police Chiefs' conference on rural crime.

We are currently working with CLA on wording relating to reporting crimes to give a consistent message to anyone who has suffered a sheep worrying attack

CAP

The 25 year Environmental plan was released in January/February, the Ag Bill is being consulted on, and a food policy is supposedly being developed via the Government's Industrial strategy. This will all replace the CAP to become our domestic agriculture and food policy.

Trade & marketing

Trade continues to be the first priority relating to Brexit discussions and still much of the UKLIBG meetings are taken up with related subjects such as the future trade arrangement with the EU, the development of new markets, health certification, tariff rate quota shares relating to existing EU import quotas (see above).

Defra are consulting on mandatory price reporting with this consultation closing late August.

NSA continues to feed into AHDB market development strategies with the aim of influencing their spending and activities. At all times we are pushing to maximise the spend on marketing, product development, and promotions both in our domestic market and overseas.

The last Smokies working group took place on the 19th January where the group agreed a Standard Operating Procedure and protocols for microbiological testing. The next step led to a meeting with VMD on the 23rd April where protocols and approaches for veterinary medicine residue testing were discussed. This meeting felt positive with a suggested way forward being identified – the next steps are to produce a draft set of protocols for discussion in early July – for which we are still waiting.

Preparations are being made for Love Lamb Week – with press releases drafted and about to go out. Our NG Ambassadors continue to be a focus for this work and our support of Countryfile Live concentrates on increasing interest in lamb.

The NSA Heritage Breeds market feasibility study is well underway and we submitted our end of phase 2 report to the Prince’s Countryside Fund, and had our work approved with the release of funds for phase 3 which is consumer and end market research. A tasting exercise was done at Sheep 2018 and we are close to proposing a model of operation involving AHDB.

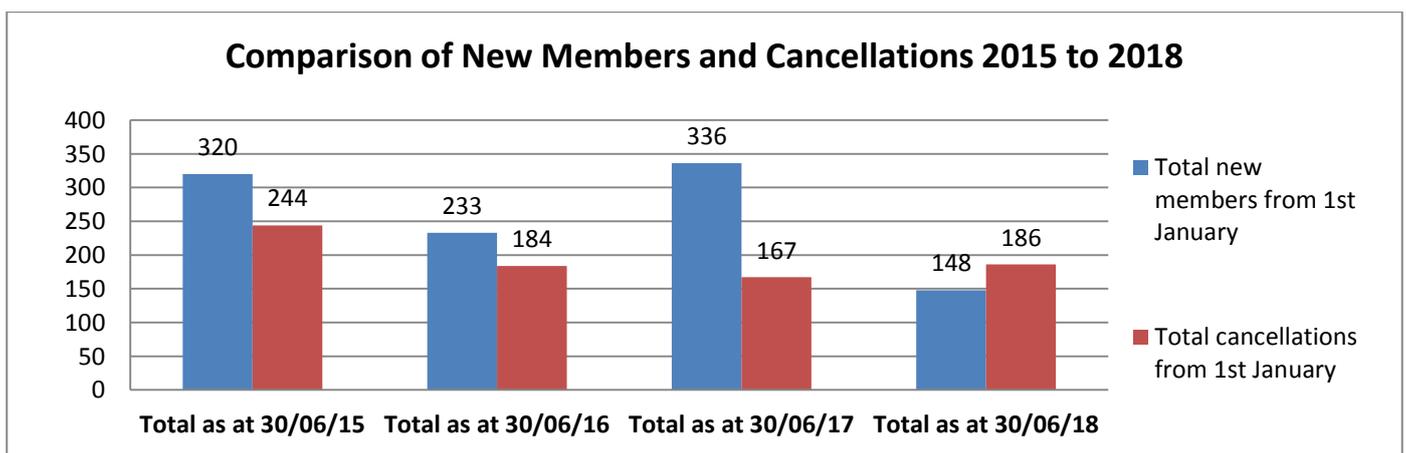
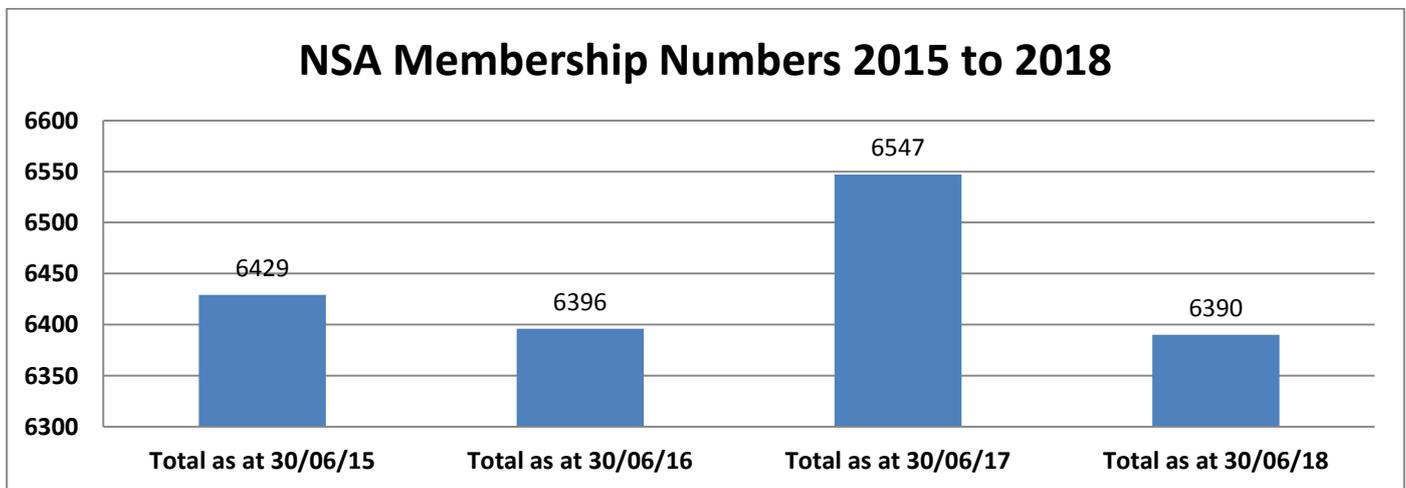
Electronic identification, movement recording, and alternatives to 6 days standstill

