

LUING CATTLE SOCIETY LTD.

JOURNAL No. 58

JANUARY 2025

Luings



CRAIGDARROCH



William Graham & Son

Craigdarroch Farm

Eliock

Sanquhar

DG4 6LE

Tel: 07920 859668

Enquiries Welcome



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Luings

Luining Cattle Society Ltd.

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M: 07592 139708 | L: 01890 781358

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Tel: 01361 890342 Mobile: 07747 032545

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Office Bearers and Members of the Breed Council 2024/25



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SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES

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Mr C.J. Symons, The Priory, Morebattle, Kelso Tel: 01573 440207 or 07971 231885

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NUNNERIE

LUINGS



ALASTAIR MACARTHUR

07887 512648

DAVID MACARTHUR

07766 004028



Tuesday 31st December 2024
Census update deadline (Grassroots)

Thursday 6th February 2025
Luing Cattle Society Annual General Meeting
Canteen, Wallet Marts, Castle Douglas

Annual Dinner
Ernespie Hotel, Castle Douglas

Friday 7th February 2025
Wallets Marts, Castle Douglas
PREMIER PEDIGREE SALE
of in-calf and bulling heifers followed by breeding bulls
(Entries close Friday 6th December)

Monday 17th February 2025
Stirling Bull Sales
Luing Society Sale

Friday 28th February 2025
Deadline for 2024 born calf registrations (Letter D)

Tuesday 13th May 2025
Spring Breeding Sale
Dingwall and Highland Mart
(Entries close Friday 11th April)

Sunday 31st August 2025
Deadline(s):
Bull inspection application form
DNA hair sample submission (Bulls intended for breeding)

Saturday 25th October 2025
Autumn Breeding Sale
at United Auctions, Stirling
(Entries close Friday 12th September)

Saturday 8th November 2025
Production Sale - Cadzow Bros
at Oban Livestock Centre
(Provisional date)

Friday 5th December 2025
Closing date for Spring Sale Entries



The last two years have gone quickly, and as we approach another AGM, I have been reflecting on the two years as Chairman. Again this year, I have tried to attend as many events as possible, given the workload at home. I was able to attend the Royal Welsh Show this past summer which was a great opportunity. There is good interest in Luings in Wales, and the stand was very busy all four days. There were two excellent Luing heifers on the stand, supplied by Craig Brook, that provided a great draw for commercial breeders passing the stand.

The weather has been very trying all year, with everyone experiencing a wetter than normal growing season. July was very catchy and both silage and straw will be expensive commodities this year, particularly for us in the islands.

We had three new members elected on to the council in February 2024; Rebecca Thomson, Stephen Little and Alastair MacArthur. These three have complimented the existing members and participated well in meetings, further enhancing our Council. The Council has a diverse group of breeders which contribute to all our sub committees, which collectively govern our Society.

Our sales have once again been strong throughout the year with Castle Douglas having a strong average for a great show of bulls, and heifers had a stronger average for a good show. As the season progressed, Dingwall had a good

sale aligned with the strength of commercial breeding sales. It is evident that female numbers are increasing in the autumn, with a commensurate decrease in early spring sales.

Stirling in October saw another excellent clearance rate, with good averages for all classes of breeding females. Following closely, the Cadzow Production Sale was a flyer with cattle going all over the UK. Private sales brokered by our fieldsman have been strong again this year, particularly into newly set up herds both north and south of the border. English environmental schemes which target native breeds at risk, have provided strong interest in the Luing breed over the last 12 months. All in all the breed continues to be in a strong position going into 2025.

Our Open Day in August was held at Chatsworth Estate, courtesy of the farm management team at Chatsworth, and attracted a good cross section of non-members from England and north Wales. While the Chatsworth Luing herd is relatively new, it was great to see the quality of the females that have been assembled, and choices of sires for these females, with the obvious goal of breeding consistency in the progeny. What isn't chosen for breeding replacements, are almost all used in the Chatsworth Farm Shop and hotels within the group. The throughput of the shops and hotels is great enough to be able to take a high percentage of the produce grown and reared at Chatsworth, which is an enviable position to be in. It focussed on the food production element of our industry, bred from quality breeding stock, reared on marginal Peakland grazing. It was also good to see first hand the adaptability of the Luing, flourishing across the stratified grazing types which exist at Chatworth. Thanks to David Howlett and Josh Wigley for the considerable amount of work that went into providing the visit for us.

The new sale in the spring schedule, held at United Auctions Stirling, and coincided with the Simmental bull sale on the same day, was a successful event. All entries were forward, and albeit a small entry, all 5 bulls sold extremely well and to a top of £14,700 and average £10,458. Based on that result, this sale will remain in the diary for this coming spring.

We added a new event this year, with an outing to Dalmailly Show in early September, purely as a marketing exercise. Janet Pringle very kindly provided a pair of heifers for the stand, which were a great attraction. We saw many local

existing breeders, and made contact with a few potential breeders. The weather was the greatest attraction, easily being the warmest and sunniest day of the year.

By the time you read this we will know how many members have put themselves forward to stand for council as we have 3 members retiring in 2025.

The Society is one year into its 2 year partnership with Signet, which has resulted in a 4 fold increase in members recording their herds on the Signet platform. Members are reminded that Signet membership is fully funded by the Society for the

duration of the trial, and any further members who wishes to partake in this are invited to contact the Secretary for further information.

Just to finish, there are many people to thank firstly to all the council members and members to have helped to put up and take down stands, and supplied cattle for the shows. The farm team at Chatsworth, together with the sponsors we had for the open day. Thank you to everyone. I have met a lot of breeders and members over the past 2 years and thank you for your hospitality over this period.

Stewart Wood
Luing Cattle Society Chairman



Rockcliffe Luing

A close-up photograph of several brown Luing cattle heads, looking directly at the camera. The cattle have thick, shaggy fur and prominent ears.

Steven and Elaine Murray
West Preston Farm
Kirkbean
Dumfries
DG2 8AU
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I am glad to report that, for the fifth year in a row, the Luing breed continues to expand its horizons and initiatives to highlight its position as the most ecologically efficient native breed in the UK. DEFRA has also continued to pursue its agricultural and environmental strategy, to include a range of environmental measures which stipulate use of Native breeds, including Luing. These measures are well resourced and require registration documentation for qualification purposes. The Society continues to work hard to promote the Luing as the breed of choice for these schemes, particularly in the north of England, where the upland terrain is so suited to the Luing. The Luing ticks all the boxes in relation to ecological robustness given their increased ability to graze inferior swards more evenly, outwinter without poaching, maintain an exceptionally high fertility rate, and wean a high growth rate calf.

The Luing Council approved the expansion of the Society Sale schedule to include an additional Society sale held within the Bull Sales schedule in Stirling in February. Although a small entry, the bulls sold very well and the fixture returns to the schedule for February 2025. Once again, this will be held on the same day as the Simmental sale, as there is an obvious cross over of buyers. All entries for both Stirling and Castle Douglas are invited to be returned within Grassroots, and given the tight turnaround, and Christmas holidays, it is respectfully asked that entries are prompt.

The Signet trial has done a full year, with one year to go, free of charge to breeders. Membership of Signet has increased 4 fold among Luing breeders to 16, which is excellent. Breeders are enabled to submit their performance records to Signet in exchange for Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) and summary performance statistics reporting. The Society continues to submit birth weights with annual registration data, as long as these are uploaded as part of the registration process, and breeders will be responsible for submitting a weaning weight, or subsequent weight, at a later stage. Obviously, the more data that can be submitted, the more accurate the outcome. Please visit **Signet Breeding Services (signetdata.com)** for more information.

The Luing council has approved the continuation of the Sire Verification programme as a means of providing greater herdbook integrity, and more importantly, providing greater certainty at the point of breeding selection – important in a relatively small population. From 2022, all males intended for breeding will need to be sire verified. Breeders are encouraged to submit DNA tail hair samples as quickly as possible, and by 31st August of the year following birth at the latest, to ensure that a valid sire verification can be possible before the bull is put with females. The council also continues to monitor all myostatin variants within the population through a testing programme for all males which are approved by the Society for breeding. Among the population as a whole, the proportion of animals (mostly males) carrying a copy of F94L remains at 25%, and F94L is the only variant (of 14 possible) that has been found in the Luing population. Polling is also an increasingly popular test, and it is useful to know whether a male carries one or two copies of the polling gene, for sale purposes.

The Luing Council continues to include Frame Score as an indicative measure of size for age, alongside both the shoulder height and scrotal size measures, currently displayed on pen cards. Additionally, an age graduated scale for scrotal measurements, has been implemented for inspection purposes, although it is stressed that all bulls forward for sales will need to meet a minimum 38cm, regardless of age.

The Luing Council has implemented a new web page to promote Luing Beef, under the heading Native Beef – www.nativebeef.co.uk. This has replaced the original “Where to Buy” page on the Luing website and went live in June 2023. There are a number of businesses highlighted on

the site that are currently retailing or supplying Luings Beef directly to the public, and if you would like to be included, please don't hesitate to contact the office. The page also has a downloadable leaflet which can be used by breeders, butchers / retailers of Luings Beef, for information purposes.

The financial report for the AGM will provide a more detailed scope of the finances, and it is pleasing to see continued confidence returning to the investment market in the past 12 months. The Governance Committee continues to oversee the council's adherence to its newly implemented Strategy Policy, which is a work in progress.

I'd like to thank the Council for their help and guidance this past year, ably chaired by Stewart Wood and Ewan McCall during this period. Your Council is in good hands, and is ably supported by both Breed Development Officers and Charles Symons, who is an extremely valuable resource to both myself and your Society members.

Natalie Cormack
Luings Cattle Society Secretary



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BEEF THE WAY IT USED TO BE

The ancestry of the Luing combines the historic breeds of Shorthorn and Highland lineage blends which, were part of the very essence of the 'Prime Scot' – the by-word for quality in London's Smithfield Market of the 19th century.

The Luing of today captures these traditional qualities of early maturing, marbling and tenderness from grass-fed systems that enhance taste and health benefits, while also delivering greater biodiversity and enabling the natural carbon-cycling capabilities of our soils.

OUR HERITAGE

The Story Behind Luing Beef

Luing (pronounced Ling) is a small, windswept Hebridean island on the West coast of Scotland, where kind soils and abundant rainfall make plentiful cow pasture between the rugged crags that give shelter from the wild Atlantic breeze. Visitors, taking the 200 yard ferry journey, can expect spectacular views and tranquility – with rush hour traffic only of contended cows ambling towards sweeter pastures. These cows are of the breed known as Luing – and this is the Island of their home.

The Luing of today captures these traditional qualities of early maturity, marbling and tenderness from grass fed systems that enhance taste (and health benefits) while also delivering greater biodiversity and enabling the natural carbon-cycling capabilities of our soils.

How Did Luing Cattle Come About

In the 1940's, three brothers embarked on a project to secure a source of cattle for their established farming businesses on the east coast. They were looking for a breeding ground for healthy, well-bred cattle that could be journeyed East to better grazings for further growing, nearer to market. With great ambition, they started by buying an Island and set about improvements. In securing the right cow herd their vision was to embrace the best of tradition with a new approach. Taking a well proven blend of breeding, they established a breeding philosophy, kept their own bulls and over the course of the following 20 years 'invented' a new breed.

These men were the Cadzow brothers: Denis, Shane and Ralph. The Cadzow family still run the farms on Luing today and share the custodianship of Luing cattle with breeders from all over the UK and beyond.



DOWNLOAD OUR LEAFLET FROM
www.nativebeef.co.uk



WHAT MAKES LUIING BEEF SPECIAL?

LuIng cows are excellent environmental grazers. Their ancestors for centuries were the habitat management of the hills and uplands of Scotland, until making way to more sheep and then forestry. However, their nimble agility and natural appetite for rough forage make them ideal managers for environmental habitat control and they are increasingly finding a role for themselves in nature management. Hardy native cows, like the LuIng, can reduce fire risk in established native woodlands while their disruption improves habitat for bugs, insects and further biodiversity.

When it comes to eating quality, marbling goes hand in hand with flavour and tenderness. LuIng beef is renowned for its natural marbling ability.

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Inverness
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Berwickshire
Northumberland
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Sheffield, Yorkshire
Blairgowrie

FOR FULL DETAILS, CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITES BELOW

www.nativebeef.co.uk
www.luIngcattlesociety.co.uk



Promotion and Events Committee

We are well into the swing of post Covid schedule of busy summer show season, followed by an even busier winter period. The Luings Cattle Society has once again participated in a busy year promoting the breed at a wide variety of events, to both members and non members alike. Our sales schedule has seen an additional sale at Stirling in February, and although the numbers were relatively small, all 5 bull sold exceptionally well. The Society was pleased to be showcasing Luings bulls to a different audience, and they were well received. The existing sales schedule, in Stirling, Castle Douglas, Dingwall and Oban provided a good mix of breeding, both pedigree and Sim-Luings attracted a good cross section of buyers. Averages have been good as well as clearance rates for all venues, which demonstrate that Luings cattle are in demand.

The Society held its usual spot at the Royal Highland Show at Ingliston in June, which was followed closely by a trip to the Royal Welsh show for a small contingent. Thanks to Mark Thomson, Tillyrie for supply of heifers at the Highland Show and Craig Brook for supply of heifers for the Royal Welsh stand. The Society held an Open Day at Chatsworth Estate in August which was a great success, showcasing commercial Luings cows thriving in a variety of environments, from Peak District moorland to low ground parks around the renowned Chatsworth House. All the stock reared at Chatsworth are destined for their own farm shop or hotels in the surrounding area, and we heard farm manager David Howlett describe how the Luings fits this bill very nicely. Our sincere thanks to the farm team at Chatsworth who looked after us so well. To round up the summer season the Society had a presence at Dalmally Show in early September, which was well received.

Newsletters and communication with members continue to include significant sections detailing the outcomes of Council deliberations, among all the other news items expected. Newsletters have begun to be distributed in electronic format alongside paper versions. Email addresses can be updated on Grassroots, so please make sure to keep your contact details up to date. Council continue to seek ways to reduce office and administration costs, while maintaining contact with members.

The promotion and events committee has met regularly, and continue to deal with a sizeable

agenda. This committee continues to monitor the balance between private and auction sales. A system of charging was introduced in 2022, and Council will assess the impact this has had on the volume of private sales vs auction sales. While the committee accepts that not all members will want to support Society sales and there is healthy demand for private transactions, the committee continues to seek a balance which provides a route for all members.

Members are reminded that the Society's website has a dedicated page promoting access to individual breeders who are retailing Luings beef in various formats. The web page is headed Native Beef and can be found by navigating to the Society's website and choosing the "Where to Buy" option. Further to this, a leaflet has been developed which is downloadable from the web page, along with promotional display materials. If you would like to be involved in this web page, please do contact the office with your contact information.

The Promotion and Events Committee Chairperson is Janet Pringle, and please don't hesitate to contact Janet or the office if you have queries or can make constructive contributions.

Breed Development

The Breed Development committee has continued to fully fund DNA profiling for older sires, although the vast majority of these are now profiled. Just a reminder that from January 2023 the Society has withdrawn funding for DNA analysis for all young males which are intended for breeding, both for sale and private use. Council have agreed that it is their intention to ensure that all male calves intended for breeding, registered from January 2022 onward, are sire verified ahead of being put with females, or by the time of Society sale, whichever is sooner. So, if you are intending keeping a young bull(s) for sale or own use, for breeding, please ensure that you submit a hair sample for analysis, and check that the sire is also profiled. There are still a small number of young bulls coming forward that can't be sire verified because the sire has not been profiled.

The Society continues to monitor samples for Myostatin variants to build a more robust picture of the frequency of myostatin variants in the Luings population. This work continues, and the

Breed Development committee continues to monitor results. To date, there have been over 1000 animals profiled, and 25% of the sampled population have one copy of F94L, which has been the only variant found. The incidence of F94L remains static in the population, to date. DNA results have flowed somewhat better following relaxation of Covid restrictions, but there remain a relatively high number of failures due to sample quality.

Following the introduction of a trial of an age graduated schedule for measuring scrotal circumference, during the autumn of 2023, Council reviewed these results in the spring of 2024. As expected this has resulted in a greater number of bulls achieving approval status at the time of inspection, at a younger age. As a reminder, the 38cm threshold remains in place for a Society sale, regardless of age. Breeders still have the option to submit a vet measurement by 1st June (approx. 2 year old) to prove acceptance for Society approval, all other traits having been passed.

The Breed Development Committee is one year into a trial with Signet which aims to provide the opportunity for breeders to engage in performance recording subsidised by the Society. Minimum data recording would include two weights, although the more data submitted the better the result. Birth weights can be submitted at the time of registration, which will be transferred to Signet by the Society, while later weights can be submitted using Signet's online data submission form, simply by registering with Signet. The Society will be able to provide Estimated Breeding Values for sale animals (for those that submit data), which will help attract new buyers seeking this information. Within herd reporting is also valuable, providing detailed analysis on individual females which can identify trends and problems before they are evident in the herd. For more information please visit the National Beef Evaluation website - <https://ahdb.org.uk/knowledge-library/national-beef-evaluations>.

The Breed Development Committee Chairman has been Robert McNee and its members are Neil McGowan, Billy Graham, Ewan McCall, Finlay McIntyre, Alastair MacArthur and Rebecca Thomson. Your Breed Development Officers are Neil McGowan and Robert McNee who would be more than happy to discuss any points in relation to breed development, DNA profiling, inspections and dam classifications.

