

Southdown News

Newsletter of The Southdown Sheep Society

Issue 34

Autumn 2022



NOTES FROM THE SOUTHDOWN OFFICE

The Council of the Southdown Sheep Society meets at least twice a year and the Notes from the Office aim to keep members updated on some of the important issues raised and discussed within Council meetings.

LAMB REGISTRATIONS

More and more members are choosing to register their lambs online using the pedeweb system. Please email the office if you need a reminder of your pedeweb password.

There is a user guide available to download from the Southdown Sheep Society website, together with some FAQs. To access the online flock book simply follow the link from the Society website.

Lamb registrations

Members should make every effort to register lambs as soon as possible to avoid omission from the next edition of the flock book. please note that all late registrations (ie after the year of birth) remain eligible for registration, but at the late fee charge of £30 per registration.

All lamb registrations should be with the office by November 30th 2022, and at the latest, by December 31st.

While the Society aims to turn around all registrations promptly, there may be a delay in processing registrations at busy times in the Southdown office.

The Southdown office is closed for all but emergency enquiries for two weeks over Christmas and New Year.

Please note that registrations cannot be processed until payment has been received and subscription is paid up to date.

2022 REGISTRATION CHARGES

on line registration fee per ewe lamb	£5
on line registration fee per ram lamb	£12
paper registration fee per ewe lamb	£7
paper registration fee per ram lamb	£18

late registration fee on line and/or on paper £30 per animal. Pedigree print-outs at time of registration cost 50p each, print-outs requested later are charged at £1 per copy.

Imports and Exports

Members are reminded that the office must be notified of any intended exports and imports. The rules as published in the current Flock Book state that "All sheep sold for export must have a Zootechnical Certificate in accordance with current legislation. The Zootechnical Certificate must be obtained from the Office, at a cost set by Council. The current fee is £20/head.

This zootechnical (export) certificate for pure-bred breeding sheep, their semen, ova and embryos certificate should accompany the animal (or germinal product) where they are traded or entered into the European Union to allow an entry or registration of those animals in other breeding books or breeding registers.

The Southdown Sheep Society therefore fulfils its obligations as a DEFRA recognised breed society by issuing the export pedigree certificate to allow entering of pure-bred breeding sheep in flock-books.

Stock for sale

Members may use the Society website to advertise stock for sale at any time. simply email the office with details.

The basic charge for a brief advert on the website for three months is £10, see the more detailed article in this newsletter for further website sales options.

Getting it right

Do we have your correct information? please try and update the office with any changes of address or contact details. if you spot any errors or inaccuracies in the information included for you in this year's publications please let the office know.

Email

if your email address changes, please remember to inform the office, this can be done via pedeweb.

All members for whom we have an email address receive the Southdown enewsletter throughout the year. the newsletter gives the office a chance to share information with members on a more regular basis in between the paper newsletters in spring and autumn.

If you would prefer not to receive our enewsletters then please let the office know.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Many thanks to all those members whose subscriptions are already paid up to date. please note – council has taken the decision to increase the annual membership subscription from January 1st 2023. The 2023 subscription is £45.

Please ensure that you amend your standing order with your own bank to reflect the increase in the annual subscription.

Standing order instruction forms are available to download from the website or from the office. Please ensure that when making a bacs payment, or setting up a standing order for subscription payment, that you include your name or flock number as a reference with the payment. Just occasionally it is impossible to trace the source of a payment!

Bacs Payment Details

Account name: Southdown Sheep Society

Sort Code: 60-02-13

Account Number: 51501376

GIFT AID

Are you registered with the Southdown Sheep Society for gift aid? If you are a tax payer then your membership contribution is worth 25% more to the society as we can claim gift aid on your subscription payment. You can claim gift aid on your subscription payment. You can download a gift aid form from the website, or simply call to request one from the southdown office.

From the Chairman

Welcome to the Society's autumn newsletter, it has given myself and my fellow Council members great satisfaction to see Society members back out and about at shows and other events this summer after two difficult years.

On a personal note, it was my great pleasure to judge the Society's National Show at the Royal Welsh Show in July, with great numbers in every class and some tremendous sheep on display.

Society sales at both Worcester and Melton Mowbray also saw some good sheep presented and buyers were willing to invest in those they felt best suited their needs, both on a pedigree and commercial front.

Congratulations to all those members who have enjoyed success at shows and sales over the summer.

Pleasingly the Society's flock competition also took place again this autumn, with a good number of entrants and a particularly high number of new entrants which is pleasing to see.

On a similar theme, the Society continues to welcome new members and it is great to see new interest in the breed from across the country. This was borne out at this year's NSA Sheep Event, Malvern, with the Society's stand busy throughout the day with a broad range of enquiries.

Particularly notable was strong interest in the breed from commercial producers seeking easy fleshing sheep which could produce finished lambs without the need for increasingly expensive feed.

Looking ahead to next year, Council is pleased to confirm that the Society's National Show will take place at Lincolnshire Show on 21st and 22nd June 2023. I do hope many of you will be there, either exhibiting or spectating.

I hope you enjoy this newsletter and the articles within it, if you have any ideas for content for future issues please don't hesitate to contact the Society office.

It only leaves me to wish you as pleasant a winter as possible and a successful lambing next spring.

Thank you all for supporting the Society and the breed over the last year and for continuing to do so in future.

Jonathan Long
Chairman of Council



Estonian Farmers meet their first Southdowns

Society member Rob Beaumont and his wife Jan welcomed 36 Estonian sheep farmers on a bus-man's tour of UK sheep farms this August. The visit was organised by Rob's vet, James Crilly of Larkmead Veterinary Group, who is a member of the ECSRHM (European College of Small Ruminant Health Management) and an Estonian vet colleague, Katrin Tahepold who did a great job of translating English sheep jargon into Estonian.

