

CURRICULUM VITAE

Jo Bridge

CONTACT DETAILS

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EXPERIENCE

My alpaca adventure began in 2012 when we bought our current property in Suffolk. For years I had lived and breathed horses and was a qualified ACPO Police Mounted instructor. I found that my job had become my hobby and I needed a change. With a few acres to fill, we purchased our first three pregnant females and soon also had our first cria, that was it I was smitten. Now we have around 60 alpacas on farm

My quest for further knowledge then began, I attended many courses through the British Alpaca Society which soon then led me to the commence the judge training program. I certified and qualified as a BAS Judge in 2017. I wanted to know as much about the fibre as I possibly could and learnt various aspects of crafting and also the shearing of alpacas and began to shear about 1000 alpacas a year so I could see and experience every type of alpaca fleece. I feel that it is as important to understand how the fleece comes off the alpaca for both the processing mills and also for the show ring. I provide skirting advice and fleece assessment for breeders and have found some lovely surprises of quality alpacas that the owners didn't know they had. Shearing alpacas affords me the opportunity to get my hands on all qualities of fleece and assist my continued learning process.

We have a relatively small herd but I'm a firm believer that even the small herds can have champions and very soon we were proudly breeding Champion and Supreme Champion alpacas with both Huacaya and Suri alpacas. Our alpaca have now also been purchased by other breeders who have gone on to improve their herds and also breed champions alpacas in the show ring

I am passionate about genetics and fleece qualities and improving the alpacas that we breed. I also love to share this with other breeders and clients and offer help and support wherever needed.

I retired as a full time Police officer in 2021 and decided to become a full time Alpaca farmer and this is one of the best life changing decisions I have ever made.

As part of my previous role as a Police officer I was a trainer, in various aspects of policing and I like to continue with that, helping and educating other owners and breeders with my gained knowledge with alpacas. In 2019 I began the process of becoming a Tutor judge and although this was paused due to covid I have now continued with this process in 2022/23 and would like to continue to eventually become a judge tutor withing the British Alpaca society. I am currently an affiliated trainer and host British Alpaca society courses at our farm.

I was one of the founder board members of the Eastern Alpaca Group and was show organiser for the first fleece show in 2016. My journey to becoming a qualified BAS judge has afforded me the opportunity for continued learning by attending workshops, seminars and calibration clinics with:

Jude Anderson
Natasha Clark
Jude Anderson
Brett Kaysen
Molly Gardner

I have also had extensive apprentice training with many BAS qualified judges over a four year period. My first time in the ring was:

Heart of England with Rob Bettinson in 2015

This was followed by the South of England with Liz Barlow
Bath and West with Shirley Bettinson
Devon County with Shirley Bettinson
Honiton short fleece show with Tim Hey
Heart of England Fleece show with Nick Harrington Smith

In **2016**

The North Devon Fleece and Halter show with Val Fullerlove
Three Counties halter show with Val Fullerlove
Westmoreland halter show with Jay Holland

2017 – Four years of work led to my first ‘Certification’ which took place at the Three counties showground. I was thrilled to be awarded a pass and now a certified BAS judge.

I have judged in 2017 to 2019.

North Somerset show
Three Counties Halter and Fleece Show
Northern Island Halter Show
Westmoreland Halter show
Midlands Halter Show
Heart of England Fleece show
North Devon Fleece show.

March 2020 to March 2021
Covid restrictions in place

2021
South of England show (first show after restrictions judged in full PPE)

2022
South West Alpaca Group Fleece show
Three Counties Fleece show
Salon Des Alpaca Liginiac, France Halter and Fleece show

North Somerset Show
CCA Cornwall Halter show
Yorkshire Alpaca show Halter
2023 – Attended the Alpaca Expo in Austria
2023 Shows to Booked to attend.

March 2023 Irish National Halter show
March 2023 Danish Alpaca Show
July 2023 Cornish Alpaca group – Fleece show
Sept 2023 Westmoreland Halter show
Nov 23 Belgium Alpaca Show Expo

I have a love of both Huacaya and Suri alpacas and I'm passionate about learning as much as I can about both and I have now increased my herd with more Suri alpacas including two recent imports of Black suri alpacas from New Zealand to add to my current breeding program and I am passionate about improving the Suri numbers that are attending in the show ring.

I firmly believe that the learning continues, and I am always searching for more information and to expand on my knowledge.

I love judging alpacas, meeting new people seeing new places and sharing my knowledge with others – from the moment the first alpaca walks into the ring I'm captivated and appreciate being afforded the opportunity to judge these wonderful animals and meeting other alpaca owners and breeders both in the UK and around the world and look forward to the next adventure !

Jo