



# CATCH-UP

## DECEMBER 2023



**Dear Members,**

First, I would very much like to wish you and your family a very merry Christmas and a happy, healthy and prosperous new year! The 'Charo-sleigh' Christmas card above was designed by Kate Simpson Fine Art who kindly gave me permission to use this to send festive wishes to you all.

It is an absolute privilege to join the British Charolais Cattle Society team as Breed Liaison Officer. I would like to thank you all for your tremendously warm welcome and I would like to say a special thank you to all the office staff who despite having extremely busy workloads have set aside time to 'show me the ropes'.

I am very excited about the future of the Society and the Charolais breed, and I hope we can work together to understand the priorities, to ensure the breed is well positioned to meet the challenges of the current and future suckler market. The outlook is positive at the moment with latest AHDB National Beef Evaluation figures (December 2023) confirming the Charolais breed is still ranked number one demonstrating the breed continues to convert for commercial farmers.





## AHDB FIGURES (DECEMBER 2023)

**No. 1** - average daily carcass gain

**No.1** - carcass weight

**No.1 (Joint)** - for days to slaughter

\*Base population = Continental

I write this newsletter on the 20 December, exactly one month after starting with the Society and wow, what a whirlwind it has been, travelling from Duns in the Scottish Borders to Stoneleigh, Stoneleigh to Duns, Duns to Thainstone, Thainstone to Duns, Duns to Builth Wells, Builth to Stoneleigh, Stoneleigh back to Oswestry and home again and in between we had an Executive and Council meeting! But my goodness what a tremendous time I have had, meeting a whole host of new people, as well as some more familiar faces and old friends. As some of my younger friends would say, "it has been a 'blast'," and long may it continue! My Charolais journey started with the Gretnahouse sale a couple of days before my official start date where breed and centre records were broken. What a fitting tribute to a lifetime's work, dedication, and breeding achievements of the late Alasdair Houston. I would like to thank Lucy, Tara and Rafe and wish them all the very best as they embark on their next chapter.

The breed was extremely well represented at LiveScot, the Welsh multibreed calf show and the Southeastern calf show, thank you exhibitors for putting the breed in the spotlight and that thanks is also extended to all the members who have promoted the breed at various events throughout the year. The Royal Welsh Winter Fair was successful with a busy stand throughout both days that led to new memberships and advertising leads whilst raising £255 for charity. The Council meeting was fruitful setting out clear aims and targets for the year ahead, and the Scottish and Northern Christmas party was extremely good fun and entertaining. I hope the following newsletter is helpful and informative and keeps you up to date on all things Charolais. If you wish to discuss any of the content, please do not hesitate to contact me on 07377 119233



Sian Sharp  
Breed Liaison Officer



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## LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Council recognise a great many people have worked tirelessly over the years to promote the Charolais breed and contribute to the British Charolais Cattle Society both in the UK and abroad. With that in mind, they have implemented a brand new 'LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD' that will be awarded on an annual basis and noted in the Breed Journal for historical purposes. Nominations for the award will be brought annually to the December Council meeting and the deserving winner will be announced following the March Council meeting with a follow-up presentation being made at one of the summer shows.

## BREED PROMOTION

The focus of our breed promotion will continue to be the commercial audience as I strongly believe if the commercial market is buoyant, the pedigree market will naturally follow. Therefore, any marketing campaigns, press releases and social media posts will aim to attract and retain our commercial customer base focussing on the Charolais being the number one terminal sire and the breed that will compliment any suckler cow. I am very keen to back-up our own knowledge of the Charolais

breed's efficiency, growth and quick finishing with facts and data and ask if you would kindly share data, market reports and finishing statistics with me so that I can use these within our marketing and promotion. Please do not hesitate to contact me on 07377 119233, email me at: [sian@charolais.co.uk](mailto:sian@charolais.co.uk) or tag the Society in any of your social media posts.

## MARKETING

Work has already commenced on the design of new marketing boards, banners, flags, and pop-ups which will be used across all the regions, to give us a consistent brand image wherever we are represented in 2024. I have extremely strong views that the materials should be image driven rather than text based, and the design of the new boards will be symbolic of the Charolais breed moving up the ranks in terms of performance, commercial viability, and genetic progress. The marketing methods used to promote the breed will be varied, incorporating testimonials which I believe are vital. I come from a farming family and in my experience, farmers can be sceptical, and I am fully aware that marketing campaigns, fancy-coloured boards and 'snappy' slogans alone are just not going to 'cut it'!



