**CURRICULUM VITAE**

**Jo Bridge**

**CONTACT DETAILS**

Hilly Ridge Alpacas

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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 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 out 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 that are both owned by us and are agisted at Hilly Ridge.

I then thought that I would need to know something more about them and the courses started, soon followed by wanting to know more about the fleece and how to tell a pet alpaca from a possible champion.

I took the BAS foundation course at Bozedown alpacas and then decided that I would give the advanced assessment a try and that was it! I was on the BAS judging route! I loved every course and found the more I learnt the more I wanted to know.

The courses paid off and soon we had our first Supreme champion Suri male and now have a successful breeding program and great success in the show ring for a relatively small breeder

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 help and support wherever needed. Like most alpaca breeders,I will talk alpaca all day.

As part of my journey to learn as much about the fleece as I could I decided to learn how to shear alpacas. 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.

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

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 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.

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 some Suri additions 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.

I love judging alpacas and the challenges it brings – from the moment the first alpaca walks into the ring I’m captivated and appreciate being afforded the opportunity to judge this wonderful animals.

I have now recertified after a period of guidance from fellow judges and support from breeders and the alpaca owners and of course BAS itself. I look forward to 2020 and the new adventures it may bring.