RHASS MAGAZINE

SPRING 2023

- + Royal Highland Show Preview
- + Meet Scotland's Shearing Team
- + Economic Impact Report
- + Paris International Agri Show

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ROYAL HIGHLAND & AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF SCOTLAND

CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME

Dear Members,

It is indeed a great honour to be inviting everyone to 'Flock to the Show' for 2023.

I have had the privilege to meet many of you around the country at shows, sales, events and viewing the magnificent painted sheep which have been well received up and down the country.

The massive machine that allows the RHS to take place has been preparing since the last member departed the RHS200 – so, with this in mind, I thank sincerely the magnificent team employed in the production and our wonderful volunteer directors and stewards. These Directors wear their badges with pride, willingly giving up their time to ensure we can all enjoy the great event that is the Royal Highland Show. Thanks also go to our Show sponsors, who dedicate their support to ensure we can showcase the best in farming, food and rural life.

This year our Flock to the Show sheep are welcoming you to the Golden Shears World Championships, which is being held during the Show. Many thanks go to Directors past and present who have been working on these championships for several years. I for one am eagerly anticipating this world class event and welcoming shearers and their families from across the world.

By now in farms and homes across Scotland and further afield, cattle will have been chosen for

some time, sheep have been selected, handcrafts and produce tried and tested, and innovations will be complete – all to make a fantastic display for all of us to witness, purchase and taste! This is ably assisted by every department within RHASS and we all have the same goal – that your visit to the Show in June will be a great success.

The Royal Highland Show is first and foremost a platform for showcasing the very best in food, farming and rural life. But it is also our flagship fundraising event, with revenue generated by the Show supporting the work of the RHASS as a charity and allowing us to do more for the advancement of our sector.

Many children from across Scotland will visit us for the first time and make lifetime memories. This is arranged by the RHET team, who I am sure will have many surprises in store for these children and sharing with many our pride in Scotland's farming.

Whether you are meeting old friends, making new friends, (or wishing you were still stock-judging!), a warm welcome is extended to you and your families. Without you, our members, none of this would be possible.

Have a great time and see you around the Show.

Jim Warnock, RHASS Chairman

RHASS HOSTS THE SCOTTISH SHOWS FORUM



The 8th annual Scottish Shows Forum was held on the 28th of January, hosted by RHASS in the Pavilion at Ingliston, attended by 65 delegates from 33 Scottish shows and organisations.

The Scottish Shows Forum is an annual conference for Scottish Agricultural Shows and Organisations to come together in advance of the upcoming show season to discuss issues, share ideas and good practice while developing cross-industry working and providing an opportunity to network. This also saw the first Local Show Fund being set up, with nine shows receiving funding from RHASS at the time of writing and further applications being reviewed.

NEW AGRICULTURE DEMONSTRATION Area to feature at royal Highland Show

A new agricultural demonstration arena is an exciting addition to this year's Royal Highland Show.

Designed to showcase innovation in agriculture, big and small, as well as hosting family-friendly entertainment, the new arena will be situated in the southside of the site, attracting footfall to this area of the showground. The Technical Innovation Awards will also move to this area, with the winning products on display. Make sure to pay it a visit this June!





THANK YOU FROM WORLD Clydesdale Show

"In October 2022 the World Clydesdale Show was held in Scotland for the first time. When RHASS made the decision to lend their support, the wheels that were driving the show definitely began to turn faster.

"Along with the financial assistance, the intangible benefit of having the visible support of an organisation with the gravitas of RHASS was huge. We would like to extend our heartfelt thankyou to RHASS for their sponsorship and support of the World Clydesdale Show."

World Clydesdale Show Committee

RHASS AWARDS & GRANTS

RHASS PROVIDES FUNDING TO INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS TO FURTHER THE SOCIETY'S CHARITABLE REMIT TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE THE BEST OF SCOTTISH AGRICULTURE AND RURAL COMMUNITIES.

This includes the Society's long-standing support of sector organisations such as the Royal Highland Education Trust (RHET), Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC), RSABI and Moredun.

Various educational awards are offered including an annual Nuffield scholarship and medals for academic achievement to students at a number of universities.

RHASS also provides support for specific projects; recent awards include:

 £2,500 to Brian Baxter for transport costs to enable him to compete in the European Ploughing Championships in Denmark in October 2023.



 £3,500 to the British Show Pony Society to support their International Working Hunter event being held at the Scottish National Equestrian Centre on Monday 7th and Tuesday 8th August 2023

Full details of awards and grants made in each financial year are reported in our Annual Review, which is available on our website following the Annual General Meeting in April or on request from our Membership team.



SUPPORTING LOCAL SHOWS

This year, RHASS has increased the budget available for awards and has also created a new fund specifically aimed at local shows, reflecting the importance of those shows to their communities and the wider agricultural sector. This fund was launched at the Scottish Shows Forum in January.

Awards have already been made to shows across the whole of Scotland for a wide variety of projects ranging from providing educational resources to supporting digital transformation. Further awards are under consideration at the time of writing.

HOW TO APPLY FOR AN AWARD OR GRANT

If you or someone you know has a project for which you or they wish to seek grant funding, please email awards@rhass.org.uk for more information.

RHASS REPORTS FROM

SALON DE L'AGRICULTURE PLAYS HOST TO AROUND 600,000 VISITORS IN PARIS ANNUALLY.

This year the event ran from the 25th of February to the 5th of March and three of the RHASS team had the pleasure of attending – Blayne Beck (Tradestand Executive), Katy McFadyen (Competitions Administrator) and Louise Elder (RHASS Director and Chief Steward of Food and Drink) – for which they were very grateful.

The show is a leading agricultural event and focusses on four main sectors, which were showcased in nine large pavilions:

- · Livestock and its sectors
- Crops and plant sectors, Garden and Vegetable Garden
- Products from the Regions of France, Overseas and the World
- Services and Professions of Agriculture.

After both joining RHASS at the start of 2023, Blayne and Katy have been eager to gain deeper insight into the agricultural industry. Between them they have visited the Turriff show, ScotHot, BBC Good Food Show, Kelso Tup sales, Stirling Bull sales and jumped at the opportunity to experience Salon de L'Agriculture. This was a great learning opportunity to inspire future planning for the Royal Highland Show.

