



Wool returns at highest levels in 10 years



Representing UK sheep
farmers for over 75 years

britishwool.org.uk

May 2026

Prices are up, outlook is strong

Global demand for wool is strengthening, and prices continue to improve, giving us renewed confidence as we enter the shearing season.



Over the past year, strong demand from our brand partners and increased auction competition has driven a **significant increase in the price of your wool**. This results in a typical 60% increase in member returns. With the market now at the highest level in a decade, we anticipate a further increase in returns for your wool in the 2026 season.

Whilst this recovery is encouraging, it follows several challenging years, and returns for some core types are only now approaching the cost of shearing. Continued work on your behalf is essential to build demand and **ensure wool provides a sustainable margin for all sheep farmers**, particularly those with hill and mountain flocks.

Demand growth is being driven by both UK processors – who purchase around 70% of your wool and are investing in their operations – and by export buyers. Chinese and Indian manufacturers are increasingly important in the global market. Buyers supplying these markets are now competing for your wool in the auction.

We continue to invest in marketing and brand partnerships to build consumer awareness and support long-term demand for British wool. More brands like Celtic & Co, John Lewis, Next & Harrison Spinks are selling British wool products, and sales of value-added traceable wool continue to rise, with **traceable wool sales up 10%** (see page 8 for more details).

Our biggest challenge is wool supply. Wool volumes have fallen with the decline in the national flock. We also recognise that, in some cases, low returns over recent years have led some farmers to retain wool on farm. Another 1,000 tonnes would add 2p/kg to returns for all members. With demand strengthening and prices improving, it is important that as much wool as possible is brought to market through your cooperative this season. To aid convenience, we have **added 10 Collection Sites across the UK** and are continuing to search for new ones for this season's clip too (see page 13).

British Wool's collective marketing model remains our greatest strength. By pooling our clip, upholding quality standards, and providing a consistent supply to global buyers, we maintain influence and bargaining power that no individual producer could achieve alone.

As we approach shearing, I encourage all sheep farmers to deliver their wool. Wool from the current season always receives a higher price than wool left on the farm. Collaborate where possible, and make full use of our expanded collection network. Together, we can reinforce wool's reputation as a sustainable, versatile fibre and continue to drive demand and maximise returns.

So my sign off from one sheep farmer to another is – **please deliver your wool!**

Jim Robertson, Chairman

23%

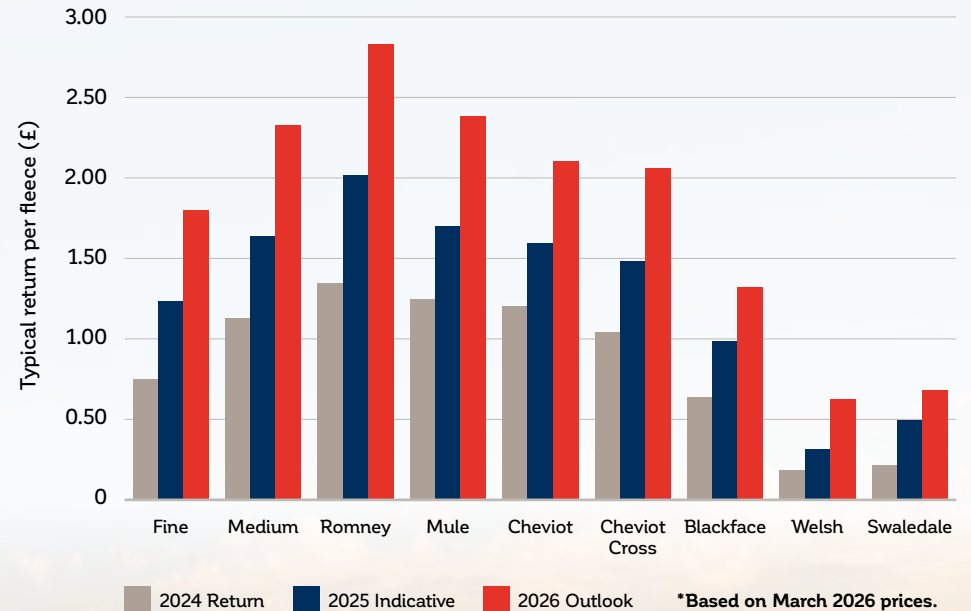
Increase in average auction prices

60%

Increase in member returns

176

Brand partners



Returns are rising across all wool types

SAVE THE DATE...

British Wool's AGM will be held on Wednesday 11th November 2026 at 2pm at British Wool's head office, Wool House, Bradford.

Your organisation

SCAN TO VISIT
OUR WEBSITE.



