

Activities report to NSA Board 5th May 2021

This report refers to main activities in quarter 1 of 2021. Activities are presented under a set of common headings.

NSA policy, technical and research work

Brexit: Deal / no deal

18th March NSA sent a letter of support to Mr. Drique for his application for a Border Control Post at his premises near Calais; a note was sent to all Breed Societies to ask that further letters of support to be sent. If the application is successful, it would be expected to be operational sometime in June 2021. A follow mail was sent 20th April to check on progress – no response at this time. Until we have a BCP with facilities to handle live animals on the EU side of the short straights we cannot export any live sheep at all. It has been confirmed that we have the facilities for livestock to come into the UK from the EU.

Brexit: Future farm support

Progress is being made in England with future farm support, with the Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot having closed for EoIs and over 2,200 applications being received. These will be reviewed by Defra and around 1500 applications invited. Work on the Phase 2 standards continues, unenclosed grazing, dry stone walls, and heritage features. The aim is that the SFI is more widely opened for scheme applications in 2022 but there is increasing worry that the learnings from the pilot will not have had time to be taken into account. Development work on LNR and LR continues. More work is being done on monitoring and enforcement in relation to the SFI pilot. No further progress has been reported on Pathway.

Sheep in upland areas (including sheep stratification)

There are still concerns over the future of upland sheep farming and reports that stock numbers are being driven downwards when CSS agreements are being renewed. The big pressure is coming from tree planting and rewilding initiatives. 22nd March: NSA provided a response to a request from DEFRA for views on Guidance for Heather & Grassland burning (England) Regulations 2021; & followed up at a stakeholder meeting 21st April. The new regulations come into force 1st May 2021 & guidance provided would give clarity on where the regulations apply and how they will support the use of burning where it is expedient. In addition, DEFRA are in the process of finalising a free training programme to be made available during the first year of the new regulations & there are further “drop-in sessions” planned for this summer (2021) – more details to come. Finally, DEFRA confirmed an intention to review the regulations in Spring 2022.

Integrating trees into sheep farming systems

This is our response to tree planting targets – an integration of trees and sheep rather than large scale block plantings. The subject is extremely high profile due to tree planting targets in relation to climate change and nature recovery. NSA is very active in this area and regularly asked for opinion. Our response is based on a need for greater recognition of the valuable role of grasslands (a view that has gained traction) and that trees can be good for nature and climate, and for soil management and sheep welfare – but it should be a case of the right trees in the right place with clarity over whether trees are for timber production or for habitat gain.

Rewilding

Reintroductions:

Lynx & Wolves: monitoring the media for further news & updates for the proposed release by Nature England as reported in the Telegraph 6th March – “Boris Johnson has asked officials to set up a rewilding “task force” to gauge appetite for returning lynx and wolves to England. A group of stakeholders is being brought together by DEFRA & will contain farmers and anglers among ecologists and other experts. Stakeholders in the taskforce will help draw up plans to bring back lost species and discuss any issues landowners may have that need to be mitigated before any scheme goes ahead. Animals under consideration include lynx and wolves, as it is hoped they can keep England's rocketing deer population.

Boris Johnson and a powerful group of cabinet ministers, including Lord Goldsmith and Michael Gove, are enthusiastic about the idea of reintroducing animals which went extinct in this country hundreds or even thousands of years ago. Carrie Symonds is also a fan of the idea, and now works for The Aspinall Foundation, which reintroduces rare animals to the wild in other countries. under control.”

Sea Eagles: NSA responded to a consultation organised by the Wild Ken Hill Estate who are applying for a licence to release WTSEs on the north Norfolk coast. Our response opposed the release suggesting we should focus on the loW population to fully understand the outcomes before charging ahead with another release.

The loW release goes on, with two annual releases having taken place. Birds have ranged widely and spent significant time in other parts of the UK. All have returned to the loW. Birds are feeding on rabbits, gulls, and fish mainly and are catching live prey earlier than predicted. No incidents relating to sheep have been reported.

Sheep health and welfare (including NSA involvement in RHWG, RUMA, SAGG and SCOPS)

NSA taking an active role in the Ruminant Health and Welfare Group that has now taken over from SHAWG. A health and welfare conference is being planned for the summer. Questions are being asked over its effectiveness but the view is that its too early to assess and needs at least a year under its belt. We remain active in all other health and welfare groups and one of the priority topics continues to be gathering evidence and data on antibiotic use. We appear to be getting closer to our position of the prescribing vets being able to upload data with the permission of the farmer, and for data to be uploaded from farm software programmes, but this is a technical challenge not yet overcome.

RDPE Scab project: 30th March Moredun (MRI) announced that agreement with DEFRA was now signed & the next steps for the project were ready to be taken. The sub-contractor agreement between MRI and NSA to cover the project for the South West region (Cornwall & Devon) has been signed. With the project team now in place & working with the Exmoor Hill Farming Network (EHFN), a kick-off meeting was held on the 20th April with local advisors (Vets & RAMAs) to introduce the project & provide answers to any questions relating to the project activities & time-plan. Further meetings are planned through May to involve other stakeholders & to recruit farmers to the project.