The team had many highlights and takeaways. For Blayne this was the International Food Hall, showcasing foods from around the world. As you walked through the hall you could smell aromas from many regions, learn about products through immersive experiences on stands – and be surprised to see camels in the centre! It was an experience that heightened her motivation to make areas of the showground more experiential and exciting for both traders and visitors at the RHS.

The sheer scale of the cattle hall astonished Katy, and she liked the idea of the cattle milking parlour being on show for educational purposes. Networking with farmers within the hall also gave her insight into how exhibitors enter into the Show. The penning and stalling within the show was modern and showed a good use of space, and Katy thinks this is something our own Show could work towards upgrading in the future.

Katy and Blayne presented their findings from Paris to their fellow RHASS employees in April. They look forward to sharing their incredible experience with the team and hopefully implementing some of the ideas into future planning for the Royal Highland Show.





INDEPENDENT REPORT REVEALS ECONOMIC IMPACT OF ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW

Bigger than Edinburgh's Hogmanay - Scotland's largest outdoor event found to contribute £39.5m per year.

In November last year, RHASS unveiled an independent economic impact report that found that the Royal Highland Show contributes £39.5 million annually to Edinburgh's economy – more than Edinburgh's Hogmanay celebrations.

Held every year in June, the Show attracts in the region of 200,000 visitors across four days to celebrate the best of Scotland's food, farming and rural life. Appealing to both rural and urban audiences, the Show is a major marketing platform for producers, exhibitors and businesses from across Scotland and the wider UK.

With an average visitor spend of £147, the Show is a key sales opportunity for exhibitors. Visitors spent

more on accommodation (21%) than any other expenditure category, with overnight visitors typically staying in Edinburgh for 2.5 nights. This is closely followed by spending on food and drink on site, and other spending (both 19%). This other spending includes purchases of agricultural equipment.

This is the first time that the economic impact of the Show has been assessed on a comparable basis to Festivals Edinburgh. Carried out by BOP Consulting, it found that the Show generated additional output in Edinburgh of £39.5m – with this corresponding to a Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employment of 674. The Show has a wide reach, with 74% of visitors travelling from across Scotland to attend.



RHASS Director of Operations, Mark Currie, commented:

The economic impact and reach of the Royal Highland Show is significant, and this report demonstrates the importance of the Show as one of Scotland's largest and most well-attended events.

"Visitors and exhibitors come from far and wide to connect, be entertained, to sell and to buy, and it is widely acknowledged to be the best platform for rural Scottish businesses in the country.

The full report can be viewed on the RHASS website.





RHASS LAUNCHES SCOTLAND-WIDE ART TRAIL

Earlier this year, RHASS launched its 'Flock to the Show' campaign, a public art trail that is travelling across Scotland this April and May.

The campaign celebrates the return of the Golden Shears World Sheep Shearing & Woolhandling Championships to the Royal Highland Show.

The art trail features 38 specially-designed sheep sculptures, decorated by artists from across the UK. Designed to engage visitors of all ages, the trail is also raising awareness of different causes related to farming, including regenerative agriculture, rural isolation and climate change.

Following the tour, the flock shall return to the Royal Highland Show during the Golden Shears in June this year, which will be the only time the sheep sculptures will gather together in one location.

The flock will then be auctioned in September to raise funds that will support the Royal Highland & Agricultural Society of Scotland Bicentennial Fund, which supports projects in the rural sector dedicated to mental health, sustainability, succession and women in agriculture.

The tour covers four main areas – Northern Scotland; Dundee, Fife and Perthshire; Strathclyde and Dumfries & Galloway; and Lothian and the Scottish Borders.



MAKE SURE TO PAY THEM A VISIT WITHIN THE FOLLOWING DATES:



NORTHERN SCOTLAND **3 - 16 April**



STIRLING, PERTH, DUNDEE, AND FIFE **18 - 30 April**

STRATHCLYDE, AND DUMFRIES AND GALLOWAY 2 - 14 May



LOTHIANS AND BORDERS 16 - 30 May

Find a full list of locations on the Royal Highland Show website: royalhighlandshow.org/flock-to-the-show



DODDIE'S SHEEP

Doddie's Sheep was designed by Hamilton-based mural artist Megan Reilly in a tribute to rugby legend and MND campaigner, the late Doddie Weir. In Doddie's signature blue and yellow tartan, this sheep's design is eye-catching and bold.

Megan has painted over 1,000 murals in her artistic career, and says it is 'any artist's dream come true'



to have their work auctioned off to raise funds for a charity. Megan also designed the 'Shepherd's Delight' sheep, which depicts a shepherd tending to his flock during a vibrant sunset.

The cause attached to Doddie's Sheep is the topic of food security – you can learn more about this topic on the Royal Highland Show website.

SHEEP WILL ROCK EWE

Adriana De Matos designed Sheep Will Rock Ewe, which was based on the concept of a 'black sheep' and is inspired by the glam rock and metal bands Adriana idolised as a teenager.

Adriana was born in Portugal where she trained as a professional artist before moving to Scotland in 2014, where she fell in love with the beauty of the country's fauna and flora and set up her own wildlife illustration business.

Sheep Will Rock Ewe is aptly sponsored by Greatest Hits Radio, and is raising awareness of the concept of 'aglflation' – the increasing costs of goods and services related to agriculture.



BE MORE ALAN

Charlotte Brayley's design was inspired by Alan, her beloved Suffolk sheep. Charlotte, who is based in Comrie, says: "The wonderful thing about Alan was he wasn't just a sheep. He brought happiness to thousands of people." Charlotte's artwork featuring Alan even helped to pay for her wedding!

The design incorporates her signature style; a mix of broad brushstrokes.

Be More Alan is sponsored by SRUC and is raising awareness of the associated issues of isolation in rural Scotland, including access to health services due and poor mental health.