As well as an inspection of Rob's flock of nearly 100 Southdown ewes and some of his high EBV tups, the visitors received a briefing on the Signet performance recording scheme from Signet's Laura Eyles, while Signet Breeding Specialist, Sam Boon gave them an insight into the RamCompare project where Rob's rams have flown the flag for the Southdown, and Andersey 19/00733 - M57980 has been one of the top performers.

Rob said: "It was a pleasure to host the visit whether I will be exporting any Southdowns to Estonia is another matter, but most of the new Society leaflets (with an Estonian translation) have been taken home."

James Crilly explained: "I have had the pleasure of visiting Estonia several times, so I was very pleased to arrange the visit and to be able to show off English sheep farming, including Rob's flock, with its impressive record of recording, genetic improvement and performance in the RamCompare programme"



Estonian visitors admire the Southdowns



Rob Beaumont extolling the virtues and advantages of Southdowns

Whilst visitors were interested to see Rob's Southdowns they were also intrigued by the shallow pitch of Rob's barn roof – roofs are much steeper in Estonia due to

snow, and also the French pigtailed used on Rob's electric fencing. The Estonians use five strands of wire to protect (rather than keep them in) their sheep from foxes, bears, jackals and wolves, though the electric fence is not effective for sea eagles.



Examples of Rob's high EBV rams

About Estonia

*The most Northern of the Baltic States
On the same latitude as the North of
Scotland*

*Capital: Tallinn is 230 miles from St
Petersburg (Same as Guildford to York)*

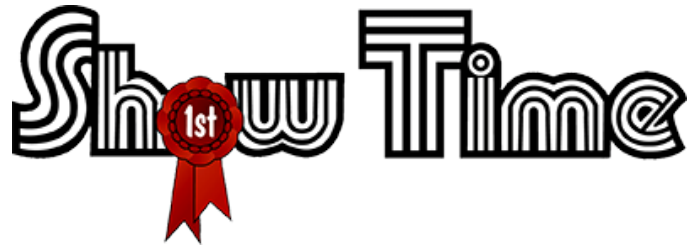
*Human Population 1.3m Sheep
Population: 70,000*

*Most popular meats: pork and chicken
Main Sheep breeds: Estonian White-
Faced Sheep, Estonian Black-Faced
Sheep, Texel, Dorset, North Country
Cheviot, Suffolk, Dorper, Lley, Arles
Merino*

A perfect Christmas gift – or a treat for the shepherd!

The new Society ties have arrived. Pure silk, in a choice of two colours: navy or maroon. The Southdown Sheep Society logo sits under the knot in navy or maroon, with a fine grey stripe above and below the logo.

For sale at £25 (this includes postage and packaging), contact the office to place an order.



NEW SOUTHDOWN SHEEP SOCIETY MERCHANDISE SUPPLIER

The Society is pleased to announce it has teamed up with Show Time for the provision of a wide range of Society branded clothing, in any style, colour and size. There is a link to the Southdown Sheep Society page on the Show Time website where you can see a few samples of clothing with the Society logo. However, the whole clothing catalogue is available with the Society logo, and members' flock names can be embroidered onto garments too.

Showtime Supplies

Pear Tree Farm,
Fangfoss, York,
YO41 5QH

Telephone: 01759 368 588

Email: sales@showtime-supplies.co.uk

<https://www.showtime-supplies.co.uk>

Advertise your flock

As a member of the Southdown Sheep Society there are a number of ways in which your flock, or individual animals, may be advertised:

2023 SPRING PUBLICATION

The Society's Spring 2023 publication is an ideal opportunity to advertise your flock.

This full colour, A4 publication, is sent to all Society members.

Please note that all adverts included in this publication will also be included on the website.

Advertising rates for members are as follows:

Full page £80

Half page £40

Other advert sizes may be available on request, please contact the office for further details.

**The deadline for copy is
January 31st 2023**

WEBSITE ADVERTS

The cost of placing an advert on the website is **£10 per advert**. All adverts will include the flock name, breeder's contact details including telephone numbers and email, and a brief outline, totalling no more than 475 characters, including spaces, of what is available for sale.

Descriptions may include pedigree information or other relevant details, including show results and one photograph is included within the £20 charge. Additional lines of text (no more than 125 characters including spaces) may be purchased for £3/line and additional photographs can be added for £/photograph.

Where breeders wish, they may also submit a private catalogue of their animals for sale in pdf format to be included with their advert at a cost of £25. All catalogues must include wording which indemnifies the Society.

Adverts remain on the website for three months. These may be added at any time. Please email the office with details.

How a Southdown story began

The Grafton flock of pedigree Southdowns was started back in September 2020 quite by accident!

Having had the luxury of way too much grass that the existing commercial ewes couldn't keep on top of, I decided to look for some store lambs to fatten. By chance, a local farmer happened to be reducing his flock number and in amongst them were some pedigree Southdown lambs. I bought them, fell in love with their teddy bear faces and there began the Grafton Southdown flock.

Shortly after, I decided I wanted to increase my numbers. Another trip to the local farmer resulted in seven shearling ewes, only by this time I had already been to a few agricultural shows and had seen the Southdowns being shown and thought 'I can do this!'

The first show we did was in the August of 2021, Staffordshire County Show. We met some lovely fellow Southdown breeders who were very supportive and gave lots of tips and advice. Unfortunately for us, we were told our sheep were 'too small' and although they were correct in other ways, they just didn't have the height that some of the others in the class had. We managed a 6th place with our shearling ewe in a large class and our triumph was my six-year-old old daughter managing a 3rd with the same ewe in her first ever Young Handler class (which was huge!).