The Defra led Traceability Design Board (now called Traceability Design Users Group) continues to meet regularly, the aim being an all species database for movements combined with a Livestock Information Programme. In late July we had confirmation that the business plan had been accepted with AHDB being the deliverer of the LIP and an industry steering group being central to its operation. Policy meetings run alongside TDUG meetings discussing issues such as the 6 day standstill and movements reporting.

Farm Assurance

There has been little action regarding RTA. The new standards were publicised and introduced and RTA held a workshop at Sheep 2018 on the new antibiotic standards. We have received no criticisms from members as yet. Adam Watson has become the NSAs RTA Beef and Lamb Board member and has attended one meeting to date, reporting that the subject of life time assurance is to be raised again soon. Following this we have been contacted by RTA to request an attendance at a forthcoming English committee to discuss lifetime assurance.

Membership Report for Board Meeting August 2018 – 2nd Quarter 2018



Members who pay subs by type:	Total as at 30/06/15	Total as at 30/06/16	Total as at 30/06/17	Total as at 30/06/18	Notes
Direct Debit	5294	5373	5542	5497	
Cash	1047	936	920	807	
Other	0	0	0	0	
Members who do not pay subs by type:					
No of Honorary members	22	21	22	23	
No of Life members	66	66	61	63	
Keith County Show Winners	0	0	2	0	No payment for first year of membership
2012 Young Handlers Competition	0	0	0	0	No payment for first year of membership
South East Region - Sheep Breeders Round Table	0	0	0	0	No payment for first year of membership
Total	6429	6396	6547	6390	
Under 27's	335	341	440	365	
Overseas	69	61	61	58	Includes 1 Life Members
Affiliated Breed Societies	82	81	83	83	
Total new members from 1st January	320	233	336	148	
New members from 1 January not paid up	2	0	3	1	
Cancellations by members (existing/new) from 1st January	75	83	61	77	
Cancellations (existing/new) by NSA from 1st January	169	101	106	109	Cancelled after 3 months
Existing members from 1 January not paid up	4	5	11	16	Awaiting DD Details/Recalls
Inactive/Renew in 4 weeks (yet to renew)		30	18	59	Current and previous month
Members by Region					
Scotland	852	839	852	858	
Northern	1055	1036	1085	1057	
Wales	1296	1314	1365	1335	
Central	459	441	453	431	
Eastern	300	290	283	282	
South West	853	823	861	796	
South East	700	731	695	680	
Northern Ireland	167	185	181	183	
Marches	678	676	711	710	
Overseas	69	61	61	58	
Total No of Membership	6429	6396	6547	6390	