DAVY BAA-WIE

Knitwear designer Jenny McHardy inspiration for Davy Baa-wie came from her love of music legend and style icon David Bowie, with the design based on the iconic knitted jumpsuit designed by Kansai Yamamoto for him during the Ziggy Stardust tour in 1974.



Working from her studio in Fife, Jenny runs her own busy knitwear label, Nervous Stitch, and is passionate about keeping Scottish textiles relevant, contemporary and conversed about.

The cause attached to Davy Baa-wie is the economic impact of significant job losses in rural communities, and the challenge of attracting new business to rural areas.

GOLDEN SHEARS: MEET TEAM SCOTLAND

Shearing teams from over 30 nations around the world are taking part in the 2023 Golden Shears Sheep Shearing & Woolhandling World Championships, in The MacRobert Theatre at the Royal Highland Show.

Meet the team who will be representing Scotland at this year's Golden Shears!

David Stewart, Team Manager

I am a past YFC shearing champion at the Royal Highland Show and represented Scotland as a member of the Scottish shearing team at international level. Despite giving up contract shearing a few years ago due to ill health, this year I was able to pick up the handpiece and get back on the boards which I'm really excited about!

Audrey Aiken, Woolhandler

This will be my third world championships representing Scotland.I leave the shearing to the guys and gals who know what they are doing with a set of blades... but probably like a crossbred best for a fleece which will hold together better for the pick-up, throw and roll!

William Craig, Shearer

I have been blade shearing since the age of 15 and won the Young Farmers Blades competition but didn't start competing seriously till the 2010 Highland Show in the Open Blades. I'm really looking forward to the buzz and atmosphere of having the World Championships in Scotland - the support for all the competitors will be amazing but especially for team Scotland!

Mark Armstrong, Shearer

I have been to three previous world champs in New Zealand in 2012/2017 and France in 2019 but the

greatest win of all time for me is being a grampy to Ewan, Adam & Lara. I am looking forward to wearing the Scottish singlet and representing my country again especially in Scotland.

Rosie Keenan, Woolhandler

I have won the Scottish circuit for the last two years securing my place in Team Scotland 2023 at the Royal Highland Show. I am most looking forward to the competition being on home ground – the atmosphere and the energy of crowd will really motivate our Scottish team.

Hamish Mitchell, Shearer

This will be the 9th time I have represented Scotland at the Golden Shear's World Championships. I have won around 100 shearing events around the world, the odd speed shear as well as the Scottish national titles 15+ times. I hope everyone has a great time and enjoys the Scottish scenery!

Calum Shaw, Shearer

I compete in the Open competition and have won at the French World team event, Royal Highland Show, Scottish National, Royal Ulster, Lochearnhead, Black Isle and Lesmahagow. I last did the World Championships in 2019 in France, and I don't have a favourite sheep to shear - as long as they are small and sit still... I'm happy!

MORE INFORMATION ON THE GOLDEN SHEARS 2023 CAN BE FOUND ON THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW WEBSITE: ROYALHIGHLANDSHOW.ORG



COMING TO THE SHOW

Members should have received their invitation to select which days they are attending the Show. If you haven't yet received yours, please email us as soon as possible at membership@rhass.org.uk with your full name, membership number and a contact phone number.

Members, of course, have priority to attend the Show and, whilst many of our members know which days they will be attending well in advance, for those who need to retain flexibility please select all four days. If you subsequently find you are not coming on one or more days then please contact us at membership@ rhass.org.uk to let us know.

Knowing how many people are coming on each day helps us to plan resources efficiently.

When you reserve your days at the Show you will also be able to select members' guest badges (to bring guests into the Members' Area) and children's tickets for any non-member children coming with you. Members are able to purchase car parking along with a maximum of four discounted Show entrance tickets for Friends & Family at £30 per ticket and one Adult Member Guest badge per day at £15. Public transport tickets can be bought via our new ticketing provider SEE tickets at the link below;

royalhighlandshow.org/visitors/ticketinformation/

MEMBERS' FORWARD PARKING

Thank you to all our members who took the time to provide feedback following the Royal Highland Show

2022. We always take feedback from our members seriously and, as announced in the Winter 2022 Society magazine, have re-introduced the members forward parking area for 2023, getting you closer to the gates.

All parking tickets must be bought in advance. Spaces on the day are allocated on a first come, first served basis until 10am. Once the reserved spaces have been filled, standard spaces are then available. Have your parking ticket and members' badge ready to show the stewards as you approach the car parks.

PROTECTING YOUR DATA

If you wish someone else to be able to discuss your membership we will ask you to authorise that in advance. We will send information on how to do this to all members.

MEMBER SURVEY

We are creating a survey to obtain feedback on members' views of the Society and to identify areas where we can improve and develop within the Membership department. We will be asking for your views on member benefits, RHASS's charitable impact and communication preferences etc. Please look out for an email from us to have your say.

I look forward to seeing as many as possible of you at the Show in June!

Marie Livingstone Society Secretary

RHASS PARTNERS WITH



RHASS and Hoggs of Fife Ltd have recently agreed a corporate fundraising partnership with the aim of raising £30,000 over 3 years in support of the Bicentennial Fund.





The fund ensures that future generations can continue to work and live in Scotland's rural communities. Hoggs of Fife are committed to supporting this fund, the industries it represents and the wider communities it will benefit.

Alongside this partnership, The Royal Highland Show has announced Hoggs of Fife as a main sponsor for the 2023 Show, and as their principal clothing partner. Hoggs of Fife are delighted to showcase their products at this year's event and have supplied the RHASS team with their 'Show' uniform. The partnership will also extend to the retail avenues of this year's event, where a range of Hoggs of Fife tee-shirts, polo shirts and hoodies will be available for visitors to purchase. **Scott Taylor, Director** "We are delighted to be working with RHASS and The Royal Highland Show to support the communities that are at the core of our business. Our commitment to those communities aligns well with the ethos of RHASS, as we always ensure that, whatever the working environment, our farming professionals feel secure, warm, and safe using our clothing and footwear.

"Hoggs of Fife are celebrating our 135th anniversary this year and, with this year's Show hosting the Golden Shears world shearing and wool handling championship, and with our roots firmly in the countryside, this is a perfect opportunity for Hoggs of Fife us to support Golden Shears, and we are proud to support and supply Team Scotland with their kit."

