

# Ryeland FBS Winter 2022



Richard Wear - Ruslin Flock. RFBS 00249.

16th July 1934 - 15th October 2022

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## From the Editor

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The Winter edition is always a bit lean on offerings so I'm delighted to be able to include a couple of articles from 2 of our younger members, Freya Silvester and Tilly Liddiard.

I hope that all your ewes are nicely in lamb and don't forget to take 'baby' photos for the next edition of the newsletter.

Wishing you all a Very Happy Christmas and New Year.

Please let me have your articles for the Spring edition by 20 February.

*Lin Whittall*

Ryeland Editor

lin.whittall@googlemail.com

## From the Chair

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Well as we near the end of 2022 we can be grateful that we have indeed returned to more normal lives.

At the start of the year the AGM was held in Stafford and was a very interesting and enjoyable event; many thanks to the North Wales and Mercia region for their support and efforts to make this another excellent AGM for the members. Next year the AGM will be held in April in the Hereford and the Marches region, at the Green Dragon Hotel, further details to follow.

The majority of shows have run this year and although in some cases these shows are not as vibrant or as busy as pre covid, however the level of entries from society members has generally been really good.

The two affiliated shows at Worcester and Carlisle were very well attended by vendors and purchasers. Special thanks to those who judged, stewarded, inspected and provided general assistance at these events. They would not be as streamlined without your help.

It was a memorable sale at Worcester with Richard Wear presenting both the Ryeland shearing ram of the year trophy for the first time and the Percy Wear points trophy in the main ring. Sadly, Richard recently passed away but I personally was pleased that he was able to present these and was able to enjoy the sale with his family and friends.

This year all council meetings have been held physically at the NSA building in Malvern. It has been nice to actually discuss processes etc across the table rather than via unstable internet connections.

This year council have revised the expenses policy, along with the judging policy, both of which have been approved by council and are included as part of your annual flock book.

Council also approved a new society logo recently. However since members received notification, concerns have been raised and this will be brought back to council at the January meeting. I'm sure the majority of you are aware as this has been discussed on social media but this is more about me providing an update to those members not on social media platforms.

This year for the first time both the Ryeland and Coloured Ryeland Committees undertook a young handlers competition for the younger society members. Results will be posted at the start of next year. Thanks to all those who took part in this competition, an excellent number of competitors were received for 2022 and we look forward to running this competition again in 2023.

The annual virtual craft competition has also just taken place and the results were posted this weekend. Many congratulations to all those who took part. The society really has many talented members. Special thanks to Claire Weedall for organising this again this year.

## **Council Members**

**President** - Alun & Eleanor Parry

**Vice President** - Pa Bateman

**Chairman** - Caz Bateman

**CRC Representative**

Caz Bateman

**Ryeland Committee Representative**

Zoe Unwin

**Councillors: retire 2024**

Joanne Fisher (Northern England)

Stephen Hipps (Yorkshire)

Matthew Pink (Yorkshire)

Pam Bateman (North Wales & Mercia)

Jack Williams (Hereford' & T. Marches)

Susan Quigley (Hereford' & T. Marches)

John Donovan - Vice Chair, (Mid, W. & S. Wales)

Andy McVicar (Mid, W. & S Wales)

Vacant (Eastern England)

Annette Reid (South East England)

Vacant (South West England)

David Mitchell (Scotland)

## **Regional Representatives:**

**Retire April 2025**

Vacant (Northern England)

Jill Gray (Yorkshire)

Jonathan Webb (Hereford' & T Marches)

Carol Bateman (Mid, W. & S. Wales)

Jenny Hughes (Eastern England)

Stephen Ramsden (South West England)

## **RFBS Office Hours:**

Tuesdays - Thursdays

9.30am - 5pm

I have just returned from the North Wales and Mercia lamb show which is held at the English Winter Fair in Stafford: there was a fantastic number of entries and both the Ryeland and Coloured Ryelands had increased in entries. In addition, it was fantastic to see new, old and young members taking part in the various classes and events held over the two days. Thank you so much to this region for their hard work and amazing organisational skills. It was a lovely end to showing for myself and fellow exhibitors in 2022.

Now that showing has finished we prepare to house the ewes over the winter months. The fields are soggy and the weather... well there are no appropriate words to describe it at present time. Scanning will be the next event at the end of the year and so we begin the circle of life and showing again...

