

Eastern Alpaca Group  
Minutes of Committee Meeting (via Zoom)  
Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2021 – 9.30am

Present: Simon Ilett (Chair), Shirley Isseyegh (Treasurer/Membership), Emma Taylor (Fibre), Harley Laver (Shows), Katherine Shearer (Secretary), Sandra Justice (Events), Jo Bridge (Welfare), Katy Gilbert (Media)

Apologies: Katy Gilbert left the meeting at 10.45am.

1. Halter Show Debrief and notes for 2022

a. Letter of complaint – response to be prepared.

A letter of complaint had been received from an exhibitor after the East of England Alpaca Show. An acknowledgement of receipt had been sent by the Treasurer and the letter had been shared with all committee members before the meeting.

The committee felt that the first aspect of the complaint had been discussed and resolved with the exhibitor on the day of the show. It was acknowledged, however that lessons could be learnt for future shows with regard to clarity and communication when colour checking. It was felt that responsibility was shared between the exhibitor and the EAG team and that this was reflected in the part refund of the entry fee for the affected alpaca.

The complaint also brought up the challenges of involving sponsors in the awarding of sashes and trophies. Suggestions were made for next year, including a reminder announcement to sponsors at the start of the show and creating more time for the championship awards ceremony at the end of the show.

Jo offered to take on the role of liaising with sponsors during the show next year. The Chair will write a letter of response to the complainant.

**Action: Jo to feedback following a discussion with exhibitor. Simon to write a letter of response.**

b. Feedback from exhibitors.

Feedback from the show had been very positive. Katy highlighted social media comments and tags from exhibitors that had attended. New exhibitors had commented on how friendly the show was. Simon had welcomed all of the exhibitors during the show and this had been noted.

A discussion followed regarding invoicing as this had been brought up by an exhibitor. It was agreed that the following terms should be set for invoices – Payment within 7 days and prior to the published date of show entries closing. Early bird entries already have a clear date set for payment.

Everyone had been very happy with the catering van. Emma suggested that the committee provide refreshments for exhibitors on arrival for a nominal fee or donation. This was agreed for next year's show.

#### c. Venue for 2022

Despite some difficulties with communication and last minute changes this year it was agreed that the venue should be booked again for 2022. Catering in particular had caused committee members a great deal of stress. It was agreed that a signed, detailed contract should be provided by the venue on payment of a deposit.

It was also agreed that the Bell and Chimes should be booked for the evening social event in 2022 as the pub had provided a very professional service.

Simon praised the committee members for their handling of the stress and last minute changes and noted that none of this stress was noticeable to attendees on the day of the show.

Simon suggested that the show be moved to a Friday, Saturday and Sunday to allow more time and to spread the judging across the weekend. This was agreed by all and provisional dates were set for 7,8,9<sup>th</sup> October 2022. It was also agreed that the number of entries should remain roughly the same.

It was agreed that the East of England Fleece Show would be held at the Essex Young Farmers Club over the weekend of 19,20,21st August.

**Action: Harley to contact Beechwood and EYFC with provisional dates. Sandra to contact the Bell and Chimes to book for 2022.**

#### d. Judges for 2022

Following a discussion it was agreed that Jay Holland would be asked to judge the East of England Alpaca Show 2022 and that Roger Clarke would be asked to judge the East of England Fleece Show 2022.

Jo volunteered to take on the roll of sponsorship management for both the fleece and halter shows next year.

#### e. Estimated costs for an EAG set of electrical cables.

The cost of a set of electrical cables is around £1200 plus VAT. It was agreed that EAG would continue to borrow cables from SWAG for now. New boxes have been provided for the cables and they will be PAT tested before they are returned. Kath will speak to SWAG about a possible reduction in hire fees next year.

The electrical kit at the show was drawing 24 amps so it would be useful to have a 32 amp breaker available. Beechwood have talked in the past about installing a 3 phase connection with part of the cost being met by EAG. Harley will ask whether there are any plans for the installation and also whether a 32 amp breaker could be provided.

**Action: Harley to discuss 3 phase connection and 32 amp breaker with Beechwood. Kath to contact Di Davies at SWAG.**

## 2. Accounts clarification

### a. Ring Steward expenses claimed.

The bank account balance is currently £12,415.07. One invoice is still outstanding. The judge's expenses have been submitted and Shirley is waiting for a spreadsheet from Grassroots before dealing with their final balance.