Hoggs of Fife Ltd is a long-established (and award winning) Scottish family-owned business, with a design and manufacturing heritage stretching back to 1888, when Andrew Hogg made his first pair of boots.

Many a RHASS member will know of our famous 'Shepherd Boots'. However, the Hoggs of Fife brand now extends across all aspects of clothing and footwear for outdoor life, using traditional and contemporary fabrics alike, to meet the needs of the modern farmer and country professionals, whilst still representing honest good value and fitfor-purpose quality.

COMPETITION TIME

Enter for a chance to WIN £250 worth of Hoggs of Fife Gift Vouchers.

Just go to www.fifecountry.co.uk/SOCIETYMAY23

And answer a simple question -"How many years has Hoggs of Fife been trading?"

Then enter your details.

Competition closes 2nd July 2023.

GOOD LUCK - and have a great Highland Show!



PERFECT FOR A SCOTTISH ADVENTURE

RHASS MEMBER BENEFITS

20% OFF

ALL Hoggs of Fife products included Clothing, Footwear and Accessories.

In addition – Hoggs of Fife will donate **10%** of the sale value to the **RHASS Bicentennial Fund**.

TO MAKE A PURCHASE:

SHOP ONLINE at www.fifecountry.co.uk/RHS

Please ensure you quote code: **23RHASS** at checkout, to receive your discount and activate our donation.

OR

SHOP INSTORE at Fife Country, High Street, Strathmiglo KY14 7QA



LEADERS

2023 CULTIVATING LEADERS GROUP

RHASS SUPPORTS PROGRAMME GROWING THE NEXT GENERATION OF AGRI LEADERS

Now in its eighth year, RHASS is delighted to support the programme, which helps young farmers develop their leadership and business skills.

The SAYFC's 2022/23 Cultivating Leaders programme, which began in October 2022, has been a huge success for the Association and the individuals who have taken part. Exploring a wide variety of topics to prepare participants for a career in the agri sector, the programme covers:



LEADERSHIP

What is it and have you got the qualities?

VISION AND GOALS

Where do you want to be and where are you now?

SUCCESSION

Are you in the position to be able to make the decisions that you need to make, have you a difficult conversation to have?

BUSINESS

Cash flows, accounts, budgets, understanding the market-place.

PRACTICAL

Actually filling out a farm business tenancy application – completing a bank loan application – drawing up a business plan to present to partners and the bank manager.

FARM/INDUSTRY VISIT

A mixture of farm visits where they will see leadership in action.

CONCLUSION

Are you a leader?

Peter Moss, Orkney YFC

The Cultivating Leaders programme was of huge value to me, not just on a business level but on a personal level as well. The course made you look inwards at how to identify personal strengths and weaknesses, and how to develop growth opportunities in ourselves and businesses.

"Being in a small group of like-minded peers allowed us to share our experiences and Heather's driving enthusiasm and ability to get even the quietest of people to open up made for an encouraging atmosphere that helped us all get the most from the sessions. The professional advice from accountants, solicitors and bank managers gave us insights into things that you only usually learn from experience (at which point it is too late). Also, the visits to meet entrepreneurs forging their own paths were of huge value, showcasing that there are different ways to get ahead in the industry, rather than just the conventional route.



Heather Wildman, programme facilitator

It is such a privilege getting to work with the group – seeing them on day one nervous, unsure and quiet and then opening up and growing as the course develops and they get to know each other better, are challenged by the speakers and professionals and set tasks to complete.

"It is really rewarding meeting past delegates at shows and events and seeing how their careers and lives have grown and changed – taking steps that they have had the courage to make thanks to this programme. It's exciting and I am really looking forward to the 2023 intake.

David Bennie, Callander YFC

The Cultivating Leaders Programme introduced me to a group of like-minded individuals who wanted to better themselves and their careers in the rural sector. It was great to hear that some of the barriers I face in my career were shared by the group and solutions were found collectively. I feel the course enhanced my knowledge of business management, dealing with succession, goal setting and working with staff.

"The course content was pitched at an understandable level by professionals who are experts in their fields. The farm visits showcased rural, innovative businesses which have driven themselves forward, to create sustainable futures. I would thoroughly recommend the course to anyone; it is worth it for the craic alone!



APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2023/24 PROGRAMME CAN BE MADE VIA THE SAYFC WEBSITE: SAYFC.ORG/CULTIVATING-LEADERS

Why Scotland ne to the benefits of

By Brian Henderson



We Scots like to think of ourselves as a nation of inventors and innovators – and love to lay claim to many of humanity's major steps forward.

Penicillin – aye, Sir Alexander Fleming was a good Ayrshire lad; television – John Logie Baird originally hailed from Helensburgh; the telephone – Alexander Graham Bell grew up in Edinburgh. And the list goes on – James Watt, James Clark Maxwell, and Adam Smith etc.

Sadly though, in a great many cases, most of the spin-off benefits and economic gains to come from the workings of these giants of innovation haven't been harnessed within our own borders and much of the financial and social capital associated with Scottish inventions have been taken through to commercial success either down south or in other parts of the world.

Agricultural research carried out in Scotland also holds a proud global reputation for being at the forefront of progress – and this was recognised a year or two back when funding was granted to set up the

new International Barley Hub (IBH) at the James Hutton Institute on the outskirts of Dundee.

With barley playing such an important role not only in supporting Scotland's agriculture but also in underwriting the outstanding international success of the whisky trade, for once we seemed to have both the brains to come up with the breakthroughs and also the underlying industry to enjoy the economic advantages of such findings.

For our scientists have played a key part in furthering the understanding of the barley genome and specifically the role which precision breeding techniques, such as

eds to lay claim four innovators

gene editing, could play in improving both the sustainability and quality of barley crops – as well as developing varieties better suited to the needs of our all-important malting and distilling industries.

So, many in the industry welcomed the recent Royal Assent given to Westminster's Precision Breeding Act, which will pave the way for developing and marketing crops derived from such technologies which mimic – but, crucially, also markedly speed up – traditional breeding techniques.