TSE controls

This subject is now being picked up via the LCAG, although the enthusiasm from FSA appears low. A letter has been written to FSA aiming to restart discussions over this. All the time we are edging towards a potential BSE free status and we need to ensure that Scrapie controls are proportionate to any revised risk. The FSA will be averse to be seen to be relaxing and food safety controls.

Supply chain concerns (including price reporting, classification and NSA involvement in Hallmark scrutiny committee)

The CCSC continues to meet quarterly. Nothing to report except that performance has been maintained throughout Covid. Mandatory price reporting and carcass classification discussions are starting again with Defra and a recent consultation meeting was held with Defra. This is the main area of activity under the heading of improving fairness in trade within the Agricultural Bill.

Farm assurance

The main area to report on is the Red Tractor Standards consultation in England (although developments here are likely to affect devolved schemes in time). From a starting point of the consultation including a wide raft of new standards including new environmental standards we have managed to get most of these excluded from what is likely to come forward. For the environmental standards it is likely they might develop a new optional environmental module, and there is a likelihood that many in the supply chain quickly start to require this. RTA will inform scheme members in July 2021 with implementation from November. Phil S and Bryan G continue on the RTA TAC, with Phil still filling in for the NSA place on the

B&L Board. We are challenging RTA's Terms of Reference which require us to put forward a number of nominations that they choose from – English Committee are clear that they would like Bryan G to fill this role.

Engagement with AHDB

Connections with AHDB are strong and positive. AHDB are showing more general support for British heritage sheep and are engaged closely on market intelligence and the reputation group. Recent conversations have been had over future AHDB governance and the expected ballot in line with recent ballots in the horticulture and potato sector.

Rural crime (including sheep worrying by dogs)

NSA Survey on Sheep Worrying by dogs closed 19.04.21, with 616 responses, it was the highest ever recorded. The Northern region had the highest number of survey responses, possibly combination of high sheep density & large areas of common land & national parks; for Scotland where there has been publicity around legislation changes (Emma Harper Bill), the awareness is high & for the South East expected to be high, due to higher urbanised proximity & density.

Some key points that the survey identified:

- 2021 results mostly correspond to those in 2017 and surveys completed in earlier years back to 2013 & again several respondents reported more than 100 incidents in the last 12 months.
- During Covid19 lockdown, more than 2/3rds of respondents have seen an increase in incidents, put down to more dog owners being at home with more time to exercise dogs.
- 56% of respondents reported a moderate to severe impact on their mental health due to suffering a sheep worrying incident
- Respondents agree that a change in legislation is required – 82% supporting the recent change in Scottish law, to be extended across the UK.

NSA Breakfast Club Webinar 5th May organised to present survey results, to be chaired by Neil Parish MP. Three workshops also planned during the period 30th April – 14th May to focus on positive actions to reduce the incidents, including guidance on direct communication with dog owners, practice perspectives from the police & use of the media to raise awareness to drive a change in behaviour.

Farm safety

NSA Communications Officer Katie James joined a meeting of the Farm Safety Partnership in March. The meeting discussed the usual reported fatalities for the period since the previous meeting and looked towards the focus of the next quarter and its targeted messages specific to safety when working with livestock (predominantly cattle). The meeting also heard findings from a recent study in ATV safety which led to a feature on this topic being included in the April / May edition of Sheep Farmer magazine.

Policy work in the devolved nations – see section on regional activities

Any other livestock research with NSA involvement not already covered

11th March – NSA joined an update meeting on Wellcome Trust FIELD project (Farm Level Interdisciplinary approaches to Endemic Livestock Disease) – no further action at this time.

12th April - Treeconomy and sheep - applying for a grant via Kering that requires sheep leather as a core commodity within a regenerative agriculture programme. A regenerative agriculture exemplar conversion plan is being developed on c.1000 acres in Norfolk, which includes grazing animals, which will now be c.300 sheep. Treeconomy's role is landscape monitoring and carbon calculation. Stakeholders include Norfolk County Council & Norfolk Wildlife Trust. NSA have provided input on native UK sheep breeds suitability, tannery contacts & guidance on basic flock management costings.

20th April update on SHEEPUK – “Genomics of sheep breed diversity in the UK” (Michael Bruford @ Cardiff Uni) - “we have had a couple more reviews, with some good comments but unfortunately no news yet. We

have been planning a contingency program both for an application to Horizon Europe (fork2farm program) and a follow-on application to BBSRC but both are contingent on knowing the result of the BBR proposal.”

Letter of support provided:

20th April - to Dr Lisa Norton (CEH) for “Transformational social and environmental innovations in livestock farming” bid.

