

Chairman's report AGM 2023

It is a huge honour and privilege for me to deliver this report as chair of the Society's board. Little did I think when I first became involved with the breed all those years ago that I would be in this position, particularly when I look back at all the great people who have held this office before me.

There can be no doubting that 2023 has once again been another exceptional year for the breed and in turn the Society. The quality of stock at all the major shows was tremendous and a true testament to the effort and hard work of breeders the length and breadth of the UK.

Our breed is in the enviable position of being the most popular sire breed in the country and that is thanks to the hard work and dedication of Society members. Continuing to produce the type of sheep demanded by the commercial sector continues to stand the breed in good stead and must remain the focus.

On a lighter note, it was great to hear so many positive reports back from the YDP Five Nations Weekend in Northern Ireland. The enthusiasm of the next generation is great to see and must be fostered and encouraged to support the next generation.

The success of this event and many others provided and supported by the Society throughout the year, continues to remind me that while the Society exists to maintain and promote the breed, it is the people we meet through the breed which make the Society what it is today.

Sales season was another tremendous time for the breed, with, for the second year in a row, three rams trading at 100,000gns or more at Lanark and for the first time, two of these coming from the same flock.

However, while the top priced animals will always generate the headlines what must also be noted and celebrated is the strong base in the trade at all four of the Society's national sales with nearly half of the rams at these sales selling at 1000gns or less.

Both Regional Club and major commercial sales across the country also saw tremendous demand for Texels, with the breed dominating the trade at many sales, including both Kelso and the Main NSA Sale, Bulth Wells.

The clearance rates and averages being achieved at all these sales are exceptional, long may it continue to be so.

Of course, none of this success would be possible were it not for the hard work and dedication of both the Society staff and the board of directors. I thank you all for your efforts and support over the last 12 months.

The work put in by the Texel team to ensure the smooth running of the Society takes a huge weight off the board and allows us to concentrate our efforts where needed.

And finally, may I take this opportunity to remind members that 2024 will be the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Society, a huge milestone in its history. There are a number of special events and activities planned for next year and I look forward to seeing many, many members joining in the celebrations.

Jeff Aiken

Chairman of the board

November 2023