The Ring Steward's expenses have increased this year but it was agreed that these should be paid as submitted.

### b. Pen clean up refunds.

There are just two exhibitors due to pay the pen cleaning fee. Katy will create a social media post that includes a reminder to exhibitors to claim their pen cleaning deposit. A discussion followed regarding the different ways that a pen cleaning fee could be charged but it was agreed to keep the existing arrangement in place. This will be looked at again before the next show.

It was agreed that having lots of helpers would make the movement of hurdles much easier. A trailer has been very helpful in the past. A local company can provide flatbed trailer hire for around £50 but the challenge is returning the trailer after the show.

**Action: Shirley to contact Katy regarding a social media post.**

### c. Judge's gifts – invoice

Cipher Crystal have very kindly donated the gifts for this year's show. The committee thanked Simon and Sally Ilett for their support.

### d. Grassroots invoice.

There have been a number of difficulties this year with the Grassroots system, but an update is planned. It was agreed that the Grassroots invoice payment would be accompanied by feedback of the issues that have come up.

**Action: Harley and Shirley to co-ordinate feedback**

### e. Sponsorship/Entry fees for 2022

The following income has been generated by the show this year - £5,148 (entries), £490 (fan hook up fees), £880 (pen clean up fees before refunds). A sum of £408 is expected to be refunded to EAG members as part of the discounted show entries scheme.

The income for the show is approximately £5,000 with an estimated £8-9,000 in costs. This leaves a shortfall of around £3,000 to be filled by sponsorship fees.

It was agreed that there wouldn't be a discount on sponsorship fees for EAG members next year as they already receive a discount on entry fees.

A comparison of entry fees for a variety of shows was made and it was agreed that entry fees for the East of England Alpaca Show were reasonable. It was agreed that a discussion of entry and sponsorship fees for next year would wait until the show accounts had been finalised and venue prices agreed.

### 3. Communication – use of WhatsApp

It was agreed that discussion of matters requiring decisions would be restricted to EAG committee meetings or the EAG Committee Facebook page. If a majority of EAG Committee members have seen and agreed an action proposed on the EAG Committee Facebook page it can be seen to be approved.

### 4. Autumn/Winter events

#### a/b. Christmas Social and Winter Warmers

Suggestions for Winter Warmer zoom events include paddock management, herd sire selection, parasitology and mites, and a weaving/spinning/dyeing presentation.

Emma hasn't yet had a response from Chris Keeble regarding a paddock management talk. It is possible that he is no longer providing talks. Emerald Green Feeds or Dengie may be able to help? Simon and Emma will follow this up.

Either Mary-Jo Smith or Nick Harrington-Smith could be asked to provide a talk on herd sire selection. Shirley will ask Nick.

Jo will contact Ami at Westpoint Vets regarding a parasitology/mites presentation. Jo will also speak to Burnt Fen Alpacas to see if they would be able to provide a talk on weaving, dyeing and spinning. Emma suggested contacting Kirsty at the Liverpool Weaving Company.

Harley will investigate an online wine tasting course for the Christmas Social.

It was suggested that an in person event could be held in the spring. It was agreed that a repeat of the alpaca birthing course would be a good idea as it had been a very valuable course for members. Jo has been arranging a birthing course for Hilly Ridge Alpacas with Ami at Westpoint Vets and offered to turn this into an EAG event.

It was agreed that Winter Warmers should be held on Wednesdays at 7pm, avoiding dates that had already been planned for BAS workshops. The first Winter Warmer was arranged for 17<sup>th</sup> November and Jo would see if Burnt Fen were able to provide a talk.

**Action:** Shirley to contact NH-S, Simon to contact Chris Keeble, Emma to contact Dengie and Emerald Green Feeds, Jo to contact Ami at Westpoint Vets and Burnt Fen Alpacas. Harley to investigate wine tasting.

#### 5. Any other business

The website update is ongoing and will be added to a future agenda. The next newsletter is due and should include husbandry tasks, show thanks and a request for helpers for next year.

#### 6. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> October at 9.30am via Zoom. (Sandra to take minutes in the absence of Kath).  
Items for the agenda – Winter Warmers/entry and sponsorship fees/live streaming shows

KS 19/10/2021