Finance Committee

A small finance committee has been established to monitor cash flow, budgeting and investments. The members of this committee are Neil McGowan, Stewart Wood, Billy Neilson and Alastair MacArthur.

Remuneration Committee

Following guidance on governance matters, the Luing Cattle Society's Remuneration Committee has responsibility for managing employment and self-employed contractors on behalf of the Society. The committee consists of Ewan McCall, Andrew Barr, and Alastair MacArthur.

Governance Committee

On external advice the Council has established a committee which aims to oversee the implementation of Governance measures. The creation of a Handbook for Council members has been followed by the creation of a Strategy Document and Risk Register. These documents outline the responsibilities, guide policies, and provide a framework for Council to measure and check procedures in an objective manner. All of these documents are available on the website for members to view, and potential Council members to review ahead of nomination. The Governance Committee has met in 2024 to review these documents and implement actions derived from this review, which aim to meet the goals determined within them. The members of the Governance Committee are Stewart Wood, Neil McGowan, Ewan McCall and Billy Neilson.





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held under the auspices of the Luing Cattle Society

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Last year's sale saw 22 bulls sell to a top of 18,900gns and average £7,832, whilst 47 bulling heifers sold to 4,410gns and averaged £2,474gns, with 19 in-calf heifers topping at 3,780gns and averaging £2,233gns.

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**LUING CATTLE SOCIETY
PREMIER SALE 2024**

9th February - Wallets Marts, Castle Douglas

The Luing Cattle Society held their annual PREMIER SALE on 9th February at Wallets Marts', Castle Douglas. Excellent demand for all bulls into both commercial and pedigree herds resulted in an average of £7832, an increase of £502 on the year for 22 sold and a clearance of 96%.



Pre-Sale Show winning pair of bulling heifers consigned by D & A Barr, Milkieston.

The pre-sale show of heifers, divided into bulling heifers and in-calf heifers, saw judge Jamie Gilchrist, Ettrickshaws, Selkirk, choose a pair of bulling heifers consigned by D & A Barr, Milkieston. This pair were both polled and sired by Benhar Tweed, and were purchased by Messrs A.C. Burke and M. Halligan, Peebles for £2940 apiece. Top price bulling heifers were consigned by Wm Graham & Son, Craigdarroch, realising £4410 apiece for a pair that went home to Dalchirla Farms, Crieff. Craigdarroch sold 6 bulling heifers to a top average of £3955 and all were purchased by Dalchirla Farms. D & A Barr sold 13 to a top of £2940 and an average of £2512. Milkieston's equal top priced pair at £2940 sold to David Clarkson, Lanarkshire. Neil Anderson, Harehead sold all 22 forward to a top of £2625 and to average £2339 for the level bunch. Forty-seven bulling heifers sold to average £2474, and increase of £889 on the year.

In calf heifers sold to a top of £3780 for a single heifer consigned by Robert McNee Ltd, Woodend, Armadale. This summer 2021 born heifer by Lammermuir Tremendous sold in calf to Benhar Adonis and goes home with Allanton Farming, Ayrshire. Robert McNee Ltd won the pre-sale show with a pair of polled heifers by Milkieston Xavi, which realised £2625 apiece. In-calf heifers averaged £2233 for 19 sold, up £398 on the year.



Pre-Sale Show winning pair of in-calf heifers consigned by Robert McNee Ltd, Benhar.

Bulls were a tremendous trade throughout, with 96% of the 23 forward finding new homes. Joint top price of £18,900 went to Wm Graham & Son, Craigdarroch and T. Renwick & Sons, Blackhouse.



Craigdarroch Becks £18,900 sold to Kedzlie Farms Ltd, Gala.

First to realise this price was Craigdarroch Becks, a heterozygous polled March 2022 born son of Harehead Yogi, which sold to Kedzlie Farms Ltd, Galashiels. T. Renwick & Sons waited until the last bull of the sale to sell Blackhouse Bunde-Aki, also



Blackhouse Bunde-Aki £18,900 sold to David Harker, Cumbria.

a heterozygous polled, slightly later born son of Nunnerie Xenon, and last bidder on this one was David Harker, Carnforth for some pedigree work.



Craigdarroch Banksy £17,850 sold to Hindmarsh Partners, Rochester.

Wm Graham & Sons also sold Craigdarroch Banksy, a homozygous polled Kirkland Yorkie son, for £17,850 to Hindmarsh Partners, Rochester, Northumberland for their Carter herd. C.C. MacArthur & Co sold Nunnerie Buzzard, by prolific sire Finlarg Tornado to AC & AL McCall, for their Culmally Herd, at £10,500. AC & AL McCall were also in selling mode, getting Culmally Brora away at £9450 to R & H McNee, Over Finlarg who were buying back some of their own breeding. A second £9450 price tag was on Robert McNee Ltd's Benhar Blacksmith, by homebred Benhar Zephyr, and goes home with Neil Anderson, Harehead. Next best was again Wm Graham & Son's Craigdarroch Bud, another homozygous polled son of Kirkland Yorkie, selling for £8400 to Drannadow Farms, Newton Stewart. Realising an equal amount was Commonsides Brigadier, consigned by W.W. Dunlop & Son. Brigadier, by Nunnerie Vegas, is a heterozygous polled March 2022 born calf that goes home with L.E. Porrit, The Lampert, Brampton. Top herd average was Craigdarroch with an average of £12,469 for 4 sold.



Nunnerie Buzzard £10,500 to AC & AL McCall, Culmally.

Other leading prices: Robert McNee Ltd, Benhar, Benhar Bandit £6,825 to Philip Simmers; C.C. MacArthur & Co, Nunnerie, Nunnerie Brodie £6,510 to G. Burnett; Kirkland Farming, Kirkland Buster £6,510 to Bainbridge Farms; T. Renwick & Sons, Blackhouse, Blackhouse Beauden £6,300 to W.W. Dunlop & Sons; T. Renwick & Sons, Blackhouse, Blackhouse Bob £5,250 to K.A. Mundell; R.H. Bell & Co., Plenderleith, Plenderleith Banker £5,040 to JC Helm.



Culmally Brora £9450 to R & H McNee, Over Finlarg.



Benhar Blacksmith £9,450 sold to the Late W.A. Penny OBE, Harehead.



Commonside Brigadier £8,400 sold to L.E. Porrit, The Lampert, Brampton.

Sale Statistics

	Av. Price (gns)	Top (gns)	Av. Price (£)	Top (£)	No. Sold
Bulls	7459	18000	7832	18900	22
Messrs W Graham & Son	11875	18000	12469	18900	4
T. Renwick & Sons	8375	18000	8794	18900	4
C.C. MacArthur & Co.	8100	10000	8505	10500	2
W.W. Dunlop & Son	8000	8000	8400	8400	1
AC & AL McCall	6600	9000	6930	9450	2
Robert McNee Ltd	6500	9000	6825	9450	3
Mrs. U. Hodge	6200	6200	6510	6510	1
Mr R.H. Bell	4800	4800	5040	5040	1
Messrs A & D Barr	4200	4200	4410	4410	1
B Ridland Ltd	4000	4000	4200	4200	1
Professor W A Penny CBE	3500	4000	3675	4200	2
Luig In-Calf Heifers	2126	3600	2233	3780	19
Mr Andrew McNee	2643	3600	2775	3780	7
Mr S. Murray	1825	2100	1916	2205	12
Luig Bulling Heifers	2356	4200	2474	4410	47
Messrs W Graham & Son	3767	4200	3955	4410	6
Mr D. Barr	2392	2800	2512	2940	13
Professor W A Penny CBE	2227	2500	2339	2625	22
Mr. James McCaig (Per S. McKinnon)	1342	1400	1409	1470	6



Andrew Barr of D & A Barr, Milkieston, Peebles receiving the trophy for the best pair of bulling heifers at the Premier Sale, from Luig Cattle Society Chairman, Stewart Wood.

LUING CATTLE SOCIETY STIRLING BULL SALE 2024

19th February - United Auctions, Stirling

The Luing Cattle Society held their inaugural bull sale at United Auctions, Stirling on Monday 19th February. All five bulls entered were forward, and 100% were sold to a tremendous average of £10,458 and a top of £14,700, and a further two 5 figure prices. Best of the bunch was Finlarg Boss, consigned by Robert and Hazel McNee, Over Finlarg, Tealing, realising £14,700 (14,000 gns). Finlarg Boss is a polled, april 2022 born son of Backmuir Whisky out of a homebred dam, by Lammermuir Tremendous, and is away to Orkney for pedigree work with Brian Ridland in his Silwick herd.



Finlarg Boss SV# - £14,700 to Brian Ridland, Orkney.

Just behind and from the same stable was Finlarg Braveheart, also polled and the same way bred. Messrs Hamilton, Allanton Farm, Ayrshire took Braveheart home for £13,650 (13,000 gns), to both pedigree and commercial cows.



Finlarg Braveheart - £13,650 to C. Hamilton, Allanton Farm, Ayrshire.

Robert McNee Ltd, Woodend, Armadale sold Benhar Bobcat to Shawhead Farms, for £12,600 (12,000 gns) for commercial cows. Bobcat is a polled Finlarg Zemen son out of a Benhar Tulip female.



Benhar Bobcat SV# - £12,600 to Shawhead Farm.

R & H McNee were back in the ring with Finlarg Bob, a Finlarg Yeltsin son, who goes home with T. Renwick & Sons, Blackhouse to some pedigree cows. Second oldest bull, Backmuir Bowser, consigned by Mr. Philip Simmers, Backmuir, Keith, sold to Messers Smith for £5,040 (4,800 gns).



Backmuir Bowser B269# SV- £5,040 to Messers Smith.

Sale Statistics

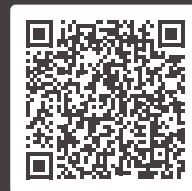
	Average (£)	Top (£)	Number
Bulls	10,458	14,700	5
Mr P. Simmers	5,040	5,040	1
R & H McNee	11,550	14,700	3
Robert McNee Ltd	12,600	12,600	1

Lot 256	Backmuir Bowser B269# SV	£5,040
Lot 257	Benhar Bobcat # SV	£12,600
Lot 258	Finlarg Bob #	£6,300
Lot 259	Finlarg Boss #	£14,700
Lot 260	Finlarg Braveheart #	£13,650

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LUING CATTLE SOCIETY SPRING BREEDING SALE 2024

15th May – Dingwall and Highland Mart

The Luing Cattle Society, in conjunction with Dingwall & Highland Marts Ltd. (15th May) sold 85 pedigree and commercial Luing cattle at their 16th Annual Spring Breeding Sale. Trade was solid for a reduced number forward. Purchasers were geographically widely spread, with cattle going as far south as the north of England. The clearance rate was 85% averages for almost all classes were up on the year.



Reserve Best Pair of Bulling Heifers – Kintail – £2835.

Pedigree bulling heifers (60) averaged £2034, up £177 on the year, and sold to a top of £2835 on five occasions, the whole consignment of heifers from local breeder Graeme MacRae, Kintail, Mulbuie, all sired by Luing Yahoo, and all purchased by Jamie Gilchrist of Mulholland Contracting, Selkirk. The first pair of these was judged to be second best pair of bulling heifers in the pre-sale show, judged by Euan Ferguson, Kiltarlity. Best pair of Bulling heifers, was awarded to Rory Cameron, Monzie for a pair of Wooplaw Warlord sired roan heifers, which went on to realise £2205 apiece, selling to Messers Birnie, Guishachan. AC & AL McCall, Culmaily, averaged £2398 for 12 sold, and to a top of £2730. The best of these were a pair sired by Craigdarroch Texas and Finlargo Ziggy, and are away to Messrs Brims, Thruster Mains, Caithness.



*Bulling Heifer Cup Winner – Rory Cameron
with Judge, Euan Ferguson.*



Best Pair of Bulling Heifers – Monzie – £2205.

Next best were two pair at £2520, all being March 2022 born, sold to Messers Jardine, Dalbeattie, and the other pair will join their stablemates at Thruster Mains, Caithness. Messers Jardine also picked up a the first Culmaily pair, sired by Finlargo Ziggy and Harehead Xplorer, for £2415 apiece. Scott Renwick, Lochbroom sold 5 heifers to an average of £2069, and to a top of £2310, to Dalhanna Farming, Ayrshire, for a pair of April 2022 born polled heifers sired by Monzie Wolf and Commonsides Scania. Rory Cameron, Monzie, sold 10 heifers to average £1822, while David McLaughlin, sold 3 Finlargo Vegas heifers to an average of £2030 and a top of £2100. Gary MacKenzie, Fanblair sold 5 bulling heifers to average £2048, marginally up on the year previous.

Similarly, a small consignment of Sim-Luing bulling heifers sold to a top of £1890, consigned by AC & AL McCall. Trade for younger heifers was more selective with 5 registered yearling Luing heifers from 2 different consignors averaging £935, an increase of £37 on the year. Sim-Luing yearling heifers fared much better for 5 selling to average £1229 with a top of £1628 (Culmaily).

Bulls (3) sold to a top of £4410 and averaged £3570, which despite the reduced number forward and sold compared to the year previous, represented an increase of £432 on the year. Top priced bull, Altnaharra Bouncer, was consigned by P & A Bakker, Altnaharra, sired by Nunnerie Wanderer and out of Arisaig Tansy. This heterozygous polled red bull was purchased by S & L Dodd, Tundergarth Mains, Lockerbie for their Tundergarth Herd. Altnaharra Brutus changed hands outside the ring for £3150, to Messers MacKay. Another at £3150 was Monzie Belter, a heterozygous polled roan bull, which was purchased for pedigree work by C.C. MacArthur & Co, Nunnerie, Biggar.

Sale Statistics

	Average (gns)	Average (£)	Top (gns)	Number
Luing Bulling Heifers	1937	2034	2700	60
Mr Graeme MacRae	2700	2835	2700	5
Mr A.C. McCall	2283	2398	2600	12
Mr F. Scott Renwick	1970	2069	2200	5
Mr Rory Cameron	1735	1822	2100	10
Mr David J. MacLaughlin	1933	2030	2000	3
Mr G. MacKenzie	1850	1943	1950	5
Mr S.A. Nairn	1825	1916	1900	8
P & A Bakker	1850	1943	1850	2
Mr Fraser MacNeil	1625	1706	1750	2
Mrs C. Lamont	1550	1628	1550	2
Mr J. Colston	1525	1601	1550	4
Mr R. Lockett	1150	1208	1150	2
Luing Bulls	3400	3570	4200	3
Messrs P & A Bakker	3600	3780	4200	2
Mr Rory Cameron	3000	3150	3000	1
Luing Cows	1975	2074	2100	4
Mr G. MacKenzie	1975	2074	2100	4
Luing Yearling Heifers	890	935	1150	5
Mr F. Scott Renwick	1150	1208	1150	1
Mr J. Colston	825	866	850	4
Sim-Luing Bulling Heifers	1800	1890	1800	1
Mr A.C. McCall	1800	1890	1800	1
Sim-Luing Yearling Heifers	1170	1229	1550	5
Mr A.C. McCall	1170	1229	1550	5
Crossbred Heifers	1571	1650	1850	7
Mr A.C. McCall	1400	1470	1850	3
Mr David J. MacLaughlin	1700	1785	1700	4
Total				85



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LUING CATTLE SOCIETY AUTUMN BREEDING SALE 2024

26th October - United Auctions, Stirling

The Luing Cattle Society held their 51st Autumn Breeding Sale at United Auctions, Stirling, on Saturday 26th October, where a good standard across all types were in demand. The offering included consignments from regular consignors plus some new vendors and a batch of 28 of B register heifers consigned by Dunalastair Estate, Pitlochry.



Top price In-Calf Heifer from Robert McNee Ltd - 3200 gns

The top priced heifer realised 3200 gns, and was a single Sim-Luing in-calf heifer consigned by Andrew McNee and family from Woodend Farm, Armadale, West Lothian. This stylish 2½ yr old heifer by Coltfoot Karl, was purchased by regular buyer Messrs Thomson, Wester Tulloch, Midmar, Aberdeenshire. Robert McNee Ltd also sold their first Sim-Luing in-calf pair to a second top of 2700 gns and are also away to the same home. Messrs McNee, Woodend sold 10 to average 2640 gns, the top average of the day. Colin Little, East Bracklinn sold 15 Sim-Luing in-calf heifers to average 2387 gns, and to a top of 2600gns for a single of heifer sired by a homebred sire East Bracklinn Lenny, and due in March to a Limousin bull. Messrs McGowan, Incheoch, sold 6 Sim-Luing in-calf heifers to an average of 2200 gns. Overall, 39 Sim-Luing in-calf heifers averaged 2413 gns, and a decrease of 190 gns on the year for 10 more sold.

A small consignment of registered Luing in-calf heifers (14) got the sale off to a solid start, with a consignment of 9 cracking heifers from Messrs Raper, Todholes, Otterburn, which averaged 2600 gns, an increase of 50gns on the year for this consignor. This batch topped the section at 2900 gns for a pair of polled heifers by Harehead Texas, in calf to a homebred bull, and are away to Jamie Gilchrist of Mulholland Contracting, Ettrickshaws, Selkirk.