Welcoming the move, Defra claimed that the Act would unlock the use of technologies to help improve UK food security, reduce pesticide use and enhance the climate resistance of our crops.

However, a question hangs over the commercial growing of crops bred using these techniques on this side of the Border – as, with agriculture being a devolved matter, the Scottish Government will have the final say on the growing of gene-edited varieties.

And, to date, the current administration has stated that it will maintain the more cautious approach adopted by the EU which places the same strict controls on crops derived from the new precision breeding technologies as were first applied to the older style of Genetically Modified crops, 30 years ago. The powers in Holyrood say that the approach will help maintain the "clean, green" image of Scotland's food and farming industry. But many in the farming and scientific sectors believe that, with the technology advancing greatly over the intervening period, its use holds out the promise of more resilient varieties which require fewer pesticides and other inputs and, as a result, offer considerable economic, environmental, and emission curbing benefits.

On top of this, the EU is conducting its own review of the strict regulations. It has also been recommended that the newer techniques be freed from many of the existing GM restrictions – although changing the legislation is likely to take some time.

Such innovative technologies alone won't offer the whole answer to the future of farming in Scotland – but with rampant food inflation joining climate change and environmental considerations at the top of the political agenda, surely the time is right for the country to have a mature public debate on the issue.

And, being ideally placed to facilitate such discussion, perhaps the RHASS could use the Highland show – which brings the farming industry and the general public together so well – to get the ball rolling and stimulate a proper, grown-up examination of the issue.

THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW 2028

Fresh from a barnstorming return to form last year, in just over a month's time the gates of Ingliston will open once again for the Royal Highland Show 2023.

There's plenty to get excited about this year, from the Golden Shears championships to the Royal Highland Hoolie – showgoers are in for a treat!

FLOCK TO THE SHOW & GOLDEN SHEARS

Of course, we can't tell you what's new at the Royal Highland Show for this year without mentioning Flock to the Show and the Golden Shears World Sheep Shearing and Woolhandling Championships.

The full flock of decorated sheep sculptures will be at the Show and there will be an interactive trail around the showground for you to find them all! **Find out more about Flock to the Show on page 8.**

Meanwhile there will be some woolly exciting action on the shearing stages with the return of the Golden Shears. You do not want to miss what will be a thrilling showcase of the world's best shearing and woolhandling talent. **Find out more about the Golden Shears on page 10.**



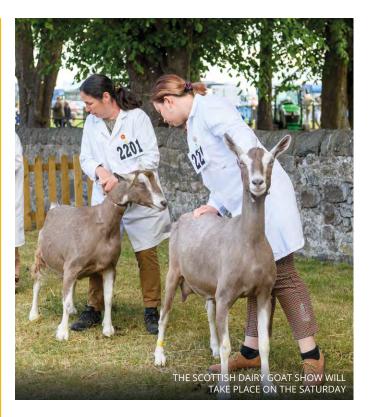
THE SHEARING STAGE AT THE ROYAL HIGHLAND SHOW 2022



SHOWCASING AGRI-INNOVATION

Farming and the agri sector are continually evolving and innovating to meet the challenges of today, and this innovation will take pride of place this year in the new Agricultural Demonstration Arena.

In the agricultural arena, the winners of this year's RHASS Technical Innovation Awards will be presented with their awards, and their winning entries will also be on display for visitors to examine.



IN THE COMPETITION RINGS

Nowhere else in the country will you find the best of the best livestock and equines on display!

The competition rings are a testament to the hard work and dedication competitors put in year-round so that their stock is in prime condition on show day.

In an exciting announcement for 2023, an increase of up to 25% has been announced to the prize fund over equine and livestock classes.

Following on from the success of introducing Valais Blacknose and Dutch Spotted classes in the sheep section last year, we are excited to welcome back these popular additions to the show rings.

In an addition to the schedule, an extra day of Goat showing will take place this year, with the Scottish Dairy Goat Show featuring on Saturday's schedule.

There are additions to equine classes across the board, including a new Driven Heavy Horse category and new Intermediate, Lead Rein and First Ridden Horse of the Year Show (HOYS) qualifiers. This brings the total number of HOYS qualifier classes to 57, the largest number of qualifiers on offer in one place in Scotland. The Coloured Horses In Hand class has also moved to the Thursday of the Show, allowing winners to be included in the Supreme In Hand class on the Friday.

SCOTLAND'S LARDER ON DISPLAY

A highlight of any day at the Highland is a visit to the famous food hall, Scotland's Larder. Here, you'll find an abundance of top-quality, delicious produce from Scotland and around the UK.

There is a big focus on Scottish produce of course, with the majority of exhibitors in Scotland's Larder based in Scotland.

As always, the Scottish Dairy and Honey Championships will offer producers a chance to shine and win that coveted gold award.

In the Scottish Dairy Championship, classes have been split to introduce several new classes, including best flavoured yogurt, cheeseboard and celebration cake made out of cheese – yum! Meanwhile in the Scottish Honey Championship, there's a new wax wrap class, with school bee keeping club entries being encouraged to engage with the next generation of beekeepers.

There will also be lots to sink your teeth into in the Food for Thought marquee, with demonstrations and talks from chefs, producers and food technicians.

Innis & Gunn will return this year as the Show's official brewery partner and primary beer supplier – cheers!

MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT

SCOTLAND & IRELAND'S MUSICAL TALENT TO BE CELEBRATED



This year showgoers will have the chance to dance the night away at the Royal Highland Hoolie! ROYAL HIGHLAND

Hosted in partnership with legendary country music phenomenon Farmers Bash, Royal Highland Hoolie will showcase some of Scotland & Ireland's best homegrown talent – including Skipinnish, Skerryvore, Derek Ryan and Laura McHugh.

The line-up of artists represents the vibrancy of the intrinsically-linked Scottish & Irish music scenes, from traditional Scottish folk music to Irish Country – there will be something for everyone at this exciting new event!

Of course, there will be the usual entertainment offerings across the showground – everything from pipe bands and ceilidhs to choirs and pop music will be on show!