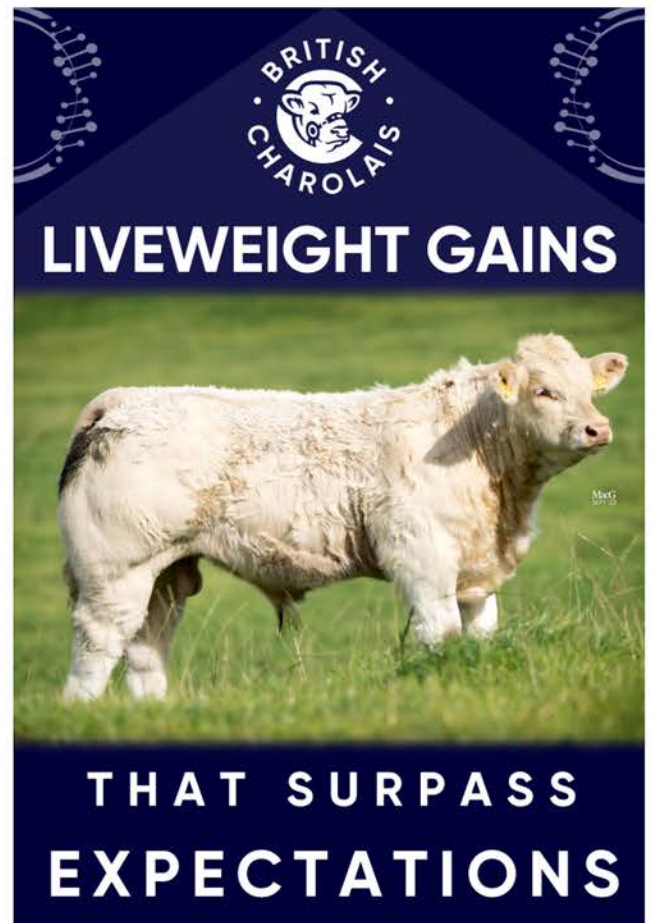
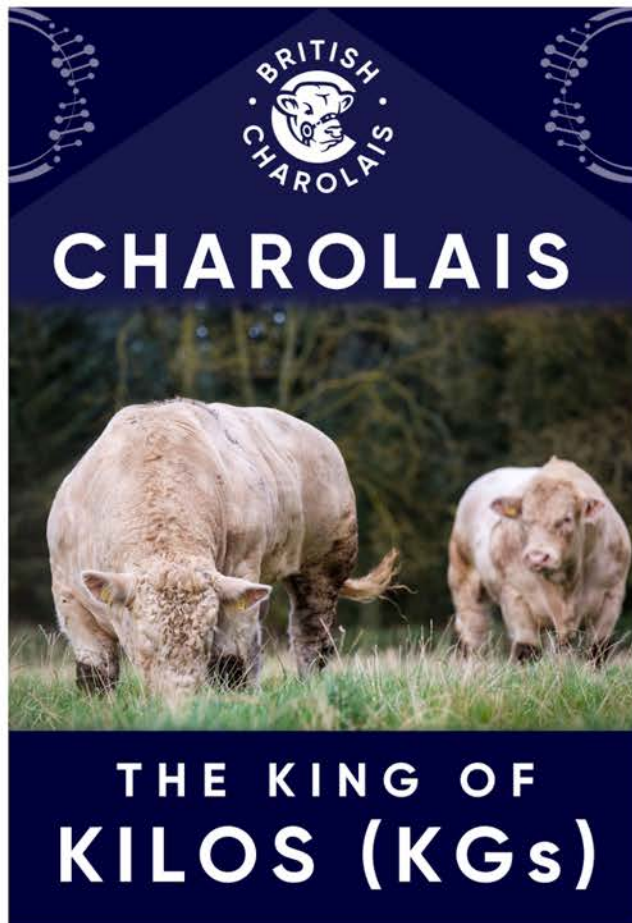
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## MARKETING continued...

Our claims need to be real and supported by real life scenarios to entice new buyers, which is why I wish to feature more case studies that permit potential new buyers to do further research into the breed and the Society. In time I would also like to add a 'personal touch' by inviting previous buyers, commercial farmers, and members to our sales throughout the year.



## SOCIAL MEDIA

### LIKE IT, SHARE IT, TAG IT!

Social media is a cost-effective way of disseminating information as well as enticing new interest in the breed and the Society. We have a large audience already, but I know there are opportunities to grow this further, so I urge you to tag the Society in any of your own posts by typing @BritishCharolais in your Facebook posts or tag britishcharolais on Instagram.



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## **SOCIAL MEDIA continued...**

With Society or regional Facebook posts, please, please, please, like the post this will increase the audience it reaches, share the post, this will send the post even further and when you share the post, type #charolais. If you really want to boost the post to a massive audience, tag some of your fellow breeders or your local regional FB page, it will go viral!!!



## **REGISTRATIONS & WEIGHTS**

Are you still using Internet solutions for online registrations and weights? Please note Internet Solutions will cease to exist at the end of January, when we move solely to ILROnline. If you haven't already done so, please sign up for the new system by emailing the office at [charolais@charolais.co.uk](mailto:charolais@charolais.co.uk) with your membership number and / or your herd prefix, and requesting an invite to ILROnline.