Luing bulling heifers, although slightly back on the year (-293 gns), sold to a top of 2500 gns, and to average 1936 gns for 94 sold, 18 more than last year. The top priced bulling heifer pair was consigned by T. Renwick & Sons, Blackhouse, and were sired by Nunnerie Xenon, realising 2500gns and purchased by Dalchirla Farms, Crieff. Top average among the bulling heifers belonged to Messrs Renwick, Blackhouse who sold 11 to average 1936 gns. Messrs A. Kennedy sold 10 heifers to average 1405 gns, and to a top of 1900 gns. First time vendor, John MacGregor, Allanfauld, sold three level heifers for the second best average among this class at 1900gns, all going home with Shona Peterson, Scammadale Farm, Kilninver. Mrs Una Hodge, Kirkland and C.C. MacArthur & Co, Nunnerie both had top prices of 1900gns for their respective lots. Una Hodge sold 10 to average 1700 gns, while Alastair and David MacArthur sold 18 to average 1778 gns. Long time supporters of this sale, Messrs Graham, Craigdarroch, sold 11 to average 1636 gns and to a top of 1800 gns for a trio purchased by Messrs Anderson & Son, Priesthaugh, Hawick. David and Andrew Barr, Milkieston, sold 13 to average 1604 gns, selling to a top of 1700 gns for a trio of heifers, sired by Harehead Xpoert and purchased by the same buyer as last year, Messrs Clarkson, Woodlands, Biggar.

A similar number of Sim-Luing bulling heifers were forward compared with the previous year (25), and sold to average 1678 gns and to a top of 2000 gns, back 207 gns on the year. Messrs Halligan and Burke, Nether Stewarton, Peebles once again achieved the best average of this section, selling 6 to average 1958 gns and a top of 2000 gns for four of the six, purchased by Hugh Stewart, Hatton of Newtyle, Blairgowrie. Mrs C.M. Reid of Boreland Farm, Peebles, had the next best herd average at 1750 gns for a batch of 9 heifers, that topped 1800 gns for two pair of Teviot Glenfiddich sired heifers, which were all purchased by Messrs Wight, Midlock, Biggar. RH Bell, Plenderleith returned to selling at this sale, with a batch of 8 heifers by a homebred bull Teviot Jupiter, to a top of 1800 gns and to average 1531 gns. The remaining lots of Sim-Luing Bulling heifers were level and solid trade for smaller lots, topped by 2 heifers consigned by the A & M Whiteford at 1100 gns.

A consignment of B Registered bulling heifers (28), from Dunalastair Estate, Pitlochry, had a top of 1550 gns and averaged 1118 gns for the batch. A small consignment of purebred yearling heifers (11) from regular consignors N.H. Horsfall, Rannoch, averaged 950 gns, an increase of 145gns on the year, and all went to the same buyer.

A small number of crossbred heifers were also sold during the sale, and were topped by a pair of Simmental crosses out of Luing cross cows, scanned in calf to a Limousin bull due March 2025, realising 2400 gns, to Messrs Rogerson, Maisongill, Appleby.

Summary and Averages

	Average Price (gns)	Average Price (£)	Top (gns)	Number Sold
B Register Heifers	1118	1173	1550	28
Dunalastair Estate	1118	1173	1550	28
Crossbred Heifers - Bulling Heifers	933	980	1000	3
Woodland Trust Scotland	933	980	1000	3
Crossbred Heifers - In-Calf Heifers	2000	2100	2400	3
Woodland Trust Scotland	2200	2310	2400	2
Mr J. Raper	1600	1680	1600	1
Luig Bulling Heifers	1639	1721	2500	94
T. Renwick & Sons	1936	2033	2500	11
Mr A. Kennedy & Son	1405	1475	1900	10
Mrs. U. Hodge	1700	1785	1900	12
C.C. MacArthur & Co.	1778	1867	1900	18
Mr A. MacGregor (Allanfauld)	1900	1995	1900	3
Messrs W Graham & Son	1636	1718	1800	11
D. & A. Barr	1604	1684	1700	13
John Lawrie (Tillyrie) Ltd	1500	1575	1500	7
Messrs R.H. Bell	1400	1470	1400	4
Messrs A.R. Mundell & Son	1140	1197	1300	5
Luig In-Calf Heifers	2314	2430	2900	14
Mr J. Raper	2600	2730	2900	9
R. & M. Whiteford	1800	1890	2000	5
Luig Yearly Heifers	950	998	950	11
Mr N.H. Horsfall	950	998	950	11
Sim Luig Bulling Heifers	1678	1762	2000	25
Messrs Halligan & Burke	1958	2056	2000	6
Mrs C.M. Reid	1750	1838	1800	9
Messrs R.H. Bell	1531	1608	1800	8
A. & M. Whiteford	1100	1155	1100	2
Sim Luig In-Calf Heifers	2413	2533	3200	39
Mr Andrew McNee	2640	2772	3200	10
Mr C. Little	2387	2506	2600	15
Messrs Finlay McGowan	2200	2310	2500	6
Mr Peter McDiarmid & Co.	2400	2520	2500	2
The Woodlands Trust Scotland	2317	2433	2400	6
Total				217



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CADZOW BROS 6th ANNUAL PRODUCTION SALE 2024

9th November - United Auctions, Oban

Cadzow Bros, Isle of Luing held their 6th annual production sale at Oban, conducted by United Auctions on Saturday 9th November, where 97 head (-8 on the year) sold to an overall average of 2176 gns, an increase of 263 gns on the year. Averages for in-calf heifers were up on the year, while bulling heifers and cows fell slightly on the year. Once again brisk bidding saw the lots disperse as far south as Shropshire. A mix of rising 2 and 3 year old purebred heifers in calf to a variety of Luing genetics, due in spring 2025, were most keenly sought after averaging 2647 gns for 55 sold, an increase of 51 gns on the year. The top price for in calf heifers peaked at 3400 gns for 4 different lots. The first of these was Luing Arduling C10, a February 2023 born daughter of Luing Zinc. She sold in calf to Luing X-am, due March 2025, selling to Messrs McGowan, Incheoch, Blairgowrie. The second to reach 3400 gns was Luing Ardluing C37, a red polled March 2023 born heifer, also a Luing Zinc daughter. This one had Lochbroom Talisker on her dam's side, selling in calf to Luing X-am, and was purchased by Jamie Gilchrist, buying for Ettrickshaws, Selkirk. Third in-calf heifer to reach 3400 gns was Luing Ardluing C41, also a Luing Zinc daughter, selling in calf to Luing X-am, and will go home to Scammadale, Kilninver. Messrs McGowan, Incheoch also went to 3400gns for another heifer in calf to Luing X-am, this time by Luing Yoda, boasting Luing Major on its dam side.



Bulling heifers were a solid trade, averaging 1304 gns, back 228 gns on last year, and for 27 sold. The top priced bulling heifer at 1900 gns, a March 2023 born Luing X-Ray daughter, which formed part of a significant load home to Messers Dodd, Tundergarth Mains, Lockerbie. The first bulling heifer into the ring made 1800 gns and was by Luing Xavier. These spring 2023 born heifers were sired by both homebred bulls, and bought in bulls, 15 different sires in total, giving buyers a good selection of genetics to choose from.

Of the 4 bulls entered, only one found a new home. Luing Callum, a February 2023, heterozygous polled Luing Zodiac 3rd son, realised 6000 gns and is away to Messrs Christie. Callum's performance figures were displayed and he sported a Beef Value of +36 (73% accuracy), and his dam had excellent classification scores, even given that she was 13 years old.

The best of the cows on offer was an in-calf third calver, Luing Ardlarach A41 by Luing Tain. She sold back in calf and due in the spring to Luing Wolf and is away to will also form part of the load down to Ettrickshaws, Selkirk. Fourteen weaned cows sold to average 1736 gns, with a top of 2600 gns, on par with last year.

Summary Statistics

	Average (gns)	Average (£)	Top (gns)	Number
Luing In-Calf Heifers	2,647	2,780	3,400	55
Luing Bulling Heifers	1,304	1,369	1,900	27
Luing Cows	1,736	1,823	2,500	14
Luing Bulls	6,000	6,300	6,000	1
Total	2,176	2,285		97

In modern livestock farming, data-driven decisions have become a cornerstone of successful operations. As the agricultural industry embraces technology and record-keeping, benchmarking has emerged as a vital tool for farmers and ranchers to measure the health and productivity of their herds. In addition to the on-farm benefits, it is helpful to the Luing breed to gather the same information so that it can be compared across breed. These statistics can then be used to promote the breed, using the same comparative measures as other breeds.

What is Benchmarking?

Benchmarking involves comparing one's performance metrics with industry standards or past performance. In cattle breeding, key data such as the number of cows and heifers put to the bull, calving weaned, and herd health indicators are crucial benchmarks. By consistently measuring these aspects over time, farmers can identify patterns, inefficiencies, and opportunities for improvement. Across the breed, Luing can be measured against other native breeds for key indicators.

The Value of Data: A Case Study

Let's consider a dataset that tracks the number of cows and heifers put to the bull for breeding purposes. This simple yet powerful metric provides critical insights into the reproductive efficiency of a herd. For instance, the data shows how many cows were put to the bull in a given breeding season, how many were homebred versus bought in, and how this relates to the herd's overall performance.

Why is this important? Farmers can use this data to forecast calving seasons, monitor genetic diversity, and ensure that the breeding program meets productivity goals. Moreover, by benchmarking these numbers against industry averages or past performance, farmers can determine whether their breeding strategy is on track or needs adjustment.

SAC has developed a simple data gathering spreadsheet that will capture the data required. A segment of the spreadsheet is displayed below.

Cows and Heifers put to the Bull	Number	Information
Number of Cows to the Bull		Cows put to the bull during Summer 2023 to calf 2024. Must include any in calf cows purchased
Number of Homebred heifers to the bull		Homebred Heifers put to the bull during Summer 2023 to calf 2024.
Number of Bought in heifers to the bull		Bought in Heifers put to the bull during Summer 2023 to calf 2024.
Age at First Calving	Age in Years	Information
Age of Calving Heifers - 2/2.5/3 years		Please specify Age of Heifers at first calving

Further, SAC has funding available that will fully fund individual businesses for this project. If enough breeders participate then the breed will benefit from the anonymised data in the form of breed wide statistics that can be used for breed promotion. Please contact SAC consulting, or the Society office for further information.

Strategic Benefits of Benchmarking

1. **Improved Reproductive Performance:** Tracking the number of cows and heifers put to the bull allows farmers to fine-tune their breeding schedules and maximize the chances of successful pregnancies. If benchmarks indicate a decline in breeding success, it can prompt timely interventions, such as adjusting nutrition or health management practices.

- 2. **Resource Optimization:** Benchmarking helps farmers make informed decisions about resource allocation. By analyzing which cows and heifers are the most productive or have higher pregnancy rates, farmers can direct their efforts toward the most valuable animals, saving time and costs.
- 3. **Genetic Improvement:** Monitoring breeding data also aids in genetic management. Knowing the ratio of homebred versus bought-in heifers, for example, can help maintain genetic diversity within the herd while ensuring that breeding stock meets performance standards.

4. **Long-Term Sustainability:** In addition to short-term gains, benchmarking provides long-term insights. By looking at year-on-year trends, farmers can predict herd growth, plan for future expansions, and ensure that their breeding strategies are aligned with environmental sustainability goals.

Moving Toward Data-Driven Agriculture

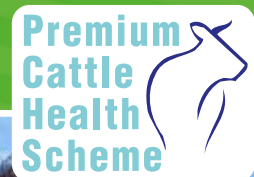
The future of livestock farming lies in the ability to harness data effectively. Benchmarking, when integrated into routine farm management, becomes a powerful tool

for enhancing productivity and ensuring the financial viability of farming operations. From increasing reproductive success to optimizing genetic selection, it's clear that benchmarking transforms raw data into actionable insights that drive success.

As the agricultural landscape continues to evolve, the farmers who embrace these techniques will be better positioned to thrive in an increasingly competitive market. In the end, benchmarking isn't just about improving numbers - it's about building a more resilient, sustainable, and profitable farming operation.



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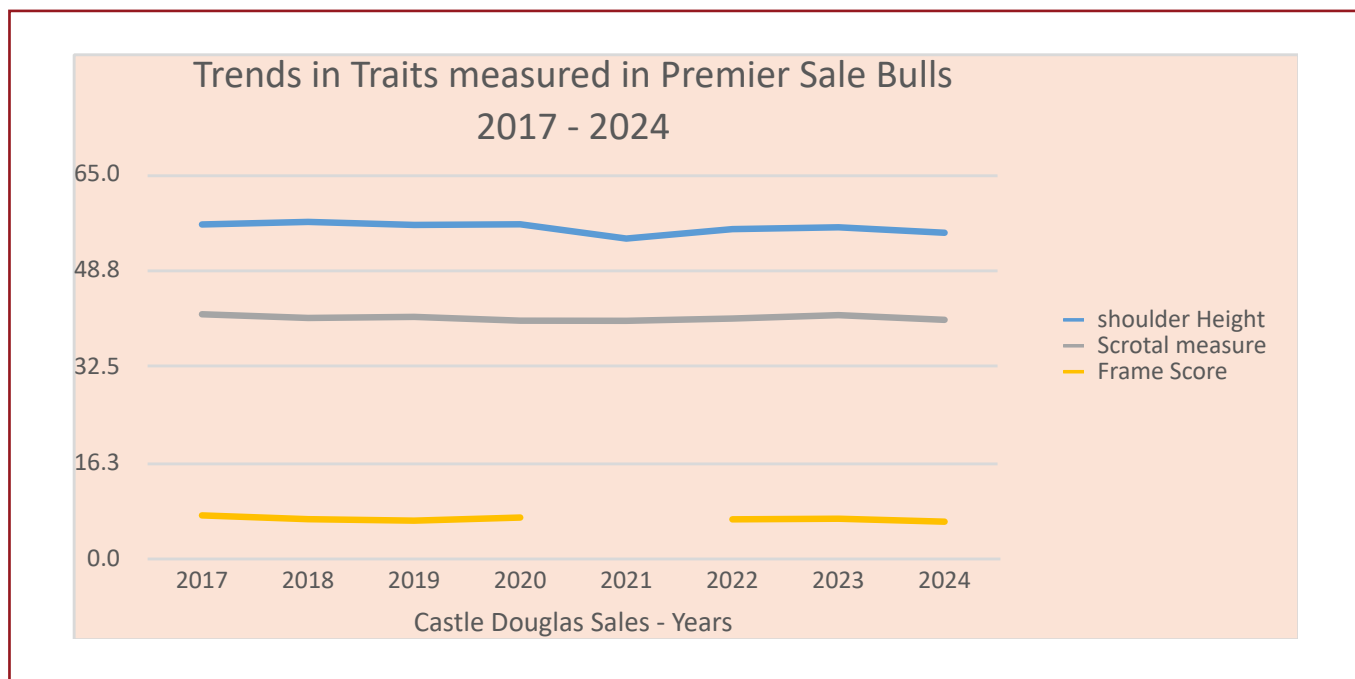
Trends in Shoulder Height, Weight and Scrotal Measures in Bulls forward at Premier Sales (2017-2024)

Luings *Luings*

Introduction

This report examines the trends in key physical traits - shoulder height, weight, and scrotal measurements - of bulls from 2017 to 2024.

The data provides valuable insights into how these traits have tracked over time, which may inform decisions regarding breeding, health, and performance evaluation.



Shoulder Height Trends (inches)

From 2017 to 2024, the shoulder height of bulls shows a fluctuating but gradually declining trend. Shoulder height peaked in 2018 at 57.0 inches. The sharpest decline occurred in 2021, where shoulder height dropped to 54.2 inches, followed by a gradual increase in subsequent years. It is important to note that the 2021 sale was held entirely online, and thus both the shoulder height and scrotal measurements were taken during the autumn before when the bulls were individually inspected on farm. However, the overall decline from 2017 (56.6 inches) to 2024 (55.2 inches) indicates a reduction of 1.4 inches over 7 years.

Scrotal Measure Trends (cm)

Scrotal measurements have remained relatively stable over time, showing minor fluctuations. Scrotal measures peaked in 2017 (41.4 cm), with the lowest value being 40.3 cm in 2021.

Again, 2021 measures were taken during the previous autumn, and are not fully comparable with the rest of the dataset. There has been a

slight recovery after 2021, with scrotal measures increasing to 41.3 cm in 2023 before dropping slightly again to 40.5 cm in 2024. The fluctuation in scrotal measures suggests stability, with no drastic long-term change.

