



Terms of Reference for SCOPS Steering Group

The Sustainable Control of Parasites in Sheep (SCOPS) is a voluntary, industry-led group that works in the interest of the UK sheep industry. It recognises that, left unchecked, resistance to parasiticides will become one of the biggest challenges to the future health and profitability of the sector.

The SCOPS Steering Group (“the Group”) was formed to develop sustainable, responsible and practical strategies for parasite control in sheep which ensure the responsible use of parasiticides in conjunction with other means of control. It consists of individuals and organisations with an active interest in the sustainable control of parasites and includes industry bodies, UK levy bodies, sheep farmers, vets, animal health advisers, parasitologists, researchers and others.

The group facilitates and oversees the delivery of these recommendations to the industry and ensures that new research and development is incorporated to refine and improve advice to the sheep industry. Activity is as agreed by the Group in an annual, costed activity plan.

Steering Group Representatives

The Group consists of individuals and organisations with an active interest in the sustainable control of parasites. These may include industry bodies, UK levy bodies, sheep farmers, vets, animal health advisers, parasitologists, researchers etc.

Organisations currently represented or invited to be represented include:-

- AgriSearch
- AHDA
- AHDB
- AMTRA
- APHA
- Defra CVO Office
- HCC
- Moredun
- NFU
- NOAH
- NSA
- QMS
- RHWG
- RUMA
- SRUC
- SVS
- Vetpol
- VMD

The Group can collectively invite and approve new organisations to be added this list at any time, in line with the funding structure outlined below. SCOPS activity carried out by Group representatives, such as attending Group meetings, is funded by the organisation they represent unless agreed otherwise by the Group when a representative individual first becomes involved with the Group.

The Group can collectively co-opt individuals (i.e. permanently join the group) or invite guests (i.e. join for one meeting or occasional meetings) at any time. As a co-opted member or guest, that individual’s time and travel costs will be covered by the organisation they represent, unless agreed otherwise by the Group and in advance of the meeting. If co-options or guests result in any one organisation listed above having more than one attendee at a meeting, that organisation’s say in any decision-making process does not increase – i.e. the organisation’s influence is still equivalent to one seat at the table.

Group representatives are encouraged to raise awareness of SCOPS and share SCOPS principles and messages where appropriate. However, Group representatives cannot use the SCOPS logo, messages or resources for their own commercial gain or for the implication of endorsement.

Steering Group Structure

The Group meets a minimum of twice a year (usually February and September) with the addition of interim and sub-group meetings where required and by agreement of the Group. As a general rule, the September meeting is face-to-face and other meetings are online, but this can be varied with agreement by the Group. To reduce costs, Group representatives are asked to provide meeting room facilities at no cost to SCOPS when meetings are face-to-face.

Steering Group Chair and Deputy Chair

The Group will appoint a chair, whose role includes:-

- Ensuring Group meetings and subsequent activities fit within the scope and resources of SCOPS, and that meeting actions are delegated to appropriate Group representatives and carried out in a timely manner.
- Being an influential representative of SCOPS and promoting SCOPS activities and role.
- Attending relevant meetings/workshops on behalf of SCOPS and reporting back.
- Ensuring SCOPS resources are used efficiently.

The Group will elect a Chair for two-year terms, with no limit to the number of terms that can be served. The position of Chair will be an agenda item at the first meeting of every year, to approve the Chair's position for the second year of his term, to re-elect the Chair for another two-year term, or elect a new Chair.

The Group should have a Deputy Chair, to be elected in two-year terms as above. The role of the Deputy Chair includes:-

- Supporting the Chair in their role outlined above, deputising where requested.
- Ensuring sufficient understanding and involvement in the scope and remit of SCOPS to allow a seamless transition from Deputy Chair to Chair.
- Taking responsibility for areas of activity where requested by the Chair.

The Chair and Deputy need not be existing Group members at the time of election. They are typically an active sheep farmer residing in the UK.

The Chair and Deputy Chair may both claim an annual honorarium for their roles – £1,000 per year for the Chair and £750 per year for the Deputy. On top of this, they may claim travel expenses at the current HMRC approved mileage allowance payment and other reasonable expenses for attending a meeting to represent SCOPS, including SCOPS Steering Group meetings (if they are not also representing another organisation). The honorarium will be paid in two six-monthly instalments on submission of an invoice. Additional expense claims must be submitted within three months and will not be paid outside this window.

When the Deputy Chair takes over as Chair, therefore vacating the position of Deputy Chair, the Group will:-

- Set a timeline to fill the vacant position.
- Delegate the Group Secretariat (supported by individuals or a working group) to:-
 - a) Decide the wording to advertise the role within the sheep sector and Group members' communication networks, and invite written applications.