Any other consultations not covered under topics above

Submitted

DEFRA: Improvements to animal welfare in transport – submitted 25-Feb-21

DEFRA: The regulation of genetic technologies – submitted 16-Mar-21

UK Parliament: Call for evidence: Moving animals across borders – submitted 16-Mar-21

Gov Wales: Proposals for the legislative framework to support Welsh agriculture - submitted 26-Mar-21

DEFRA: The Heather and Grass etc. Burning (England) Regulations 2021 – submitted 22-Mar-21

DEFRA: Draft Policy Statement on Environmental Principles. Opened:10-Mar-21 closes: 02-Jun-21

More general topics (updated if and when activity occurs)

• **Genetics**

NSA held a breakfast webinar on the subject of gene editing and replied to the Defra consultation

• **Trade and marketing (including NSA projects around mutton, heritage breeds etc, and NSA involvement in work addressing red meat consumption concerns e.g. Veganuary etc)**

Bob Kennard had submitted a Heritage Lottery bid to support the progress of BHS, but we have now received confirmation that it is too close to commercial activity to be funded this way. There has been interest amongst a network of research organisations in applying to UKRI for a blockchain traceability project using BHS as a vehicle. This could present some opportunities – but we need to get the foundations of BHS operational first. NSA is involved in the AHDB reputation group working to create a strong and attractive reputation for British meat production.

• **Wool**

Wool prices have improved in the region of 10p/kg – nowhere near where they need to be but a positive sign. The backlog of wool has now been sold via the BW auctions so at least volumes are being shifted. NSA has done a lot on wool and innovation and our contribution to Countryfile created a lot of activity, and lot of supporting comments, but some criticism from BW. However we have had some influence in interest in innovation within BW and have recently introduced them to NexGen tree shelters, and a sustainable building organisation based in Exeter. In addition we have had contact with Northampton University that is developing a wool and fibre innovation centre. The Home Office has approved an application to allow shearers to come into the UK on seasonal work permits for the next 3 years although travel restrictions are likely to result in low numbers coming to the UK this season. The industry initiative to encourage British shearers will continue again. BW shearing training will not have taken place over the last year but it is hoped to resume as soon as possible.

NSA communications and knowledge exchange work

Press work

The first quarter of the year has seen a continuation of a large amount of press work undertaken by NSA. A total of 30 press releases were issued during the period, averaging two press releases per week. Towards the end of the period activity has increased further. This could be the result of weekly press planning meetings between NSA Operations Director, NSA Policy and Technical Officer and NSA Communications Officer ensuring plentiful and varied content is sent out by NSA each week.

Main issues dominating press activity have been new Environmental schemes for the UK's farmers and the ongoing issue of sheep worrying by dogs that has seen NSA begin work with public facing organisations such as the RSPCA to raise the profile of the issue.

The table at the end of this report shows the press releases put out in the past quarter per week and their different focuses as well as the social media reach for posts that have been placed on social media relating to the press releases.

Sheep Farmer magazine – see recent editions

Weekly Email Update

The NSA members' Weekly Email Update has been sent to approximately 4000 people each Friday during the last quarter, this includes mailings to members (for whom we have email addresses), breed society representatives and a complimentary list, which includes Defra and devolved Government representatives. The average open rate of the email in the third quarter continues to increase slightly each quarter following the pattern of 2020 ensuring it remains at an above average figure for the industry. The open rate has grown in the past quarter from 32% to 33%.

This is especially encouraging as it indicated that recipients of the email are hopefully valuing the information it is delivering further. Although there is a lot of room to increase the open rate further it is still a positive number when compared to the industry average open rate for emails of 19%.

Website:

Visits to the NSA website increased over the last quarter, from an average of 20,696 visits per month to 27,185 visits per month. Unchanged from Q4 in 2020, people most frequently used the website to view work experience and placement opportunities on the Lambing Work Experience page in this period. Other frequently visited pages were Sheep Breeds in the UK and Next Generation 'Starting your own flock'.

The last quarter saw visits to the website from 57,911 users, generating 207,108 page views. Of these users 89.1% came to the site from direct search or a direct link e.g. in the Weekly Email Update or press activity, and 7.7% came from social media. Work is ongoing to increase traffic to the NSA website from NSA's social media channels.

The NSA Virtual Event website had 2,050 visits in the last quarter, before the site was made dormant on 4th March 2021. Activity on this website aligned with the NSA Breakfast Club webinars, as people used the site to register to attend each week. The move away from the site was to simplify the process for people joining webinars by keeping everything on NSA's main website. This has worked well so far, with NSA receiving positive feedback on the new process.

Social media

The past three months have seen the growth of NSA's social media pages.

At the end of the first quarter of 2021 the NSA Facebook page following had increased by 545 to 17,200 people, and Twitter had increased by 206 followers to 12,787. This growth could be attributed to consistent and meaningful activity on both accounts in the interests of sheep farmers, including frequent press activity.

Posts performed well across a range of topics. Content on sheep worrying by dogs consistently received much attention on both Facebook and Twitter. The NSA Breakfast Club webinars were also well received.