I would like to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas, shared with loved ones, family and friends.

Merry Christmas/Nadolig Llawen

*Caz Bateman*  
Chair

## Herefordshire & The Marches Regional Report

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After a very successful Autumn Lamb Show and Afternoon Tea, our regional committee is quietly settling down before the run up to lambing, and of course considering ideas for hosting the annual RFBS AGM next year.

**Lamb Show** - Congratulations to all involved in our Autumn Lamb Show held at Kington Show, whether as part of the organising team or exhibiting. Full results on the next page.

We enjoyed a lovely Afternoon tea in Richards Castle Village Hall in October. The winners of the Regional Points Competition were Jack Deakins (Coloureds) and Tom Wright (Ryelands). Congratulations.

Our thoughts are with John and Grace Nugent as Grace is not very well. Get well soon Grace.

We wish you all a Very Happy Christmas and a productive and successful lambing.  
*David Duggan*  
Regional Chairman

**Ryelands**, judged by Robert Morgan

**Feb/March ram lamb trimmed**

1. Tom Wright
2. Tom Wright
3. A Bayliss

**Feb ram lamb untrimmed**

1. J Chorlton

**March ram lamb untrimmed**

1. Davies family

**January born ewe lamb trimmed**

1. Sophie Wright
2. S Quigley
3. J Deakins

**January born ewe lamb untrimmed**

1. S Quigley

**Feb born ewe lamb trimmed**

1. T Wright
2. The Jenkins family
3. S Bradbury

**Feb born ewe lamb untrimmed**

1. The Davies family
- 2 J Chorlton

**March born ewe lamb trimmed**

1. Good life Ryelands
2. M Jones
3. M Pugh

**Male Champion**

T Wright

**Female Champion**

S Wright

**Champion**

S Wright

**Res Champion**

T Wright

**Pairs Champion**

T Wright

**Reserve pairs**

S Quigley

**Wool on the hoof**

The Davies family

**Ryeland young handler**

1. Annie Bayliss
2. Tilly James
3. Erin Owen

**Coloured Ryelands**, judge J Pinches

**January ram lamb trimmed**

1. J Deakins
2. J Deakins

**January ram lamb untrimmed**

1. J Deakins
2. J Deakins

**Feb ram lamb trimmed**

1. S Ridge
2. R Whitticase
3. A Bayliss

**March ram lamb trimmed**

1. Erin Owen
2. J Hitchman
3. R Whitticase

**March ram lamb untrimmed**

1. S Bradbury

**January born ewe lamb trimmed**

1. J Deakins
2. S Wright
3. J Deakins

**January ewe lamb untrimmed**

1. J Deakins
2. J Deakins

**February ewe lamb trimmed**

1. A Ridge
2. I Jenkins
3. S Bradbury

**February ewe lamb untrimmed**

1. L Wilcox

**March ewe lamb trimmed**

1. R Whitticase
2. E Pritchard

**Male Champion**

Erin Owen

**Female Champion and Overall Champion**

Richard Whitticase

**Pairs Champion**

Richard Whitticase

**Reserve pairs**

Jack Deakins

**Wool on the hoof**

S Wright

**Coloured Ryeland young handlers**

1. Tilly James
2. Scarlett Ridge
3. Erin Owen

## North Wales & Mercia Regional Report

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By now the tups are probably all finished with the ewes and some of you will be about to welcome the first of the 2023 lambs. The shepherd's year seems to go very fast, as there is always something happening!

Our region had a good year, with the final event being the Annual lamb show at Stafford show-ground in November. It was the best attended to date, with 86 lambs and lots of new exhibitors. The standard was also the highest we have had, and far more ram lambs were on show as in previous years. The event was expertly organised by Karen Turnbull as usual, and ran like clockwork. We were fortunate to have Tim Tyne judging the show classes who is one of the most experienced and respected commercial judges in the country. We like to use a commercial judge rather than a purely Ryeland one to put the emphasis on correct conformation and



*Champion Ryeland, bred and exhibited by Alison Robinson*

suitability as breeding stock rather than judging the finished article in terms of condition, presentation and 'cosmetic' attributes of the lamb, though of course breed standards were strictly adhered to throughout.

