



WHITEFACE DARTMOOR SHEEP BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter February 2021

Dear Member

We might still be in lockdown, but time marches on and farming doesn't stop. I hope you have all managed to avoid the virus and look forward to when we can all safely meet up again.

As we had no Annual General Meeting (AGM) in January this year to update everyone, we thought you might like a February Newsletter. As no new names were put forward to join Council or stand for one of the Officers roles, and the existing Council members that were due to stand down at the AGM were eligible to stand again, it was agreed that everyone should be re-elected on-block. Council were asked to formally approve the 2019/2020 Annual Accounts and this was duly completed via email, with one-member abstaining. With all the business usually carried out at an AGM now completed, it was agreed to hold the next AGM in January 2022.

Within this Newsletter you will find:

- a Report from our Chairman
- an update on where we are with the Grassroots system
- a Report from our Registrations Officer
- an update from our Treasurer/Membership Secretary
- opportunities to make more money from keeping Whiteface Dartmoor sheep

You will also find enclosed with this Newsletter this year's Flock Survey for you to complete and return.

We will update you on future events going forward, as and when we know what is happening with the lifting of restrictions. The list of proposed dates below is what we hope will be able to go ahead in the future, but may need to change, depending on circumstances at the time.

Roy Endacott
Secretary

Proposed WFDSBA Dates for 2021

Council Meeting	6 May
General Meeting	16 Jun
Council meeting	19 Aug
WFDSBA S & S	27 Aug
General Meeting	15 Sept
Flock competition W/C	4 Oct
Annual Dinner	20 Oct
Council meeting	18 Nov

Chairman's Report

Little did we know the A.G.M. in January 2020 was to be the last get together. February 2020 saw Miranda resign as Registration Officer, and Clive Wilton pick up the reins. I would like, on behalf of the Society, to thank Clive for the huge amount of work that he has put in sorting and getting things up to date.

We still managed to hold our Annual Show and Sale, despite the Covid restrictions. Special thanks to Terry Phipps and Clyde Coaker for judging in the limited space available. Well done to all the prize Winners. All but a handful of the rams sold to a good average price. There were some very good ewes on offer, with some breeders going home more than pleased with the days market.

It was with great sadness that shortly after the Show and Sale, we mourned the passing of Christine Coaker. Christine was a much respected and loved member of the Whiteface family, and is greatly missed.

There is one thing I would like your support with. Please fill in the Flock Survey' that Clive has sent out with this Newsletter. This is not new, it is something that had lapsed in recent years, but is in the Whiteface rule book. This is important as it gives an accurate number of sheep in the society, therefore helping with the rare breed status.

I would like to thank the Officers for all their help in my first year as Chairman, and look forward to working with them in my second year.

Let us hope that, as this year progresses, we can get back to meeting up again, and enjoying one another's company.

Stay safe.

Roger Hutchings

Grassroots Update

Due to the restrictions last year, we didn't have the opportunity to launch the Grassroots system to all our members. We hope to hold a launch event later this year, when we can show everyone how it all works and then people will be able to start recording their own flocks' births, sales, deaths, and registrations. To try and iron out any teething problems with the way the system works for the Whiteface Dartmoor breed, we are asking for volunteers who already understand the system to help trial it. If this is of interest to you, please contact our Registrations Officer, Clive Wilton, (Tel. 01566 248792 Email. chwilton@yahoo.com) who will explain how it works and provide you with your password that allows you access onto the Grassroots system.

Registrations Officer Report Feb 2021

It is about a year since I took on the role of Registration Officer for the Association, and what a year it has been. There is no need to mention the C word, we are all aware of it and its implications. On a personal note, I was furloughed from work in March last year, and then made redundant in August, so that gave me plenty of time to concentrate on the Registration task. I have really enjoyed it, including putting together the Flock Book, and feel it might have helped to keep me sane during lockdown.

One thing that became apparent early on was the fact that our flock records were very much out of date as there had not been a flock survey for a number of years. It was decided that this needed to be remedied, and so every member was sent a full list of all the animals which the Grassroots system showed as being in their flock. Some flocks were very straightforward, and some most definitely were not. To all those members who did their best to get everything up to date, I say a huge thank you. It has been a wonderful way for me to get to know some of you, and as always, I am here to give whatever help I can. A special well done to Lucy Hawker for being the fastest to make her return, she emailed me the details of her flock at 11am on the day the letter arrived.

There have been a few members who did not wish to complete the survey, which is a pity as we need accurate numbers going forward, as there is talk of payments being linked to rare breeds of livestock in the future. Going back many years, it has been a requirement of membership of the Association to submit these numbers annually. In the past the flock book listed the number of ewes in each flock each year, and since we started using the Grassroots system, it is very simple to have each individual recorded, we just need to record Deaths, Births and Sales.

It has been agreed that from this year (2021) no member will be able to register lambs until their Flock Survey has been completed. If anyone needs help to do this we are here to help. There are members with tag readers who are happy to come to your farm and record the tag numbers for you, and as always, this information is securely stored.