KEEPING THE KIDS ENTERTAINED

As always, there is so much to engage young minds at the Show. Whether it's the fascinating beekeeping tent (complete with real queen bee!) the chance to get nose-to-muzzle with the animals, the fantastic RHET Discovery Tent or the engaging Countryside Area – there's something around every corner.

And don't forget, kids aged 15 and under go free to the Show!

KIDS CAN LEARN ABOUT ANIMALS UP CLOSE

EXCITING MOUNTAIN BIKING DISPLAYS

UNEARTHING THE SCIENCE OF FOOD & DRINK

The 2023 Presidential Initiative



INNOVATIVE SEED POTATO TRIALS IN SOUTH ABERDEENSHIRE WERE ONE OF THE TOPICS COVERED

Each year the directors of the Royal Highland & Agricultural Society of Scotland appoint a president, four vice presidents and an honorary chaplain.

By tradition each years' Presidential Team is drawn from one of the eight regions which, until 1960, hosted the Royal Highland Show in rotation. Had the show still moved around the country it would have been held in Perth Region which includes Angus, Fife and Perth and Kinross. This year's President is Ian Duncan Millar, the four Vice Presidents are Ronnie Black, George Taylor, Linda Tinson and Ewan Pate. The Honorary Chaplain is the Very Reverend Dr Angus Morrison.

Here, on behalf of the presidential team, Ewan Pate describes the 2023 RHASS Presidential Initiative.

The 2023 RHASS Presidential Initiative is already proving its worth by drawing attention to the vital role of science and technology in advancing the efficiency of Scottish agriculture.

Much attention is given to the politics of farming, particularly just now as a new agricultural support

policy begins to take shape, but important as it is, the route to profitability will always lie in innovation. History proves as much.

With these thoughts in mind this year's RHASS Presidential Initiative, led by Aberfeldy farmer Ian Duncan Millar, decided that their initiative should simply be entitled "The Science of Food and Drink."

It has turned out to be an endlessly fascinating topic. We knew that Scotland punched above its weight in terms of scientific expertise - lan is a former chair of the Moredun Foundation and others of us have worked closely with the James Hutton Institute and Scotland's Rural College. Even then I do not think we had guite realised how guickly much of that research was being taken up and applied at farm level.

The chain from scientist and engineer to the farm and then to the consumer is actually remarkably short, and thank goodness, strong. Everyone is a winner.

As we developed our project over the autumn and winter, we realised that there were stories out there which simply had to be told. The process has started already as RHASS members may have noticed. Since the beginning of February we have released fortnightly stories connecting science with farming. Prepared on our behalf by writers from Jane Craigie Marketing each story is backed up by a comprehensive case study. The farming press has kindly used the stories as they have been released. They can also be read in full on the RHASS website (rhass.org.uk/presidential-initiative).

At the time of writing topics covered have included water quality and livestock health in Glenlivet, blackcurrant production in Tayside and innovative seed potato trials in South Aberdeenshire. As we near the Royal Highland Show, these and others will accumulate to become an accessible online archive of ten fascinating stories.

But that is only the preamble to our activities at the Show itself. These will be based around a marguee on a prime site just opposite the entrance to the Members' Pavilion. Here over the four days of the Show we and our sponsors will be exhibiting and demonstrating some cutting-edge technology.

We have been backed by some fantastic sponsors and we are more than encouraged by their suggestions for exhibits. Much of it is under wraps at the time of writing but suffice to say, we are beyond excited at the prospects.



LIVESTOCK HEALTH IN GLENLIVET WAS ANOTHER TOPIC COVERED



ONE OF THE CASE STUDIES COVERED BLACKCURRANT PRODUCTION IN TAYSIDE



The idea is that we will not run seminars or set piece talks but instead offer conversations with the experts in each field. There will be something for everyone with all ages catered for. We look forward to seeing you there.

Celebrating Technical Innovation

3D/2D CRAFT, ART

Agri innovation will be in the spotlight at the Royal Highland Show

The RHASS Technical Innovation awards are an annual celebration of the innovative new products that are enhancing work and life for those working in the agri and associated rural sectors.

26

YAMAHA



This year at the Royal Highland Show, a spotlight is being shone on the significant steps forward being made in all kinds of agri innovation – from apps that monitor herds and crop-monitoring drone software to the latest tractor technology and livestock equipment.

These innovations, including the winners of this year's Technical Innovation Awards, will be displayed in a brand new agri demo arena in the Ingliston showground.

Last year, Penderfeed Livestock Equipment took home a prestigious Gold award for their Arrowquip Q-Catch 86 Series Squeeze Cattle Crush. Gold awards are only given to those entries which have already won a Silver Award, and have demonstrated continuous outstanding merit.

We spoke to Penderfeed Livestock Equipment founder, Peter Sanderson, who explains what led to the development of the Arrowquip Q-Catch and what winning has meant to their business.

"Penderfeed Livestock Equipment started in 1982 when I moved from an all-grass livestock hill farm to an arable farm without any grass. The suckler cows were sold and the sheep had to be housed in the buildings, so we made steel framed walk-through feeders for them (the original ones made are still used on the farm). The walk-through troughs acted as a PEN Division as well as a FEEDer. My name is SanDERson – thus PENDERFEED.

"Other farmers saw these feeders and asked me to make them for their own farms. This soon developed into requests for other items of farm equipment and the business expanded from there. We strive to find the right equipment for the job, which attracted us to the Arrowquip cattle crush. This is also made by a farming family firm who rear their own cattle and it is well made, quiet and efficient.

"The Arrowquip Q86 crush was displayed at the Royal Highland Show winning a Gold Technical Innovation Award which has brought great awareness to the product.

"The innovation awards are very important to raise awareness and bring attention to a new product."

"My son Ben is ably assisting the business to develop, especially with electronic data equipment which helps farmers to record the progress of their livestock. We hope to continue to offer personal service to improve and ease the handling and feeding of sheep and cattle."

CHAIRMAN'S CYCLING CHALLENGE

The Chairman of the Royal Highland Education Trust will cycle around Scotland this June to raise money and awareness in support of the charity's work to connect young people with farming and the working countryside.