- b) Update selection criteria and scoring matrix to assess applicants (see appendix), if needed.
- Using the selection criteria and scoring matrix, SCOPS funders (as listed below) will individually score applications to produce a total score/ranking. A meeting (usually virtual/teleconference) will discuss the top ranked applicants and decide the most suitable candidate for the position. If the scoring process identifies a clearly preferred candidate, a meeting may be deemed unnecessary. Individual scores will be shared among the funders, but only the total score discussed outside the funders.
- The Group Secretariat will contact all applicants, sharing the scoring matrix and an individual's total score if requested; no other feedback will be provided.

Should the Chair position become vacant and cannot be filled by the Deputy Chair, or the Deputy Chair position becomes vacant, the Group will decide how to proceed.

Steering Group income

SCOPS is funded by contributions provided by industry bodies and match-funded by levy bodies. Currently the six industry bodies are AHDA, AMTRA, NFU, NOAH, NSA and Vetpol and the four levy bodies are AHDB, HCC, QMS and AgriSearch.

Commercial companies cannot sponsor SCOPS, but SCOPS can offer sponsorship opportunities for specific projects for a clearly defined duration. Conditions on the promotion and use of the SCOPS logo, messages and resources for the duration of projects will be provided at the outset.

Steering Group expenditure

The Group will delegate agreed actions to appropriate individuals and/or organisations for an appropriate fee, and agreement to use any individual and/or organisation on an ongoing basis should be an agenda item at the first meeting of every year in order to clarify the remit and cost of that work.

Work currently delegated on an ongoing basis falls into three categories:-

1. **Consultancy:** SCOPS has appointed Lesley Stubbings and Nerys Wright to provide consultancy work as independent sheep consultants.
2. **Financial and secretarial:** SCOPS has appointed NSA to administer its accounts and provide secretarial support, including taking minutes at two Group meetings a year.
3. **Communications:** SCOPS has appointed NSA to run the SCOPS website, issue approved press releases and post information on social media.

To ensure good communication and progression of agreed actions, the SCOPS Chair, Deputy Chair and the service providers listed above have a monthly online meeting to discuss work streams.

All individuals and/or organisations carrying out work for SCOPS must submit itemised invoices within three months of work being completed.

Given its limited resources and specific remit, SCOPS cannot use its funds to sponsor events, competitions etc, or pay for trade stand space to attend events.

Review process. These terms of reference should be confirmed at the first meeting of each year.

Agreed September 2018. Updated: September 2021. January 2022. February 2022. May 2024

Appendix 1: Selection criteria for Deputy Chair

Role and responsibilities

The role of the SCOPS Steering Group Deputy Chair is as set out in the SCOPS Terms of Reference. The purpose is to ensure consistency when the Chair retires, and so the responsibility of the Deputy Chair is to familiarise themselves with the workings of SCOPS and the people and organisations involved. They should work closely with the Chair to establish a constructive relationship and share responsibilities where appropriate. They should highlight any conflict of interest should this occur.

Knowledge and experience

When looking for a Deputy Chair, the SCOPS Steering Group is looking for some who can:-

- Demonstrate a good understanding of the SCOPS principles.
- Keep abreast of new developments affecting SCOPS principles and priorities, and contribute to meetings/events in a way that is in-line with and supportive of those principles and priorities.
- Demonstrate commitment to the SCOPS principles in their day-to-day work.
- Dedicate time to SCOPS, attending two Steering Group meetings a year, attending other occasional meetings / workshops where requested, leading areas of activity where delegated by the Chair, and joining sub-group discussions where possible.

Length of service and remuneration

The SCOPS Terms of Reference state the Deputy Chair is elected in two-year terms. The Terms of Reference also state that reasonable expenses can be claimed

Application process

Written applications are accepted in the form of a short CV and a summary of why the applicant would like to join SCOPS, what they would bring to the group and previous relevant experience. This application will be reviewed as below.

	Score out of 5 (0=does not meet criteria; 5=fully meets criteria)
Current understanding of SCOPS role, purpose, principles and activities.	
Ability and appetite to keep abreast of new developments and future challenges.	
Ability and appetite to ensure SCOPS principles and activities are shared within the industry.	
Application of SCOPS principles on own farm and/or role(s) within the sheep industry.	
Ability and appetite to attend and contribute to meetings.	
Ability to represent SCOPS within the industry / relate to sheep farmers at a practical level.	
Total (out of 30)	