It was here that things took a turn! The 'local farmer' and I finally got our act together and started dating.... This was the start of where Graham Finlay and his Roughborough flock combined with the Grafton flock... Was this the point where I gained 80 ewes, or did he just get back the ones he sold to me? Win-win either way!



A proud young handler with her winning shearling ewe and rosette



Karen Green in winning action

We decided then to have a go with the same ewes at Moreton Show in September 2021. Again, disappointingly, we were again told our sheep were too small and that if we wanted to succeed then we would have to feed up our show stock.

Having listened to the feedback that year, we decided that this wasn't the direction in which we wanted to take the Grafton flock forward. We want to stick with the breed as it was traditionally bred. We also take great pride in the fact that our flock is grass-fed so for us, feeding concentrates isn't conducive to our farming practices.

We did our first lambing together this year in February 2022 of both our pedigrees and our commercials, which proved to be a successful partnership (we managed not to kill each other!) and had excellent lambing percentages. I joined Graham to live at the farm this summer, so we were incredibly busy joining two houses together and sadly we missed out on all but one show this year.

On the very last day for entry, after too much wine, I took it upon myself to enter an aged ewe, shearling ram and shearling ewe into our local Moreton Show. Again, being so busy with full time jobs as well as our own farm we struggled to find the time to pull out a show team. Cut a long story short, we chose our three from the flock the week before the show. We chucked some halters on, gave them a half bath and a little trim and went for it!

We are super proud of what happened on that day. After thinking we probably wouldn't stand a chance and were expecting to do our classes then have an enjoyable

day looking around the show, little did we know how fantastic our little traditional bunch were going to do that morning. Our aged ewe came 2nd, our shearling ram also 2nd and our super little shearling ewe cleaned up with a 1st in her class, change to breed champion and then went on to reserve interbreed champion. Southdown Judge Sarah Mitchell gave us such positive feedback on our sheep which was incredibly encouraging and only served to strengthen our commitment to maintain our traditional, grass-fed and high welfare flock without feeling that we have to make huge changes in order to win with them.

We very much appreciate that on the day, every judge and every show will always be different and have a differing opinion, but we also recognise what a super

flock we do have and by staying true to our own values we can still produce winning stock.

Our ewes are all currently out with our new boy from the Gunton flock and we are really looking forward to seeing what they all produce for us when we lamb again in February 2023.

We also can't wait to get our stock out to more of the shows next year and catch up again with all our Southdown friends.

See you at the sheep pens.

*Karen Green,
The Grafton-Roughborough Flock*

The 2023 National Southdown Show

Book the date!

The Southdown Sheep Society is pleased to confirm that the 2023 National Southdown Show will take place at the Lincolnshire Show on June 21st-22nd.

The judge for the 2023 National Show is Stephen Humphrey.

The Lincolnshire Show offers a memorable day out for all: "Experience a true celebration of rural Lincolnshire with an eclectic mix of breath-taking entertainment, food, shopping, music, horticulture and farm life".

We encourage all members to consider giving their support to the National Show, whether as exhibitors or spectators.

Members are reminded of the conditions imposed by all shows who offer dedicated Southdown classes:

'All animals entered in these classes must be from current members of the Southdown Sheep Society and either be registered or eligible for registration with the Southdown Sheep Society. All animals must be owned by exhibitors for minimum of four months prior to show.'

Full details will be published on the Southdown Sheep Society website as soon as they are available. Alternatively, contact the Lincolnshire Showground Equine & Livestock Secretary, Helen McGurk, HMcGurk@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk 01522 585511 www.lincolnshireshowground.co.uk

So, save the date:

**2023 National Southdown Show
at the Lincolnshire Show on June 21st-22nd,
at Lincolnshire Showground,
Grange-de-Lings,
Lincoln, LN2 2NA**

Starting with Southdown Sheep Hammerwich Southdowns

In September 2020, we had our first Southdowns. We bought six ewe lambs from the Buckland flock. In addition, we decided we would like to have some lambs in the spring so managed to purchase in-lamb shearing ewes from the Gunton and Brooklyn flocks. This was the start of a whole new, exciting learning journey, along with new friends made.

Everyone has been very friendly and supportive with lots of advice when we have needed it, especially as I seemed to develop a problem - sheep health anxiety! (i.e. Are they safe/healthy? Blue bottles, maggots, Heptavac P, too hot, too wet ...)



2022 Ewe Lambs

However, the ewes responded brilliantly to a rattling bucket, which has been great for moving and handling them. We have found them very easy to manage, with very few problems. Rotational grazing and faecal egg counts have helped us to minimise medication. Detailed records about each ewe have been invaluable in helping us to make decisions to keep the flock healthy and happy.

With trepidation, we looked forward to spring and lambing time, but found that the ewes lambed without any trouble, with the lambs soon standing up and suckling. Our second year of lambing proved to be just the same.

One of the most difficult aspects of sheep keeping has been deciding who to part with. As we only have a few acres, we have needed to be realistic about the numbers we can keep. Eating our own lamb for the first time was a revelation – a very different and delicious taste in comparison to shop bought.

One of the highlights of our year (2022) was showing some lambs at Stafford show. Chris and Dave Rhead were invaluable with their help and advice regarding preparing and showing them (We have a lot to learn!). We thoroughly enjoyed the visit to Miriam Parker and Tim Green's where we found out all about wool and chatted to like-minded people.

In the future, we are looking forward to buying a new ram to further develop our traditional style of Southdowns, more shows, more flock visits and making more friends.