Phil created a Twitter account in February. Phil was warmly welcomed to twitter, with his followers building quickly to 368, largely of well-recognised industry names. This has been beneficial in publicly connecting

Phil to NSA's work and has provided the opportunity to promote NSA's content to a wider audience through Phil's followers.

The top three performing Facebook posts for the quarter were:

1. This infographic to raise awareness of sheep worrying by dogs performed the best throughout the quarter, reaching 197,020 people and generating 8,456 interactions with the post. The post prompted requests to make the image available as a sign, so it is now available as a downloadable poster for farmers to print themselves on the NSA website.



2. Extension of the deadline for Defra's consultation on Improvements to Animal Welfare in Transport and a call for contributions. 17,492 people reached and 771 interactions with the post.



3. The announcement of the George Hedley Memorial Award posthumously to Rachel Lumley. This post reached 14,107 people and received 796 interactions.

 **National Sheep Association**
March 23 · 🌐

The National Sheep Association has announced the posthumous winner of the George Hedley Memorial Award as Cumbrian sheep farmer and passionate voice for lamb consumption Rachel Lumley.

Rachel was the driving force behind the now well-established and successful Love Lamb Week that takes place at the beginning of September each year. She passed away suddenly in July 2020 and is widely missed within the industry.

Read more at go.nationalsheep.org.uk/georgehedleymemorial2021



The top three performing Twitter posts were:

1. "NSA and RSPCA have united to raise public awareness of sheep worrying by dogs, at a time of year that traditionally sees a peak of cases reported. Read our joint press release" 17,285 people reached and 90 interactions with the tweet.
2. "NSA is supporting research by Rothamsted, AHDB, and the University of Bristol investigating on-farm measurements that are truly useful for effective management decisions on UK sheep farms. To contribute, take 5-10 minutes to complete this survey" 13,137 people reached and 73 interactions with the tweet.
3. Sharing a video of a dog chasing sheep: "These kinds of incidents happen far too often. Dog owners, please take note of the stress any dog can cause by chasing or attacking livestock. Keep them on a lead and under control. Farmers, please contribute to NSA's 2021 sheep worrying by dogs survey" 9,226 people reached and 80 interactions with the tweet.

Email Campaigns:

Throughout the last quarter, Becky and Chris have sent targeted email campaigns to non-members who have previously expressed interest in NSA activity or membership, and to members. There were three campaigns this quarter:

1. 'Win one year's free membership!' sent to NSA members on 27th January 2021 to encourage membership sign-ups as part of the competition to win a free membership which ran from 4th January to 12th February 2021. The email had 2,394 recipients and directed 47 people to the NSA website. View the campaign here: <https://mailchi.mp/b20c616ae94b/win-one-year-of-free-nsa-membership>
2. 'Sheep worrying update' sent to members and potential members on 18th March 2021 outlining the current and upcoming work NSA is doing to tackle sheep worrying by dogs, and encouraging potential members to join NSA. The email had 6,216 recipients and redirected 102 people to the NSA website as well as 321 people to the sheep worrying survey. View the campaigns here: <https://mailchi.mp/416667d68973/nsa-needs-your-support-to-combat-sheep-worrying-by-dogs> and <https://mailchi.mp/c2fa7fc0761f/nsa-needs-your-support-to-combat-sheep-worrying-by-dogs>

3. 'NSA and Solway campaign' sent to potential members who attended the Breakfast Club webinars once on 30th March 2021, and again to those who had not opened the email on 6th April 2021, advertised the current competition running with Solway Recycling to entice potential members. The email had 87 recipients and redirected five people to the NSA website. View the campaign here: <https://mailchi.mp/c1bccdabfe85/win-farm-equipment-with-nsa-and-solway-recycling-392413>

Public-facing activities

AHDB's 1.5million 'eat Balanced' campaign launched in January at the beginning of the quarter. The campaign was a result of several industry bodies including NSA working together in the group named 'Reputation First'. The group aims to highlight the positive qualities of red meat and dairy consumption as well as its methods of production, establishing a solid network of resources to counteract negative coverage directed at UK agriculture as seen in recent years.

A further meeting of this group is planned for the end of April that should deliver some results on the success of the campaign.

Farmer-facing meetings and activities organised / attended

The Breakfast clubs have continued to be popular and have now moved to once a month with speakers already organised for well into the summer and autumn. We have now had chance to analyse the data from the previous ones and we had over 564 people register/ attend all 7 breakfast club webinars. This was nearly being a 50/50 split of members and non-members giving Chris plenty of data to work with. With uncertainty of what can go ahead still nothing is planned for farmer-facing meetings yet but hopefully things can start to happen soon.

Other areas of NSA activity

NSA Next Generation

The 2020 cohort of NSA Next Generation Ambassadors were able to meet online in January for a 'Virtual' delivery session. The meeting gave the group an opportunity to catch up and to hear from NSA Operations Director Joanne Briggs and NSA Communications Officer Katie James on the hopeful plans for future activity in 2021. The session also included a talk from NSA English Committee Chairman Kevin Harrison who the group met on their first delivery session in February 2020 on preparing for lambing this year.