* Corporate Supporters as at 31/06/18 = 52 companies, sending Weekly Email Update and/or Sheep Farmer to 262 recipients

New members

Month	Total New Mems 2017	2017 No Under 27	Total New Mems 2018	2018 No Under 27
April	121	3	100	3
May	216	22	116	5
June	336	25	148	9

Membership Sources (Reason for Joining) – January to June 2018 (Descending Order)

Source	Number
Mem Pack Request Website	39
Lambing List	18
INTERNET	15
Gift	14
Scotsheep	10
Eastern Region Winter Fair	7
Membership Pack	7
Other	6
Ram Sales	6
Young Ambassador	6
Balmoral Show	3
Sheep Dog Handling Course Scotland	3
Next Generation	2
Next Generation Newsletter Website	2
Not Known	2
2013 Welsh Sheep	1
Advertise on Weekly Email Update	1
Recommended	1
Reinstated	1
Sheep South West	1
South Sheep	1
Welsh Commons	1

Membership Cancellations (Reason for leaving) – January to June 2018 (Descending Order)

Source	Number
Did not renew	89
No reason given	29
Other - see Extra Info	15
Sold Flock	10
DD Recalled	9
Retired	8
Deceased	6
Advised by bacs DD cancelled	4
Sheep Farmer Returned	4
Subs too high	3
Leaving Sheep Farming	2

Renewal Returned	2
Addressee Gone Away	1
Cutting costs	1
No longer sells at Ram Sales	1
Payer Retired	1
Reducing Expenses	1

Membership Campaigns

The second quarter has seen NSA give away its second part of the membership recruitment prize draw of Tornado wire to a young farmer in Kent. We are also collecting lots of valuable information from our data caption campaigns with Swannndri and Redback, leading to potential new members.

Great Yorkshire show saw us bring in 12 new members (the highest we have ever had at the show) and the NSA Sheep Event saw us bring a further 70. Having also just returned from a successful Royal Welsh, this too will have a positive impact on our membership figures. It is worth noting however that footfall at shows this year is noticeably down, with a lot of shows being a lot quieter, this could be attributed to a number of reasons including economic climate and the weather.

We continue to find out why people are not renewing their membership, this will be able to help us with having a better position on retention.

We continue to be supported by LAA, with various auction marts sending out 50-2000 leaflets on a bi monthly basis, which is an invaluable way of drawing attention to NSA and membership.

Communications

Work with Woodland Trust. In Q2 we concluded our work with Woodland Trust to produce an updated version of the Sheep & Trees booklet. The revised booklet is more clearly appropriate for all of the UK, with a case study from a farmer in each of the four nations. It is also suitable for Government officials and other policy makers/influences as it looks at the role of trees in post-Brexit farm support packages and public good reward programmes. The booklet was launched at the Sheep Event. Hard copies are available via NSA Head Office and it can be [downloaded from the website here](#).

Recent press coverage

- Drip-feeding of Sheep Event preview material dominated Q2, with the NSA team working alongside Pinstone Communications on that. Pinstone also liaised with Farmers Guardian and Farmers Weekly directly on previews running in both publications.
- Away from the Sheep Event, press releases were issued regularly with a six, five and seven different topics covered in April, May and June respectively. Of these, the best take-up was of press releases around the NSA position on culling ravens. This had an exceptionally good take up in the farming press, and also had coverage in the Times and Daily Mail. NSA comments on rewilding / the Saddleworth wildfires also did well in the regional press and farming press, including Phil being quoted on the front page of Farmers Guardian. The NSA comments on the Asda-Sainsburys merger in April did well in the agricultural press, as well as being picked up by the Express and the Metro.
- In addition to our own press work, NSA is continuing to provide a paid-for service to SCOPS to issue press releases and do social media. It is good for NSA's profile to be seen to be doing this, as the SCOPS releases are picked up very well by the agricultural press and perform well on social media (more below).