Farmers co-operative

all profits returned to our members



All types of wool

taken in any volume

Over
4,000

shearers trained in the past five years



76
years



working on behalf of UK sheep farmers

Guaranteed payment

paying the true global value for your wool



Board Members elected by farmers

9 farmer members on the Board

80 Regional Member Representatives

ensuring we are representing farmers at a local level



Working with global brands and manufacturers

to drive demand



Easy to deal with, always looking for better ways to improve our service and make wool delivery simple for our members



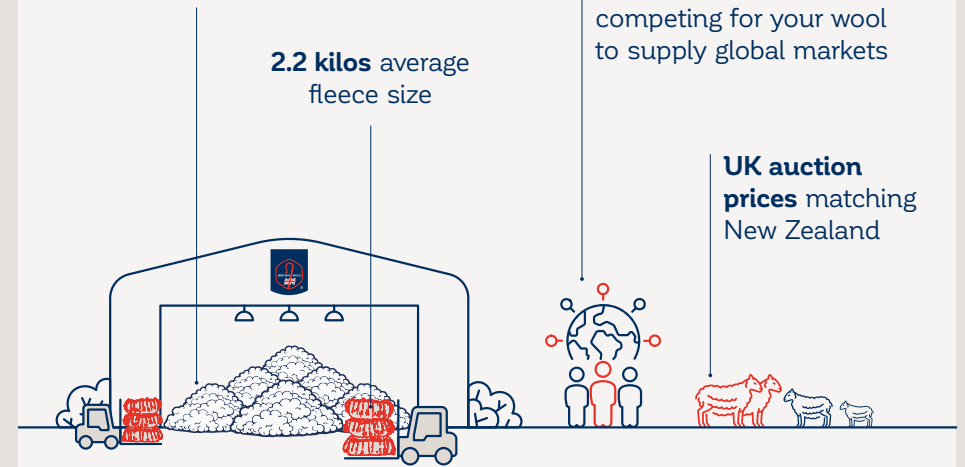
Industry highlights

18.7 million kilos sold through British Wool

2.2 kilos average fleece size

10 auction buyers competing for your wool to supply global markets

UK auction prices matching New Zealand



Wool is collected from **all of the UK**

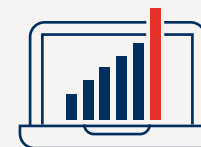
see page 13



52% of UK residents have heard of British Wool in the past 12 months



Global wool prices at **highest levels** since 2015



British Wool works with brands in the **UK, China, Japan, South Korea, US** and across **Europe**



Discover the journey of your wool



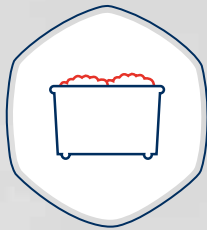
Grading

Wool is sorted by type and quality.



Auction

Sold in 8-tonne lots at auction.



Scouring

Wool is washed before processing.



Processing

Wool is transformed into yarn or felt.



Manufacturers

Wool is made into carpets, bedding, clothing and other products.



Retailers

British wool products are sold with the "Crook Mark" logo.



Consumers

Buy products made from British wool.



Why wool auctions work for you

British Wool sells your wool through a competitive auction process. The sales team hold 18 online auctions throughout the year. Richard Alderson, our auctioneer, explains more...

"After your wool is graded by our depot teams, it is packed into auction lots. Each auction lot typically weighs just over 8 tonnes and is made up of 24 bales. Lots combine graded wool from multiple farms, usually over 100, to ensure the supply of a consistent quality product to the market.

"Every bale in every lot of wool is core tested, with samples being sent to the IWTO-approved testing lab in Wales. The test results provide critical lot-by-lot data for both British Wool and our auction customers. The key metrics which impact price are the yield, the colour, the micron and the levels of contamination from vegetable matter. Yields matter for all grades, and for some grades, the colour and micron of a specific lot can have a significant impact on price. The team uses these metrics to determine a guide price for every lot before each sale.

"The British Wool auctions are there to maximise the value of wool and return the true market value to members. As auctioneers, our role is to maximise the value of the clip over the year as a whole. We do this by managing the supply to market to achieve the best possible price. After every sale, we determine how

much of each type of wool to put up for sale in the next auction to optimise supply against demand.

"During an auction, the auctioneers essentially are deciding whether to accept the price offered or take the wool back into stock. Our decisions as auctioneers are informed by regular dialogue with auction customers, feedback from the wider supply chain, detailed analysis of buying patterns and analysis of the global wool market. Paying close attention to the New Zealand auctions is particularly important.

"British Wool only releases wool to auction buyers after payment has been received. Once collected, wool will go for scouring at one of the two UK processing plants or be shipped for export. Post scouring, it will be spun into yarn or felted before progressing through the manufacturing supply chain and being transformed into a wide range of end products."



10 buyers compete for your wool through the auction system.