The second half of the delivery session welcomed motivational speaker and life coach Wyn Jones who engaged the group with some inspirational thinking.

As part of the NSA Breakfast Club webinars first recipients of the NSA Next Generation Samuel Wharry travel bursary, Marie Prebble and Charlie Beaty held an online session on the findings of their study trips. The session was well attended with 52 people joining the webinar and 45 so far having viewed the recording online.

The finals of the NSA Next Generation Shepherd competition recommenced in the first quarter of 2021 with the qualifying finalists invited to take part in a series of online tasks. Entries for carcass judging were submitted in March with videos demonstrating safe handling of ATVs and also of drenching technique due to be submitted at the beginning of the second quarter. Response from competitors on the revised online format in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic seem to have been welcomed with only a couple of competitors withdrawing from the competition. The final elements of the contest should see the winners named in June 2021.

Engagement with NSA-affiliated breed societies

Chris and Becky are continuing with the quarterly email that seems to be popular with the breed societies. Chris has had 14 breed societies allow NSA to place an advert free of charge in their flock books or year books. Chris will be presenting to them all at the forum and is putting across the value to the industry of promoting NSA membership to the breed members. The newsletter that is sent to them is also popular giving their members a rounded update on what is happening in the industry and how NSA has been involved in what has been going on.

George Hedley Memorial Award

Arrangements are in place to make the presentation to the family of Rachael Lumley as soon as convenient. Letters to invite nominations for 2021 award will be sent in May.

Activity around separate companies owned solely or partly by NSA

- **British Heritage Sheep** – Report from Bob Kennard. British Heritage Sheep has been set up as a limited company fully owned by NSA. Funding of the project remains an issue, despite widespread moral support. Applications to grant donors, and other sources of finance are being made, including crowdfunding. Logo draft designs being considered. Website addresses of www.heritagesheep.org, www.heritagesheep.co.uk and www.heritagesheep.org.uk have been bought, and linked to the NSA Heritage Sheep webpage as a temporary measure. Regular meetings being held with AHDB. HCC has made financial contribution, and has offered advice on logo design.
- **Ovine Semen Archive.** NSA and RBST representatives who sit on the OSA Board are now meeting monthly as part of a process to rationalise the semen in storage and, therefore, reduce costs. A work plan has been signed off by the Board for Tom Blunt (RBST) and Joanne Briggs (NSA) to progress through each individual breed in the store and, working to agreed protocols and in consultation with breed societies and individuals with owners' shares, recommend how much semen should be retained for each ram and each breed. Each month the Board signs off these recommendations (usually four or five breeds at a time) with a target of December 2021 for all breeds to have been processed. Simultaneously, NSA and RBST is working to support the concept of a national gene bank for livestock, acknowledging that OSA is only being maintained because nothing better exists for the sheep sector.
- **Register of Sheep Advisors.** NSA and BASIS are in the process of registering RoSA and setting up a Board and Steering Group. Individuals wishing to become RoSA registered can apply from 1st June and various launch activities are planned for mid-May and early June. The priority at the moment is getting the Articles correct so the governance and working relationship between NSA and BASIS is on solid foundations.

NSA internal work / operations

Sheep Farmer performance / corporate supporters / income from commercial companies

We have now done two editions of Sheep Farmer with Lavenham Press, the company contracted to produce Sheep Farmer magazine (design, print and mailing). There were a couple of teething problems around mailing on both editions but we have solved those now, and are exploring cheaper alternatives to Royal Mail for future delivery. Having had an average-sized edition in Feb/Mar, advertising sales exceeded expectations in Apr/May with a bumper 56-page edition produced. Helen reports a good level of interest in advertising going forward and is looking to sell against a 'Breeding Focus' in the Jun/Jul and Aug/Sep editions – this is a work in progress but may go a small way to replace the income lost from the NSA Sheep Centre at the Royal Welsh Show. Corporate support packages remain stable and demand for advertising in Weekly Email Update is strong. With the NSA Breakfast Club webinars continuing as a separate entity to the Virtual Sheep Event that they were originally born out of, content of these webinars is strongly driven by NSA with policy topics generally being chosen. This means there is no opportunity for sponsorship by commercial companies, but Helen is exploring sponsored webinars. The first sponsored webinar of 2021 will be in late April.

Governance

Three new Trustees have been approved by the Board

Sheep Centre site

A minor repair has been carried out to the roof at Bats Loft and the gas boilers in the Firs Farmhouse and the main NSA office have been serviced. Two diseased ash trees were removed in conjunction with other tree-work being carried out near-by.

Regional activities (to include NSA ram sales)

Cymru Wales Region – report by Helen Roberts

NSA Cymru has submitted a robust response to both the Proposed Agriculture White Paper and the welfare and transport regulations.

