

## NEWS RELEASE

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### GOODBYE 'BULLY', HELLO 'ARWEL'

In the Winter of 2016, we said goodbye to our 6 year old Shetland Bull. His pedigree name was Hengistbury Acer, but he was affectionately known as 007 (due to his herd number) or in short – Bully. A very calm animal, Bully proved to be if anything, too popular with the ladies and our herd had grown so much thanks to his help, that there was a risk of him breeding with his own gene pool. We found him a nice farm in County Durham – where he started to grow the herd almost instantly. In the 9 months after he left, we had a further 6 calves of his, born on Hengistbury.

Shetland Cattle are growing in numbers since a low point in the 1980's, where an estimated 75 pure bred cows and 30 bulls remained – leading it to be classed as critically endangered. Conservation grazing has set a route to recovery for this breed, what would be considered poor grazing for most modern breeds, Shetlands are completely at home with. This includes heathland, salt marsh and ancient grassland. Their low impact management, through grazing the dominant – allows species such as Skylark, Marsh Samphire and Sundew, to flourish.

We have taken opportunities to expand on the areas that are grazed within Bournemouth and have a need to grow our herd once again. After agreeing the purchase of a two year old Shetland Bull, Arwel, from Cheshire – we are excitedly awaiting collecting him in mid-February. Selecting bulls for all Shetland herds is a careful process, giving that the breed was at one point so low that inbreeding is a very big risk, but also for our herd, visitors and the presence of dogs on some reserves means that temperament is also crucial. We are members of, and have great assistance from the Shetland Breeders Association that we know that Arwel will be a great fit for us – and we should soon be hearing the pitter-patter of tiny hooves – as our herd starts to welcome new members.