

CEO UPDATE



Time marches on...

As we move through another year in our cyclical calendar of events, the summer show season is now upon us. Kicking off with the prestigious Balmoral Show here in Northern Ireland, an event that remains a focal point for the agricultural industry. If you have never attended, it is certainly worth a visit.

- RUAS Balmoral - 13th May 2026
- Royal Three Counties - 12th June 2026
- Royal Highland Show - 18th June 2026
- Great Yorkshire Show - 15th July 2026
- Royal Welsh Show - 20th July 2026

COUNCIL

These updates provide an opportunity to reflect on Council activity over the past three months.

At our most recent meeting, we saw several changes in Council membership: Diana Lindon and Iain Barbour stepped down, and we thank them for their valued contributions over the years. We welcome James Wallace (Scottish Branch) and Kevin Hasemore (South East Branch) to Council.

After three years as Chair, Jane Soulsby has stepped back from the role, handing over to Andrew Evans, who has effectively been preparing for the position during that time. We extend our thanks to Jane for her dedication, not only as Chair, but for her service on Council since 2007.

David Miskelly has been appointed as Vice Chair.

Glenys Morgan handed over the President's Crook to Glynis Soulsby for the coming year. Northern Ireland Branch nominated John Hegarty as President Elect.

Overall, the Society remains in a strong position, with committed individuals ensuring effective governance and momentum that has been created over the past few years.

COUNCIL FOCUS POINTS

Additional topics discussed at Council included planning for the 2026 sale season and consideration of 2027 sale dates, monitoring levels of embryo transfer (ET) within flocks and

our continued links with Native British Lamb 365, formerly the Stratified Sheep Group.

FINANCIAL POSITION

Financially, we remain stable and well-managed. A clean audit was presented in person by our auditors at the recent Council meeting.

It is good to have a clean audit by a third party, independently scrutinising our financial practices and keeping transparency.

A slight surplus has been recorded on our trading. Council continues to discuss projects to reinvest this effectively to continue to take our breed forward. Further work is underway to ensure that all investments deliver 'bang for the buck'.

We remain focused on controlling our costs and increasing income to spend on marketing the Suffolk Advantage. This is to keep the wider marketplace changing to Suffolk genetics, either as a terminal sire or the ever popular Suffolk Mule cross.

Key reports show we are ahead of budget on trading and P&L for first quarter. Debtors list is under control and our investments (reserves) continue to perform in line with expectations.

While recent world events may influence investment performance as the year progresses, this is out of our control to a point. Our investment company is tasked with delivering a return, which they have done during my tenure as CEO.

YEARBOOK 2026

The Yearbook has landed earlier this year and features an eclectic mix of technical content, alongside show, sale, and club reports. Thanks to Gill in the office, who chases contributions and coordinates the entire publication, no mean feat! We set ourselves the goal of delivering it earlier this year, which was achieved with publication by the end of February. Positive feedback has already been received, and we hope you enjoy the read.

PRE SALE DNA TESTING

Sale season is fast approaching and once again we will offer members access to pre-sale DNA testing. Whilst this is voluntary, it can provide reassurance on the sires of consignments as well as give a Scrapie Genotype report.

Pre-sale DNA kits can be ordered in the usual way from the Office: enquiries@suffolksheep.org These must be returned by Friday 22nd May 2026.

**Vendors wishing to participate in the SRUC Scrapie Monitoring Scheme may do so directly with SRUC at their own cost.*

Scottish Area Branch Sale, Lanark

- Inspection: 15 July 2026
- Show & Sale: 16 July 2026

NI Premier Export Sale, Ballymena

- Inspection: 17 July 2026
- Show & Sale: 18 July 2026

National Show and Sale, Shrewsbury

- Inspection & Show: 24 July 2026
- Sale: 25 July 2026

Suffolk Spectacular, Carlisle

- Inspection & Show: 31 July 2026
- Sale: 1 August 2026

GRASSROOTS

Our breed registry system, Grassroots, has recently undergone an upgrade.

While members may notice little immediate change, the transition to a Windows 365 platform has enhanced our abilities to move more processes online. It is important that we make full use of the system in place to maximise efficiency. We are now exploring how best to utilise these improvements to simplify processes and deliver additional value to members.

NEW MEMBERS

Membership growth continues to be very encouraging with 41 new members since my last update, which had also reported a record month of new members.

This represents a strong start to the year and reflects growing confidence in both the breed and the Society.

We are also exploring further initiatives to encourage more sheep farmers to get involved in what we are about. The principle is sound, but we must ensure that the delivery and structure doesn't impinge on the service currently offered to you.

DIGITAL COMMUNICATION

We have been reviewing our social media and digital communication strategies in order to make best use of what has become a key part of today's marketing and

communication process.

I have sat in on a number of recent Digital Marketing mentoring sessions with Gill, which were funded by Invest NI. These have increased our understanding on how to maximise engagement, analyse performance and adapt or maintain our approach accordingly.

This is already proving valuable and will play an important role in how we promote the Society moving forward.

NATIONAL FLOCK COMPETITION

We are delighted to confirm that Glenys Morgan, Llangeview flock and our immediate past President, will be judge of our National Flock Competition 2026.

Last year, Overall Champion flock and winner of the Bristol Gold cup was Sharps flock, but where will it go this year? You can see this year's information and previous winners on our website by clicking [here](#).

[Entry forms](#) and updated [Conditions of Entry](#) are now available on our website or by contacting the Office. Entries close on Monday 11th May 2026. We look forward to receiving your entries.

**BIRTH
NOTIFICATIONS**

Remember the deadline for 2026 Birth Notifications to be submitted is 31st May 2026. Either complete them online or by returning paperwork sent in February.

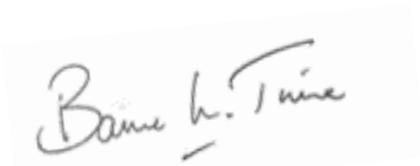
All birth notified AI or ET lambs MUST be accompanied by certificates/receipts before they can be processed. Submissions made after the deadline will incur late fees.

You can login to Grassroots [here](#).

I look forward to seeing many of you over the summer months.

As always, your feedback is welcome on all aspects of Society business. The office team, Anna, Margo and Gill, are on hand to assist you with registrations and any queries you may have.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the Suffolk Sheep Society.



Barrie L Turner
CEO