Website

- Website traffic has remained stable during the second quarter of 2018 averaging 20,104 visits per month. However, these figures for 2018 do not reflect favourably with 2017 or 2016 and we think there is some issue with the way Pedigree Farmer (our website provider) is reporting the figures across all the NSA websites. We are investigating this and hope to have an answer for the next Board Report.
- Visits to the website from a mobile device continue to remain high, with approximately 60% of visitors using a mobile device rather than a traditional computer/laptop.
- The percentage of new visitors to the website continues to increase with more than 82% of visitors to the website doing so for the first time. This is encouraging as it shows that interest in the association and the information provided on the website is growing – however it also demonstrates that people are not returning

to use the website frequently, highlighting that perhaps more/different content is needed to keep people coming back.

Social media

- The reach of social media posts via the platforms of Facebook and Twitter continues to grow with 9,147 likes at the end of the second quarter on Facebook and 9,868 followers on Twitter. This compares with 7,058 likes on Facebook and 8,066 followers on Twitter at the end of the second quarter of 2017.
- An increase of almost 1,000 new followers on Facebook has been seen since the beginning of 2018 alone.
- Efforts to increase NSA activity on social media sites continue with a range of posts being added in an effort to appeal to different audiences. Therefore, in addition to posts about NSA events and news we try to add light-hearted posts and images that generate support and comradery between our audience.
- NSA has produced a series of graphics designed for use on social media (examples pictured). These feature impactful images with thought-provoking statements or those hoping to generate membership enquiries.
- Total quarterly reach (amount of people having seen a post or tweet on their pages) on Facebook has been almost 250,000 and on Twitter a reach of almost 220,000. It would be expected for these figures to be lower, as the first quarter included the intensive social media campaign on sheep worrying by dogs, however these are in line with figures from the first quarter – again showing the increase in the NSA’s presence on social media sites.
- For the first time we trialled a paid for ‘Boosted’ Facebook post to see the increased impact. £10 was paid to boost a post meaning it would appear on interested party’s social media pages even if they did not follow the NSA page. It wouldn’t be appropriate to judge the success of this on one post, but it has given us the confidence to try it another couple of times to more accurately gauge its worth.
- The most popular Facebook posts during April, May and June have been:
 - April – SCOPS post – High Nematodirus risk – Reach of almost **30,000** people
 - May – ‘Calling all young shepherds’ – NSA South East Region Next Generation event – Boosted post – Reach of more than **9,000** people
 - June – ‘Thank a sheep farmer’ – Reach of almost **55,000** people. Almost 2,000 people interacted with the post (Commented, liked, shared etc)

Top three on Facebook	Top three on Twitter
	
54,876 people reached	15,919 impressions
1,970 reactions, comments and shares	573 engagements
	
29,796 people reached	9,206 impressions

208 reactions, comments and shares	176 engagements
 <p>National Sheep Association Published by Katie James (17:28 June at 10:23) · G</p> <p>As the devastating wildfire continues to rage over Saddleworth Moor (NSA) warning of the increased risk of similar disasters if proposals to rewild man of the UK's upland areas are pursued.</p> <p>Read the full NSA press release on this at https://www.national-sheep.org.uk/.../nsa-warns-of-link-between-...</p> <p>NATIONAL SHEEP.ORG.UK NSA warns of link between upland rewilding and devastating wildfires News National Sheep Association</p>	 <p>National Sheep Assoc @natsheep SCOPS is urging sheep farmers to take action as first case of 4-AD (orange) wormer resistance is reported in the UK #SCOPS http://www.scops.org.uk/news/327/scops-calls-for-action-as-first-case-of-resistance-to-group-4-wormer-monepantel-is-reported-in-the-uk/ ... pic.twitter.com/g7b8EWTwDA</p>
13,039 people reached	9,038 impressions
593 reactions, comments and shares	195 engagements

NSA Next Generation

- Profiles of the finalists for the NSA Next Generation Shepherd of the Year competition the Sheep Event in Malvern have been part of our preview work for the event, including press work and the Event Guide.
- An NSA Next Generation workshop will be part of the workshop programme at NSA Sheep 2018, repeated twice during the day and focusing specifically on employed shepherds.
- The second delivery session for the 2018 NSA Next Generation Ambassador group was held in May. This was two days in mid-Wales and covered: benchmarking and calculating production costs; grassland management; parasite control; and Ambassador engagement in Love Lamb Week and other projects they might want to get involved in to raise the profile of the Sheep sector.
- The NSA Samuel Wharry Memorial Award for the Next Generation will be announced at the Sheep Event Dinner and application invited this autumn. Details of this and a full plan for NSA Next Generation activity in 2019 will be circulated soon.