► **Member Login**

## **ILROnline TRAINING**

We will shortly be releasing some very short YouTube videos showing you how to perform the basic functions in **You Tube** ILROnline. In the meantime, there is a detailed guide giving step-by-step instructions that can be downloaded: [www.charolais.co.uk/downloads/ilronline-guide/](http://www.charolais.co.uk/downloads/ilronline-guide/)

## **WHITE GOLD SALE**

The 'White Gold' sale will take place at Borderway, Carlisle on Saturday 11th May 2024. Please note there will be a female show alongside the bull show on the Friday evening. Further details will be issued to all members once a schedule has been received from the market.



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## NEW SOCIETY SALE CONDITIONS ASSOCIATED WITH REGISTRATIONS TIMEFRAME

Current registration procedures state that all birth notifications must be received by the Society within 27 days from the date of birth. A standard registration fee is applied for full registrations within the same timeframe. Full registrations beyond 27 days incur the appropriate late registration fees in accordance with <https://www.charolais.co.uk/downloads/registration-documents/>

A new sale condition was passed at the last Council meeting, whereby all animals born on or after 1 March 2024 must be birth notified as a minimum requirement within that 27-day timeframe and failure to do so, will exclude that animal from being eligible to enter Society sales. All other sale conditions and registration rules remain unchanged.



## SOCIETY SALES & SCROTAL MEASUREMENT

We are extremely grateful to members / vendors for their continued support at the Society sales and I would like to extend a massive thank you to the stewards whose assistance at the inspection and during the stewarding of the classes is invaluable.

I am always open to suggestions and feedback as to how things could be improved, and one suggestion put forward to Council was the consistent use of the same type of scrotal tape to be used at all Society sales. This idea has been adopted by Council and an approved metal tape consistent with the metal tape used at Stirling Bull Sales and in Northern Ireland has been purchased. This tape will be recommended to the appointed vets.

Feedback was also received regarding the scrotal measurement categories, currently they stand as:

**13-18 months – 34cm**

**18-24 months – 36cm**

**>24 months – 38cm**

This means that an animal a day younger than 18 months can pass at 34cm, but a bull just one day older than 18 months can fail with a measurement of 35cm.



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## **SOCIETY SALES & SCROTAL MEASUREMENT continued...**

A Council member has been charged with investigating whether there is a fairer, more linear way of measurement. This will be fed back to Council, and should there be any changes, these will be notified to members well in advance of implementation.

## **NEWS FROM THE OFFICE**

Everything these days seems to have a barcode or a QR code and even our well-known postage stamps have acquired one too.

The Royal Mail introduced barcoded stamps in February 2022 allowing each stamp to be traceable through the postal system. Use of the old non-barcoded stamps was stopped on 31 July 2023.

Recently we have received a high level of post with old stamps which incurs additional costs for the Society, so we would kindly ask you to ensure that all post contains the correct stamp.

## **COUNCIL VACANCIES**

A gentle reminder that the following council vacancies will be available from June 2024.

1 x Northern Ireland

1 x Southern England

1 x Scotland

1 x Wales

1 x National

Mr D Bothwell (Northern Ireland) and Mr A J Clark (Scotland) are eligible for re-election in 2024.

Mr A E Sellick (Southern England), Mr B L Williams (Wales) and Mr A P Drysdale (National) have served two terms of three years and are therefore not eligible for re-election in 2024.

## **INSPECTIONS**



In 2023 47 MMR inspections have been conducted and two large herd inspections. This matches the number of MMR inspections conducted in 2022 whilst in 2021 there were 40 MMR inspections carried out.



# YOUTH BREEDERS PROGRAMME BACKED BY HARBRO

The 2024 youth development programme will once again kindly be backed by Harbro. The weekend is in the early stage of planning and full details will be sent to members and advertised in Spring. We can however announce that two lucky senior candidates from the 2023 cohort who haven't attended an International Charolais event before, will win a British Charolais Cattle Society sponsored place at the Charolais International Youth Programme scheduled in July 2024. The winners will be announced once the full international schedule and timings are known.



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## FLUCTUATING TEMPERATURES, A CONSTANT WORRY

Jill Hunter. Harbro Beef & Sheep Nutritionist

# Harbro

QUALITY LIVESTOCK NUTRITION



Looking at the weather forecast, I'm really concerned about pneumonia in newly weaned and suckling calves over the next few weeks. Constant change between -5 to +12 oc can have a really negative impact on both feed intakes and calf health.

Some considerations:

- Good ventilation and adequate stocking density – is ventilation as good as it could be and are the cattle spread out enough?
- Keeping weaned calves away from baby calves – different air-space is key to keep air clean and young calves safe
- Clipping backs out on weaned cattle
- Speaking to vet about vaccinations for young calves and any others not yet vaccinated
- Having a balanced ration, which calves are settled on, will help to support immune system – immunity needs energy and protein
- Topping up minerals – make sure the correct rate is being fed (get your scales out!) and all animals are getting their share – zinc, selenium and vitamin E are some key vitamins and minerals to support the immune system through risky periods
- Consider adding a Breathe Mix powder to any total mixed rations (TMR) or offer a lick bucket with menthol/garlic to help reduce risk of respiratory conditions



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# CHAROLAIS

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**BRITISH CHAROLAIS CATTLE SOCIETY**