The announcement that took us all by surprise was the proposal to put the whole of Wales in an NVZ. We urged Members to write to their Senedd Members to vote against this proposal and I wrote to Lesley Griffiths personally and on behalf of NSA Cymru.

At our Annual Meeting, we took the decision to postpone NSA Welsh Sheep to Tuesday 16th May 2023 and are grateful to our hosts the Owen Family, Red House Aberhafesp, for agreeing the venue, it sounds a long way ahead but please put the date in your diary now. At the annual meeting, all officers remained in place with Kate Hovers continuing in the Chair. Kate chaired the meeting and welcomed the following speakers Phil Stocker NSA CEO, Steve Hughson RWAS CEO, James Owen, WG and James Heinrich joined all the way from NZ, making the power of Zoom a useful addition to communication. All speakers gave brilliant talks, and a full report is on the website <https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk/news/31211/upbeat-online-annual-regional-members-meeting-for-nsa-cymru-wales/>. It was also agreed that if regulations permit, we will look at a series of farm walks later in the year and we will be running the Next Generation Shepherd competition to find our Welsh competitors for Malvern 2022.

NSA Scotland Activity Report for NSA Board Meeting

Monday 01 March NSA Regional Managers Meeting attended by Euan Emslie and Grace Reid.

Wednesday 03rd March NSA Scotland Committee Meeting. Update provided by British Wool CEO Andrew Hogley – interesting and forward-thinking presentation. Topics covered: Sheep Worrying by Dogs (Emma Harper meeting), Rewilding, Muirburn, Consultation responses (FAWC/gene editing), NSA Scotsheep, COP26.

Wednesday 10th March

- Scottish Government Animal Health and Welfare General Stakeholders Group Meeting attended by Grace Reid. EU exit, Covid update, Emma Harper MSP Member's Bill, FAWC Consultation – Scottish responses (400), several thousand Defra responses.
- NSA UK Policy and Technical Meeting attended by Grace Reid.

Thursday 11th March

- Ramblers Scotland Meeting to discuss Mapping Scotland's Paths initiative attended by Jen Craig, Maimie Paterson and Grace Reid. Background of project and future steps, launch to public, upkeep of new paths, digital database, IPA fund, SOAC, young people.
- SAYFC Agri and Rural Affairs Panel Evening attended by Grace Reid. Opportunities and barriers in sheep farming, future meat production, versatility of lamb, diversification, new entrants, funding, EU exit, sustainability.

Monday 15th March Farming Roundtable Meeting attended by Grace Reid. COP26, farmer led groups, industry updates.

Wednesday 17th March NSA Scotland/QMS Catchup attended by Jen Craig and Grace Reid. New QMS activity – promotions, magazine, market reports, QMS attending NSA Scotland Committee meetings, sheep worrying by dogs, biodiversity, climate change/COP26.

Thursday 18th March

- Scottish Government ARD Stakeholders meeting attended by Grace Reid. Pillar 1 and 2 updates, TAC, farmer led groups, AECS, funding shortfall to devolved nations, FE vision for Scottish Agriculture 2025 – 2030 (high quality food in accordance with the highest environmental standards, increased provenance, confidence and financial support/stability, biodiversity).
- Fergus Ewing Meeting to be attended by Maimie Paterson and Grace Reid. SG achievements since 2016, Brexit, Scrapie requirements, Covid roadmap, farmer led groups, HUCCG, CAP simplification and improvement (2021-2024), climate change.

Monday 22nd March Farming Roundtable Meeting attended by Grace Reid. Topics covered – COP26, Carbon Credits, Climate Change. Dr Vicky West (Scottish Forestry) gave a presentation covering the Woodland Carbon Code. Questions raised around cost of carbon credits, tenancy and young farmer opportunities, cost of land, verification/assessment of carbon/land use change, grassland inventory.

Monday 29th March Farming Roundtable Meeting attended by Grace Reid. COP26, future TAC, farmer led groups, Covid testing kits, GB/NI trade, Highland show announcement, SG roadmap.

Monday 26th April NSA Regional Managers Meeting attended by Euan Emslie.

Upcoming Meetings:

Wednesday 05th May Scottish Government Animal Health and Welfare General Stakeholder Group Meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.

Monday 10th May

- Farming Roundtable Meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.
- QMS Beef and Lamb Marketing Strategy meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.

Monday 17th May Farming Roundtable Meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.

Thursday 20th May Scottish Government ARD Stakeholder Meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.

Monday 24th May Farming Roundtable Meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.

Monday 31st May Farming Roundtable Meeting to be attended by Grace Reid.

Thursday 03rd June NSA UK Policy and Technical Meeting to be attended by John Fyall and Grace Reid.