*Lorna Pheasant
The Hammerwich Flock*

Looking back on the 2022 Show Season

At the end of September the last show of the season took place. It was a great chance to see pals who have not been to shows because of this miserable covid. There were many breeds there, split into five different sections. Classes were well supported with 22 forward in the shortwool ewe lamb class and 18 ewes in that



Lesley Mead in action

class. Being a shortwool class there were Southdowns, Hampshires, Ryelands and coloured Ryelands. There were five members showing (plus two non-members) and also two council members and that was lovely to see them in the ring as they rarely actually show their stock. Our judge was a younger person and it was great to see that he liked the traditional sheep and the winners were well deserving of the rosettes they were given. It was a refreshing change to be pleased with the judge as on August Monday a local farmer's son judged mixed breed classes at a small show and he didn't even look at the natives, let alone feel them. It was a lovely end to the season as the Southdowns did very well. A Southdown ram won the shortwool championship and I won the shortwool pairs with a pair ewes and then the pairs championship. On the trophy I saw that Terry and I had won it in 2010 and other pals are on there too for other years with different breeds.

Lesley Mead, the Holly Bar Flock

The 2022 Flock Competition

Many Congratulations to Freddy Bethley and the High Green Flock who are this year's Champion Flock. A full round-up of the results will be included in the Spring 2023 Newsletter and on the Southdown Sheep Society website in due course.

UPDATES FROM AROUND THE REGIONS

North Shires

We are pleased to welcome Society members into the group that is now to be known as North Shires, that will include Oxon members with members in Beds, Bucks and Herts.

The Group is to be a way of meeting other members, to discuss sheep, other matters and to make visits. This is where we would like you to put some thought into what you would like to do.

It has already been discussed that there will be a visit to a Southdown flock in May/June next year, but obviously no final details have been made as yet.

Please get in touch with Lesley or Graham with your suggestions, details below (and in the Flock book) so that we can be a busy and interesting group. Society members from other areas are also welcome.

Lesley Mead 01525 270135

Graham Ryves-Webb 01491 641757

West Midlands

October Occasion: West Midlands Group Report

A small group from the West Midlands area met at the home of the Buckland flock on 15th October. This was the first gathering of the group since the COVID pandemic and everyone was delighted to be together again in person. Billed as an informal get together the emphasis was on cake and chat rather than anything too technical.

The day started with a quick run up the hill to see the sheep on what was a beautiful morning, so a chance to enjoy the view alongside a little cardio workout. Then it was down to the yards for a tractor, carriage and pony fix before lunch.

At the request of the group we then spent some time looking at wool. Wool from the Buckland Flock shearlings is currently contract spun and used for both knitting and weaving. Wool is primarily graded based on its fineness and its staple length.

There are two standard measures of fineness. The Bradford count system is based on the number of hanks of yarn that can be spun from 1lb of washed wool. One hank is 560 yards of yarn. The larger number will be the finer wool. Southdown grades fine 56-60s. The Micron count is the universal grading system used globally as it is an objective measurement developed in the USA in the late 1960's. Optical fibre analysis and laser scanning technology can evaluate 100's of samples in an hour. The Southdown is micron range fine 23-30.

A year is considered the natural growth period for the wool and defines the staple length. There is a large difference between breeds, but also within the breed.



A closer look at wool

Southdown range is 4-6 cm. Factors affecting staple length include:

- Genetic line
- Finer fibre is shorter staple
- Nutrition and health
- Age, growth slows down as sheep age
- Climate; increase in wool growth with an increase in temperature
- Pregnancy and lactation slow fibre growth.

Not surprisingly with the emphasis on breeding replacements and selection for more commercial carcase traits the quality of the fleece can deteriorate.

So why, despite the fact that Southdown fleece is graded "fine", is the wool cheque rather disappointing? Southdown yield is 45-55% of the raw fleece weight which means a fleece of 2 kg will only produce 900-1100g of usable fibre. But there are several other factors at play which also limit what use the fibre can be put to:

- Fibre diameter and variation in fibre diameter are directly related to the types of yarn and fabric that can be manufactured.
- Finer fibres are required in the more expensive fabrics and command a higher price.
- Fibre length is a limiting factor which indicates if wools of a specific grade can be used in the woollen or worsted manufacturing processes.
- Worsted is the process that requires combing and produces a smoother and stronger yarn. The machinery involved in combing requires a minimum fibre length for each of the grades.
- In the process of weaving any fabric the warp has to be of a worsted type to withstand the process on the loom. Weft fibres can be woollen or worsted types.

The short fibre length of the Southdown means it generally has to be blended to create a warp yarn.

The equipment in many of the smaller mills just cannot comb the fibres to produce a worsted yarn from pure

BLANK

BLANK



Out and about on the Buckland hillside

Southdown. The longer finer fibres from a long wool breed can be used as both warp and weft and are also used for blending with a short wool. It is that versatility which will command a higher price.

There then followed an interesting discussion on price! There are a range of options out there, but the take home message in the current climate is that unless you are prepared to invest upfront to have fibre processed and can also add value, the cost of shearing (if you cannot do it yourself) will outweigh the return from the sale of wool. Be aware if a price is quoted above the British Wool Board - is it for the whole fleece weight and not after further grading/penalty? Finally weigh up the cost of fuel and your time or carriage costs getting it to the buyer.

East Midlands

The East Midlands members have enjoyed being back showing again this summer following the two year break due to Covid. Derbyshire Show agreed to put on



East Midlands members' get-together October 2022



East Midlands members at the 2022 Derbyshire Show

Southdown classes and was really pleasing to have so many local members support this. The Southdown breed was the best supported across all the sheep show classes on the day. Plans are already underway to try and get more shows in the area to commit to Southdown breed classes 2023 and I hope to update you on those in the Spring.

In October the group met in Nottingham and enjoyed a morning walking around the Avenue Farm Flock. Chis and Lorraine Levell were great hosts, and we all enjoyed a superb BBQ whilst Charlie Tester did a trimming demonstration.