Frame Score (units)

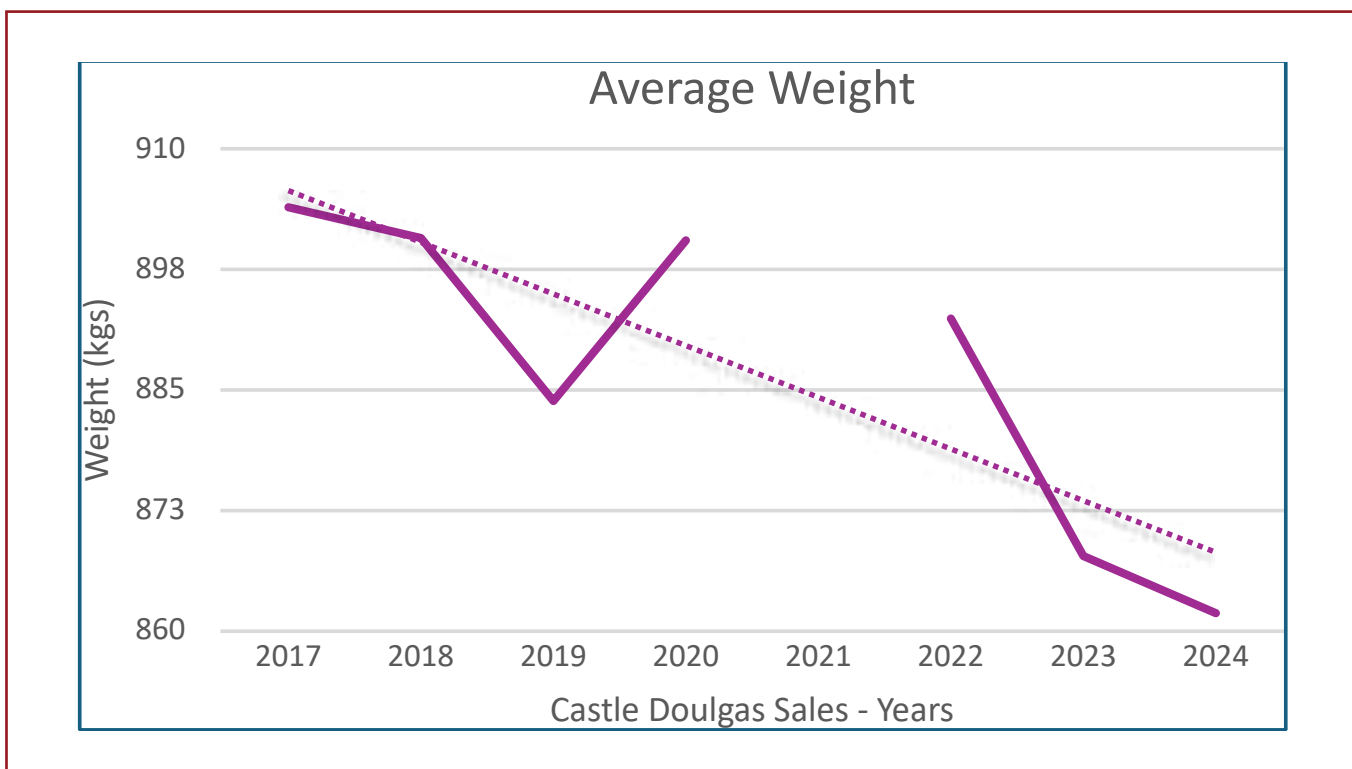
Hip Height is also measured at the time of inspection at sales, but has not been displayed here as it directly mirrors shoulder height. Hip height is used to calculate Frame Score, which is a measure that is displayed on the pen card. Frame Score is a convenient way of describing the skeletal size of cattle, and was used as a tool particularly in the '70s and '80s to increase size in some breeds. Taken as a measurement of height in inches at the hip (over the hook bones), and converted to FS using a set of tables taking account of the animal's age and sex. Most animals should maintain the same Frame Score throughout their life, regardless of when they are evaluated. However, FS may change for animals that mature earlier or later than the average for their breed. No one Frame Size will be best for

all systems (feed resources and markets), with large-framed animals tending to be heavier, leaner and later maturing. Frame Scores can be monitored to maintain body size, fatness level and rate of maturity to the optimum level for a specific herd. It becomes a useful tool to predict cow size when selecting replacement heifers, and in the selection of the maternal sire. It is unlikely that a FS 10 bull will leave FS 6 daughters.

Given its relationship with hip height and thus shoulder height it is not surprising that the trend in Frame Score over the same period has been relatively static, showing only a small decrease from 6.9 (avg) in 2017 to 6.4 (avg) in 2024.

Average Weight Trends (kg)

Average weight demonstrates a gradual downward trend over the years, with some fluctuations, but consistently declines toward the latter years. The highest recorded weight was in 2017 at 904 kg, and there was a consistent decrease in weight over the following years. Although there was a slight recovery in weight in 2020 (901 kg), the trend continued downward in the years that followed. The lowest weight recorded was in 2024 (862 kg), marking a total decrease of 42 kg since 2017.



Conclusion

From 2017 to 2024, the data demonstrates that bulls forward for the Premier Sale are generally becoming shorter in stature and lighter in weight, with no significant change in scrotal

measurements. These trends reflect changes in genetic selection, environmental factors, and management practices over the years.



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Contact: **STEPHEN LITTLE** (07583 329041) stephenlittleboreland@gmail.com



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Out 'n About - with Stannage Herd and Moorland Meat

FARM FACTS

5500 acres total

5100 acres Moorland

400 acres in-bye

550 Blackface Ewes

45 Luing cows

20 Luing heifers

25 Luing steers

6 Belted Galloway cows

1400 ft above sea level



The Stannage Herd of Luings is part of a wider business that covers 5500 acres in total, with varying topography, of which only 400 acres can be classed as in-bye. Most of the in-bye land is part of a higher tier Countryside Stewardship Scheme, managed by ourselves. Part of the land is tenanted from RSPB, which is in control of the environmental schemes thereon. The business also does a bit of contracting and we have a retail meat outlet selling boxed beef locally, supply a local café/bistro, in addition to 2 catering units (Moor Than Burgers) that cater at a variety of local events including sheepdog trials, clay shoots, charity events, National Trust Events, Peak Park and RSPB events. Feedback from our customers is incredibly positive, and we sell an increasing amount from Facebook, and will soon publish a new website. We graze 1400 feet above sea level, and in places it is quite flat and open, but in other places it is well sheltered with good water sources and good amounts of shelter allowing for year round grazing.

All moorland is SSSI classified under the Higher Tier HLS managed by our landlords, the cattle grazing being a major influence on the management system. This past year will be the last year that we run sheep on Burbage and Toley Moss alongside the cattle herd and the cattle will take over as the focus of our business.

Burbage, Toley Moss and Stannage, although within close proximity of each other, vary massively in topography. Toley is very flat and open with a lot more grass mixes as well as short heather beds, whereas Burbage is a small glacial valley, with excellent natural water sources, tree shelter to rocky outcrops at Higger Tor and Carrs Walk, a bronze age Hill Fort.

Burbage and Stannage are world renowned climbing areas which do make them extremely popular with the public, which can cause a few issues occasionally with loose dogs. However, the walkers, climbers and paragliders always enjoy seeing the cattle out on the moors and they are extremely popular and well photographed on Instagram! The cattle are very quiet and docile which has been an important selection trait with grazing these areas in mind, as unfortunately people don't always use their common sense when it comes to wanting to catch the perfect selfie with a cow and calf or the bull!

Burbage and Toley were sold in the 1920s by the Duke of Rutland and were heavily kept grouse moors with many management tracks for shooters and keepers, which makes access to manage the livestock more efficient.



North Lees Hall Farm, rented from the Peak District National Park is in a full FBT in a higher tier Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreement managed by ourselves. We are fortunate that this unit has some of the best species rich grassland in the area, with supplements SP6 cattle grazing and SP8, a native breeds at risk supplement. Young heifers graze this unit, and over 2 smaller moorland blocks, with 250 Blackface ewes on the main moorland block.

Our initial cow herd consisted of a mix of Whitebred Shorthorn and Luining cross cows, with the heifers calving to a Hereford bull, which worked well on the moorland. The Luining crosses were particularly well suited to the environment, and following a conversation with the manager of Chatsworth Estate, we expanded the herd with the purchase of 16 heifers from Floors Estate, sourced by Charles Symons. This was followed by the purchase of a pure Luining bull from local breeders, Stephen Buckley, which was an aged bull that they were done with, Luining Xavi. In 2022 11 bulling heifers were purchased from the Cadzow Sale in the backend, in addition to a small batch of yearling heifers from Gavin Fearon in the Lake District. These were calved to Luining Xavi in 2023 and 2024. In 2024 all heifers were put to Portmore Aristocrat, and we will look forward to some of our first homebred calves coming through.

Cows are calved in February/March, and run outside as long as possible in the run-up to calving, when they are brought inside for calving. Cows are returned to Totley Moss with calves at foot at 12 weeks old. We are currently limited with water sources so have grazed them on Burbage this past summer. Another

management change this past summer has seen the bulling heifers taken off Burbage earlier to calve, while the cows will remain overwintered outside until calving in May 2025.

We feed small amounts of hay during bad weather, onto bracken beds which tramples the bracken to support heather regeneration. The hay meadows don't crop huge amounts but the quality of what is produced is far superior with the meadow grasses, herbs and wildflowers etc. Cows come in to calve and are fed a mix of meadow hay from North Lees in addition to bought in haylage, but the meadow hay is much more palatable and preferred by the cattle

We have plans in place for implementing weight gain monitoring all calves from birth to weaning. My daughter is very handy on a computer and is developing software that we can have on our phones so we can track each animal and keep tabs on our growth charts, health status etc. Once calves are weaned, they will come inside for a few months where will be better able to monitor their growth more closely as we are wanting to aim for the best natural growth rates without the need for supplementing with corn and concentrates.

Some steers are either sold store via Bakewell Market, or to a neighbour privately, and heifers go out to North Lees for a year to grow on. A few steers are kept and will go out on Totley Moss for a year to grow on, then will go out on to Burbage to finish. We prefer to finish them at approx. 30 months old, for our own outlets. The finishing age is greater than standard commercial growing period, but we find that the self sufficiency and conversion rate from grass makes a cost effective system, resulting in a superior product.





We find the cattle to be extremely transient, and they tend to have set grazing patterns which alter throughout the year with the weather. We also find this gives an excellent quality of meat with the cows being active as well as being hardy. They lay down fat differently to a standard commercial cow resulting in a well marbled finish to the meat.

Given the scale of the land area, specific cows are fitted with GPS collars, from Digit Animal. While we don't know where every animal is all of the time, we are able to track some animals in each group, which is a big advantage.

Similar to many farmers in England and Wales, the increase in TB in an area is of concern. While we are currently zoned a 1 year testing area, we have been lucky not to have had any reactors within our herd, and neither have any of our neighbours. We are vigilant when buying in stock, even when purchasing from a 4 year area, and request a pre-movement test before any sale is agreed, which gives us peace of mind.

***Nick and Liz Denniff and Family
Peak District, Derbyshire***

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Luings Complement Diversity on the Chatsworth Estate

Chatsworth's Luing herd was started in 2018 with the purchase of a consignment of heifers from the Cadzow family and already comprises of around 155 head, of which 90 are spring calving and the remaining 65 calve in the autumn in 8 week blocks. This mix helps to achieve a constant supply of beef into the Chatsworth Estate Farmshop and Café and also allows flexibility for the various conservation grazing requirements across moorland and the different types of grassland.

Both Luing and Simmental bulls for breeding replacements. Around 50 cows will run with the two pedigree Luing bulls, with the best progeny kept for breeding and the remaining cows will run with two Simmental bulls, with the aim to produce a high quality carcass or Sim-Luing breeding animals.

The main outlet for the beef is the Chatsworth Farm Shop, as well as the Devonshire Group Hotels on the Chatsworth Estate, and local butchers. All progeny not retained for breeding will be marketed through these outlets. The Chatsworth Farm Shop has a throughput of 2 beef carcasses per week on average and an additional carcass is supplied to the Devonshire Group Hotels.

Chatsworth Farms team of 7 is responsible for the management of 2,104 ha (5,200 acres) of diverse land across the Chatsworth Estate, which consists of approximately 2000 acres of Peak District moorland, 1000 acres of parkland and the remaining semi-improved grassland. As well as the Luing herd, there is also a further 200 cows which consist of Limousin and Hereford breeding.

The sheep flock consists of 2500 ewes with 600 followers and is centred around the 1000 acres of parkland which is all open access for the public to enjoy.

All land farmed is in a variety of environmental schemes from Environmental Stewardship, Countryside Stewardship and SFI. A small portion of land has been entered into a 10 year Woodland Pasture agreement, grazed by the Luing herd.

The farm is part of the wider Chatsworth Estate which welcomes over 600,000 visitors in addition to 24,000 educational visitors a year. The livestock farm also works alongside Chatsworth's 1133ha (2800ac) arable farm, which is based around 20 miles away, and adopts regenerative farming principles with the integration of livestock. The sheep spend time on this unit during the winter months grazing cover crops. A muck for straw arrangement between the two units is another beneficial feature.





Altnaharra Luings...

Possibly the Toughest Cattle in the UK



The 36,600 acre Altnaharra Estate sits by itself in the middle of Sutherland in the Scottish Highlands, surrounded by the mountains of Ben Hee, Ben Klibreck and Ben Loyal. Its main claim to fame is that it is, along with Braemar, officially the coldest place in the UK, with long, harsh, cold winters which see temperatures plummet, hitting a record low of -27.2c back in 1995. Not a place where you want to be when the Winter Fuel Allowance has been pulled!

The estate is managed by Pieter Bakker, who has been there for over 24 years with his wife Antonette, running the Estate's deer farm along with the forestry and accommodation enterprises as well as the stalking and fishing for which the estate is historically renowned for. The Luing herd was established in 2014, encouraged by the late Estate owner, Jim Gray, from whom they leased 1500 acres on an unfenced part of the Estate's hill ground. This block is a combination of very exposed hill ground and deep peat bogs, and the Luing has proven itself as the perfect choice, not only surviving the harsh climate, but thriving in it.

The Altnaharra Herd was established by buying in yearling heifers from the Welbeck, Arisaig and Lochbroom herds, followed up with a bull from Kilbrora. Time was taken to make sure that the herd got hefted to its hill and acclimatised to both ticks and the harsh environment. One of the problems that they faced was that their heft was unfenced, so after they took part in the first commercial trial in Scotland with

NoFence, a Norwegian company, in early 2020 they introduced some of the NoFence GPS tracker collars which emit a noise as the cattle near the defined boundary, which can be altered accordingly with an app on a mobile phone. This has proved to be an extremely effective system, helping to control the grazing areas without the cost of any extra fencing. It is currently mainly the matriarch cows which have the collars fitted as they lead the herd and decide where the herd moves. Pieter commented "It has been really interesting to watch the patterns of grazing and we discovered that often they move several miles during the night."

The Luings were chosen because of their reputation for hardiness and utilisation of poorer ground. A sizeable chunk of the estate is in an SSSI (c20,000 acres) which mainly consists of blanket bog and peatland habitat. The cows are entirely outside all year round, and Pieter was careful to choose genetics that were of moderate size, with good mothering ability, but also with the ability to rear a good calf. Calving is done outside on the hill, mainly in early April. Pieter noted "many a time the cows calve in sub zero conditions, or in a snowstorm, but they find shelter on the hill and calve down well." They have had over 200 calves since they first started with the Luings and never had to assist a single one, which is a great testament to the breed and its ability to survive in this harsh climate. Dry cows are outwintered and fed silage, but are offered a small amount of cobs during calving time, mainly to help with the tagging and management of the calves.





Heifer calves are housed for the first winter only, mainly to help them grow out well so they are fit to be bulled and calve at three years old. The aim is to produce docile, polled, medium sized bulling heifers to sell at the Society's Dingwall sale in May, although they have only recently started selling some as they have been trying to build up their own herd first. The bull calves are kept entire to allow for bull selection of the best ones later in the season, with the ones missing the grade sold as stores at either Stirling or Dingwall. There is potential for selling a couple of bulls annually, following on from Altnaharra Bouncer, selling for the top price of £4,400 at Dingwall this past spring.

The environment demands an easily managed calf, and thus polling is an important trait for

this system. The herd has recently been DNA tested to determine the polling status, which will also provide an idea of the myostatin status of the females. This will enable us to choose future stock bulls with more knowledge, and to this end a homozygous polled bull called Clansman has been purchased this autumn from the McGowans. The past main stock bull was Nunnerie Wanderer purchased in Castle Douglas in 2019, which has left a lot of quality females within the herd. The current stock bull is Benhar Zidane, which is on loan, and who, after doing a good job has now been returned and is being replaced by Wooplaw Big Ben, which was bought privately earlier this year and ran with a batch of heifers over the summer.



In 2020 Pieter had the chance to purchase the 240 acre Colaboll Farm at Shinness, Lairg, along with the tenancy on the adjacent 160-acre Dalchork Farm. Shinness is pretty much the next door holding to Altnaharra, however, due to the scale of Altnaharra it is almost 20 miles down the road. This holding is run by Pieter and Antonette's son Scott, 20, who was able to get a New Entrant grant, being the main partner in the family partnership. A new herd was established here, mainly using Altnaharra heifers along with purchasing females from Jeff Norrie of the adjacent Shinness herd. Jeff retired from his part of the Shinness Luing herd, (but is still very much involved with the Luings at Colaboll), which he ran with Fraser Macneil, who now solely runs the Shinness Luing herd which is located adjacent to Colaboll farm. The two herds are very much run jointly and the current stock bull at Colaboll, Blackhouse Zidane, was a joint purchase with Fraser Macneil, out of Castle Douglas in 2022 for 10,000 gns. Last year Scott completed an SRUC apprenticeship at Culmally Farm and is working part time as a fencer with the remaining time running Colaboll Farm, along with Fraser. Scott also runs a small flock of 40 North Country Cheviots at Colaboll, and contract farms another 100 NCC ewes at Altnaharra Estate. All silage is home produced and made by themselves on farm, a necessity due to distance from any other feed supply. All the straw is bought in, however.