N.I. Regional Activities 1st Quarter 2021 - report from Edward Adamson

I continue monthly meetings of The Local Action Group which distributes EU Monies to Rural Businesses and Areas

Regular FQAS meetings and in particular as a result of Covid resolved a funding problem with an agreed rise in membership of the Scheme

N.I. Region ARMM held in February

Committee decided there was no alternative but to cancel Sheep Event due to Covid Regulations

Along with UFU, British Wool & Ulster Wool met with Minister of Agriculture on two occasions to request financial aid from the Covid Fund to compensate for the fall in value of wool which was eventually successful.

Organised several meetings with RUAS and breed societies in an effort to put on Sheep Breed Displays at RUAS Balmoral Show in September to replace Show classes.

I identified a farmer involved in Dog Worrying and together we did a BBC radio interview

Attended an Animal Health and Welfare Meeting - Some concern that as the new EU Animal Health Law is introduced there may be more variants between GB and N.I.

Met with Pauline Navarro, a French entrepreneur who had successfully created a business grazing grass areas around industrial sites who was trying to expand the business.

Several meetings with DAERA on the problems of sheep movements from GB to NI and now a UK group including Sean Riches and Phil Stocker has been formed to take this problem forward.

Other significant external meetings – attended by Phil unless otherwise stated

January

- 11th TDUG
- 12th Black Mt Land Use Partnership
AHDB Agricultural Productivity Task Force (APTF)
Oxford Real Farming Conference, Making Small Abattoirs Sustainable
- 13th AHDB
NSA Scotland ARMM
- 15th EU transition/Welsh Gov meeting
Defra, Katherine Flynn
- 18th RoSA, development meeting
Improvements to Animal Welfare in transit consultation call with Defra.
Regional Managers meeting
Animal Welfare in transit call
- 19th Ruminant Health & Welfare Group
Black Mt Land Use Partnership
- 20th Breakfast Club webinar with Victoria Prentiss
Lifetime assurance, Red Tractor
- 21st Board meeting
- 22nd LCAG
English Committee extraordinary meeting with AHDB
- 25th PSGHS Advisory Group meeting
Trade Advisory Group
NSA/RBST Ovine Semen Archive Board meeting
- 26th AHDB Carcase classification scrutiny committee
RDPE Sheep Scab project meeting
Grasslands Seminar
- 27th Breakfast Club Webinar
ELM Stakeholder Engagement Group
AHDB reputation group
- 28th Dog Worrying collaboration meeting
Red Tractor Consumer Campaign Briefing
Northern Region ARMM
- 29th Welsh Government EU transition
Defra, Katherine Flynn

February

- 1st NFU Mutual insurance renewal
- 2nd NSF sheep dipper registration

RPDE Sheep scab project meeting
 Black Mt Land Use Partnership
 3rd Stephen Jacobs, OF&G Organic
 English Committee
 8th TDUG
 Agri-food T.A.G.
 NSA/RBST Ovine Semen Archive
 9th Defra GB Livestock core group
 Elanco
 10th Isle of Wight Sea Eagles, steering group call
 FSA Joint Industry Working Group
 RDPE sheep scab project
 DIT quarterly stakeholder briefing
 11th Devolved nations meeting
 UKP&T extraordinary meeting
 Defra farming payments workshop
 N.I. region ARMM
 12th LCAG
 Defra, Katherine Flynn
 15th Welsh Commons Forum
 16th Black Mt Land Use Partnership
 AHDB E medicines hub demo
 RUMA
 17th RUMA
 F&GP meeting
 Defra Pathway Scheme meeting
 18th AHDB Sheep sector challenges & opportunities meeting
 Defra ELM stakeholder call
 AHWBE data meeting
 Call with NSA Scotland Executive
 19th Black Mt Land Use Partnership
 22nd Mobile dipper registration call
 Defra strategic roundtable
 23rd NSA/RBST Ovine Semen Archive
 NFU virtual conference
 Defra ELM stakeholder call
 Call with Laura Ryan
 24th Cymru Wales Region ARMM
 Ruminant H&W steering group call
 25th Uplands Alliance ELMS workshop
 Gwyn Jones webinar on results-based payments
 Webinar meeting
 Corlena Patterson, Global Sheep Producers Forum
 Black Mt Land Use Partnership
 26th LCAG. Defra, Katherine Flynn
 Bishop Fleming/BASIS cal re RoSA
 Defra, Katherine Flynn
 March
 1st Regional Managers
 2nd Mobile Sheep dippers meeting
 Chris Jackson, UKTAG Paraguay call
 3rd AHDB APTF call

Breed Society Forum planning call
 Call with Treeconomy
 Black Mt Land Use Partnership

4th RUMA
 UKRI Innovation funding call

5th Chris Jackson, UKTAG

8th TDUG.
 Tesco Sustainable lamb Group
 Mobile sheep dippers
 NSA/RBST Ovine Semen Archive

9th ELM Sustainable Farming Incentive pilot call
 APPG Farming call with Fay Jones MP

10th UKP&T committee
 Black Mt Land Use Partnership

11th Red Tractor Beef & Lamb Sector Board
 UK Innovation funding

12th LCAG
 David Swales, AHDB meat consumption statistics call
 EU Agri Food, W Gov