It was lovely to see exhibitors from all parts of the country not just our own region, and congratulations go to all those who took the prizes away. A really enjoyable meal was organised at the wonderful Chinese buffet restaurant on the Saturday night which 25 attended. The Sunday saw wool on the hoof classes and a talk all about wool from the senior grader at the wool board, Ian Brooksbanks, as well as young handler and a charity fancy dress class. We also held a Craft Competition and the Fleece and Yarn committee organised a lovely informative stand so thank you to Lin for that! Hopefully some of those who read this will be tempted to come along next year with or without their lambs as there is so much that can be learnt as well as having a lot of fun.

There have been some changes to our regional committee, and we now have a 'social media and marketing' role which has been taken on by Gareth Silvester. This

will enable our members to be kept informed of what is going on in the region through our own website [www.ryelandnwam.org](http://www.ryelandnwam.org) so do please keep checking for updates. We will also use our region's Facebook page which you can request to join as well as the national one.

I hope everyone has a lovely Christmas, happy & healthy New Year and successful lambing season.

*Michele Varmen*

Regional Chair

## News from Scotland

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### Health and nutrition meeting

RFBS members in Scotland held a gathering near Stirling on Sunday, September 11, hosted by Janice Milne. Once again we were so very fortunate to have vet Caroline Robinson from SAC Consulting to speak to us and she was joined by her colleague, nutritionist Lorna Shaw who started the meeting with a very informative talk on all aspects of sheep nutrition. Included in that was a section on condition scoring using special demonstration pads imitating the 'feel' of the different scores then moving on to demonstrate on some of Janice's sheep.

After lunch, Caroline covered a wide range of health issues, the main one of which was foot health and care. Then both ladies answered a variety of questions from the floor. We are very lucky to be able to tap into the knowledge of these ladies who gave up their days to join us at no expense to the group.

At the end of the day Janice presented them both with small tokens of our appreciation. And we are also once again indebted to Janice and Russell for hosting the meeting.

### Scottish Smallholders' Festival

The next event in Scotland saw RFBS members putting on a breed display at the very popular Scottish Smallholders' Festival at Forfar on October 22,

The days saw a very healthy amount of visitors to the stand manned by RFBS members Janice Milne, Douglas Stainton and Susan Bryden with a good deal of very positive interest in both breeds .

The stand featured a new attraction which proved very popular with visitors. Douglas very kindly brought along his 'selfie' photo booth and lots of children (and adults too) went home with a special photo souvenir of their visit.

Thanks also go to Dee Tippett for providing a display of her wonderful Ryeland wool crafts, including the winner of last year's RFBS craft show, her amazing blanket.

A great day was topped off in the best possible way when Janice's Coloured tup

lamb was crowned interbreed champion of the lamb show organised as part of the festival.

### **Winter lunch**

By the time this newsletter is published, Scottish members will have attended their winter lunch, a regular gathering which obviously was not held during Covid. At this lunch, the winner of the points competition will have been presented, news to follow in next newsletter.

Wishing everyone across the country and very happy Christmas and, as we say in Scotland, a very Guid New Year.

*Susan Bryden*

## **News From South East England**

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Findon Sheep Fair took place on 10th September. The stunning backdrop of the South Downs and the glorious early Autumn weather made for a perfect setting, and there was a reasonable turnout of both Ryeland and Coloured Ryeland entries. In the Ryeland classes, a ewe exhibited by Harriet Hunt and Fiona Liddiard won the championship with Kim Dolden's ram lamb in reserve, whilst the CR championship went to Peter Jacques' magnificent ram lamb, which also went on to take the reserve supreme championship and the wool on the hoof championship. This achievement was as poignant as it was impressive; the show was Peter's swan song, because sadly he is dispersing his flock.

In the light of the cancellation of the 2022 Cranleigh Show, it had been decided that the Cranleigh Points Trophy, awarded to the member gaining the most points in Ryeland and CR classes at the Show, should be awarded at Findon instead this year. Harriet Hunt and Fiona Liddiard triumphed in what turned out to be a close run contest. This was the first year of Ryeland classes at Findon and they were therefore something of an experiment. However, we understand that the level of entries was sufficient to ensure that the classes will run again next year, which is great news for the South East region.

Aside from the competitions, it was very good to meet up with old and new faces over cold drinks and homemade cakes kindly provided by members. All in all it was an excellent day and many thanks go to Steve Unwin, who made the long journey from Shropshire to West Sussex to judge the sheep.

There are regional plans afoot for 2023 which will be announced in the new year by email, but in the meantime a very happy and peaceful Christmas to all our members.