The group will be meeting three or four times in 2023 and I would encourage any new or established breeders to join us and get involved with the group.

Welcome to New Members

D & R Barnard	Rockland All Saints, Norfolk
Miss Melissa Bartley	Welshpool, Powys
Molly Best	Chatham, Kent
Alice-Rose Brooks	Saunderton, Bucks
Mrs Katie Dinmore	Kingsclere, Berkshire
Georgina Edwards	Pendock, Gloucester
Felicity & Alisdair Elliott	Dunsfold, Surrey
Samantha Gibson	Buxton, Derbyshire
Kellyann Green	Corley, Coventry
Phoebe Hodnett	Bodmin, Cornwall
Olivia Skye Holtom	Meriden, Coventry
Mrs B How, Steyning	WestSussex
G H & E L Jones	Pwllheli, Gwynedd
Emilie Kelso	Dungannon, Northern Ireland
Rare Breeds Centre	Ashford, Kent
Peter Taylor	Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire
Charlie	Tester, Loughborough, Leics
Sioned Thomas	Whitland, Carmarthenshire
Hannah Tolley	Alfrick, Worcester
Mr B & Mrs S de Havilland	Rye, East Sussex

The Burch Dare Perpetual Challenge Trophy



Throughout the year, points are accumulated by members by their participation in shows.

Points are awarded too for the Flock Competition.

The principle behind the allocation of points remains true to the wishes of the Burch Dare family's wishes as set out in 1934.

The 2022 results are as follows:

Winner: Mrs Elizabeth Sargent

Runner-up: G & M Sparke

Third place: Mrs Amy Readhead-Higgins

Book Review

“A Farmer’s Year” by H Rider Haggard

Henry Rider Haggard is best known as the author of *She* and *King Solomon’s Mines*, but he was also a gentleman farmer in the Waveney Valley, on the borders of Norfolk and Suffolk. ‘A Farmer’s Year’ is his diary for 1898, a time of crisis for the farming industry. The diary chronicles his daily observations of the changing countryside, of the people among whom he lived and worked, and vividly evokes the everyday life of a rural community at the turn of the century.

I was invited recently to give a talk on ‘Changing farming practices in the Waveney Valley over the past 150 years’ and my research led me to ‘A Farmer’s Year’. It was interesting to note that Rider Haggard includes mention not infrequently of Southdown sheep. For example, his entry for August 12th 1898 reads: “To-day arrived two Southdown rams and thirty-one black-faced ewes...the rams are aged, and one of them is rather shaky on his feet, from foot-rot in past seasons I suppose; but I understand that their pedigree is distinguished, and as they only cost forty shillings apiece I cannot complain.” Certainly this is an interesting read in front of the fire on a winter’s evening! – Ed.

HEIDI CRUNDWELL PHOTOGRAPHY

‘Southdown sheep in frost’ available as a greetings card.



Perfect as a winter or Christmas card.
Blank inside for your own message.

Visit the website for more details.

Enjoy a special **20%** off all greetings cards
using code
SOUTHDOWN20
at the checkout.

Valid until 31/12/22

More cards and prints available online at
www.heidicrundwellphotography.co.uk

Flock health plans; what, why and how?

In its simplest form a flock health plan is an annual list of health actions for your flock, helping ensure you remain on top of key health concerns and aiming to prevent rather than treat disease, infection etc..

Flock health plans can take many forms, some people prefer to use a calendar to plot actions through the seasons, while others prefer a written document which details production targets allied to relevant preventative treatment timings, feeding regimes and management actions.

For many traditional shepherds much of the information that should be within a flock health plan is borne from experience and retained in their memories from year to year. Timings of treatments may vary depending on lambing date, shearing timings or other factors, but by and large they will perform a similar routine without recourse to a written plan.

However, there are significant benefits in writing a plan, because if nothing else it gives cause to question current practices and examine if current treatments are necessary, worthwhile or effective.

It also allows you to consider alternative or additional treatments and can give rise to proactive and productive discussions with vets and other animal health advisors which otherwise may not have taken place.

As a starting point your vet should always be involved in your flock health planning at some level, if only to verify what you believe to be a sensible plan for your flock.

And while vet involvement will come at a cost, the benefit of their experience and up to date knowledge of the latest and most appropriate treatments more often than not far outweighs the cost.

As a starting point a flock health plan should be based around the shepherding cycle. So, it is a good idea to start with mating and work from there.

If you regularly give certain treatments ahead of mating, such as abortion vaccinations or mineral and trace element supplements then work back from mating to find the ideal date for these treatments. For example, if using ToxoVax this must be given at least three weeks ahead of mating.

Then work forwards from tugging towards lambing and include any pre-lambing vaccinations or other treatments. You can also include a scanning date if you do this and also target feeding dates.

Larger flocks may also find some benefit in metabolic

blood profiling a number of ewes pre-lambing to assess feeding requirements, but this is unlikely to be cost-effective for smaller flocks.

Protocols for lambing should also be included, with this including the circumstances in which you expect to have to tube feed lambs as well as a regime for ensuring lambs have received sufficient colostrum and treatment protocols for any post-partum issues in both ewes and lambs. The basics of the lambing routine should also be included as the flock health plan can be a useful reference for anyone unfamiliar with your lambing set up should the need arise to have temporary cover at this critical point in the year.

Ewe and lamb management post-lambing varies from flock to flock, but it is important to document any routine treatments you give either ewes or lambs in the post-lambing period.

And then the plan should consider pro-active measures to guard against a myriad of early life issues which can develop in lambs in the first few weeks and months of life, such as coccidiosis, entropion (in-turned eyelids) and e-coli infections.

Those flocks which routinely use clostridial vaccines should include the timings for these in their plan, remembering the need for the second dose of the primary course.