The Altnaharra herd currently numbers about 32 cows, Colaboll herd approximately 34 cows, and Shinness Luings totalling 12 cows, meaning that circa 75 cows over the three herds went to the bull this year. Ideally, the aim is for about 100 cows in total to run with the bull each year. The bulls are kept with their bulling groups for 9-10 weeks at the most, to make sure the calving is kept as tight as possible. All the cows are scanned in the autumn, mainly to detect twins, and as at Altnaharra, cows are again outwintered at Colaboll and just fed silage, with a small amount of cobs during calving mainly for easy tagging. All 3 herds are PCHS members and are Johnes R1 and BVD accredited, since the outset.

They are hoping to, for the first time, to take a bull to Castle Douglas in February 2025, although it is an awful long way down from Altnaharra. There is a batch of heifers earmarked for Dingwall Society sale in May. Once thing is sure though....where ever they go, they will thrive and do, as they may well be the toughest cattle in the UK!!

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Dunalastair Estate



Finlay McIntyre was born and bred in Rannoch, next to Dunalastair Estate, and although he strayed away for a while, the call of Loch Rannoch and Schiehallion proved too strong and he returned, only after getting a BSc (Hons) Agriculture at SRUC, making his name as an auctioneer at Thainstone and Forfar Marts, and starring in the BBC TV series “The Mart”. Having scaled the heights of celebrity, he got the chance to return home and manage Dunalastair Estate, which has been in the hands of the de Sales La Terriere family for over 150 years. The current Laird, Captain Iain, is 94, but still retains an interest in the farm, whilst his son Robert is the Factor and looks after the day to day running of the Estate. Dunalastair has a mix of enterprises, including holiday cottages, a 350KW hydro-electric station as well as more traditional forestry and deer stalking, but also branching out into film sets, with the hit series Outlander having been filmed in part on the estate. Finlay’s grandfather was the head shepherd in times gone by and his father also worked on the Estate as a shepherd too, so he was returning to a familiar heft, with his wife Gillian, to continue the family’s work.

Dunalastair and Crossmount farms are set in the beautiful Glen of Rannoch, running to 16,000 acres, mainly hill ground, from Loch Rannoch to the summit of Schiehallion, which runs to 3553 feet above sea level. Schiehallion has its place in history as it was used in an experiment in 1774 by

Astronomer Royal, Nevil Maskelyne, to calculate the mass of the Earth, which proved a success, measuring to within 20% accuracy....and all that with just a plumb line and Newtons Theory of Gravity. Anyway....away from the science and back to the farming, Finlay runs around 2500 Blackface ewes on the Estate, running the main pure along with around 300 Cheviot X ewes as well as a 70 strong pure flock of Hill Cheviots, running under the Mount Alexander prefix. Each year they try to plant 20 acres of fodder crop, which is then reseeded with grass the following year, which helps keep the leys fresh around the farm. They have four full time workers around the Estate, who make a great team, with Ally Macintosh the cattleman, based at Home Farm and is an asset to the herd. Alongside the sheep there runs a herd of Luìng cattle, which were on the farm when Finlay returned, running to around 160 calving cows plus followers.

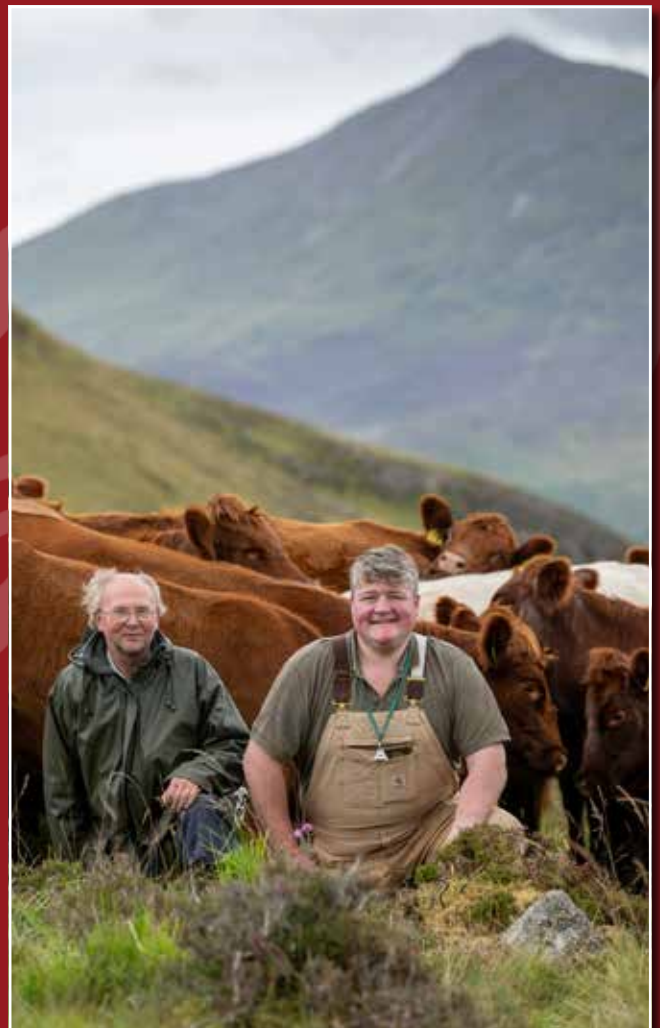
The Luìng cattle have proved themselves to be ideal for grazing the rough hillsides around the Estate, spending the summer up on the high hillsides, thriving on grazing the rough grass and then wintering outside in 140 acres of woodland, where they have access to silage but no hard feed, around the lower edges of the hills. Calving starts in March, outside in the woodland, which is ideal against the worst of any weather, providing plenty of shelter, and with the Luìng cattle having such a placid temperament it makes it possible to tag the calves as soon after birth, even in the woods. The temperament of the cattle is very important as there are lots of walkers and hikers passing through the farmland too, so it is vital that the cows are all nice and quiet.





Heifers are calved at three years old, with Finlay just retaining the best 25 to 30 heifers, looking for a nice beefy cow with a good muzzle and pelvis and from the best families too, as he feels the best lines produce the most consistent progeny. Over the coming years, as the herd reaches capacity, Finlay can see the number of retained heifers reducing, allowing more to be sold at society sales. One of the main things they look out for is the fertility of the cattle. Each bull runs with 25-30 cows, enough for them to cover without overworking them and no empty cows or heifers are retained, and this policy seems to be working well, with 166 cows bulled last year and 160 calved. The calves are spained in October, with steers sold deadweight at around 2 years old, aiming for a carcass weight of 370kgs. The heifers that aren't retained are sold at either the Society sale at Dingwall in May or the UA Stirling sale in the back end. They have now built up a good customer base with plenty of repeat customers coming back for their cattle year after year.

When looking for a fresh bull, Finlay favours a well-made bull with a good backline and a leg in each corner. He prefers a moderate boned bull with correct feet over a bigger type. A naturally fleshing bull with a bit of spark make for lovely cow makers. The cows at Dunalastair must "live off the merit of their backs" as he puts it, so a big, hard cow won't do. The back breeding of any bull is vitally important too, with a lot of





emphasis put on the maternal lines of bulls. Finlay feels that they have been lucky when bringing in fresh blood as each bull has moved the herd forward, helping to build a herd at Dunalastair fit to face the future, with females that are fertile, docile and versatile enough, and which convert the poor roughage that they graze into milk and protein. As Finlay says “There is no limit to the success this breed can enjoy, she is truly a wonderful cow, no greater words needed!”

Another factor of the breed and the Luings Society, as a whole, is the depth of wonderful people involved in the breed, and he sees them as a shining example of everything we should be proud of in our agricultural communities. He feels honoured to have been at the receiving end of some great advice and wisdom from many within the breed. And as he again perfectly phrases it “with such great cattle and folks to match, there is no hurdle this breed cannae loup.”





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Jill Hunter, Harbro Beef and Sheep Nutritionist

It is well documented fertility is the number one driver of productivity and profitability in suckler herds and a pedigree herd should be the ideal place to strive for perfection in all aspects, including fertility as there is access to the very best genetics. AHDB report over 60% of cost and emissions derived from suckler produced beef comes from keeping the cow herself. It is easy to let a cow slip a few weeks or months because of her past progeny success and the hope she might produce the one you've been waiting for. However, when you adopt a purely commercial lens, this isn't possible and every cow must earn her place.

As we recognise fertility is key to sustainability and profitability, there are a few areas the Harbro team focus on, to help fine tune fertility from a nutrition and management perspective:

Heifers: Typically, bulling heifers are well managed and pregnancy rates are good but the challenge comes when trying to get them back in calf for the second time. Any cow needing assistance at calving will need extra time to recover before she starts cycling again. Pelvic measuring heifers and removing the smallest 10% is a sure way to continually improve the calving ease of your females. Then bull maiden heifers 21 days ahead of the main cow group to allow them more time to recover and regain body condition once calved. Keep calved heifers separate from the main herd throughout the summer and feed them well as they are being asked to rear a calf, repair after calving, prepare for bulling then maintain a pregnancy, all while still growing themselves.

Bulls: Half the job of getting cows in calf is down to the bull. Semen production takes around seven weeks, meaning close attention to detail is needed around stock bulls, whether serving the cows naturally, through artificial insemination

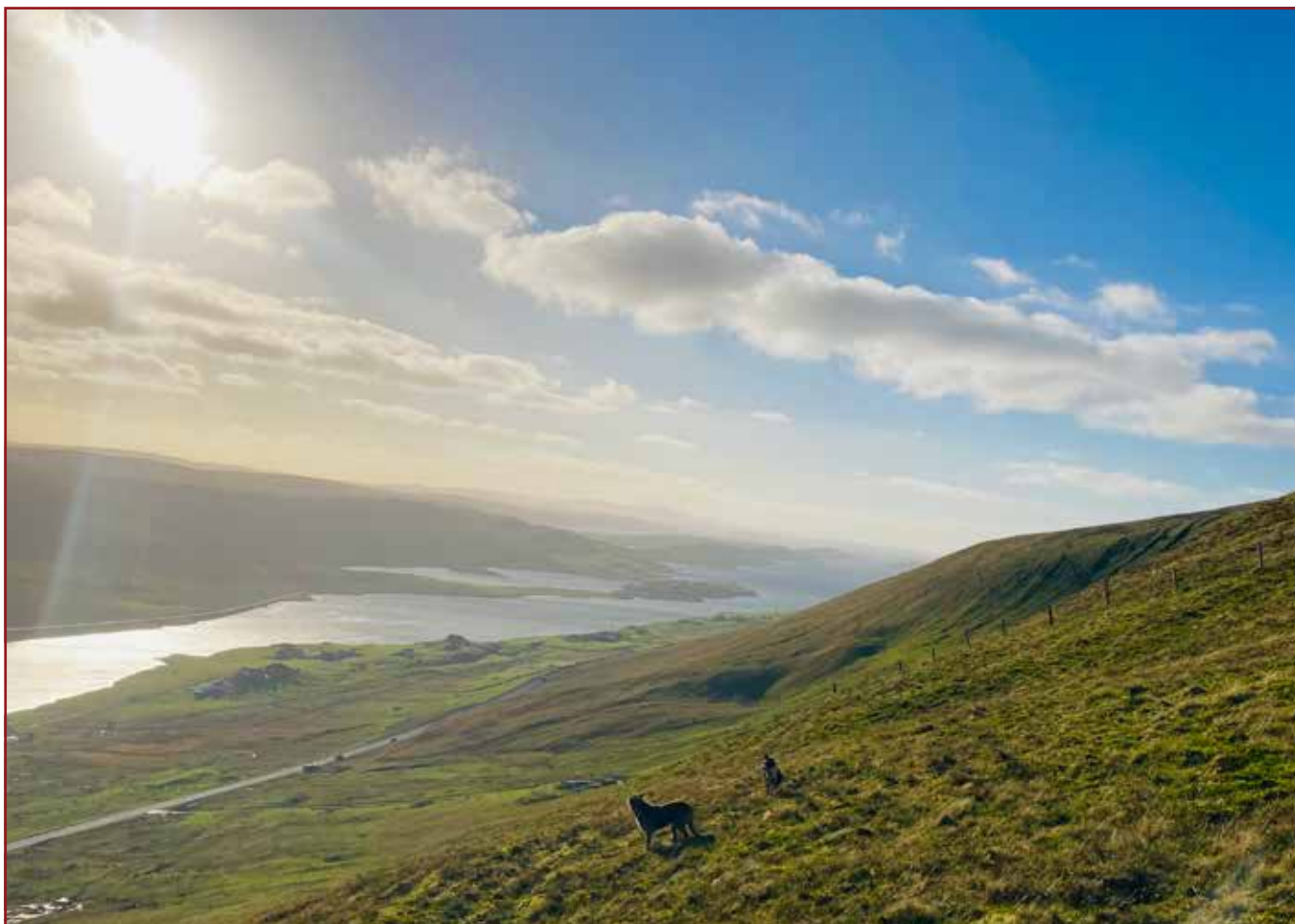
or embryo work. We should look carefully at their mineral supplementation and consider the benefit of additional antioxidant support along with omega 3, which is proven to support semen quality, which is why the Stockman's Choice range was designed alongside Glasgow Vet School with this in mind.

Cow body condition: It is important to be mindful of the change in cow condition throughout the year and our team have been trained to body condition score cows to support this. Cows which carry excess body condition year-round become lazy and less likely to cycle normally. Keep cows fit, active and make them work for you. It is well understood in the dairy industry how the diet a cow is fed before calving has more impact on her milk production and fertility than the ration she is fed after calving, meaning it is crucial to plan the ration alongside your nutritionist, if you want to maximise milk production and early calf growth.

Mineral supplementation: Minerals in grazing and forage differ between geographic areas and even farm to farm. At Harbro we regularly test forages to ensure products continue to meet requirements of high performing animals. Investing in fertility by putting your herd on the Harbro suckler cow mineral programme will cost around £35 per cow for the year. Super Suckler SEC is the base of our mineral programme and focuses on:

- Supporting immunity through supplying selenium as Sel-plex, meaning it gets into colostrum and milk to help newborns keep warm, boost immune system and get calves off to a good start.
- Looking after cow and calf health by having the right level of vitamin E and antioxidants, along with magnesium and calcium to avoid grass staggers, slow calvings and retained cleansings.
- Boosting fertility by including the right level of copper, from a source which has a positive impact on rumen health and is not affected by molybdenum

At Harbro, our focus is on maximising homegrown feeds, choosing quality products led by science and innovation, then backing it up with the best advice. Our team are on hand to help evaluate current feeding regimes, assess body condition and match a mineral programme to your herd, should you wish to fine tune and find the next marginal gain. After all, fertile, productive and profitable cattle are what the commercial buyers want to buy. Leave the passengers behind and fill your herd with stock which meet the mark when supported in the right way.



“Kurkigarth”, is situated within the Weisdale valley, central Shetland, which lies 130 miles North of mainland UK. The unit comprises of 2000 acres of owned and rented grazing, of which most would be considered rough grazing or hill, and includes a flock of sheep on common grazings. The business was taken over by brother Magnus and I back in 2014 after the unexpected passing of our father when we were just 18 and 16.



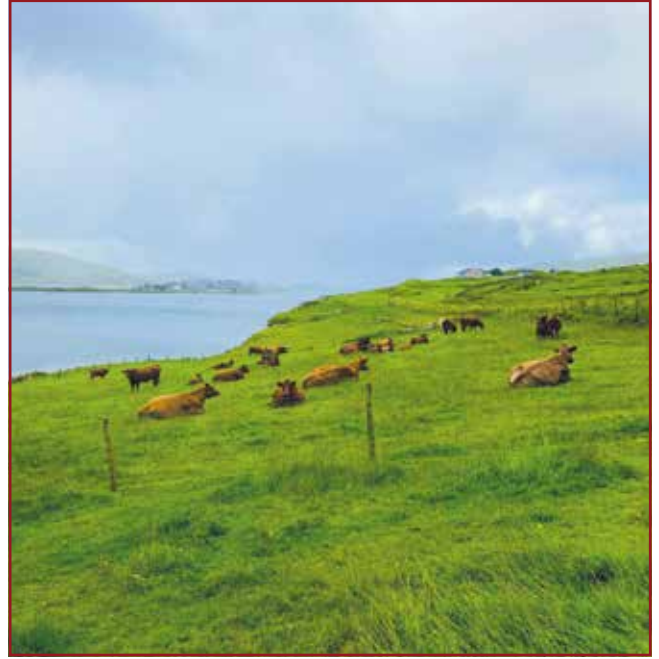
There are 1100 ewes running here, mostly native Shetland sheep run pure, with some put to Cheviot tups. Also included in the sheep flock are 200 commercial Cheviot x Shetland ewes which are put to Texel tups and a small registered flock of NCC park type ewes to breed rams for our own use, and to sell locally.

Currently we have 20 Luings and Luings x Shorthorn cows. The Luings being relatively new to the business in 2020. We purchased our first stock bull, Backmuir Xante, along with bulling heifers from Finlarg and Lammermuir, followed by others from Harehead. These purchases have left us in good stead to improve our herd. Although these cattle would happily outwinter, they are housed in November due to the wet soils. Calving begins in March onwards with the cows turned out whenever they are ready. Careful consideration was taken when choosing the Luings. We needed a moderate framed milky cow, that could thrive on poorer quality grazing with adverse weathers. Currently we are the most Northerly registered herd in the UK, although by the time this is published that will have changed.