Breed Societies / Breed Society Forum

- The NSA Breed Society Forum was held on Thursday 3rd May. Attendance wasn't great, but those who came got a huge amount out of it. It was particularly useful to get wider engagement in a genetic scoping project that NSA is supporting with Defra, AHDB and SRUC.
- Following success with an NSA Next Generation email newsletter, issued quarterly, we are looking to do something similar for pedigree breeders later this year. This will be sent to breed society secretaries and representatives, but also anyone else who expresses an interest, to see if this will gain more engagement than we currently get from information just sent to breed society secretaries. For example, less than 20% of them open the NSA Weekly Email Update each Friday.

George Hedley Memorial Award

The presentation of the 2017 George Hedley Memorial Award was made at the pre Sheep Event dinner. The award being made posthumously was accepted by the late Samuel Wharry's sisters who very kindly travelled from Northern Ireland to attend the dinner.

The nomination requests for the 2018 have been sent out with a closing date of October 26th.

Internal and HQ

Policies, organisation, management & staff

Joanne Briggs is now back to 4 days a week and Nicola Smith is also up to 4 days a week having done all our work on GDPR (data protection) and now focussing fully on research activities. Katie and Ellie have settled in well and Jo is doing more policy related work particularly on the sheep health side.

A new appointment has been made to look after the Marches region and induction training is under way.

Governance

The 2017 audit process is complete and the end of year report and financial statements will be discussed at the 8th August Board meeting with the intention of signing them off in advance of our AGM the following day. The reports and completion memorandum are available and there are a reduced number of actions to take forward. One serious change in HMRC requirements has been identified – from April 2019 all tax returns need to be made directly from an accounts software package. This means a potentially serious change in the way the NSA does its accounts across all cost centres. This will be discussed at the August 8th Board meeting.

Data Protection

The majority of data protection work is complete and training and information has been provided to all staff including regional managers. Most of the work will now be maintaining records and ensuring compliance.

Sheep Centre site

Bats Loft – Nothing to report.

Firs Farmhouse – Nothing to report.

The barn – We have accepted a quote for the upgrading of the barn and this work will be done during the winter. NSA building at the RWS – Progress steps are being made – following the last Board meeting we have extended the business plan to include the cost of doing nothing, we have instructed architects to conduct an environmental survey, dig test holes and complete detailed drawings. This will come to the Board again before we take a decision on proceeding with planning permission and any tendering process. A meeting has been held with RWAS to explore funding contributions or an improved deal, but we are settled on a no rent lease deal and have more work to do on various share arrangements between NSA Cymru, NSA W&B ram sales, and the RWAS.

Accounts and audit

Debtors are currently £8,397.59, of which £3,600 is Sheep Event Sponsorship (which will be paid this week), £1,200 is Corporate Support income and the rest is just general bits and pieces. The Corporate Support money is becoming more of an issue just recently, with some companies taking anything up to six months to settle their invoices. I'm not sure why this should be. All stand income for the Sheep Event that had fallen due was paid before the event, however there were a few invoices that were a bit late going out that are still outstanding.

NSA Sheep Event – Report from Helen Davies

Now all sponsorship has been invoiced it will be around £62K which is slightly below the budget, and less than 2016. Trade stands have grossed £87K which is slightly up on 2016 and 7K more than the budget. The gate money is up on 2016 by roughly 6K and up on budget by just over 4K. We have not had a chance to calculate the number of NSA Members that attended this time. Sponsorship is getting harder and we must start to think of ways to be more inventive to retain and obtain new sponsors.

The event will again leave a healthy surplus but at the time of this report the invoice for the dinner had not yet been received along with a few other outstanding items. I anticipate a similar surplus to 2016.

We have had an exceptional amount of international interest and very positive feedback. Farm Tours went very well.

All demos, seminars and workshops had large crowds all day. There was a very positive atmosphere at the event with a lot of business done. Trade stands are already enquiring for future events.

Dinner was very good and the atmosphere was brilliant, the raffle raised £1744 for RABI.