Alistair Marshall, a dairy farmer from Dumfries and Galloway who has been RHET Chair since 2021, will be cycling through each of the 13 RHET Countryside Initiatives. Alistair hopes the Chairman's Challenge will raise at least £10,000 to support RHET to continue to provide free educational activities and experiential learning for young people aged 3 – 18 years.

Alistair said "I'm immensely proud of the work RHET does, which each year makes it possible for around 70,000 children to visit a working farm or benefit from a classroom activity focussed on food and farming. But, like a lot of charities and businesses, the pandemic hit hard, and this challenge is one way to help raise money to ensure we can continue to take the classroom to the countryside.

"Thankfully, I won't be doing this challenge alone as volunteers from across RHET's network will be cycling parts of the challenge with me. We will also be joined by the RHET sheep, which will be decorated by school children and sit alongside the RHASS "Flock to the Show' art display at the Royal Highland Show."

The Challenge will start in the Lothians, with Alistair then cycling to schools in the Borders, Dumfries and Galloway, Ayrshire and Arran, Dumbarton, Lomond and Renfrew, Argyll and Bute, Forth Valley, Clyde, Highlands, Aberdeenshire, Angus, Perth & Kinross and Fife before finishing at the Royal Highland Show. "There are opportunities available for organisations to throw their support behind the initiative with different sponsorship packages available with sponsors' logos featured on the RHET support vehicle which will be part of the challenge entourage," said Alistair.

Katrina Barclay, RHET Executive Officer, said:

"The impact of the pandemic has been felt keenly by our young people making it more important than ever to be offering RHET's unique service. And although the pandemic has also resulted in greater interest in food provenance and sustainability, it has put even greater pressure on RHET's resources. For example, the cost of transporting 50 school children to a farm by bus has increased by 200%.

"I would really encourage anyone who can to get behind our Chairman as he puts rubber to the road, all for a great cause."

Since 1999, the Royal Highland Education Trust has been providing free, impactful experiences relating to the environment, economic and social realities of rural Scotland.

Through a programme of farm visits, RHET provides the opportunity to meet those responsible for rearing and growing our food. In so doing, they combine unbiased and engaging information with a hands-on lifelong learning experience.

For more information on how you can support RHET's Cycle to the Show challenge, please search for RHET on Just Giving and Facebook (@RoyalHighlandEducationTrust)



GETTING BIODIVERSITY INTO THE MIX FINDINGS FROM THE SEAMS CROP MIXTURES PROJECT

RHET have been heavily involved in the last four years with the SEAMS (Sustainability in Education and Agriculture using Mixtures) project, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and coordinated by the James Hutton Institute. Alongside RHET, the project worked with Buglife Scotland, Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, LEAF (Linking Environment and Farming), NFU Scotland, NatureScot, Scottish Agronomy, and Soil Association Scotland.

SEAMS aimed to develop, promote, and implement crop species mixtures as a sustainable crop production system for Scotland, and a resource for knowledge exchange on food production, agricultural ecology and environmental sustainability. The SEAMS project came to an end in March and is now busy putting together final reports and considering what that project has delivered over the past four years.

It has been a busy 4 years, but we've managed to achieve a lot, and would like to thank everyone who has supported the SEAMS project. For more information about SEAMS visit: hutton.ac.uk/research/projects/seams-sustainability-education-and-agriculture-using-mixtures

MORE EXCITING EVENTS FOR 2023

The Royal Highland Centre delivers some of Scotland's biggest events year-round – it also raises vital funds for RHASS as a charity.

In the last year, the Royal Highland Centre has hosted some of the most exciting events in Scotland, including the revival of Connect Festival. The RHASS team has been working hard on updating the Royal Highland Centre's brand, to better reflect its status as a dynamic, modern events venue. The new website was unveiled earlier this year and it looks fantastic – make sure to take a look at royalhighlandcentre.co.uk if you haven't already!

Looking ahead to the rest of this year, there is lots more in store for music fans and beyond.

30th August / 1st September

Lewis Capaldi

Scottish national treasure Lewis Capaldi is a global superstar, selling out his upcoming 2023 arena tour. This will be a show to remember, with superstardom beckoning for the popular singer-songwriter. On Scottish soil, he is bound to be on top form at the Royal Highland Centre

15-16th September

The Big Event

The Big Event offers a unique opportunity to test drive a wide range of vehicles available on the Motability scheme, including standard production cars and vehicles fitted with popular driving adaptations. Free to attend and as accessible and inclusive as possible, it offers a great day out for the whole family.

25-27th August

Connect Festival

After a successful return in 2022, Connect returns to the Royal Highland Centre this summer. Bringing you the very best music, from global stars to local heroes and grassroots talent to international music legends, this is a festival for you to discover and enjoy. And more than just music, Connect offers outstanding experiences; comedy, spoken word, debate, visual arts as well as exceptional food and drink from local talent and big-name Scottish chefs.

22nd July

Hearts Live

Hearts Live is the ultimate event for Heart of Midlothian Football Club fans! This event offers an exciting opportunity for fans of all ages to meet the players from the men's and women's teams, as well as past legends. Participate in live Q&As with players and management, and test your skills in challenges like crossbar and free-kick competitions.

16th July

Scottish Festival of Motoring

With a variety of car displays including classic, club, modified as well as motorcycles too, the Scottish Festival of Motoring is back again for a third year. You can also watch live demos, daring stunts, music and activities for kids, making it a must for all the family.

ROYAL

HIGHLAND

CENTRE

RHASS RESULTS SHOW SIGNS OF OPTIMISM DESPITE DIFFICULT ECONOMIC CLIMATE

Members attending the RHASS Annual General meeting held on 27th April were presented with a confident set of accounts for the year ended November 2022, despite the charity having to navigate the impact of a challenging economic climate.

Overall income recovered to £11m (2021: £8.2m) following the pandemic, with membership revenues increasing to £0.6m and sponsorship contributing £0.7m.