*Laura Goldsmith*

## **South, Mid & West Wales Regional Report**

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I would firstly like to thank Clive, Mary, Lisa and the Jenkins family for hosting an open day at their farm in Pembrokeshire on the August Bank Holiday Monday. The event was well attended by members and their family friends. Everyone enjoyed the day which included Coloured Ryeland and Ryeland flocks belong to grandsons Arthur and Osian. Also on show on the day were Badger face Torddu sheep and pygmy goats belonging to the other grandchildren as well as their livestock.

Topics included, stock judging, trimming, wool products and pre tugging advice. Experienced sheep members were available to answer questions and offer advice. The second event which was to take place on Sunday 18th September at the home of Sue and Andy McVicar was unfortunately cancelled due to lack of support.

Our Regional Christmas lunch will be on Sunday 11th December at The Castle Hotel, Llandovery it will be good to meet old friends and make new ones. All are welcome. We urgently need additional committee members and volunteers to help with future events, if you are interested please contact me.

*Andy McVicar*

[andrewmcvicar245@btinternet.com](mailto:andrewmcvicar245@btinternet.com)

Regional Chair

## **South West England Regional Report**

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A SW Show & Sale for pedigree Ryelands & Coloured Ryelands was held at Kivells Holsworthy market on Saturday 17th September. Quality Coloured ewes sold well, with a top price of 400 gns, however, buyers were very selective, with a lower demand for rams and lambs; most selling close to their reserves, and a few taken home. The Committee is reviewing plans for next year.

On Saturday 8th October, the SW group arranged an exclusive guided tour of the historic Coldharbour Woollen Mill near Taunton, founded in the late 18th century,

and still in limited operation today. It was followed by a Bring & Share lunch, and an informal social gathering. We had hoped to attract newer members to an off-farm weekend event, but although supported by established breeders, it did not bring in the new members as hoped. We will look to arrange further events in the new year

A Christmas Lunch and social gathering has been arranged for Saturday December 3<sup>rd</sup> at a venue just outside Exeter. It will provide an opportunity for awards of cups and prizes for the SW Points competition, and the Young Handlers prize, together with some fun activities on the day. We are looking forward to the social catch up before lambing commences in the new year.

Happy Christmas all!

*Gillian Dixon*

Regional Secretary

## Yorkshire Regional Report

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Well summer is now over and we have had a full season of shows in Yorkshire. So to celebrate and recognize all the exhibitors and some who don't show, we once again had our Autumn Lunch at the Old Bridge Hotel near Wetherby, which was well attended by both new and experienced breeders. We had the presentations for the Annual Points Trophies and the Annual Flock Competition, results are as follows.

### **Ryeland Points Award**

1st Molly Cook  
2nd The Welford Family  
3rd The Ellis Family

### **Coloured Ryeland Points Award**

1st D Aindow  
2nd K and M Shaw  
3rd The Ellis Family

### **Junior Ryeland**

1st Pippa Welford  
2nd Otis Dilworth

### **Junior Coloured Ryeland**

1st Otis Dilworth

### **FLOCK COMPETITION 2022**

#### **RYELAND FLOCK**

1<sup>st</sup> H Holloway also 1<sup>st</sup> Ram,  
Breeding Ewe and Ram lamb  
2<sup>nd</sup> M Cook also 1<sup>st</sup> Ewe Lamb  
3<sup>rd</sup> The Ellis Family

#### **Novice Flock**

1st M Cook

#### **COLOURED FLOCK**

1<sup>st</sup> E Healey also 1<sup>st</sup> Ram and  
Breeding Ewe  
2<sup>nd</sup> M and K Shaw also 1<sup>st</sup> Ram  
Lamb  
3<sup>rd</sup> H Holloway  
Ewe Lamb 1<sup>st</sup> D Aindow

#### **NOVICE COLOURED FLOCK**

1st M and K Shaw  
2nd O Reade  
3rd C Carr

A huge well done to everyone who took the time to enter, and a massive thanks to Jeannie Scott and Stephen Hipps for judging the flock competition. Wishing you all a lovely Christmas and best wishes for a successful lambing 2023

## Good Life Ryelands

Hello, I'm Freya and I have been keeping Ryeland's since March 2020 and here's how I got into sheep.