I am due to meet with Ken Nottage on the 9th Aug to discuss the date for 2020 and future charging arrangements as Three Counties want to charge for the hire of crowd barriers, tables chairs etc. going forward.

Many thanks to all NSA people who help and volunteer to make these events a huge success.

NSA Regions

Report from Helen Davies, Cymru/Wales region

NSA HAS BUSY WEEK AT ROYAL WELSH SHOW: The Royal Welsh Show ran from Monday morning until Thursday evening and NSA had its normal presence with many staff and NSA Cymru/Wales Region elected officers present. NSA was sited at the head of its own building on the showground that housed many trade stands for sheep breeds, ram breeders, sheepdogs, EID Cymru, and other sheep-related trades. Although the week's high

temperatures did not affect the show, the impact of the heat and drought on forage availability and feed costs were very much the focus of many conversations.

I took the opportunity to stress the importance of the sheep industry within the agricultural sector when I met the Prime Minister at the Royal Welsh Show. The Prime Minister took on board the message from the sheep industry and said the Government was still negotiating with the EU to ensure the best deal for agriculture as a whole, but that she recognised the importance of the sheep sector within that. Theresa May's visit to the sheep section of the show coincided with the interbreed pairs final, sponsored by NSA Cymru/Wales Region.

There was also an in-depth meeting and discussion with Hannah Blythyn, AM and Welsh Government Environment Minister; a visit to the stand by Secretary of State Michael Gove; and various meetings with Meat and Livestock Australia, FUW, TFA, HCC; and several more.

Quarantine rules are beginning to affect the entries at small and mid-week shows and NSA will keep the pressure up on Welsh Government to review these rules at the earliest opportunity.

Next meeting 21th August, when the main topic will be the Welsh Government's consultation on support Welsh farming after Brexit.

New EID rules will come into force 1st Sept when batch recording will go and individual numbers will need to be documented on the movement forms, this coincides with the 10 mile rule review.

NSA Cymru will be attending a meeting of the Black Mountains Group to discuss Sheep Scab and is currently working on a paper with other industry representatives to put forward to Welsh Government

NSA Welsh Sheep 21st May 2019 Glynllifon Site, LL54 5DU

Wales and Border Ram Sale report from Jane Smith

The Early Sale has 625 entries and takes place Monday 6th August, we have a slight reduction in ram lambs which would indicate that perhaps more of the "bottom end" lambs have already been cashed with the excellent prices for lamb earlier in the year. Hopefully that will be carried forward to the Main Sale on 17th September. Celebrating 40 years in 2018, we can now confirm a visit by the Princess Royal in the morning and we have a planning meeting on July 31st to confirm her itinerary. She will be at the sale from 11am until 12.45. In addition to her visit we have produced a commemorative booklet which has been circulated to all members and as a giveaway at the Sheep Event and the Royal Welsh. At the Main Sale we will be giving all vendors, inspectors and bike riders a specially commissioned baseball cap, again to celebrate the anniversary. We allocated a budget of £10K to this celebration and have come in below budget.

Northern Ireland Region – report from Edward Adamson

MAY

Attended NFU Brexit Roundtable Meeting

I have been attending 1 - 2 meetings per month as part of N.I. Animal Health & Welfare Strategy Group putting together an up to date Strategy for N.I.

Rural Development Programme meetings continue 1 per month

I attended a Round Table Discussion on Brexit hosted by Margaret Ritchie, former MP, where Michael Creed TD, Minister for Agriculture in Ireland was present

Lleyn Council Meeting

NSA organised a coach trip to Scotsheep

RUAS, Balmoral took up all the second week of May

Attended an Agrisearch Sheep Committee Meeting

JUNE

I attended an Efficient Lamb Production farmwalk organised by AFBI & AHDB in Armagh

UK Policy & Tech Meeting in Birmingham

Regional Managers Meeting in Malvern

Lleyn Meeting in Hillsborough

Attended a stakeholder meeting on Ammonia gases in N.I.

Attended a stakeholder meeting and formation of a group involved in AMR and forming links with farmers and recording antibiotic use

Attended Sheep Event in Malvern

Hosted 6 USA delegates on a visit to N. I.