Creating demand for British wool

Key results

10%

Increase in traceable wool sales

15

Brands buying traceable wool

176

Brands selling British wool rich products

60%

Of the clip under license

woolroom
BETTER SLEEP, NATURALLY

MOON
EST. 1837

Dreams


Harrison Spinks
The True Bedmakers


DEVON DUVETS


habitat

More buyers in the market = stronger long-term demand

Growing awareness

673 

pieces of coverage for the 75th Anniversary

594 

pieces of broadcast coverage

30 

pieces on the BBC including the national news and Countryfile

National coverage

BBC, ITV, GB News, Telegraph, Daily Mirror, Daily Express, LBC

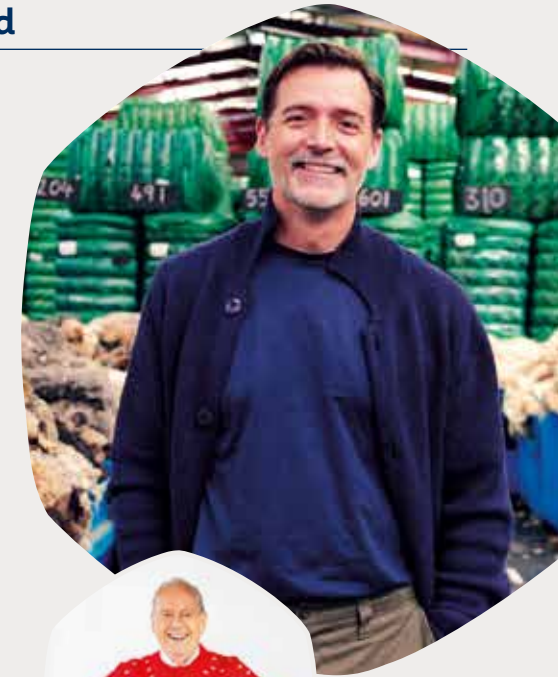


118k+ 

consumers following our social channels

More awareness helps drive future sales

Activity to increase demand



National exposure

- **Royal visit** brought attention to British wool across UK media.
- Working with influencers to reach a wider number of consumers.
- Worked alongside **Patrick Grant**, judge on BBC's Great Sewing Bee and founder of Community Clothing, on social media activity reaching over 630,000 consumers.
- Joined forces with **Gyles Brandreth** and Save the Children to produce a 100% British wool Christmas jumper. Resulted in a lot of national press coverage including a section on ITVs This Morning.
- Continued work with **Shaun the Sheep** targeting the carpet and knitting markets.



New markets

Proactively targeted the fashion market working with the leading fashion University in the UK (Central Saint Martins). Introducing British wool to new buyers and students and helping to get more British wool into this market.



Increased demand in new markets = stronger long-term demand

Shearing training

Our shearing team will be delivering a wide range of shearing courses across the UK this season. Whether you have never picked up a handpiece or are looking to hone your technique, British Wool's trainers are here to support you.

Courses are co-ordinated by our regional lead instructors, supported by Estelle Drye and Kam Dlay-Lewis in Head Office. Our experienced team of instructors are here to support you on your shearing journey.



SCAN HERE TO BOOK A SHEARING COURSE.



All machine shearing, blade shearing, and wool handling courses are now live and located across the UK. Scan the QR code today to book a course.

Estelle Drye



Andy Barratt



Estelle Drye



Hywel Wigley Jones



Kieran McCullough



Ed Odell



Lowri Evans

900+ 

attended courses last year.

130 

courses held.

Backing our shearers

Good shearing is essential to maximising the value of your wool and defending the industry's reputation for welfare. British Wool is proud to have trained and supported some of the world's best, including several shearing record attempts held in the UK.

The World Shearing & Wool Handling Championships were held during March in New Zealand. We congratulate all UK-based teams and competitors for their successes – everyone can be very proud of their achievements, demonstrating the high standards and quality of shearing and wool handling here in the UK.

Our Ambassadors promote British Wool to our members and the benefits of wool to consumers. Ambassadors have been involved in several initiatives – social media, the press and media and shows in promoting our key messages.



Meet your depot teams

British Wool's depot teams are here to support you, for any enquiries or to arrange delivery of your wool, contact your local depot.

Below are some of our depot team members:



Janet Miles
Ashford
01233 622444



Sam Harland
Bradford
01274 737559



Brian Jones
Brecon
01874 622754



Susan Boe
Evanton
01349 830678



Michael Sanderson
Borders
01896 754898



Aled Evans
Newtown
01686 626040



Nicola Andrews
South Molton
01769 572178



Gareth Bowdler
Bromyard
01885 483314



Darren Charlton
Brampton
01228 672111



Christine Devine
Irvine
01294 203637



Charles Hall
Launceston
01579 342422



Barry Bellis
(Grading Depot
Manager)

Porthmadog
01766 515178

Dinas Mawddwy
01650 531206



Amanda Knighton
Castle Bytham
07977 021975

Collection network

British Wool has a nationwide network of collection centres to make it as easy as possible for you to drop off your wool. Your local depot can advise on the closest option for you, or check the depot locator on the British Wool website by scanning the QR code opposite.