So it all started when I watched the program called "The farmers country show down" with Steven Hipps in it and he inspired me to get into Ryeland sheep. I also had the opportunity to meet Steven Hipps at my very first county show. I have loved the breed ever since. Then for my birthday at the age of 8 my parents took me to buy some Ryeland's as a surprise. I was so shocked when I saw them because my par-ents had told me that we were going to pick up a shed and I wanted to take them home immediately. It was the best birthday present ever. Since then, I've been expanding my flock even more and I'm so proud of my sheep because of how well they have done at the shows.



This year I won my very first cup with a Group of 3 at the Kington Show and my very first homebred ewe lamb won her class at the Kington Lamb show. My very first home-bred ewe lamb is called Good Life Clo-ver and she was born on the 10/3/22 out of a Birchdale ewe and a Just Three ram. I have 7 breeding ewes at home and all of the ewes went

in with the ram, who is called Just Three Axile, from September to October for a February half term lambing. I'm also excited about the upcoming shows in the years to come. I want to enter more shows across England and expand my knowledge of sheep even further and go on more courses held by the Ryeland flock book society.

*Freya Silvester*

## **Fleece & Yarn Committee Report**

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We have met several times by Zoom and are in the process of producing a leaflet aimed at crafters to hand out to the public at shows.

Promotional breed stands have been booked for 2023 at Buxton Show in March, Wonderwool Wales next April and Bakewell Show in October and Helen Gray will be at the Galashiels show. There may well be other wool shows being attended by members of Regional Committees and we'd love to hear from you. These should certainly help raise the profile of the Ryeland breed and the products which can be made from their wool.

In addition the NSA shows have representation from the RFBS. North Wales and Mercia group kindly offered promotional stand space at Stafford Winter Fair this month, which Lin Whittall attended.

If anyone would like to advertise their wares at these shows please let us know. Or indeed if you would like to join our committee we would love to hear from you.

The following are some of the forthcoming wool shows for 2023. It's not exhaustive nor do we take any responsibility for it being completely accurate!!! Please use it as a guide.

- Waltham Abbey Wool Show Waltham Abbey, Essex 15 Jan 2023
- Unravel Farnham, Surrey 24-26 Feb 2023
- The Stitch Festival London 23-26 March 2023
- East Anglia Yarn Festival Norfolk Showground Arena 18/19 March 2023
- Spring into Wool Leeds 1&2 April 2023
- Wonderwool Wales Built Wells 22/23 April 2023 RFBS attendance
- Buxton Wool Gathering Buxton 11&12 March 2023 RFBS attendance
- Wool @ J13 Penkridge, Staffs 13/14 May 2023
- Woolly Weekend Dilham, Norfolk 10/11 June
- Summer Wool Festival Ampthill, Beds 29&30 July 2023
- North East Wool Show Newcastle Racecourse 12&13 August 2023
- Southern Wool Show Newbury Racecourse 2&3 September 2023

- Perth Festival of Yarn Perth 9&10 September 2023
- Kernow Yarn and Fibre Festival Wadebridge, Cornwall 17 September 2023
- Yarnsdale Skipton, Yorkshire 23&24 September 2023
- Bakewell Wool Gathering Bakewell, Derbyshire October 2023 RFBS in attendance

Happy Christmas to ewe and yours.

*Jenny Cummings*

jennyec@hotmail.co.uk

## President's Dinner

The President's Dinner took place in Anglesey. As part of the weekend members were treated to a farm walk and they would like to say thank you to everyone who came. The money collected from the raffle was given to Ty Gobaith who were very grateful.



### Correction:

RHAS champion was bred by A Davies Catherton and exhibited by A Frazier.

## Richard Wear – Ruslin Ryelands

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It is with sadness we have to say Richard passed peacefully away at home on Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

A service of Celebration for his life was held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022. The church was full to witness the family floral tributes of a Shepherds crook and Champion rosette carried in on 2 Hurdles by his Grandsons and his bearers who included Andrew Hunter Blair and Jordan Stone who had only spoken to Richard the night before he died to confirm that Ruslin Chef was on his way to Germany.

Family and friends paid tribute to Richard with Eulogy's, Poems and Memories and in true show style we all went to the bar in the village hall. Richard's father Percy the founder of the Ruslin Flock helped build the hall in memory of his Brothers and Brother In-law after World War 1. In true Showmanship style the last round was on Richard.