The weaned Luings stot calves are sold off the cows in October at the local SLMG mart in Lerwick. Last year they sold in one batch for £850 having received no creep, just grass and milk. The heifers are overwintered and after replacements are selected, the remainder are sold to a regular customer who has taken them for 10 years now. The Luings have generated a lot of interest in Shetland, as others realise their potential.

As for future plans, we see no benefits in crossing the cows again. It would be great to make it to the premier sale with bulls at some point,



although its not exactly down the road! This is the first year we have left bull calves entire, by our current stock bull Nunnerie Yukon.

Lastly, we would like to thank the Luings Cattle Society and Charles Symons for making the process of getting cattle here so easy and for the friendly welcome to the breed. We would also like to thank Brian Ridland for his help and advice over the years.

**Harold Gilfillan
Gilfillan Brothers**





Dirnanean

Functional Efficient Robust

Herd established 1966 Signet recorded



'Our 160 Luing cows produce Sim-Luing heifers to sell—or Luings for our own replacements. The 70 'stud' cows all calved at 2yo and brought a calf to weaning every year. They have been selected for weaning efficiency, calving interval, udder and teat scores, docility and longevity. The result is a medium framed, easy-fleshing cow (Mature cows: Frame Score 6.0, 645kg at CS 3.1).
...take advantage with a Dirnanean bull.'



Dirnanean Chief (P) to Fearn Farm...



...and his sire, Dirnanean Zion (P).



Incheoch Patrick (PP) to Aikengall



Clearwater Nitrous (P) - stock sire.

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WOOD, Stewart
(Chairman)
(Appointed 2021)

Stewart is married to Wilma and has two grown up sons, Gareth who now work fulltime on the farm and Chris and family have moved back to Orkney and works in the construction industry.

We farm 620 acres (95 rented) on Orkney and run a herd of 170 suckler cows, and just over 300 breeding ewes and grow 65 acres barley and 10 acres oats, all for home use. We bought our first Luings in 2007 and now have 60 cows and heifers at the bull this year with most of them bred pure to increase the numbers, there are 90 Sim-Luing crossed with the Charolais, we also have a few Angus x Luing heifers coming into the herd and seem to be performing as well, along with our small herd of Charolais cows.

Most of the cows are calved in the Spring (30 Autumn) and most of the progeny sold in the Spring. All the Luing and Sim-Luing heifers suitable for breeding are retained.

All males out of the Luing cows are left entire and finished at 13-14 months and sold dead weight. We are pleased with the weights and confirmation they are achieving, showing how versatile the Luing cow is.

Our flock of sheep consist of around 100 Cheviots crossed with the Blueface Leicester, to produce the Cheviot Mule. The remainder of the flock is now mostly Cheviot Mules, with Texel tups being the main sire for them, all lambs are finished on the farm. There are also small flocks of Texel and North Country Cheviot.

In 2011 we took the decision to diversify our business and being in Orkney with a strong tourism market we built three new self-catering cottages and opened for business in 2012.

McGOWAN, Neil
(Immediate Past Chairman)

Neil and Debbie farm in a family partnership at Incheoch, at the foot of Glenisla, home to the Dirnanean herd. Neil's parents, Finlay and Judy started in Luings with the purchase of Dirnanean farm in 1977. The current herd of about 150 cows are partly bred pure for replacements the rest crossed to produce Sim-Luings. Heifers are calved at 2yo and pure steers finished off grass at around 18 months. Incheoch is also home to a 50 cow Simmental herd and flocks of Lley and Texel ewes, with a ram and bull sale held on the farm. Having worked successfully with

performance recording in maternal sheep, Neil was the first breeder to record Luings on the Signet system. Daughter, Tally, is studying to be a vet in Edinburgh and Angus, Agriculture in Newcastle. Neil's passion for the Luing stems from a family history with the breed, but is driven by his vision for the suckler cow of the future – where he sees Luing as the robust, maternal bull of choice for most commercial herds.

GRAHAM, Billy
(Appointed 2022)

Married to Fiona with two children Ruaridh 10 and Isla 8. Farmed at Craigdarroch since 2000 along with my father. We run about 1650 blackface ewes and 60 Luing cows all kept pure and out on the hill all year.

BARR, Andrew
(Appointed 2022)

Married to Nicola with two children, Isla 13 and Alistair 11. The fourth generation to farm at Milkieston near Peebles which is a 900 acre upland farm and been in the family for 100 years. In partnership with my dad David we run 110 Luing cows all bred pure with heifers being sold at the society sales at Stirling and Castle Douglas. We have 1000 ewes, 350 Blackies, 250 Lairg type Cheviots and 400 Scotch Mules.

McCALL, Ewan
(Appointed 2022)

Ewan and wife Claire and their 2 children Isla (6) and Alan (3) farm at Culmally Farm Golspie with Ewan's parents Angus and Evelyn. Culmally extends to 600 acres with an additional 170 acres of rented grazing is home to 100 Luing and Sim Luing cows and 300 cheviot and cheviot mule sheep with 200 acres of barley grown for the malting market and some retained for feed.

After finishing a BSC honours degree at SRUC Craibstone Ewan travelled to New Zealand and Australia for almost 2 years working on farms and for contractors, returning home in 2007 to farm with his parents.

The Luing herd was started in the 1960's when Ewan's grandfather Alan farmed at Kildonan Helmsdale and then moved to Culmally in 1971. The first bull was Luing Agent who was crossed with shorthorn crossed highland cows and progeny was then graded up to form the foundation cows.

The Luing cow suits the system at Culmailly with cows being out wintered on stubbles and then moved up onto the permanent pasture during the summer months. All cattle are spring calvers and heifers calve down at 2 years old. In recent years male Luing calves have been left entire and finished at 13/14 months. There is a closed herd policy with surplus heifers being sold at the Dingwall society sale, a few bulls are kept to also be sold at Castle Douglas and Dingwall sales.

Sim Luing calves are sold store in March through Dingwall mart and any suitable yearling Sim Luing heifers sold at the Dingwall Society sale.

McNEE, Robert **(Appointed 2023)**

Robert and his wife Hazel and their children Kate and Alan farm at Over Finlarg Farm, Tealing, which extends to 740 acres with some grazing ground rented. Both the sheep flock and the suckler herd are now completely closed, with only home bred replacements used for breeding tups and bulls bought at auction.

Hazel and Robert lamb 900 ewes along with 200 ewe hogs, comprising of 600 hill type north country cheviot ewes of which 200 are bred pure and the remaining crossed to the Bluefaced Leicester for producing cheviot mules. 200 Blackie ewes are crossed with home bred crossing Bluefaced Leicester to produce scotch mules, with the result being tupped with the Texel and sold as hogs with lambs at foot. There are also 100 pure Texels, and pedigree Bluefaced Leicesters which are used for breeding tups for home use and shearlings for the commercial market.

Over Finlarg accommodates 180 pedigree cows of which 100 are Luings and the remainder being pedigree Limousins and a few Simmentals. The Luing is ideal for our farm and we enjoy producing both pedigree Luings and Sim-Luings, selling both bulls and heifers at Stirling and Castle Douglas.

McINTYRE, Finlay **(Appointed 2023)**

Formerly an auctioneer, Finlay is Farm Manager at Dunalastair Estate, Kinloch Rannoch, running approximately 150 Luing cows and followers. All progeny are finished on farm. Dunalastair also runs 3500 hill sheep.

NEILSON, Billy **(Appointed 2023)**

Farm Manager for Dr Huntington, Bonawe Farm, Crofter and owner of Cruachan Herd. Former commissioner of the Crofting Commission. A lifetime's experience with cattle from the family dairy farm through to management of various Argyll farming units.

PRINGLE, Janet **(Appointed 2023)**

Janet Pringle - I have a croft in the south end of the Isle of Skye, that is home to my own herd of cows while I currently Contact Farm at Glen Finglas, Callander for The Woodland Trust Scotland. Glen Finglas is 12,000 acres. I have been here since 2013. It is significantly important for ancient wood pasture and newer regenerative woodlands. We carry 80 spring calving Luing cows and retain all heifer calves. These calves are grown on before being sold privately and at The Society sale in Stirling during October. All cows and most young stock are outwintered. Male calves are weaned and sold store. Glen Finglas is an extensive grazing system. The cattle are here to keep the wood pastures in shape and to lessen the fire risk across the hill glens while contributing to the overall biodiversity of the place. I have help delivering the farm contacting from my partner of 25 years Ian and niece Catherine. We also have a family farm in Kinross where we also keep cattle.

Glen Finglas has a small stock of sheep. There are 200 blackface and 200 cheviot cross ewes run in hill parks and on the low ground around Loch Venachar. These are lambed outside from late April onwards to coincide with the tail end of calving. The sheep form part of one of the longest hill grazing trials in Europe. This research is carried out by the James Hutton Institute, who I also do contract work for.

Cattle have been ever present in my life. Growing up on west coast hill farms I feel it is a real privilege to be continuing as many of my family have done before me. Its great to be working with the Luings and involved with the society helping to promote and ensure a future for the breed.

MacARTHUR, Alastair **(Appointed 2024)**

I was born and brought up at Nunnerie Farm in the Southern Uplands where I have been working for over 50 years. I am married to Ann with 2 grown up children, David who is a partner in the farm business and Fiona. We run around 1200 pure Blackface ewes at Nunnerie on around 3500 acres in the Daer valley. The farm lies between 1000 to 2000 feet, mainly molinia grass on peat ground with little inbye.

We also run 1200 Blackface ewes at Muirhouse Farm near Biggar on 500 acres which has been extensively quarried for sand and gravel. Half the ewes are crossed with Bluefaced Leicester tups and we also have 200 mule ewes and small flocks of Texel and Leicester.

Luing cows were introduced to Nunnerie over 30 years ago with the purchase of 2 in-calf Benhar heifers at Oban, gradually replacing a blue grey herd. The 60 pure cows are on the hill all year,

only coming inbye for calving in bad weather. The emphasis in both sheep and cattle is the production of quality and healthy females, with the sale of rams and bulls a secondary concern.

We grow around 40 acres of barley and 40 acres of rape and kale with 100 ac of baled silage or hay. All stock not sold for breeding are fattened at Muirhouse. Young bulls are finished around 15 months in July with a few younger bullocks grazed over the summer. Heifers are sold mainly at Stirling in October, with a few kept for the February sale. Bulls are sold in Castle Douglas and Dingwall.

LITTLE, Stephen **(Appointed 2024)**

Stephen has resided at Boreland farm for seven years, where he lives with his partner Suzanne. Boreland Farm is around 3400 acres and is owned by the Reid family, which is nestled, by Portmore loch, in the Moorfoot Hills above Peebles in the Scottish Borders. The land rises to over 2000 feet above sea level, with a mix of woodland, rough heather hill to good grazing land, which is frequently limed and reseeded.

The stock numbers are currently around 1420 Hill North Country Cheviot ewes and 110 Cheviot Mule ewes. Cheviot mule ewe lambs are sold for breeding and wether lambs fattened at home on rape. The cows are now a closed herd, currently running at 73 pure Luining cows with half of them bred pure and the rest going to the Simmental Bull. The Sim Luining heifers all go to the U.A Society Autumn sale. We are still building the herd up, so all Luining females are being kept at the moment. The Luining males are mostly fattened at home, with a few Sim Luings going store. Going forward, the Luings fit very well into our system, improving much of the grazing ground for sheep and leaving a good profit margin with very little input.

THOMSON, Rebecca **(Appointed 2024)**

Rebecca currently works at home full time at Tillyrie, following just over three years working for Tayforth Machinery Ring. Before that I graduated with an HND in Agriculture from SRUC Oatridge in 2016. I currently enjoy some extracurricular activities including livestock secretary for Kinross-shire Agricultural Society, committee member for Kinross JAC and an active member of the local hockey club.

Tillyrie runs 80 Luining cows and a small herd of Simmental cows and they are split between Luining and Simmental bulls. We sell Sim-Luining heifers at the Autumn Breeding Sale, Stirling and occasionally a few pedigree bulls at Castle Douglas. Other enterprises at Tillyrie include 400-450 strong flock of sheep, which includes a small flock of purebred Texels.

Luings are the foundation of our family farming business, and are demonstrating what the Luining cow can produce; be that bred pure females and males; or crossed with the Simmental to produce the sought after Sim-Luining females, for breeding.

SYMONS, Charles **(Fieldsman)**

Recently retired from full time farming, Charles and Mary have now moved to The Priory at Morebattle. This is a 20-acre property and Charles spends his spare time training sheepdogs. There are 3 acres of gardens to maintain so they will still be very busy. Hopefully there will be more time to dedicate to the job of Fieldsman, a job thoroughly enjoyed. When on bull inspection and cow classification duty hopefully there will be more time to have a look around herds and spend more time with members rather than the usual rush in and out. Anyone wishing to discuss anything Luining please don't hesitate to contact your fieldsman.



Weight recording is not limited to youngstock, weigh all your cattle this autumn.

As we enter the autumn and the weather is starting to turn, many of you will be thinking about winter jobs. Hopefully one near the top of the list is the collection of weights for youngstock and cows.

The provision of cow weights is important as it supports on-going research in the Luing breed and will ultimately lead to the development of a new Estimated Breeding Value (EBV) for this trait.



Recording Cow Weights

Each year we encourage breeders in Signet recorded herds to record the mature weight of their cows, along with a body condition score (1 to 5) and management code. These measurements are often taken at weaning time, though cow weights can be supplied at any point during the year. These traits are important in maternal breeds, where it may be desirable to limit increases in cow size, while continuing to enhance calf growth rates.

Cattle mature size is becoming an increasingly important topic, as the industry strives to increase herd efficiency and productivity. It is now more important than ever to utilise the tools available to manage your herd and record weight data. Keeping larger cows can be extremely costly as they have a higher nutritional requirement over the winter, resulting in a reduction in stocking density.

You cannot manage what you don't measure, so start measuring cow mature weights to identify the more efficient cows within your herd.

Numbers of Mature Cow Weights and Condition Scores

The good news is Luing breeders have already recorded a lot of data, with over 4,000 records recorded to date - though many will be repeated measures on the same cattle over successive seasons.

Year of Measure	Luing Records
2014	130
2015	106
2016	204
2017	409
2018	456
2019	518
2020	557
2021	562
2022	513
2023	515
2024	50
Grand Total	4,020

Monthly Data Inputs

Signet records show that most Luing breeders supply cow weight in September and October so this appears to be a good time to collect measurements; fitting the job around other routine tasks at this time of year.

Month	Luing	%
1	217	5%
2	9	0%
3	47	1%
4	0	0%
5	1	0%
6	63	2%
7	40	1%
8	56	1%
9	1,347	34%
10	1,587	39%
11	525	13%
12	128	3%
Grand Total	4,020	

Conclusion

Luing breeders are doing well when it comes to collecting mature cow weights and body condition scores, but it could be better if more herds got involved.

Signet gets access to calving records from about 3,000 Luing breeding cows each year, but we know only about 17% of these have cow mature weight records.

This year, Signet have sent out weigh sheets to all Signet recorded Luing herds to ask breeders to supply cow weights. If you could please weigh your cows it would really help. We know most of the historic weight records were collected in September and October so we hope you have already collected this data and once received we

can start work with SRUC to generate the first set of breeding values for cow mature weights for Luing cattle.

Thanks for your ongoing support. If you have any questions about the recording of this information please contact me directly.

Stuart Friswell
Signet Breeding Services
Email: Stuart.friswell@ahdb.org.uk

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2024 has been an unbelievable year for The Luing Cattle Society with unprecedented demand for Luing cattle mainly from new breeders. The increase in demand has resulted in the creation of 20 new herds joining The Luing Cattle Society.

When I think back to 1989 when Mary and I bought our first Luing cattle there were only in the mid 20's of herds registering cattle. The number stayed pretty static for probably 10 years and when restocking took place in 2001 following foot and mouth there was an increase in herds registering cattle as farmers looked for something different and a number chose Luings as their preferred breed. Over the last 10 years the interest has been steadily rising, culminating in this years fantastic results as more and more people realize the value of Luing cattle. The versatility of Luing cattle is undoubtedly helping fuel this demand, whether people want to keep hardy cows in the harshest of environments or they want to keep a cow on more productive land where inside wintering is the only option, there are Luing cattle to suit their system.

On one of the many wet summers days this year I decided to re-read the paper presented by Dennis Cadzow to The British Cattle Breeders Club in 1967. It is a wonderful read and to anyone who hasn't read it I can thoroughly recommend it. Two quotations from that paper under the section Breeds and Societies stood out to me as being of particular significance:

1. **“Breed societies may sometimes have too many restrictions and smother initiative. They should realise that where a breed is too much of one type it will cease to evolve to meet changing demands. A certain diversity is needed if one is ever to be constructive.”**
2. **“I feel sure that the great pioneers of the past who started breeds would rather see the cattle preserved than their book of rules. That is the heritage we have been given - the cattle, not the rules, and I think those early breeders would find us sadly neglectful if we did not do everything possible to keep pace with the times and produce the type of cattle which are now in demand.”**



I feel these two statements are as true in 2024 as they were in 1967. If we don't evolve, we will be left behind and others will take over our space. One of the ways our breed is evolving is by the increased use of the polled gene which I think is a great idea as long as it isn't rushed as selecting hard for any one trait to the expense of others could come back to bite us at a later date. I am reasonably confident that I have seen homozygous polled bulls being used in herds that would not have been used had they not carried that gene, we need to tread carefully.