However, despite the increased income, the overall annual deficit grew to £1.2m (2021: £0.8m) reflecting the significant impact of higher costs across the day-to-day operational activity and the escalation in costs associated with staging the Royal Highland Show. Adjusting the deficit for depreciation and loan interest shows a positive earnings position of £0.1m (2021: £0.5m). This illustrates the positive underlying operating model within RHASS.

The movement in funds to $\pm 16.9m$ (2021: $\pm 19.4m$), reflects the above operating deficit and the negative revaluation of a RHASS investment property by $\pm 1.4m$. This revaluation coincided with the UK Government's mini budget and associated short-term shocks in the market. This property is held for investment purposes and the value is anticipated to rise back to previous levels.

Long term loan repayments resumed in mid-2021 resulting in a reduction of debt to £8.7m (2021: £9.3m) despite interest increases from £143k to £299k in the year.

Highlights for the year included the return of the Royal Highland Show to celebrate its 200th event, which was delivered in a tight timeframe given the everchanging Covid-19 landscape in early 2022. RHASS continued live-stream broadcasting via the RHS TV platform, taking the excitement of the Show to a global audience alongside the return of the live event.

The wider economic impact of the Royal Highland Show was also unveiled in 2022 with the release of an independent report detailing the event's contribution to Edinburgh's economy, which was calculated at £39.5 million annually – more than Edinburgh's Hogmanay.

The Highland Centre Limited, RHASS's wholly-owned trading company, which generates income to support RHASS's charitable remit, returned a higher-than-budgeted profit due to an increased number of highprofile live events, coupled with non-event business including Royal Mail and the NHS vaccination use.

Total grants awarded totalled £227,664 (2021: 259,362) with over £167,000 in prize money additionally awarded to Royal Highland Show competitors.

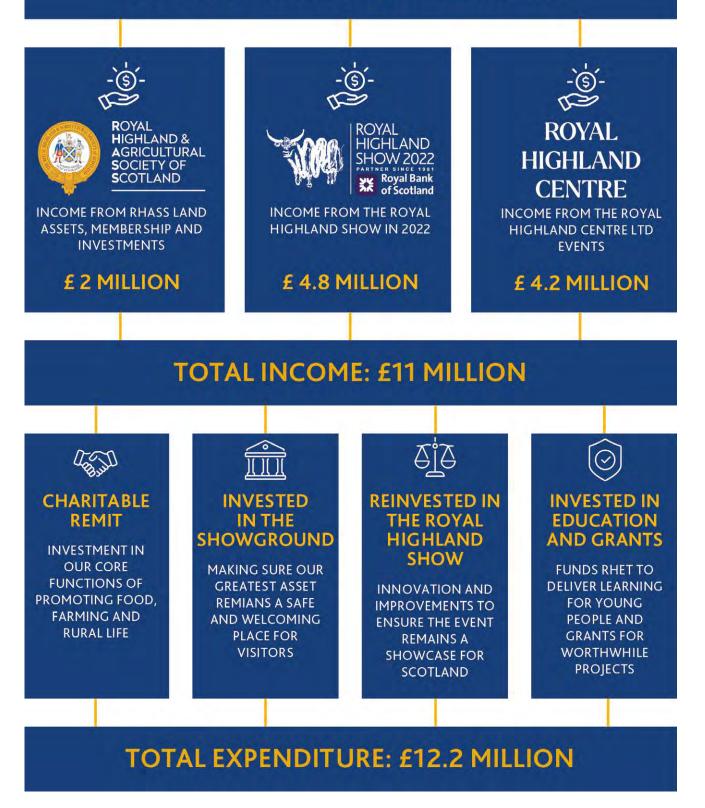
RHASS Chairman, Jim Warnock added:

"The Directors knew that this was going to be a difficult year as we returned to normal after Covid-19. However, we are confident that the Society's financial outlook is positive and in line with expectations, with plans to bring the Society back to a positive financial footing.

"We would like pay tribute to our members who have remained steadfast in their support throughout the difficult times – it is very much appreciated."

"While we are confident that the appeal of the Show will remain, and the Royal Highland Centre is on track to continue its upward trajectory, the impact of reduced household income and the increased cost of doing business remains very real. However. under our Directors' careful stewardship, I am confident that RHASS will continue to be a financially secure organisation supporting rural Scotland."

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE CHARITY



"It's never been more vital to showcase our sector"

As this edition of Society lands on doorsteps, we are only a few short weeks away from the time of year in June we all look forward to – the Royal Highland Show.

The excitement is building for what promises to be a brilliant Show – our Flock to the Show campaign has captured the imaginations of people the length and breadth of the country, and we can't wait to welcome countries from around the world for the Golden Shears.

RHASS continues to make sure we are supporting our communities and are having the right discussions with the right people. We aim to become a trusted source of information and influence, and this takes place through initiatives such as The Flock to the Show. This campaign seeks to highlight the important causes that are impacting our rural communities, making people aware of the conditions we are all living and working within.

In the meantime, the changing landscape for food production and the wider agricultural sector is challenging. As an industry, we must continue to champion all that is good about our work to combat the misinformation that is harming the sector.

The important work of RHET also goes towards correcting any misconceptions about farming and agriculture, allowing children to learn from farmers – straight from the horse's mouth! It's vital that we instil this understanding of how food gets from farm to plate from a young age so we raise a generation of informed consumers.

The Royal Highland Show stands as an important point of access into our industry – for many visitors this may well be the only time of year they get up close to farm animals or heavy machinery. It is an essential lifeline between



producer and consumer, strengthening and growing this relationship in an informative, engaging, and fun way.

We can't wait to welcome our valued members to Ingliston for the Royal Highland Show this summer, it is certain to be a great four days. The atmosphere in the MacRobert Theatre for the Golden Shears final is sure to be magnificent – we really are bringing the world's top talent to Scotland, so we will be putting our best foot forward and showcasing the very best of our country.

I hope that those of you who can't make it to the Show or Golden Shears this year can instead watch online through our RHS TV platform – it is so easy to access and really brings the atmosphere of the showground into your living room.

With my wishes to you all for a productive summer and successful Show,

Alan Laidlaw, RHASS Chief Executive

Donation FORM





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