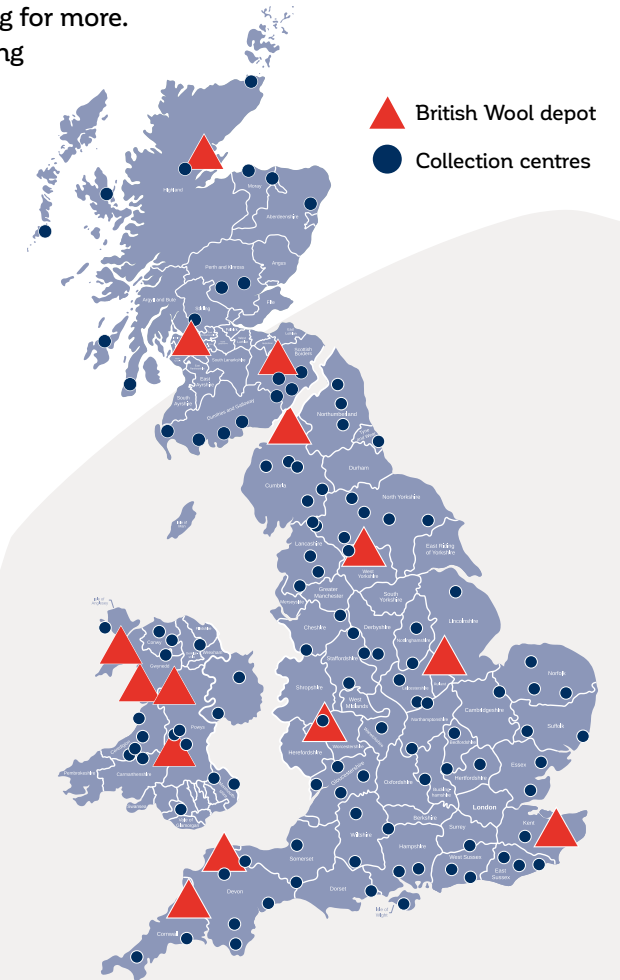
We have enhanced our service by adding several new collection centres over the last year and are looking for more.

If you are interested in acting as a collection centre for British Wool and have a dry shed, good access and yard area, please contact your local depot.

Members who work with neighbours to gather a full load are eligible for free transport. Our local depots can arrange this for you.



SCAN HERE TO
FIND YOUR NEAREST
COLLECTION CENTRES



14

wool depots.

150+

collection centres.

Meet your Board


British Wool prides itself on being a farmer-led organisation with nine farmer-elected board members and 80 regional member representatives. Your board is here to represent you.

Below are your farmer Board Members:



Scan here to find out more.


Jim Robertson



Chairman and Scottish Southern Board Member

jimrobertson@britishwool.org.uk


Brendan Kelly



Vice Chairman and Northern Ireland Board Member

brendankelly@britishwool.org.uk

Rosie Keenan



Scottish Northern Board Member

rosiekeen@britishwool.org.uk


Carl Stephenson



English Northern Board Member

carlstephenson@britishwool.org.uk

Richard Spencer



English Central Board Member

richardspencer@britishwool.org.uk

Wyn Williams



Welsh Northern Board Member

wynwilliams@britishwool.org.uk


John Davies



Welsh Southern Board Member

[johndavies@britishwool.org.uk](mailto: johndavies@britishwool.org.uk)


Penny Chantler



English Southern Board Member

pennychantler@britishwool.org.uk

Alan Derryman



English South Western Board Member

alanderryman@britishwool.org.uk

Our key focus areas

Strengthening the collection network



Adding collection centres to make it easier for farmers to market their wool.

Driving demand



Working across brands, manufacturers and direct-to-consumer channels to grow demand.

Wool promotion



Partnering with other wool-growing nations to promote wool and shape legislation.

Shearing training



Investing in skills and supporting the next generation of shearers.





British Wool's

**Member returns are at the
highest levels for 10 years**

Contact your local depot
or collection centre now
to arrange delivery of your
2026 wool clip.



**FIND YOUR NEAREST
COLLECTION CENTRE**

To find out more, contact the British Wool team
agpo@britishwool.org.uk

 @britishwoolfarm

 @britishwoolfarm

britishwool.org.uk



THE CAMPAIGN FOR WOOL
Patron: HM King Charles III