

Chairman's Report

It's goodbye to 2021 and hello to 2022! My second year as Association chairman, and again, what an unusual year it was. With covid restrictions gradually being lifted and people adjusting to life post Brexit, the year finished with damage and fall out from the devastating storm Arwen.

Fortunately, in the teeswater world, things were slightly calmer. Just about! Council meetings continued to be held by Zoom though it was good to get back to a live meeting here at the Wensleydale Pantry in November. Many agricultural shows were once again cancelled due to covid, but with good summer weather, those that did go ahead including the Great Yorkshire, Westmorland and Masham Sheep Fair enjoyed a good day. I was privileged to be asked to judge at Masham. It was a difficult task given the large entry of teeswaters but very pleasing that the teeswater champion, a shearling ram exhibited by the Bainbridge Bros went on to be the overall reserve champion.

Our new website is up and running, receiving positive comments for the clear format and user friendly layout. It is very much a work in progress where new pages and photographs can be added as required to expand the information available.

In 2021, Council took the decision to change the ear tag supplier to Allflex, a move which will generate a saving of a few hundred pounds each year.

We had a very good entry of 138 sheep at our annual Leyburn sale. It was one of the best we've had with a real buzz in the atmosphere, a crowded ring, new buyers and sellers, buoyant trade and average prices well up on last year. Two sheep made over 1000 guineas. My thanks go to our judge, Andrew Dixon and our inspectors, Tom Gorst and Tony Barker, and congratulations to David and Gill Newbold who had the champion sheep and joint top price with a gimmer shearling, and to Giles and Kieran Horner who took the reserve champion spot with a shearling ram. A new award for the sheep with the best fleece was won by Giles and Kieran with their gimmer lamb.

Brexit brought about great challenges everywhere, even in the teeswater sheep world. Thanks to tireless work by Davina Stanhope, in November we became a Zootechnical recognised association by gaining our certificate. The Association now meets the criteria in the Zootech standards to enable our members to be officially recognised to trade with other countries. Any import

or export of breeding sheep, semen or embryos can only happen if accompanied by a Zootech certificate. But the story doesn't stop there. We also need to gain 'third country listing' to be able our members to actually carry out trade with EU countries or other listed countries. More challenges, but we're getting there.

My two years as chairman has certainly been an unusual time, but I'm proud of what we've achieved in the unusual and challenging circumstances. But the work doesn't stop. We have to move on, look forwards, progress and encourage new and old members alike. There are ever changing priorities and demands. We have to focus on what is important to all our members, be ambitious, strive to improve to advance our Association and teeswater sheep.

It's been a special honour to be the Association chairman and I'd like to say thank you to everyone for their support and plaudits. Thank you to Olivia for her work as our secretary and especially for obtaining the sponsorship from Mole Country Stores for our Leyburn sale.

Finally, saying hello to 2022, I would like to wish our new chairman the best of luck and every success going forwards. I am sure the Association will be in very good hands.

David Waine
2nd March 2022