



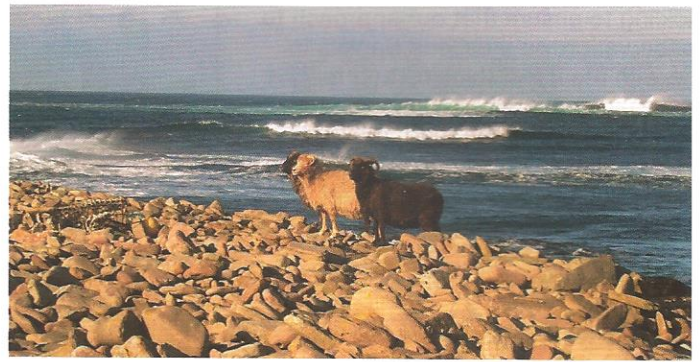
Tom joins Field Officer team

RBST's presence on the ground has been strengthened by the recruitment of a third Field Officer. Tom Blunt has joined the team to cover the south and south east.

Tom, from Newport Pagnell in north Buckinghamshire, graduated from Harper Adams in 2013 with a BSc in Agribusiness. His family has had an involvement with RBST since 2000 when they first acquired Red Poll cattle and Tom has built his livestock experience with the Blunt's own herd, managing his own pedigree Suffolk sheep flock and by helping other livestock keepers with show preparation and showing. He has been a regular at major shows, such as the Royal Three Counties, and most recently has been working on the show preparation of Southdown sheep.

Commenting on his new role, Tom says: "I've grown up with rare breeds and this is an opportunity to get more closely involved helping to preserve and promote them. Some people argue that not everything is commercially viable but every breed has its value and it is essential that we work to preserve our native livestock genetics. I am very much looking forward to becoming part of the RBST team and to getting out and about and working with and helping develop our Support Groups across my region."

Tom's area will take in the south/south east, East Anglia and parts of the Midlands. Richard Broad's area will now focus on Wales and the South West and he also now takes on responsibility for Northern Ireland, taking over from Ruth Dalton who covers parts of the Midlands, the north of England and Scotland.



New initiative to protect North Ronaldsays

Officially launched in September, the Orkney Sheep Foundation (OSF) is a new initiative launched to help secure the long-term future of North Ronaldsay sheep on their native island.

OSF's mission has two strands: to raise and allocate funds to restore North Ronaldsay's historic Sheep Dyke and to ensure the survival of the sheep in their natural habitat on their native island. The dyke, listed Grade A by Historic Scotland which regards it as 'probably the largest drystone construction conceived of as a single entity in the world', was substantially damaged by the storms of December 2012 and January 2013. Although RBST stepped in with funds to effect emergency repairs, in its current state the dyke needs major reconstruction. Unfortunately, the island has neither the financial resources nor the manpower to carry out the work.

OSF Trustees include RBST's Peter Titley, who takes on the role of Secretary, the charity's Convenor is Hunter Peace, Treasurer is Robert Brewis and their fellow Trustees are Howie Firth, a former Councillor for North Ronaldsay and its neighbouring island of Sanday, and Kate Traill Price, a direct descendant of the family who purchased the island in 1727 and who still own the original Laird's house and the Estate which encompasses the dyke and the foreshore.

Kate, whose family founded the ancient North Ronaldsay Sheep Court, says: "Support for the repair and restoration of the sheep dyke will not only conserve a remarkable historic structure and an internationally significant ancient breed, it will also ensure the survival of the traditional system of community flock management."

www.theorkneysheepfoundation.org

Trustee appointments

In the 2015 elections to the Board, Dr Richard Small was re-elected and Prof Tim Morris became a Trustee for the first time.

Tim has been a member of RBST for over 30 years and has kept and worked with goats, horses including Shires, cattle including a milking herd of Red Poll, sheep, chickens and geese. He is still keeping Southdown sheep.

His professional life began with a 'very mixed' veterinary practice followed by a PhD in cattle reproduction, with ponies and sheep 'on the side'. He spent 20 years in animal and then human medicine research until a change of tack led him into in equine health and welfare for British horseracing. He now acts as advisor

to a wide range of organisations, is a visiting Professor at the University of Nottingham and sits on Defra's Animal Health and Welfare Board for England. He has been Trustee for a number of charities and director of a number of companies.

Welcoming Tim to the Board, Chairman Gail Sprake said: "We are delighted to have another veterinary professional on the Board and Tim brings a wealth of very relevant expertise as well as a long-standing commitment to the work of RBST. It is also a pleasure to welcome back Richard Small who has made a great contribution to the work of the Conservation Committee and will continue in that role."