Scottish Region – report from George Milne

16/5/18 Parliamentary reception to present “The Complimentary Role of Sheep in Upland and Hill Areas” and “The Benefits of Sheep in Arable Rotations” 60 guests and press and MSPs were in attendance at this highly successful event.

30/5/18 Scotsheep held at Kings arms farm, Ballantrae.

21-24/6/18 Royal Highland show.

John Fyall attended a Brexit Scottish Industry Round Table meeting on the 18th June where all sectors came together to discuss various political issues. On the same day he met with QMS to discuss further funding and the new lamb campaign.

Mr Ewing had direct discussions with John prior to the Highland Show when he announced his support proposals, and attended the stand at the Royal Highland Show to discuss in particular LFASS and many other issues relevant to the sheep sector.

During the Highland there was a Cross Party Parliamentary Group from Westminster on the Future of Scottish Farming where NSA asked for some certainty on how money will be allocated to devolved nations in terms of Pillar 1&2, PGI's, labour and freedom to devise Scottish Policy. (Please see full report on the RHS.)

A letter was sent to Nicola Sturgeon and the relevant ministers on Carbon Emissions Targets setting out our view that they were setting an unrealistic and inhibitive farming target.

Kathy Peebles represented NSA at an industry OPA meeting held at the Moredun and a meeting held in the Scottish Parliament hosted by Emma Harper MSP on Dog worrying.

Since my return to work we have responded to two large consultations, firstly The National Council of Rural Advisers document entitled “*Together We can, Together We will*” The consultation incorporated people, infrastructure and a vision for a potential new rural economic strategy. Within our reply we focused heavily on the important role sheep farmers and sheep farming play to support all of our social, economic and environmental benefits to rural Scotland.

The second paper, launched by the Scottish Government “*Stability and Simplicity*” contains proposals for a rural funding transition period - invited comments on options for stabilising and simplifying support for land managers, individuals and organisations across Scotland in the period immediately after the UK leaves the European Union, whilst ensuring that we maintain our environmental standards and meet climate change targets.

NSA Highland Sheep will be held in Caithness on Wednesday, June 12, 2019. The one-day event to promote the Highland sheep industry will be kindly hosted by the Sutherland family at Sibmister overlooking the north coast of mainland Scotland four miles east of Thurso.

Significant external meetings and contacts not covered above

April 30th SHAWG and Defra meeting re Health and Harmony and sheep health

May 1st AHWBE AGM and discussion on Health and Harmony

May 3rd Breed society forum

May 3rd Meeting with Tesco re Cop trials

May 4th Welsh Commons Forum meeting

May 10th Antibiotics resistance workshop with APHA

May 11th Defra Farming productivity meeting

May 16th Scottish parliamentary reception

May 17th Black Mountains Partnership meeting

May 21st UKLIBG meeting

May 22nd HRH celebratory event

May 24 and 25th ISAGE research meeting Bilbao

May 29th PSGHS meeting re MV

May 30th Scotsheep

May 31st Meeting with Zoetis

May 31st Defra 6 day standstill meeting

June 5th Meeting with Moredun to discuss future funding relationship

June 5th Moredun OPA workshop

June 6th UK P&T meeting

June 7th FMD table top exercise

June 11th 6 day standstill workshop with Defra

June 12th 1st MLC SL scrutiny oversight committee meeting

June 13th Regional Managers meeting

June 14th Meeting with Steve Hughson RWAS re building

June 15th UKLIBG meeting

June 16th 3 Counties show

June 19th Meeting with TFA to discuss Brexit positions

June 19th Defra and industry meeting on carcass splitting and sheep ageing
June 21st Royal Highland Show
June 22nd Sheepwatch UK conference
June 25th APPG for farming meeting
July 2nd Meeting with Joe Farren and Trevor Richards British Wool
July 3rd APPGAW evidence session on small abattoir controls and regs
July 5th Meet with HRH in Black Mountains
July 9th Meet with MP Teresa Villiers
July 10th Senedd exhibition
July 10th Livestock core group meeting
July 12th FGP
July 13th MLCSL scrutiny committee sub group meeting
July 13th UKLIBG meeting
July 16th MLCSL scrutiny committee wider group meeting
July 18th Sheep 2018
July 19th Meeting with Laurence Pierce wool merchants
July 23rd and 24th Royal Welsh show
July 26th consultation meeting with Public Health Wales re impact of Brexit on farmers