Anthelmintic treatments also need to be included in a flock health plan and where feasible these should be done as a result of faecal egg counts to avoid unnecessary treatments which cost both time and money and potentially quicken the course of anthelmintic resistance.

Other considerations which warrant consideration when undertaking a flock health plan include;

- * Quarantine procedures for incoming stock, whether newly purchased animals or resident animals which have been away from home for some reason.
- * Health scheme participation.
- * Developing treatment protocols for familiar issues.
- * Foot trimming policies.

There is a range of guidance and flock health plan templates available online to assist with preparing a plan and at some stage your vet should be involved too.

Above all, once you have prepared your plan refer back to it regularly and review it at least annually to ensure it remains relevant, active and up to date.

A Shepherd's Quiz

Test your 'sheepy' knowledge with this light-hearted quiz. These questions all have a connection - sort of - with sheep or sheep keeping! Many thanks to Patrick Goldsworthy who compiled the quiz originally for Bottisham Shepherds Club.

- 1 Where was the original version of the feature film "Rams" set?
- 2 What is the 11th letter of the Greek alphabet?
- 3 Where did the band Genesis' lamb lie down?
- 4 In which Thomas Hardy novel do lambs suffer bloat?
- 5 Which group was the first to record the song Barbara Ann?
- 6 What animal was the character Babar?
- 7 Approximately how many times are sheep mentioned in the Bible?
a) 200 b) 500 c) 700 d) 1000
- 8 What song did Rocky Sharpe and the Replays chart with in 1979?
- 9 In what city is the American Football team The Rams based?
- 10 What English football club has the nickname The Rams?
- 11 Which Caribbean Island became a republic in 2021?
- 12 Where is Scepig and/or what is Scepig better known as?
- 13 What is a shofar?
- 14 In which book of the bible does the "The Lord is my Shepherd" originate?
- 15 In the Middle East what dish is known as "baid ghanam"?

answers can be found on page 17

REGIONAL GROUP CO-ORDINATORS

South West Group

Co-ordinators: **Adam & Caroline Brown**
01398 361245
adamandcaroline@googlemail.com

Simon & Wendy Everdell
01984 624760 / 07732254957
wendyfirman@hotmail.co.uk

West Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: **Miriam Parker**
01743 884483
miriam@livestockwise.co.uk

Wales Group

Co-ordinator: **Lynda Richards-Davies**
07791 596865
lyndafree16@aol.com

East Midlands Group

Co-ordinator: **Will Morton**
07793 977092
Will_morton05@hotmail.co.uk

East Anglia Group

Co-ordinator: **Mark Robertson**
07739 091520
Briggsflock1256@gmail.com

North Shires Group

Co-ordinator: **Lesley Mead**
01525 270135
lesleyhollybar@btinternet.com

South of England Group

Co-ordinator: **Paul Humphrey**
01243 811518
pmhumphrey62@gmail.com



Southdowns see 1300guineas high at Worcester

A top call of 1300gns was the highlight of the Southdown Sheep Society's Premier Sale, Worcester, on Saturday (6th August), with this price paid for a shearling ram from D, S and P Humphrey's East flock, East Dean 21/05278.



Sale leader at the Southdown sale at Worcester was a shearling ram from the Humphrey family selling for 1300 guineas.

Sired by the homebred East Dean 17/03163 and out of a dam by Wigginton 12/00019, he had previously been male champion at Royal Cornwall and sold to Keith Manning, Findon, West Sussex.

Then at 680gns was a shearling ram from Roland Williams, Aberystwyth. This was Greenlands Man of The Moment, a Greenlands Great Expectation son out of a dam by Greenlands J R 91st. Buying this one was T R Davies, Clynderwen, Carmar.

Following him at 600gns was the day's male and reserve overall champion from young breeder Annabel Halcrow, Northants, with Calley Castle 21/00247. Sired by Chaileybrook 20/00666 Diablo and out of a dam by De Pibrac Max, he headed to Lichfield, Staffordshire, with Emily Yates.

A 560gns call followed that for a shearling from Buckinghamshire-based Basil Cooper, in the form of



Champion male - a ram lamb from Annabel Halcrow selling for 600 guineas

Glandore 21/00243. This son of Offham Arcturus is out of a dam by Ridings 15/03077 and sold to Ruth Judson, Bingley, West Yorkshire.

Then making 550gns was another from Roland Williams, with a full brother to his 680gns shearling, in the form of Greenlands Great Nephew. He sold to Aled Johnson, Llanyfynydd, Carmarthenshire.

And at 540gns was Usk-based Harry Wood's sole male entry of the sale, Windrush Leon. Sired by Ridings 15/03077, he is out of a dam by East Dean 17/03198 and was bought by Neil Stainthorpe, Selby, North Yorks.

Ram lambs

Topping the ram lambs was a 740gns call for the first prize ram lamb from the pre-sale show from Basil Cooper's Glandore flock. Sired by Offham Orion, this lamb is out of the same dam as Mr Cooper's 560gns shearling ram and was bought by Katherine Wheeler, Wormsley, Herefordshire.

This was followed by a 510gns call for a lamb from Messrs Beck and Son's Harbeck pen, Harbeck Knucklepuck. Sired by Beckbred Amazeballs and out of a dam by Glandore 15/00094, he sold to Jess Stanger, Newark.

Then came a brace of sales at 480gns, with the first being for Jonathan Long's Chaileybrook 22/01368, a son of the imported sire Dartagnan and out of a dam by TC4028. He stood second in the pre-sale show and went home to Northumberland with M White.

The other at this money was Annabel Halcrow's Calley Castle Sprout, a Chaileybrook Diablo son which had been reserve male champion at the Royal Welsh earlier in the year. He's out of a dam by De Pibrac Max and sold to Robert Cox, Leicestershire.