I have represented The Luing Cattle Society throughout the year at many shows and demonstrations, all of which have been well attended with numerous enquiries from potential new members as well as speaking to and providing refreshments for existing members and hopefully answering any questions that they had. One of the highlights for me was council taking the open day to Chatsworth Estate in Derbyshire. I think it was a great idea to move out of our comfort zone and make an effort to spread the word further afield. The day was very well attended and a great display was put on by David Howlett and his team. Most open days I feel we are preaching to the converted and what stood out to me at Chatsworth was the number of people that I didn't know, a number of whom were seeing Luing cattle for the first time. Hopefully we have sown a few seeds that will germinate in the near future.

Sales in the last financial year have been very good whether it be through society sales or through The Society brokerage scheme. Gross turnover in 2023 was just over £1.41 million a rise on the previous year of 16%. Gross turnover in the last financial year was £2.06 million, a rise of 46%. I think this is a great achievement showing the increased popularity of Luing cattle and it is huge thanks to members that sell their cattle via society outlets and contribute levies which in turn gives The Society more income to spend and promote the breed to the benefit of all members.

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to the upwards surge in the popularity of Luing cattle. We have a great council and officers who should be applauded for all of the hard work that they put in on behalf of all members. I would also like to thank all those people who have been kind enough to give me some fantastic hospitality, it really is appreciated.

Last but not least I would like to thank Natalie for all of the hard work she puts in on behalf all members. The creation of new herds and movements of larger numbers of cattle create substantially more work whether it be doing transfers, sending out invoices, sorting out queries and dealing with the inevitable increase in registrations. The efforts that these additional transactions require should not be underestimated.



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Registrations, Charges and Useful Information

THE YEAR LETTER FOR CALVES BORN IN 2024 is D and 2025 is E

This is an extract only, a full copy of Society rules, regulations and byelaws is available at www.luingcattlesociety.co.uk/society-rules

Luing Male and Female Registrations

1. Each Herd Book Year will end on 31st December.
2. Breeders are required to update their herdbook list (herd census) as at 31st December either online by lodging deaths, sales and transfers (online preferred) or via a paper annual return upon request to the office.
3. **On-line registration and herd census options are now available using the link on the website at www.luingcattlesociety.co.uk/login . This will re-direct you to our online database provided by Grassroots.** A username and password can be obtained by contacting the Breed Secretary on secretary@luingcattlesociety.co.uk or by using the password request facility in Grassroots. **Use of the online system for all herdbook based transactions is encouraged.** Alternatively, a birthing summary form can be used to register via a paper-based system and all calves born in that year should be entered. This must be **fully completed** for all calves to be registered: i.e. UK tag, date of birth, name and/or management tag, colour, horned/polled and sire. Breeders are encouraged to notify all other calves born (date of birth, UK tag and sire) so that full records can be kept for every breeding female on the database.
4. Registrations (both online and paper based) must be done / returned to the Breed Secretary by **28th February** of the year following the year of birth. Early registrations are encouraged. **Please note that all registrations received after 28th February will be charged double fees.**
5. Any animals which are first presented for registration over 2 years of age can only be considered for Appendix B, and will attract double registration fees.
6. Pedigree certificates will be issued for all calves fully registered, and will be forwarded electronically. Registration certificates are not issued for birth notifications.

Sim-Luing Female Calf Registrations

1. Entries will only be accepted from members of the Luing Cattle Society Ltd.
2. To be eligible for acceptance into the register for Sim-Luing females, heifer calves must be:
 - a. out of Pedigree or Appendix A Luing females registered in the Herd Book of the Luing Cattle Society and,
 - b. sired by a Simmental bull registered in the Herd Book of the British Simmental Cattle Society Ltd.
3. All calves should be registered by the 28th February following their year of birth.
4. Following verification of the registration of both the dam and the sire by the Luing Cattle Society, the Sim-Luing heifer will be accepted for entry into the register and a certificate issued.

Charges

An Annual Subscription is due annually on 1st January and members will receive a renewal notice around early January. The Annual Subscription is £50.00 incl. VAT (£41.67 + £8.33 VAT). Any member not settling membership fees within two months of issue of invoice may, at the discretion of Council, lose his/her rights of membership. Payment of Annual Subscriptions by standing order is encouraged, and the bank details are available on our website at <https://luingcattlesociety.co.uk/publications> .

Registration Fees

1. Pedigree Luing

Registration fees (Pedigree, Appendix or Sim-Luing) are charged on a sliding scale based on the number of breeding cows (i.e. females over 2 years of age) held on Society records for each herd at 31st December of the year of birth, of the calves being registered. This includes full Pedigree and Appendix A and B cows and Sim-Luing females.

Breeding Females (>2 yrs)	Registrations completed online	Registrations completed on paper
1-25	£8.50	£9.00
26-50	£8.00	£8.50
51-100	£7.50	£8.00
101-250	£7.00	£7.50
251+	£6.50	£7.00

2. Sim-Luings

If only Sim-Luing heifer calves are to be registered, the registration fees will be as follows:

Number of Calves registered	Registrations completed online (per head)	Registrations completed on paper (per head)
1-15	£9.50	£10.00
16 or over	£8.00	£8.50

3. Individuals who feel that they have a special case will have the opportunity to appeal and the merit of the case will be considered by the Council.
4. Breeders will be invoiced when registrations are processed, at the end of each respective registration period.

Transfer Fees

All animals purchased at Society Sales (males and females) will be transferred free of charge.

Transfer fees are incurred by the purchaser (unless previously agreed with the vendor) upon the transfer between herds, of any full Pedigree or appendix female animal purchased outwith a Society Sale (purchased privately) at £10.00 + VAT per female.

Transfer fees are incurred by the purchaser (unless previously agreed with the vendor) upon the transfer into the purchaser's herd, for bulls purchased outwith Society Sales (privately) on a two tier basis, as follows:

- 1-30 breeding females (as listed on each herd's list on Grassroots) - £2 /eligible breeding female, with a minimum fee payable of £25 +VAT
- 30+ females - £100 + VAT

Bull Inspection

1. No bull can be sold at a Pedigree Luing Sale until it has been inspected by an appointed representative of the Society and has been accepted as conforming to the standards as laid down by the Society, including a minimum height and scrotal circumference. Breeders must apply to the Society for this inspection by 31st August each year.
2. The bulls will be inspected as soon as is reasonably possible and the dam of each bull will be classification scored at the time of the bull inspection. Dams must be presented for inspection if they are still on the farm - regardless of whether they have been scored in previous years. The age of the dam at the time of assessment and the number of calves she has had will be taken into consideration to ensure potential buyers know the scores relate to a young cow yet to fully prove herself.
3. Bulls passed for entry into a Society sale will have their pedigree record updated on grassroots. Bulls not to be entered for a Society Sale but otherwise deemed suitable for pedigree breeding will also have their pedigree record updated on grassroots.
4. Breeders are encouraged to have bulls inspected for Society approval prior to private sale - to avoid the potential problem of a bull being turned down after being sold. Only bulls with Dam Classification Scheme scores for feet, locomotion, udder and teats of 5 or above (out of 10) will be approved for use.

Society Sales

- The Society holds 4 Official sales:
 - **The 60th Premier Sale will take place in Wallets Mart, Castle Douglas on Friday 7th February 2025.**
 - **Stirling Bull Sales - United Auctions, Stirling Agricultural Centre - Monday 17th February 2025.**
 - **Spring Breeding Sale - Dingwall and Highland Mart, Dingwall - Wednesday 14th May 2025.**
 - **Autumn Breeding Sale - United Auctions, Stirling - Saturday 25th October 2025.**
- Premier Sale - all bulls must be in the market by Wednesday night and heifers must be penned by 12 noon on Thursday before the sale.
- The minimum age for bulls sold at Society Sales is 18 months on the day of the sale and each bull must have been approved for pedigree use (by inspection) by the Society, in association with the rules on bull inspection set out in the Society's rule and byelaws. In addition, bulls will be weighed at the sale, and must meet the minimum height measurement of 52" at the shoulder and have a scrotal circumference of at least 38cm. Bulls will be sold in age order with oldest bulls sold first. Measurements will be taken in the market and displayed on the pen card.
- All cattle presented at Society Sales must come from herds which are members of a CHeCS accredited health scheme and must be vaccinated against BVD (both males and females). Any cattle coming from a herd which is not accredited free of BVD must be individually tested negative for the virus.
- A health declaration form must be submitted with an entry form, the information from which will be displayed in the sale catalogue.
- **NO minimum age** is required for pedigree Luing females presented for sale. Any animal with a black nose or displaying unruly temperament will be rejected by the inspection panel.
- Vendors are responsible for ensuring that all animals forward are correctly identified in relation to current identification regulation.
- All cattle will be sold under the terms and conditions of the National Beef Association Breeding warranty. A copy of the relevant breeding warranty can be found at www.luingcattlesociety.co.uk/sales. Both vendors and purchasers are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the terms, especially timescales for notification, ahead of sale/purchase.
- The upset price for bulls is **2,000gns**.

Luing Website/Facebook (www.luingcattlesociety.co.uk)

The Society website and social media pages continues to prove a useful source of information on the breed from commercial beef producers wanting to find out more about Luing cattle and for breeders needing to download sales entry forms, application forms, or sale catalogues. Another very useful feature is the 'stock for sale' pages, which is available to all members. Adverts are free of charge if using the Society's brokerage service, and £100 if not.

Cattle Health Policy

Since 2011, all official Society sales (Premier Sale in Castle Douglas, Spring Sale in Dingwall and Autumn Sale in U.A. Stirling) have had the same entry conditions in terms of cattle health; entry is only permitted from herds which are members of a CHeCS (Cattle Health Certification Standards) accredited health scheme such as Biobest Laboratories' *HiHealth Herdcare* or SAC's *Premium Cattle Health Scheme*. In addition to being a member of such a scheme, herds must be specifically managing BVD and Johne's disease. All stock forward for Society sales are expected to have been vaccinated for BVD (see above), originate from a BVD accredited herd, or have individually tested negative ahead of departure from the holding in accordance with the ScotGov initiative.

PLENDERLEITH

At home in the Cheviot Hills

LUINGS, SIM-LUINGS & SIMMENTALS

RORY BELL : 07740697600 | FINLAY BELL: 07554554553

Living's

Events 2024



Dalmally Show.

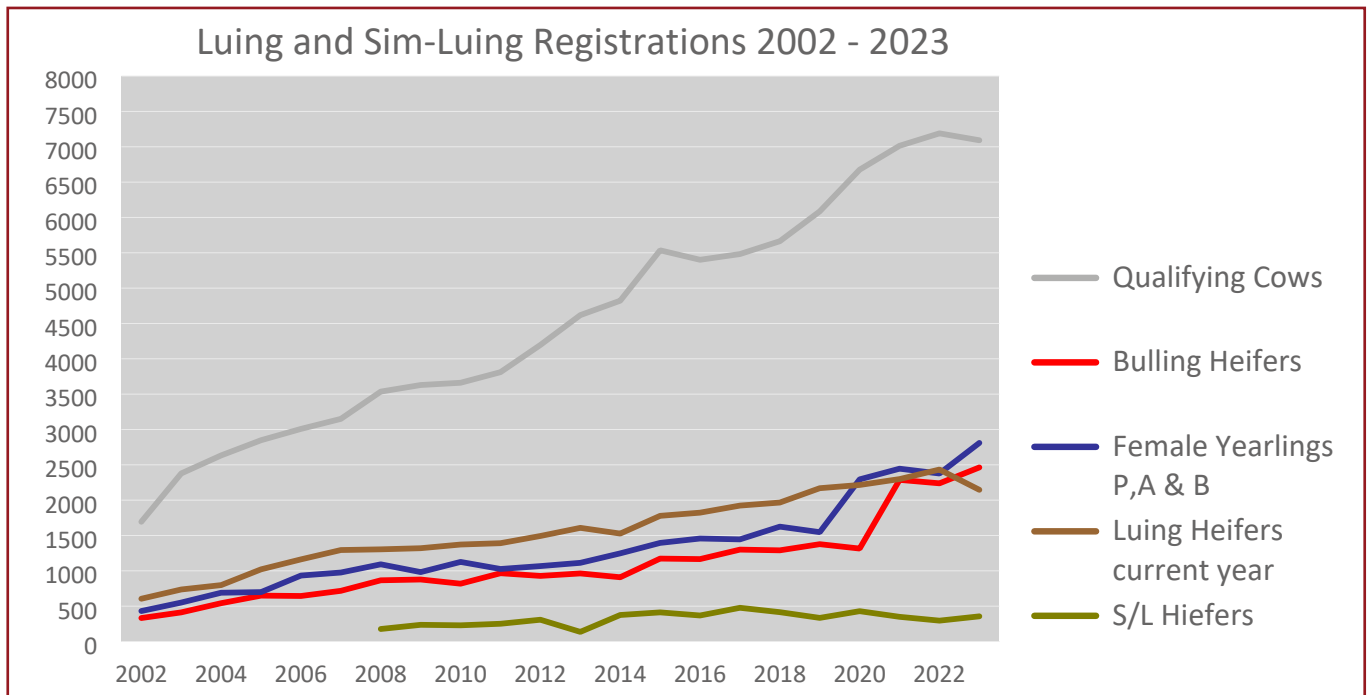


Royal Welsh Show.



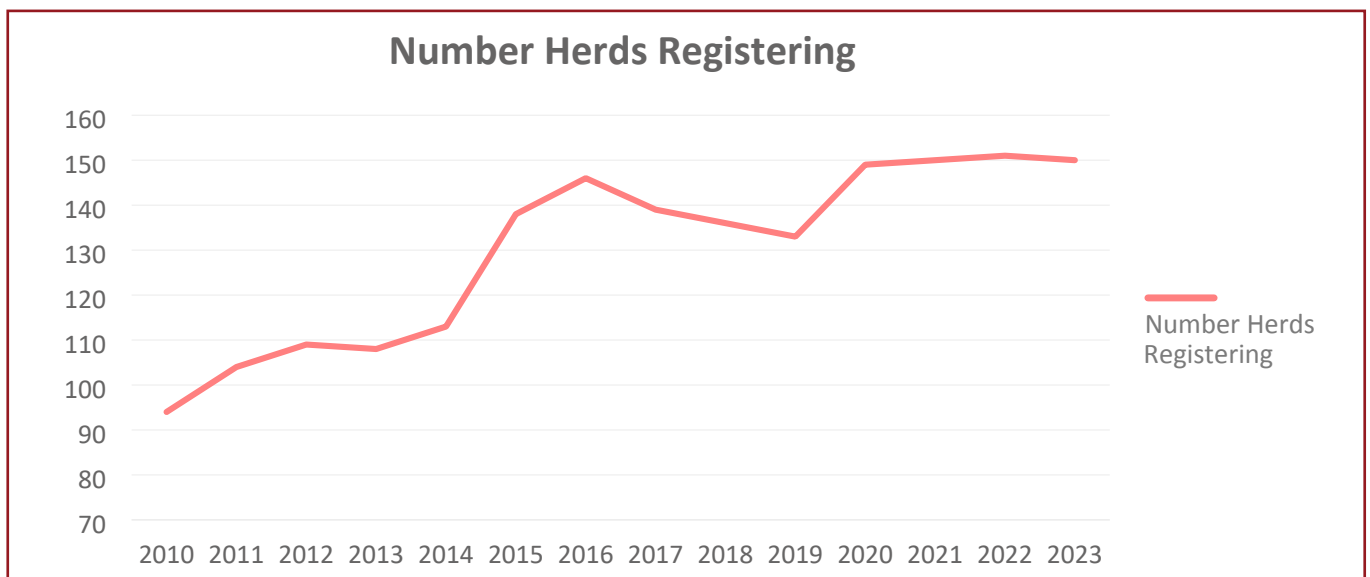
The flexibility of the Luing, together with the genetic variability within the breed is appealing to more systems, resulting in an increase in popularity of the Luing. From a total of 1694 cows in 2002, the breed has increased year on year to 7192 breeding females at 31st December 2022, while 2023 saw a slight dip to 7090. Annual registrations of female calves has grown from 605 to 2146 with a peak in 2022 of 2433, over the same period, nearly a 4-fold increase.

