

CEO UPDATE



A year not to forget...

2026 will be one not to forget for me, for all the wrong reasons. A slight health blip in the last quarter has meant me taking my foot off the gas and running things in the background with the help of many.

Travel throughout July was fairly hampered, which left

me unable to attend shows and sales during the busiest month of the year, until I can get to the bottom of what caused the issue. My thanks must go to all those who have continued to keep a check on me. I am grateful to you for doing that. Messages and phone calls were plentiful, so thank you.

Thanks must also go to the many who stood in for me at these events and orchestrated them without me being there. Without the support of the membership, clubs, branches and Council to get through it, I may well have been floundering!

But all went well, and the Society calendar was delivered with a real rallying of the troops, for which I am grateful to each and every one of you. There are too many to mention individually, but your help and support have been very much appreciated.

ISDS WORLD TRIALS 2026

I am writing this at an event which is something a little different for us. The International World Sheepdog Trials are taking place at Huntington Farm

in the Scottish Borders. We are the only breed Society here supporting the event, and it has been busy!

There has not been one team of competitors who doesn't know someone in the country they come from who keeps Suffolk sheep.

I was speaking with Team Japan, assuming that there would be little knowledge of Suffolks there, but, on the contrary, the sole competitor keeps 300. Suffolks are regarded as the equivalent of Wagyu beef, and a butcher's lamb can attain a value of £800.

Hopefully there will be more about this in the 2027 Yearbook!

**2026 SALE
SEASON**

The sales have been and gone for 2026, and they have been hailed as a great success, with good prices and, in particular, high clearance rates.

More rams going to more homes means more Suffolks on the ground, and justifiably so for the reasons that we are marketing through the Suffolk Advantage. The message is getting out there.

Just four years ago, the percentage of Suffolk rams sold at the Kelso ram sales stood at 19%. This year, it stands at 27.2%.

I use this as a barometer of our engagement with the commercial farmer, and it tells us that we are gaining overall market share within the wider industry.

What we are doing is meeting the industry's needs, but this is no time to be complacent. We will be keeping our foot on the gas to maintain the momentum.

**BLACK WOOL
& PEELING**

The debate on black wool and peeling still goes on and remains a point of friction. There is very much a division of opinion within the membership on the matter.

I looked back, and during my tenure at the helm, the subject has not missed a Council agenda. This was not the first time the issue was under discussion, as it had also appeared on many previous agendas.

We will be progressing this with the help of some outside advice prior to the Council meeting and hopefully making some movement in a direction that will meet the approval of both sides of the debate, if we can.

**SHOW
SEASON**

The show season is all but over, and the breed has seen considerable success in the show ring, with many reports of breed champions going on to attain interbreed titles and then progressing to champion of champions.

Congratulations to you all for taking the time and investing your hard-earned cash to showcase our fantastic breed at these events.

**SOCIETY
APPROVED
EWES**

We are going to run an initiative throughout 2027 to encourage breeders of Suffolk sheep, and perhaps past members too, to rejoin the Society through our system of "Society Approved Ewes".

The exact mechanics of this will be finalised and launched for the start of the year, with an incentive to rejoin our ranks being made available.

**NSA SHEEP
EVENT**

It was a year of two NSA Sheep Events, and the National Sheep Event at the Three Counties Showground in Malvern was a good one.

We had a presence in both the Non MV section and the MV-accredited section, alongside the Native British Lamb 365 group.

We took our message across the wider industry to good effect.

Thanks again go to the people who gave up their time and manned the stand, making things happen and ensuring that the event went ahead with plenty of hands to cover what was required.

**PEDIGREE
CERTIFICATES**

The change to the pedigree certificates is happening as I write.

The old style certificates will no longer be available and, in line with our status as a Zootechnically approved breed Society in a third country, Zootechnical certificates will be issued from the start of the new financial year.

Our breed registry system allows members to access these certificates online if required, but a move towards a more digital process is inevitable, and the upgrade to the system has facilitated this.

There are other assets within our Grassroots package that we do not currently make full use of, and we are developing these for implementation during 2027.

COUNCIL

The next packed agenda Council meeting is on 20 October, and the opportunity to move things forward again will be then.

Council is well structured, with some very good people who have the best interests of the breed at heart.

If you have any concerns or initiatives that you think could help, make sure you arm your branch representatives with the information and contact them.

EVENTS

There is little let-up in the near future, with Agri Expo at Carlisle's Borderway Mart and the Sheep Breeders'

Round Table in Birmingham coming up in the next quarter.

Be assured, we will be making our presence felt at these events and taking things to a new level.

FEMALE SALES

We are in a good seam and heading into the female sales season, for which I wish you all the the very best of luck, whether selling or buying.



Get The Suffolk Advantage

UPCOMING FEMALE SALES



30 OCT	WCSSA - Exeter Livestock Centre	21 NOV	BIG BANG EXPORT - Ballymena
6 NOV	NORTHERN COUNTIES - Borderway Mart	21 NOV	WINTER WARMERS - Melton Mowbray
7 NOV	GREAT BONANZA - Ballymena	23 NOV	NI BRANCH EXPORT - Ballymena
7 NOV	FEMALE SALE - CCM Skipton	23 NOV	ABERDEEN CHRISTMAS CLASSIC - Thainstone
12 NOV	NORTH WEST CLUB SALE - NWA J36	27 NOV	SUFFOLK SUPREMES - Lanark
13 NOV	BORDERWAY BLACK BEAUTIES - Borderway Mart	27 NOV	BLACK GOLD - Ballymena
14 NOV	WESTERN WONDERS - Monmouthshire	28 NOV	DARK DIAMONDS - Borderway Mart
20 NOV	THREE NATIONS - Borderway Mart		

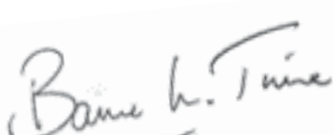



The end of September is our financial year end, so it is a busy time in the office, with new membership, autumn returns and all the other day-to-day tasks mixed in with this.

Our office team manage this to great effect between them, organised and prepared for the busy time ahead. I thank Anna, Margo and Gill for continuing to look after the Society's administration, which they do very well.

We have seen record numbers of new members, with new flocks joining the Society in 2025/26. The buzz about the breed is indeed infectious and, again, backs up that we are heading in the right direction.

I look forward to receiving many more new applications from people wishing to become engaged with a breed that is very much in the ascendancy.



Barrie L Turner
CEO