And at 440gns was Littlebrook 22/01033 from Sophie Long. Again, by the imported sire Dartagnan he is out of a dam by Chaileybrook 13/0001. Buyers here were Chloe and Katie West, Stoke Gifford, South Glos.

Shearling ewes

Leading the female trade was the female and overall champion from the pre-sale show a shearling ewe from Jonathan Long, Chaileybrook 21/01039. She's by Southern Cross 15/00649 and out of a dam by Chaileybrook 09/0002 and sold to Nightingale Community Farm, London.

Next best at 600gns was Glandore 21/00257, a shearling ewe from Basil Cooper. She's by Ridings Performer and out of a dam by Ridings 11/00701 and was knocked down to previous buyer Katherine Wheeler.

Two shearlings then made 500gns, the first of which was Chaileybrook 21/01030 from Jonathan Long.



Pre-sale champion and top priced female from Jonathan Long

By imported sire Dartagnan and out of a Percheron daughter, she sold to previous purchaser Nightingale Community Farm, London.

The other at this price was an East Dean shearling

from the Humphrey family, East Dean 21/05263. Sired by Snowden 16/00596 and out of a dam by East Dean 16/02855 she sold to Tom Chester, Needwood, Staffordshire.

Ewe lambs

Topping the ewe lamb trade at 500gns was the first prize winner from the pre-sale show from Messrs Beck, Harbeck Blackhawk, a Beckbred Amazeballs daughter out of a dam by De Pibrac 18/00299. She sold to Sophie Davies, Boston, Lincolnshire.

Then at 400gns was the second prize winner from Jonathan Long, Chaileybrook 22/01355. This Dartagnan daughter is out of a Percheron daughter and sold to Stephen Cobbold, Sudbury, Suffolk.

Averages: 12 shearling rams £593.25, 10 ram lambs £397.42, 28 shearling ewes £342.37, seven ewe lambs £325.50 (McCartneys).

NSA Sheep 2022 at Malvern

Opening its gates for the first time in four years, the National Sheep Association (NSA) Sheep Event 2022 drew crowds from across the UK to enjoy a fantastic day

area. The new Society stand and pop-ups were on display for the first time, together with a flyer aimed at the commercial market.



The Society stand at Sheep 2022

at the Three Counties Showground, Worcestershire, on Wednesday 27th July.

The Southdown Sheep Society was well represented and this year the decision was made to take a stand in the MV Accredited section of the breed society display

The stand was busy throughout the day with the majority of enquiries coming from commercial producers seeking information about rams that could produce lambs for them without the need for expensive concentrate supplement feeds.

NSA Chief Executive Phil Stocker said: "What a fantastic day we all had at NSA Sheep Event! It was so good to welcome back visitors who created a real buzz all around the showground. Thanks go to all involved in the organisation of such a valued industry event and to the event sponsors and exhibitors who of course help to make the event an essential date in the diary of the nation's sheep farmers."

A little reminder

The annual membership subscription increases from £40 to £45 from January 1st 2023.

Please remember to update your standing order instruction with your bank to reflect the increase in the subscription for 2023.

15. Sheep's testicles
14. Psalms (23)
13. A ram's horn musical instrument
12. The Isle of Sheppey
11. Barbados
10. Derby County
9. Los Angeles
8. Ram-a-lam-a-Ding-dong

7. 500
6. Elephant
- covered it in 1965
5. The Regents in 1961; The Beach Boys
4. Far From The Madding Crowd
3. Broadway
2. La or Lambda
1. Iceland

QUIZ ANSWERS

Brompton ewe hits 1500gns at Melton Mowbray

The dispersal of the Glaves' family's Brompton flock claimed the leading prices at the Southdown Sheep Society's second sale of the year at Melton Mowbray when Brompton 19/04829 set a new aged ewe record for the breed at 1500gns.

This daughter of Southern Cross 13/00419 is out of a dam by Chaileybrook 07/0019 and sold to James Langmead, Hampshire.

Second best at 1000gns was Brompton 19/04726, a similarly bred ewe, again by the Southern Cross sire and out of a dam by Chaileybrook 07/0019. She also headed back to Hampshire to join Mr Langmead.

A 2018-born ewe by Offham Astronaut, Brompton 18/04454, then made 650gns, with this one being out of another Chaileybrook 07/0019 daughter. Buying this one was Stephen Cobbold, Suffolk.

Then making 600gns was the pre-sale show champion from Stephen and Paul Humphrey, a shearling ewe by Goodwood Ebor, East Dean 21/05342. This one is out of a dam by Southern Cross 13/00421 and was claimed by Mr Langmead too.



Freddy Bethley winning ram lamb

Close behind at 580gns was another from the same vendors, East Dean 21/05256, a Montecristo 15/15088 daughter out of a dam by East Dean 14/01652. She sold to previous buyer Mr Langmead.

And making 500gns was another East Dean shearling, East Dean 21/05267, a Snowden 16/00596 daughter out of a Goodwood Ebor daughter. She was bought by A New, Bampton, Oxon.

Lorraine Clements then sold her shearling ewe, Avenue Farm 21/00346 at 500gns. She's by Moonstone Dancing in the Moonlight and out of a Ridings 15/03077 daughter and sold to J Williams, Chepstow.

Another from the same home and selling to the same buyer then made 460gns. This was , Avenue Farm 21/00350, again by the Moonstone sire and this time out of an East Dean ewe by East Dean 14/01652.

Next in line at 440gns was a ewe lamb from the Glaves family, Brompton 22/06171. Sired by the 1000gns Littlebrook 22/06171, she is out of an Offham Astronaut daughter and was again bought by Mr Cobbold.