In the next newsletter there will be full obituary, 88 years "King Ryeland" RIP

*Brenda Wear*

## Tilly Liddiard - Cottage Ryelands

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My name is Tilly, and I am 12 years old, and I love farming and animals. I have 3 family, 2 siblings that help me, flock of 7 sheep including 3 Ryeland's, 3 coloured Ryeland's and 1 Suffolk mule.

In august 2019 when I was 9 years old my dad got a new job as a farm manager, when I found out we would be moving house to a farm I was lucky enough to start thinking about getting sheep which was my dream. When I asked my parents, my mum said yes however my dad



*This me with Cottage Bambi winning Ryeland champion at Findon sheep fair 2022*

took a bit of convincing. However, he finally said yes!! So later in the year we went to Alresford show to see which breeds we liked the best. After thinking about the Suffolk's, I saw the Ryeland's and immediately fell in love with them.

In February 2020 we found 1 Ryeland and 1 coloured Ryeland ewes named peaches and angle. In that summer we met our good friend Harriet who also has Ryeland's in the same village. In November we put the ewes in with her rams and hoped that in April we would have some lambs. When scanning came around, we found out that my white Ryeland ewe peaches was pregnant with twins. On the 6th of April 2021 my two beautiful ewe lambs were born, and I named them Boo and Bambi, however it wasn't all smooth sailing from there on, peaches health started going downhill and so did the lambs due to a tricky birth. The lambs had to wear some little puppy jackets to keep their body heat up, we had to give peaches twin lamb drench every day until she got better, one week later all three were fit and fighting! It was all worth the long hours of TLC it because now almost 2 years later I have 2 beautiful shearling ewes that are now with our ram Greenfield Biscuit.

We have been to lots of shows in our first year with Harriet to see how the showing world works. To our surprise we did well, and I am very proud of my little flock. At our local show, Alresford, we decided to take my sheep Boo into the wool on the hoof class and won 1st place then went on to win the champion ship. A few weeks later we went to Findon sheep fair where it was the annual Southeast Ryeland show, with my mums help we won a 3rd place with Boo and a 1st place with Bambi in the shearling ewe class we then went on to win Ryeland champion this was a complete shock, and I was so happy. As well as the main class I also compete in young handlers every weekend which is a lot of fun and I have learned so much!

At the Ryeland sales in Devon, I brought my first shearling ram named Biscuit who I loved from the moment I saw him! I was so pleased we won the bid! This was very exciting and nerve racking. Biscuit has finished Topping my shearlings and I am really looking forward to seeing My homebred ewes lambing next April. We managed to sync topping with my easter holidays so I can be there when they are born.

Whilst on the lambing subject I thought I would share what I do on a typical lambing day with help from our friend who we share the barn with.

- Assist with Births if needed
- Dipping lamb's navels with iodine and weighing them
- Making sure ewes are feeding the lambs correctly in there bonding pens
- General Feeding and bedding up, and cleaning out dirty pens
- Assisting with drawing up medication if anything needs it.
- Turning ewes and Lambs out to a big turnout pen and numbering, castrating and docking
- Recording all information on our board.
- Look after pet lambs and cleaning out milk feeder.
- Most importantly looking at the lamb cam to see if anything is going to pop!

## The Shepherd's Examination

### Rectal temperature

Normal is 38.8-39.9°C.  
Fever is caused by infection or inflammation.

### Poor body condition

Check teeth if individuals are thin.  
Other causes include liver fluke and 'iceberg diseases'.

### Scour

Loose faeces can be caused by rich grass or dietary indiscretion but if the ewe is thin or unwell then it could be a sign of disease, parasites, or acidosis (from too much concentrate feed).

### Vulva

Is she lambing?  
Pregnant ewe: check for vaginal prolapse. Abnormal discharge could be a sign of impending abortion.  
After lambing: Check for uterine prolapse or retained placenta (>12 hrs). Abnormal discharge could indicate metritis (uterine infection).

### Udder

Toxic mastitis causes a hot, swollen, painful udder with abnormal, watery & bloody, or clotted milk.

### Observations from a distance

Subtle abnormalities and behaviour changes are often the first signs of illness. These may be more visible before the sheep is moved or caught.



Examine feet for signs of infection.  
A wobbly/weak gait may be a sign of a heavily pregnant ewe. Check a large udder.  
Other causes include poisoning, CO

A thin ewe s  
Teeth grinding  
Check along  
CLA.  
A fluid swell

## Signs of an Unwell Ewe.

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### Chest

Heavy, forceful breathing may be a sign of pneumonia, especially if the sheep is coughing.  
Rapid breathing may be due to stress, pain or heat.