Sim-Luing heifer registrations have had similar growth over the same period, albeit at a much lower level, having gone from 177 in 2010 to 356 in 2023, with a peak of 477 in 2017. Registrations of male calves also continues to follow the same increasing trend, rising from 102 in 2004 to 496 in 2022. The trends are depicted in the following graph:



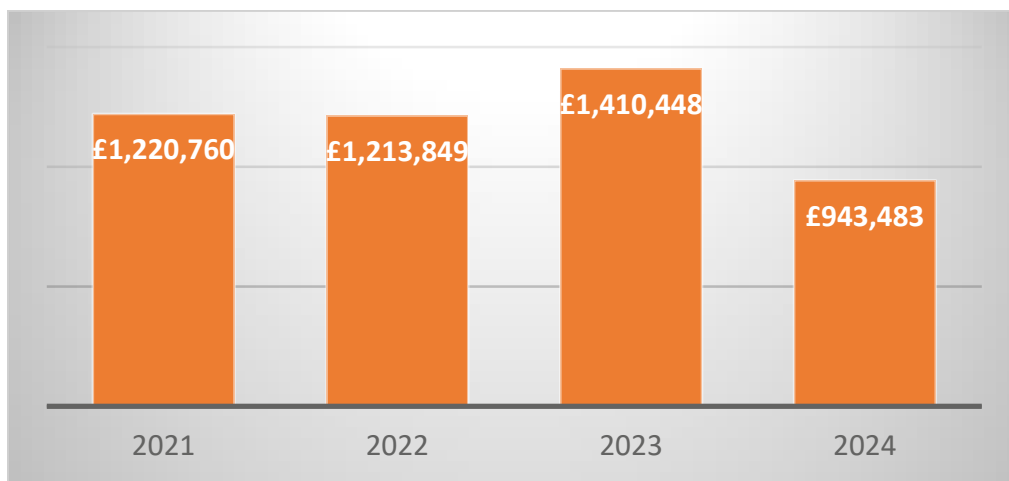
Herds registering females have risen from 94 in 2010, to 151 in 2023. This represents total registrations, including Sim-Luing heifer calves.

It is interesting to note the pattern over time, where herds registering calves have dropped, particularly between 2016 and 2019.



Sitting alongside these figures is a similarly strong performance in both pedigree and commercial sales in the most recently collated period. Total society sales turnover during the 2023 sales calendar was £1.4m, and a healthy but slightly lower £0.95m in 2024. In total, Society Sales traded 400 females over the year to an overall average of £2359, an increase on the previous year of nearly £400. There were 31 young bulls sold through Society sales, to a top

of £18,900, and an impressive average of £7175. Fewer cows than last year went through Society Sales, at only 18, but the previous year saw two significant dispersals. Pedigree Luing in-calf heifers (88) sold to average £2686 (+£600 on the year) and 228 bulling heifers averaged £2326 (also +£600 on the year). Sim-Luing heifers (65) averaged £3360 for in-calf females and £1995 for bulling heifers.



The rise in popularity of the Luing female, having been selected for its hardy versatility, and milkiness, with sound locomotion and excellent mothering ability, has been supported by the Society's dam classification scheme. All dams of approved males for Society Sales, will have been classified as being above average (score

5) in important traits such as feet, locomotion, temperament, udder, teats, condition score and skeletal size. This system ensures that Luing females can calve at 2 years old, wean calves at 50% of their bodyweight at 200 days, and re-breed annually with longevity.

STREAMVIEW LUINGS

Castleberg Tyrone



Bulls and Heifers for sale

Adrian Caldwell

Tel: 07712 645577

Signet Provides Breeders with the Tools to Push Genetic Improvement on Farm

Performance recording is available to all members of the Luings Cattle Society, this initiative provides access to free weight recording for participating herds. Signet provides a range of tools and services for breeders to meet the needs of the commercial producer.

During Autumn 2023, the Society worked closely with Signet to launch a new performance recording initiative, allowing herds to access a weight recording service for free. There has been a steady increase in the number of herds participating and data transfer from the Society is working well allowing calving records to flow into the analysis.



The following Luings herds are currently signed up to record; Dirnanean, Commonsides, Luings, Scotsburn, Sutherland, Yondercroft, Etrick, Caerddaniel, Oronsay, Fanblair, Stonehouse, Luckington Luings, Benhar, Ulzieside, Burnfoot and Howgate.

Number of Luings records within Signet's analysis



Signet Reports/Tools

Breeders can produce and utilise a range of reports and tools directly from the website.

- **Promising Young Bull lists** and **Sire Summary** reports allow breeders to compare bulls across herds and identify high genetic merit animals which may be of interest for future breeding programmes.
- **Inbreeding calculator** - breeders can create mating plans and assess levels of inbreeding when homebred bulls are used within the herd.
- **Herd finder tool** - buyers can locate performance recorded breeders. Searches can be undertaken by breed and post code, displaying the closest farms first.
- **Cattle for sale page** - breeders can display performance recorded stock that are for sale, highlighting pedigree information and breeding values.
- **Figures at sales** - When you are looking to take stock to market don't forget to take sale cards, these can be easily printed directly from the Signet webpage (If you need assistance, please get in contact with one of the Signet team). These can provide breeders with a competitive advantage and help to inform buyers when making purchasing decisions.

- **Ultrasound Scanning** - Signet also supports an ultrasound scanning service, this provides cattle breeders with the opportunity to assess the carcass quality of their cattle by measuring muscle and fat levels in the live animal. Unlike growth rate, it isn't always easy to identify cattle with superior muscling across the loin, but this tool is a great help. For more information head to the Signet website.
- **AHDB National Beef Evaluations** - published alongside the traits that you record on farm, you will find five new traits that are derived from industry datasets. This information includes four breeding values for carcass traits which are evaluated using abattoir records and a breeding of real importance in maternal breeding programmes, calf survival.

It's not too late to start performance recording your herd through the Society's initiative. If you would like to find out more, please email: laura.eyes@ahdb.org.uk or tel 07902 493551.

Signet 
BREEDING SERVICES





Pure cows and bull.

I worked for 12 years as Farm Manager of Low Moor Howe Farm Ltd near Windermere, during which time I established the Winster herd of Luing cattle. The purpose of the herd was primarily to stock extensive 'Managed Habitat' grazing under a Lake District National Park ESA agreement which at that time was the second biggest agreement in Cumbria.

We had a great start in Luings with a packet of heifers bought privately from Wooplaw in 2006 and a bull from Buckholm thereafter. Notable cattle purchased at Society sales over the next couple of years came from Merkland, Wellbeck and Monzie to name only a few, we had found our type!

In 2014, we were very privileged to host the Luing Cattle Society Annual Open Day at Winster with over 700 people attending on the day. This was truly a highlight of my time at Winster, and 10 years on, the Luing is still having a huge influence on our cattle, but in a very different environment.

On leaving the Farm Manager role at Winster, Mary, Elsie (3), George (18 months) and Cameron (due in the back end) and I entered into a partnership agreement with my mother's cousin Robert and Margaret Atkinson at Capplerigg, a 250 acre farm at Crook, between Kendal and Windermere.

We managed to afford to leave Winster with 6 pure heifers in calf to Culmally Predator and 4 Sim-Luing bulling heifers which we added to Robert's 35 Lim X cows. These were derived from the British Friesians which Robert had milked up until 2004. These were good square cows but, I felt, getting in need of a shot of vigour and milk

as by now many were getting close to being pure Limousin, so we bought a Simmental bull from David Loftus at Blackpool.

Alongside the cows we have 300 lowland ewes. These consist of a nucleus flock of around 100 north of England mules, 180 1st cross Texels out of these mules and 20 pure Texels. We maintain these numbers by buying 20 mule shearlings annually from the same source, and a Texel stock tup every 3rd year with a lot of emphasis placed on maternal figures. We keep around 60 Texel X hoggs each year and cull all our ewes after 5 crops (to date, for more than they were worth as lambs!). We aim to finish all our lambs off grass by Christmas, and are sold deadweight.

I was really pleased with the Sim x Lim calves and as cows they have been a great success, however when we lost our Simmental bull unexpectedly in 2018, it was a chance to maybe increase the Luing population in our herd before we bred them all out. Having neighbouring cattle on all sides, small fields, and keeping our own replacement heifers, running 3 bulls wasn't an option, practically or financially. At Castle Douglas in February 2019, I purchased Lammermuir Xcellence from Paddy and Sheila Crerar and in June he went to work with virtually everything that wasn't Simmental bred.

Our 1st LuingxLim calves arrived in April 2020 with as little fuss as you would well expect. In early summer, these calves didn't really catch your eye, I think only because of the preconception of what a calf sucking a Limousin cow should look like! They obviously carried a little more hair and



Limousin cross heifers with Luig sired calves.

definitely didn't have the shape of a continental calf in the first 12 weeks, but they grew away and did nothing at all wrong.

Our cows winter on a simple slurry based, self feed pit silage system. We have an electric feed rail at the silage face which the calves can get underneath for ad-lib silage. Any silage the calves knock down gets hoovered up by the cows which have cleaned up any silage they have on offer in around 4 hours! The calves are offered up to 1.5kg of concentrate per day also. The calves are dosed for fluke and worms around Christmas and weaned in early February. Bullock calves and surplus heifers are sold through the store ring at Northwest Auctions from the end of March through to the Grass Day sale in early May.

In 2021 our Luig x bullocks averaged £85 less than their Limousin x bedfellows. Shape is key in Cumbria! This was a hit I was willing to accept, just like the hit most Lake District farmers take on their mule whether lambs when breeding a superior breeding female. By turnout time the Luig X heifers are really showing themselves and the untrained eye would struggle to separate them. Out at grass for their second summer was when I had to admit that the Luig x Lim was a lot better than I had expected! The Luig Bull,



Luig cross bulling heifers.

(well known by now as Paddy!) has put length and depth into our heifers, not everyone's cup of tea, especially in our part of the world, but in my eyes, good functional, feminine females. Now with Limousin calves out of Luig x Lim heifers on the ground I am equally as pleased with what we have bred.

Inevitably, the time had come to change a bull as their daughters were growing up. Confident he had finished work and before the late summer grazing had totally depleted I took Paddy to the cast ring in early October. At 1025kg he realised £1960. It is great that the long awaited beef price we are currently seeing is driven by demand but it is equally as unfortunate that the demand is driven by a lack of stock rather than a genuine want and understanding of the superior quality product we produce.

As winter looms, the argument for a smaller cow is at the forefront of our minds. The cows will soon be inside, ground conditions dictating the day over the quantity of grazing left amidst the hoof marks. It is our intention to replace our Luig bull with a Simmental, again with emphasis placed on maternal traits. Paddy has left us some really sound Luig x cows which I am looking forward to working with.

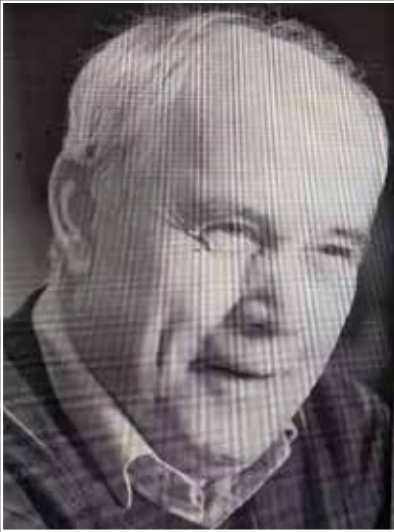
Alec Smith



Luig Bull - "Paddy".

Obituary

FRANCIS 'BRUCE' YOUNG (27.1.1942 - 27.3.2024)



Francis Bruce Young was born on the 26th of January 1942 in the family farmhouse at Congeith, Kirkgunzeon. His parents Frank and Nora were delighted to welcome a second son, a brother for Jimmy. Tragically, the boys' mother died when Bruce was only 18 months old so life was difficult but the two brothers bonded and became a dynamic duo, supporting their father on the farm. The family was greatly supported by Granny Young helped to look after the boys in those early days.

Bruce attended Miss Trotter's pre-school in Dumfries before attending Kirkgunzeon Primary, until he was eight years old, Bruce then attended Cambusdoon School in Alloway, before moving onto Holt School in Lochmaben for his secondary school education.

Bruce's cousins, Neil, Jim and Alastair Clark lived next door at Corra and from early on, Neil and Bruce, as the youngest, were inseparable. In fact, when Bruce was 11, his father remarried, with Jimmy being Frank and Kay's best man while Bruce and Neil went on their honeymoon with them! When Bruce was home from school, he and Neil would be out in the fields playing and making up for lost time. Alastair fondly recalls sunny days spent in the burn at Corra, where the Young boys and the Clark boys would play in a corner of the river they called their swimming pool. They made a diving board and would spend hours jumping in and clambering back out, shrieking with laughter in the sunshine. Bruce, who was a non-swimmer, jumped into the deepest part of the pool one time and struggled to keep his head above the water so Jimmy and Alastair had to jump in and save him - and after that, Bruce never went back, nor learned to swim!

Bruce loved sport at school and enjoyed playing cricket at Cambusdoon and was, what his friends called, a social rugby player. He left at sixteen to become a mechanic at Corries and his young farmer friends like George Barbour and the late Andrew Dunlop, would agree that he knew an engine better than a cow!

In the early 60's, he got the chance, through Dalgetty's, to take cattle to New Zealand and he jumped at the chance of adventure. He sailed for New Zealand and stayed for eighteen months, driving sheep lorries around the North and South Islands. On his return, he continued to haul cattle and sheep but this time for his father's business, McBrides in Crossmichael.

Following on from Granny Young, another strong woman became his main supporter, in the form of Mrs Carson, the housekeeper. Many will remember how loyal and faithful she was and how she carried out all the housework and cooking for Bruce. Mrs Carson tried to keep callers and visitors at arm's length so as not to disturb her wonderful Bruce, often by telling them that he was out when in fact he was tucking into a hearty lunch she had made for him in the room next door!

When brother Jimmy moved to Australia in the sixties, Frank asked his youngest son if he wanted to continue to haul for him or to return to help with the farm: Bruce chose Congeith and they built the farm up together.

Bruce was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis when he was just 26 but he never allowed this to affect his life plans. He married Sally Cadzow in 1973 and they were blessed with twins Tanya and Kirsty being born in 1976, Rory in 1978 and Kim in 1980. Bruce was a hard-working man who dedicated his life to becoming a trusted businessman. His dogged determination to build his business could often result in missing family time and holidays as Bruce wanted to stay on to work but Kirsty, Tanya, Rory and Kim still enjoyed their holidays with their mother, often spending summers with their grandparents on the Isle of Luing.

As well as the farm, Bruce invested in a range of businesses over the years, with his good friend and business partner Andrew Cairns. Their portfolio included three chemist shops, a laundry and the Fly Half pub in Dumfries. When he heard that his friends' daughter, Elizabeth Brockbank, was thinking of investing in a local pub, he suggested he could go into business with her. So in 1996, Elizabeth and Bruce invested together in the Laurie Arms in Laurieston. This business partnership worked well with Elizabeth cooking and grafting

behind the scenes and Bruce entertaining the customers and being the wonderful front of house host he always was.

In 1999, Bruce bought Glaisters and, as Director, planted the first field of Fraser Firs. Twenty-five years on, and with Rory now at the helm, the company is committed for 12 months of the year to growing Christmas trees and making the plantations environmentally friendly.

In the millennium, Bruce travelled with his cousin Alastair to visit brother Jimmy in Sydney. A recurring theme when Bruce travelled, was that he always found a bit of the Stewartry wherever he went: and it proved to be a neighbours' reunion when he met up with fifteen pals from Kirkgunzeon and Dalbeattie who were Down Under too, including the McCowan family, Colin Dempster and Jim Smith!

Back home, Bruce and Elizabeth continued to work hard to build a successful business together at the Laurie Arms and in 2001 these two business partners became life partners. They got engaged on a cruise to Antigua and were married in 2009 at Craighadam.

The newlyweds honeymooned aboard the Queen Mary, sailing to New York. They may have been on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean but, as usual, a little piece of home was waiting there for them in the form of Sinclair Dunlop, who was working in New York and had booked them West Side Story tickets and dinner at the Waldorf Astoria along with Maureen's sister, his Aunt Cath, who was also out visiting him at the time.

After seven and a half years as landlords, Bruce and Elizabeth sold the pub in 2003 to give them time to go travelling. Bruce loved their trips to amazing overseas destinations such as New Zealand, the Caribbean, South Africa and Australia, appreciating the landscapes, the food and the wine. They also enjoyed trips together

closer to home and had many happy holidays in Borrowdale in the Lake District.

Bruce always had a positive attitude and had been described as being a "glass half full kind of man." Ten years ago a stroke took most of his speech and Bruce found this a challenging time however he could still make himself understood, like the time they had guests over and he tapped his glass to let Elizabeth know that she needed to top them up with wine!

Throughout his life, Bruce was always outgoing and never allowed his health or his wheelchair to define him. He loved people and was a superb dinner party host and an even better dinner party guest. Known as '20 Questions Young,' Bruce was truly interested in learning about people. His friend Andrew says he wasn't nosey, just inquisitive. When his late brother Jimmy and sister-in-law Chris came over from Australia for a visit a few years ago, they organised a party for them at Clarebrand Village Hall so that all Jimmy's friends could come and see him at the same time. Bruce loved the party and it turned out to be a wonderful way of him seeing all his friends too, with him and Jimmy and the Clark cousins back together just like the old days.

Over the last few years, Bruce had many long hospital visits and, during Covid, became seriously unwell. Bruce was such a strong man with a wonderful spirit and was so well looked after by his carer Veronica and his beloved Lizzie and looked forward to visitors. Even as his eyesight and hearing began to fail he would still have a twinkle in his eye and a smile on his lips. Sadly but peacefully, Bruce passed away in hospital on the 27th of March 2024 at the age of 82. He was a loving husband to Elizabeth (or as Bruce always called her, Lizzie), father to Kirsty, Tanya, Rory and Kim, Grandpa to Harry, Ben, Heidi, Evie and Max, brother, cousin and friend to many.





FINLARG HERD
BRED WITH PASSION

FINLARG HERD



FINLARG HERD
BRED WITH PASSION

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SIDLAWS



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Calvert, Neville	5 Savoy Place, Youngtown, Tasmania, Australia, 7249	T: 61 363437998	E: nocalvert@gmail.com
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