And making 410gns was Emily Yates' shearling ewe Fulfen 21/00023. Sired by the homebred Fulfen Boomer and out of a Chaileybrook 13/0001 daughter she was the pick of previous buyer A New.

Back with the aged ewes and Brompton 20/05369, an Offham Astronaut daughter made 400gns when selling to Maria Cork, Derbyshire. She's out of a Southern Cross 13/00419 daughter.

MALES

Topping the ram trade at 380gns was aged ram Avenue Farm Leigh from Lorraine Clements. This 2020-born ram is by Ridings Colonel and out of a Sutherland Samwise daughter. He was taken by M Osborne, Dorking.



Paul Humphrey and the show and sale champion

A pair then sold at 300gns, with the first being the first prize shearling ram from the pre-sale show from the Humphrey brothers. This was East Dean 21/05218, a son of homebred sire East Dean 19/04455 and out of a dam by East Dean 11/00450. He found a new home with S Johns, Wrexham.

And matching this price was Emily Yates' Fulfen Corona, a son of the imported sire Breton and out of a Chaileybrook 13/0001 daughter. Buying him was previous buyer A New.

Averages; 17 aged ewes £347.12, 18 shearling ewes £308.58, 15 ewe lambs £180.60, four aged rams £257.25, three shearling rams £266, two ram lambs £199.50 (Melton Mowbray Market).

Congratulations to our members



Congratulations to member Netty Palliser (Kingsacre Flock in Hampshire) who got married in the summer. Netty says "Our Southdowns made an appearance, but only at a distance and in full view of the wedding breakfast - we decided that my dress maybe wasn't that compatible with 12 enthusiastic ovines! The most amusing sheep related story was hearing about one of my fellow vets of class '98 - after a few too many dwinks, he decided to try and climb over the live sheep electric fence ...twice! Once on the way in to the paddock and once on the way out! The vet boys never fail to amuse!"



The Southdown flock at a respectable distance

Congratulations to Mark and Katy Robertson on the birth of baby Hazel on September 12th 2022



Baby Hazel is introduced to the Southdowns at an early age!

DATES FOR THE DIARY

2022

November 24th South Eastern Prime Stock Winter Fair at South of England Showground, Ardingly, West Sussex, RH17 6TL
For more information contact Amie Dickson on 07816 866362

November 19th English Winter Fair at the Staffordshire County Showground, Stafford, ST18 0BD
*For more information contact 01785 258060
Email: enquiries@staffscountyshowground.co.uk*

November 28-29th The Royal Welsh Winter Fair
*For more information contact RWAS on 01982 553683
Email: requests@rwas.co.uk*

November 28-29th Ashford Cattle Show
*For more information contact Hobbs Parker on 07887 643002
Email: ashfordcattleshow@gmail.com*

2023

April 1st Closing date for receipt of 2023 Council nominations

May 16th NSA Welsh Sheep at Red House, Aberhafesp, Newtown, Powys
<https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk> › forthcoming-events

June 7th NSA North Sheep at Bradford House Farm, Ponteland, Northumberland, NE20 0HA
<https://www.nationalsheep.org.uk> › forthcoming-events

June 21st-22nd National Southdown Show at the Lincolnshire Show at Lincolnshire Showground, Grange-de-Lings, Lincoln, LN2 2NA.
Full details will be published on the Southdown Sheep Society website as soon as they are available.

Alternatively, contact the Lincolnshire Showground Equine & Livestock Secretary, Helen McGurk, HMcGurk@lincolnshireshowground.co.uk 01522 585511 www.lincolnshireshowground.co.uk

Saturday August 5th The Southdown Sheep Society Premier Breeders Show & Sale at Worcester Market
worcester@mccartneys.co.uk

September - Traditional Native Breeds National Show and Sale at Melton Mowbray
info@meltonmowbraymarket.co.uk (date to be confirmed)

Please note: dates are correct at time of going to press

Meet the new Council members



My name is Mark Robertson and I am delighted to be part of the Southdown Sheep Society Council. I am looking forward to working with Council, and the local East Anglia group, in the year ahead, bringing in some fresh ideas drawing on my experience working within the Farm Animal Welfare sector.

I am based in South Norfolk and together with my family have a small flock of Southdowns. We very much keep our sheep as a hobby for showing, dreaming of one day breeding a show champion. We started our flock seven years ago, very keen, but with little experience of pedigree sheep. To say we have learnt a lot is an understatement, we have met some lovely sheep owners along the way who have been more than happy to answer our questions and point us in the right direction. We continue to strive to improve our knowledge and our flock.

Having not come from a farming background we have come to understand that keeping sheep is no easy task,

with each year throwing up different challenges and this year has been no exception, with the lack of rain and, therefore, lack of grass problems this summer. Whatever the challenge, you always deep down enjoy it (mostly). We want to keep improving our flock and eagerly look forward to lambing each year, hoping for strong healthy lambs that will catch the eye of the judge in the show ring. We now find that people ask us questions and we enjoy sharing the knowledge and passion that comes from breeding this superb breed of sheep.



My name is Will Morton, I am 43 years old, married with two children and I am based in Lincolnshire. My involvement with Southdown sheep started in 2015 when I formed the Blackfriar Flock. The flock quickly grew and now numbers about 90 breeding ewes. I took on the role as East Midlands Regional Coordinator earlier in the year and was delighted to be elected to Council as I am passionate about the breed and keen to see the Southdown breed thrive in both pedigree and commercial sectors. I look forward to working with the rest of Council to see the breed progress for the benefit of all the membership.

Southdown Sheep Society

Registered Office: Meens Farm, Capps Lane, All Saints, Halesworth, Suffolk IP19 0PD

Secretary: Mrs Gail Sprake

telephone: 01986 782251

secretary@southdownsheepsociety.co.uk www.southdownsheepsociety.co.uk

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