

**Minutes of the Albion Cattle Society AGM**

**held in Bakewell on 18th September 2021**

**Committee Members present at the meeting**: John Ball, (Chairman) Lynn Parks, (Treasurer), Susannah Mannerings, (Secretary) John Pring, Mike Caunter and Colin Nankervis.

The open meeting was also well attended by current members, potential members & interested persons.

**Apologies:** Lili Kersey, (Registrations) Also: Graham Clews, Bob Cowell & Richard Toon.

**Chairman’s Report.**

JB commented how interesting it was to see the topography of the area; imagining William Clark beginning the Blue Albions; able to graze all day in the Peak District, in all weathers and produce milk. A dual-purpose breed which going forward, could err either to the beef side or to the dairy, depending on what breeders are looking for. However, there is only have a limited selection of stock and in the future, to use kinship reports to find the rarer female lines to breed bulls or do embryo work to broaden the genetics.

**Treasurer’s Report.**

LP reported £4262.33 in the ACS account; in the last year there has been approximately £1000 in semen sales and 31 registrations (not yet all paid for) However, LP pointed out that only 25% members from two years ago have paid this year, emphasising a problem with continuity.

LP also stated that Nationwide bank was ending all club accounts on 31/12/2021 & that the new account should be able to take standing orders & BACS payments but that she was having trouble finding a suitable new account. LP is worried the money in the account could become frozen.

Alan Hewson suggested CAF (Charities Aid Foundation) banking; Ed Wilmott suggested Unity Trust Bank but giving two committee members access, another suggestion was for LP to open an account using her name. JB said it was important not to let the account become frozen. It was proposed by Leona Mills to allow LP to use her own initiative, (seconded: Jane Bonsall)

**Secretary’s Report.**

SM stated that she continues to receive many varied enquiries & there were about 10000 hits on the website in the year, many were just after Albions were featured on Countryfile or such-like. SM has a list of people who want Albions & new member enquiries. Last year (autumn) quite a few new members were able to keep Albions as the Scoutbeck herd were overstocked & other stock also became available & that it was important to maintain a list of wanted & for sale Albions. It was also important to keep fundraising.

**Registrations.**

Currently there are 197 pedigree females & 41 pedigree males.

46 were registered in 2020 & 31 so far in 2021.

**Appointment of Officers***-* JB, LP, & SM were all willing to continue in their roles; Colin Nankervis proposed JB & SM, both seconded by John Thompson. John Thompson proposed LP, seconded by Jane Bonsall & Leona Mills.

Leona & Aimee Mills were voted on to the committee; proposed by absentee Lili Kersey, seconded by Zelda Lawrence-Curran. Jane Bonsall was also voted on, proposed by Chris Birch, seconded by Alan Mills.

**Open Meeting Discussions.**

Become a Charity.

It was discussed how hard it would be for ACS to become a registered charity. J Ball said 2 years of audited accounts are required so this will take time to look into & discuss.

Memberships.

With the concern over the lack of continuity of membership, it was suggested that all membership should go via the treasurer with a cut off date if not paid. It should be the same date every year; ie. Subscriptions become due on November 1st & should be paid by December 31st. It was stated that some payments could not be made as the bank account only accepted cheques; quite a few people paid cash after the meeting.

Promoting the Breed.

Providing suitable classes at shows & persuading RBST to focus on Albions were suggested, though it was pointed out how shows are struggling with numbers & RBST has lost valuable field officers.

Zelda Lawrence-Curran suggested targeting small holders, (as they successfully did with Dexters) holdings limited by size could bring increased sales & more holdings would give greater disease safe guarding. J Ball suggested getting an article in Small Holder magazine.

DNA Testing.

John Thompson asked about DNA testing of at least all bulls- as more members are gained, it is hard to follow every animal. Matt Britton stated that the Hereford Society pay £30-£40 and test all first calved heifers. Cost was a concern. Zelda L-C suggested involving a university. Hair sampling is cheaper than blood tests.

Bull Inspections.

The difficulties of bull inspecting were discussed, either by using vets, appointed inspectors or photos & videos. There was a suggestion of raising the registration cost of bull calves to cover costs. The committee agreed to look more closely at this.

AOB.

Ed Willmott kindly donated a beautiful old trophy used in past Blue Albion classes; John Thompson suggested starting a herd competition.

The use of sexed semen was discussed. It would be great for embryo work. MC explained that it costs £25 per straw to make & 92% motility is required so it is recommended that the bull stays at stud for a while.

J Ball recommended using the free service of kinship reporting to avoid inbreeding.

It was explained that MC is currently researching a suitable set of rules for the society as the original ones are outdated.