We have had a good number of new members join in the last year, welcome to you all, and one new member who has over 350 Whiteface sheep actually sent me the printout from his tag reader to check that the animals were registered.

The Flock Book this year should be ready by the Show & Sale at the end of August, and as there was no flock competition last year, we will be looking for some Whiteface photos to include in it. There are already one or two nice ones, but we need more, and I would particularly like to get one or two showing sheep on the moor, or on the cliffs. It can be anything, something stunning, amusing or something with the Ahhhh factor.

Wishing you all a good lambing, and I look forward to seeing you as soon as we are able.

Clive Wilton

Treasurer and Membership Secretary Update

2021 WFDSBA Subscriptions

Membership subscriptions were due on 1st January. A number of members have not paid their subscription yet. Please would you do so as soon as possible. The new cut-off date for payment is 31st March 2021 at the latest (as agreed by Council).

Contact: Mrs Chris Caunter ccaunter@btinternet.com or 07534620312

A warm welcome to the new members that have joined us since the last update:

No. 257 Leighon Flock

Darren & Louise James, 2 Leighon Cottages, Manaton, Newton Abbot, Devon. TQ13 9UP
Tel. 01647 221674 Email. louise.s.james84@gmail.com

No. 259 Lower Dittisham Flock

Mark Cockings, Lower Dittisham, Sampford Spiney, Yelverton, Devon. PL20 6LW
Tel. 01822 854827 Email. ejrivy@btinternet.com

No. 260 Nymet Flock

James Hudson, Nymet Farm, Nymet Tracy, Bow, Crediton, Devon. EX17 6DB
Tel. 07715 472310 Email. jameshudson2000@btinternet.com

No. 261 Chagford Flock

Lewis Steer & Fiona Searson, 56 The Square, Chagford, Newton Abbot, Devon. TQ13 8AE
Tel. 07585 905282 Email. lewis@thedartmoorshepherd.co.uk

No. 262 Loveny Flock

Tracey Hooper, Hayloft, St Neot, Liskeard, Cornwall. PL14 6QG
Tel. 01579 321545 Email. traceyhooper1@me.com

No. 263 Heywoods WD Sheep Flock

Duncan Heywood, Dorwell Farm, Primrose Lane, Wrangaton, South Brent, Devon. TQ10 9HF
Tel. 07984 647734 Email. duncan.heywood85@gmail.com

No. 264 Flockdown Flock

Emma Hydleman, Middle Spreacombe Farm, Spreacombe, Braunton, Devon, EX33 1JA
Tel. 01271 871204 Email. emmahydleman@gmail.com

No. 265 Old Spicery Flock

Malcolm Tribe, Old Spicery, Tedburn St Mary, Exeter, Devon. EX6 6BB
Tel. 07831261990 Email. barnydog@icloud.com

Chris Caunter

Opportunities to add Value to your Whiteface Dartmoor flock

The challenge of uncertain times often results in new initiatives being born. If you keep Whiteface Dartmoor sheep, you might be interested to read about two businesses that are using the unique features of the breed to add value to the products we produce.

Twool

Most Whiteface Dartmoor breeders will know or have heard of Kim Stead. In 2010 Kim started Twool, and it has been her aim to develop a range of sustainable British made products using natural, renewable UK resources ever since.

Twool products are made from Whiteface Dartmoor wool and so help promote and protect this ancient breed. The wool is collected at source from farmers who are paid a fair price. Last year Twool paid 65p/kg for the Whiteface Dartmoor wool they sourced, a bit different to the price offered by other wool buyers.

If you would like to know more about Twool you can visit their website at www.twool.co.uk If you would like to chat to someone about supplying your Whiteface Dartmoor wool to Twool then please call Tom Watson on 07950 314319.

The Dartmoor Shepherd

Do you sell your Whiteface Dartmoor lambs or cull ewes direct to an abattoir? As new members of the Whiteface Dartmoor Sheep Breeders Association, we are looking to work with fellow Whiteface Dartmoor flocks that are looking to add value to their lambs and cull ewes.

Through our business we have established a strong demand for both pure Whiteface Dartmoor and Whiteface Dartmoor mule (BFL sired) hides. We are now looking for fellow farmers that may be interested in supplying us with hides. We will pay a good price for hides from both lambs and cull stock. We can buy both raw and/or tanned hides and possibly arrange collection from the abattoir you use. We are interested in any amounts no matter how large or small. Please contact Lewis Steer on 07585905282 or by email at lewis@thedartmoorshepherd.co.uk to discuss this further.

For more information on The Dartmoor Shepherd please visit their website at www.thedartmoorshepherd.co.uk

The Whiteface Dartmoor Sheep Breeders Association is providing you with this information, but is not promoting either of these local businesses over other businesses that may provide a similar service. However, if you feel one or both of them may provide an opportunity for you to add value to your Whiteface Dartmoor flock, then you may wish to investigate further.