15th Black Mt Land Use Partnership
 Global sheep producers call

16th RoSA call with Roythornes and Basis
 ELM stakeholder, landscape recovery-conservation

17th Australia Trade call
 AHDB reputation group
 Ruminant Health & Welfare steering group.
 Wales & Border ram sale committee meeting
 Cymru Wales committee meeting

18th DAERA, GB import livestock ID stakeholder call
 British Heritage Sheep call with AHDB.
 Extraordinary Board meeting.
 Suckler Beef Producers Assn.
 George Eustice call
 Federation of Cumbria Commoners AGM

22nd NFU Farming Organisations roundtable call
 Mobile sheep dippers call

23rd EFRA Select committee, moving animals across borders.
 NFU political debate.
 RDPE Sheep Scab project meeting
 UKRI Innovation funding call

24th Webinar meeting.
 Monthly research call.
 Ruminant Health & Welfare group, four nations meeting

25th Livestock transport cleaning & disinfecting call
 Defra EU Animal Health Regulation call
 Black Mt Land Use Partnership

26th LCAG
 Defra catch-up, Katherine Flynn
 Caroline Clarke Nufuturedevelopments, wool insulation call

April
 7th VMD call dipper accreditation
 RDPE Sheep Scab project call

- 8th NOAH UK livestock core vaccine protocol
- 9th LCAG.
ELM Stakeholder commons call
Lucy Mather, KTN Agri-food Group call re British Heritage Sheep
- 12th TDUG
NSA/RBST Ovine Semen Archive call
- 13th Farmers Guardian podcast recording
RDPE sheep scab project catch up meeting
Defra, Harrison Bradley red meat supply call
Moss Jones, FAWL
- 14th F&GP meeting
Industry group call with NFU
- 15th Red Tractor consultation feed-back call
ELM Engagement Group call
- 16th Gary Hurlestone, Next Gen Tree Shelters
Campaign for Wool Council meeting
- 19th British Wool and Nufuturedevelopments
Trade and Animal Welfare webinar, Ranil Jayawardena MP, Minister for International Trade
Global sheep producers call
- 20th British Heritage Sheep, crowdfunding call
ELM Stakeholders, Agreements and Compliance
RDPE sheep scab project, advisor kick-off meeting
- 21st Alistair Driver, rewilding call
National Audit Office – ELM call
- 22nd Red Tractor consultation feed-back call
Livestock Information Programme webinar
- 23rd Ruminant H&W Group survey results
Forest Creation Partners introductory call
Defra, Katherine Flynn
- 26th RDPE sheep scab project
Regional Managers meeting
Mobile dipper group call
- 27th Trade Advisory Group UK-NZ call
RoSA meeting
BBC interview
Ruminant H&W Group, welfare workshop planning
Black Mt Land Use Partners
N.I. Select Committee, Livestock Trade call
English Committee
Michael Seals, TB catch-up
Mobile dipper call with VMD
- 28th AHDB Reputation Group
AHDB Carcase Classification Scrutiny Committee call
RoSA call with Roythornes and Basis
AHDB Industry Liaison Group for Medicine Hub

Appendix – Press releases issued and their social media reach

Week commencing	Press releases issued	Social media reach on press release links - Facebook
4 th Jan		
11 th Jan	1. First breakfast club promoted	1. 1.2k
18 th Jan	1. New NSA Chairman announced 2. V Prentis webinar report	1. 2.9k 2. 1.1k
25 th Jan	1. NSA support for Eat Balanced campaign 2. Third breakfast club promotion	1. 898 2. 1.1k
1 st Feb	1. Travel bursary webinar promotion 2. SCOPS Liver fluke update	1. 3.9k 2. 1.3k
8 th Feb	1. Book competition winners announced 2. Wales ARMM promotion 3. Natural England webinar promotion	1. 1.5k 2. 3.9k 3. 2.1k
15 th Feb	1. Solway prize giveaway 2. SCOPS worming at lambing time	1. 1.3k 2. 4.2k
22 nd Feb	1. Sheep worrying by dogs survey launch	1. 6.3k
1 st March	1. SCOPS nematodirus forecast launch 2. NSA event postponements	1. 2.4k 2. 6.7k
8 th March	1. Breakfast clubs return in April 2. SFI statement	1. 1k 2. 1.1k
15 th March	1. SCOPS triple resistance advice 2. ELMS opportunities 3. New Central Region Chairman	1. 1.3k 2. 1.1k 3. 1k
22 nd March	1. George Hedley award announced 2. NSA response on live export 3. NSA statement on levy board votes 4. Sheep worrying by dogs join work with RSPCA 5. Membership winner announced	1. 14.1k 2. 4.3k 3. 810 4. 6.1k 5. 1.6k
29 th March	1. Choose the lamb to suit your tastes this Easter 2. NSA Cymru response to Wales Ag Bill 3. NSA thanks Emma Harper MP	1. 1.7k 2. 2.8k 3. 791