### Ears

Drooped ears can be a sign of pain or illness.  
Check for infection around ear-tags.  
If only one ear is droopy and there is a head tilt (+/- drooling) this could be a sign of listeriosis.



### Nose

Thick or green nasal discharge is likely a sign of pneumonia/respiratory infection.

### Eyes

A cloudy or red, partially closed eye may be a sign of bacterial infection. This can be caught from other sheep, spread by flies or is from silage/haylage. There may be watery discharge from the affected eye(s).  
Look at the conjunctiva colour (pink fleshy tissue inside the lower eyelid) to assess for anaemia. Paleness may indicate liver-fluke or barber's pole worm.  
Sudden blindness in a heavily pregnant ewe may be caused by twin-lamb disease.

### Mobility

of twin lamb disease or hypocalcaemia in lactating ewe's udder for toxic mastitis.  
CN, neurological diseases or extreme

### Teeth

should be checked for missing teeth.  
Swelling can be a sign of pain, discomfort or stress.  
Feel the jaw bones for tooth abscesses. If the abscess is at a lymph-node then suspect  
Swelling under the jaw (bottle jaw) can indicate liver fluke, worms, Johne's disease.

## Autumn on the Farm

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It's been a busy few months on the farm. Our woodland pigs were brought back down to the farmstead before the weather turned. They had the shelter of the barn as well as an outdoor area for them to clear as their last job.

Tupping time came around fast...and seemed to end even quicker. The ewes were then left alone for 6 weeks to give them optimum chance for embryo implantation, and then they were gathered, given a mineral drench and a body condition score check before being turned out again. Our new clover & herbal ley is still delivering the goods and our autumn lambs are looking great!



But the biggest change this autumn has been our new butchery unit. It was finally approved back in Sep-tember and we have been busy processing our mutton, hogget, our autumn lamb and our rare breed pigs. It's been a steep learning curve but we are in good hands with our experienced butcher; he does the skilled butchering and I make the sausages, burgers, bacon and of course pack the end product. The thing I failed to take into account was time! Running the farm and a family is a full time job but now I have another full time job to fit in....but hey who needs sleep anyway?! I do try to limit the butchery hours to two days a week, whether that is processing our own meat or private kills for other local smallholders. Any longer and I just don't get chance to fit everything in and I don't want things to slip which is often the case when you try to spread yourself too thin. A problem I think a lot of us will know all too well!

In October we decided to open a farm shop, a couple of days a week to make it easier for our local community to access our produce. Up to now we have managed to sell our produce by advertising on social media and offering free local delivery but this is very time consuming and obviously fuel prices haven't been very forgiving.

After experimenting with a pop up shop last year we decided a regular shop was perhaps the way forward. I designed a web-site with a page dedicated to our virtual shop; where customers can place an order for collection on Friday tea times just like click & collect; and then our shop is open for browse and buy on Sat-urday afternoons. So far it seems to be going well but being off the beaten track, we are under no illusion that building up that cus-tomer base is going to be slow. I'll keep you posted on that one.

Besides all that we attended the North Wales & Mercia Lamb show hosted by the English Winter Fair at Stafford; this officially ended our 2022 show season and what a finale it was! To say we did well was an understatement and it certainly felt like our Christmas had arrived early. We have worked hard over the last two years to improve our flock quite literally from the ground up, focusing our attentions on our grassland and soil management, as well as focusing on preventative flock health rather than being reactive. And all this work reaped its rewards with the fantastic results we achieved. We felt particularly proud that we achieved those results with purely grass fed lambs. Like I said earlier the clover and herbal leys have had out-standing results with our autumn lambs finishing an absolute treat. We have always received lots of help and support from our Ryeland family and I like to think that everyone took joy in our results as it certainly felt like a team effort.



So thank you to everyone for all of that help and support, we are very humbled and grateful for you all.

Today was back to reality, morning rounds, bacon slicing and packing in the butchery, drafting off some more ram lambs followed by an abattoir run this afternoon, school run, evening rounds, tea time, article writing, paperwork.....you know the drill!

So for now, we hope you all have a peaceful Christmas and the new year

*Jayne Carter*  
Team Ryecroft

