

FAS Business Plan 2022/23

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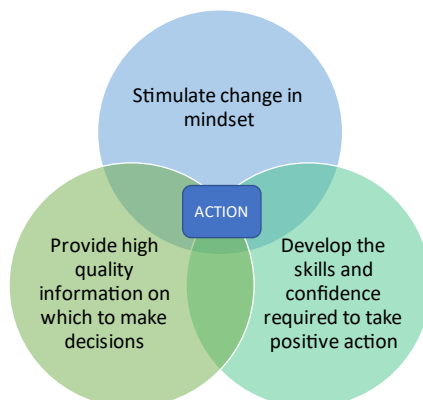
Introduction

The new Farm Advisory Service (FAS) will be an elevation of the current programme – retaining the brand, website, and social media presence – yet substantially reframed and invigorated to address the current climate and biodiversity crises, while demonstrating innovative approaches to maximise engagement and impact. Key to the programme will be the continual and consistent reinforcement of the message that climate change and biodiversity are not in opposition to financial growth and sustainability, instead that one is a requisite to the other.

Objectives

To achieve substantial biodiversity gains in Scotland, this business plan recognises there is a need to:

- Drive awareness and mindset shift of what biodiversity is, how a range of relatively minor adjustments can be valuable, and that biodiversity is a valuable member of the 'food production team'.
- Raise the level of awareness of national biodiversity priorities amongst farmers, crofters, and land managers through provision of integrated technical advice, information, interactions with NatureScot, and assessing the outcomes of this provision.
- Drive increased practical implementation of integrated land management by farmers, crofters and land managers which will increase positive management of priority habitats and species and contribute to sustainable agriculture.
- Improve understanding and drive adoption by farmers, crofters and land managers of specific practices that deliver public goods, supporting participants through the transition from the EU Common Agricultural Policy, using focus groups and the dissemination of information.



We will provide support and promote action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions per unit of product from farm businesses across Scotland. We will align to and complement the successful Farming for a Better Climate initiative and help farmers, crofters, and land managers to:

- recognise the contribution made by routine agricultural practices to greenhouse gas emissions and the scale and nature of global climate change.
- identify business benefits through improved resource efficiency, animal welfare and adopting suitable climate change mitigation, including adaptation measures.
- improve business resilience and contribute to thriving resilient rural communities.
- be compliant with related mandatory and good practice standards and recognise the importance of their actions in contributing towards the statutory targets set out in the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009.
- increase carbon sequestration on the farm or croft.

Further areas where we will support the delivery of Scottish Government objectives include:

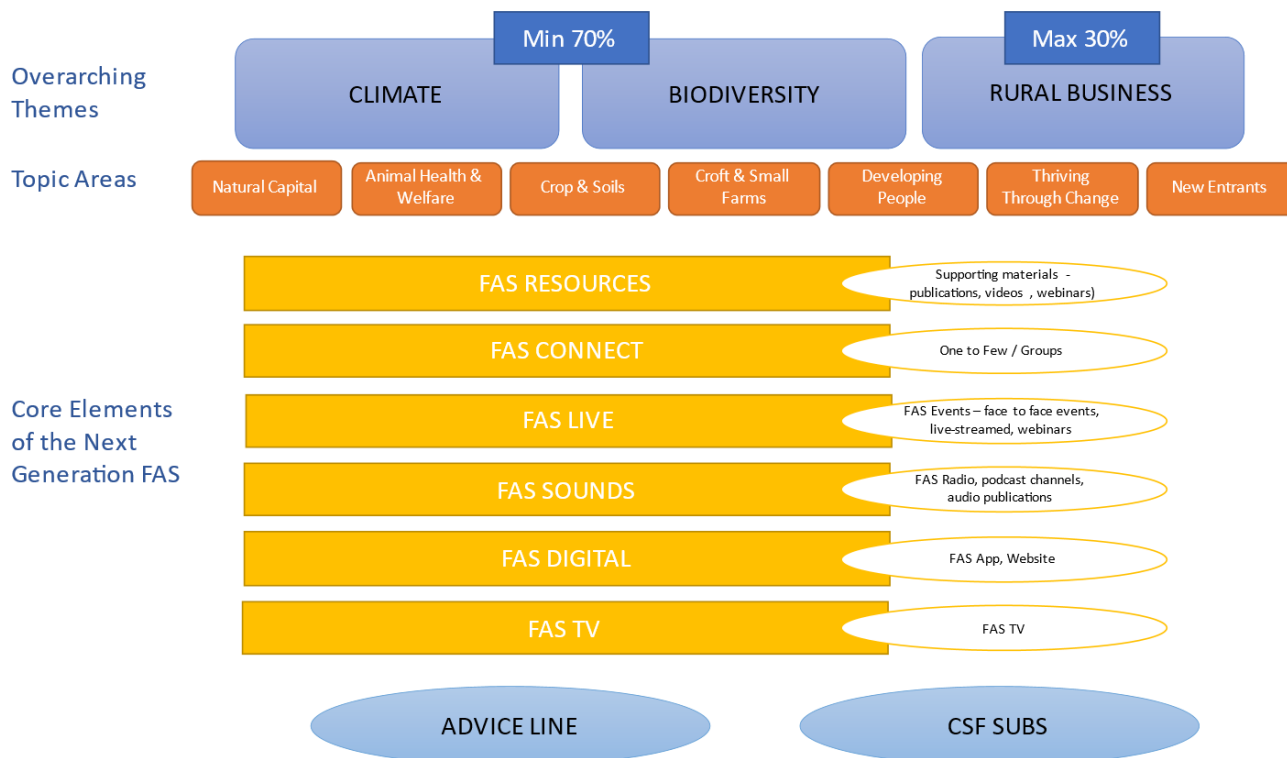
- Pollution prevention – working in partnership with the industry and SEPA to deliver advice on cost effective approaches to improve resource efficiency and address pollution and related waste issues.
- Cross-compliance and Greening – support improved performance by increasing understanding of underlying legislation and standards which underpin high quality sustainable food production.

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- Woodland planting – advising on integrated, holistically managed farms incorporating woodland, offering a diverse range of benefits including sustainable land use, biodiversity net gain, carbon capture, and building resilience.
- Crop health – fostering greater awareness and uptake of integrated and sustainable crop protection strategies.
- Renewable energy – supporting the adoption of sustainable low-carbon technologies.
- Diversification and agritourism – helping land-based businesses to become price makers, having a closer relationship with end consumers, being part of driving a dynamic diverse agricultural sector where there are broader opportunities for growth.
- Women in agriculture – helping women gain skills to further their roles, influence, and recognition in the agricultural and rural economy.
- Organic farming – supporting the growth, cohesiveness, and profile of organic production.

Approach

The Farm Advisory Service will comprise the following elements: National One-to-Many Farm Advisory Service; Crofters and Small Farms Advisory Service; and a National Helpdesk Facility. Our overall proposed approach is summarised overleaf:



A strength of this programme is that it is designed to reach and engage the full range of farmers, crofters, and land managers. Intentional variety in delivery method means whatever the location or situation there is a way for participants to interact with the FAS. We will use technology to build a strong learning journey for all involved and direct users through the wealth of information available in a way that is accessible and inviting.

With the aim of improving our ability to tailor the promotion, marketing, and impact of different FAS resources, we have modified the way that outputs are categorised. Outputs will be grouped as:

- **FAS Resources** – videos, publications, and webinar recordings
- **FAS Connect** – one-to-few group activities, expanded for 2022–24
- **FAS Live** – large face-to-face events and webinars
- **FAS Sounds** – podcasts and audio versions of popular publications
- **FAS Digital** – the FAS App

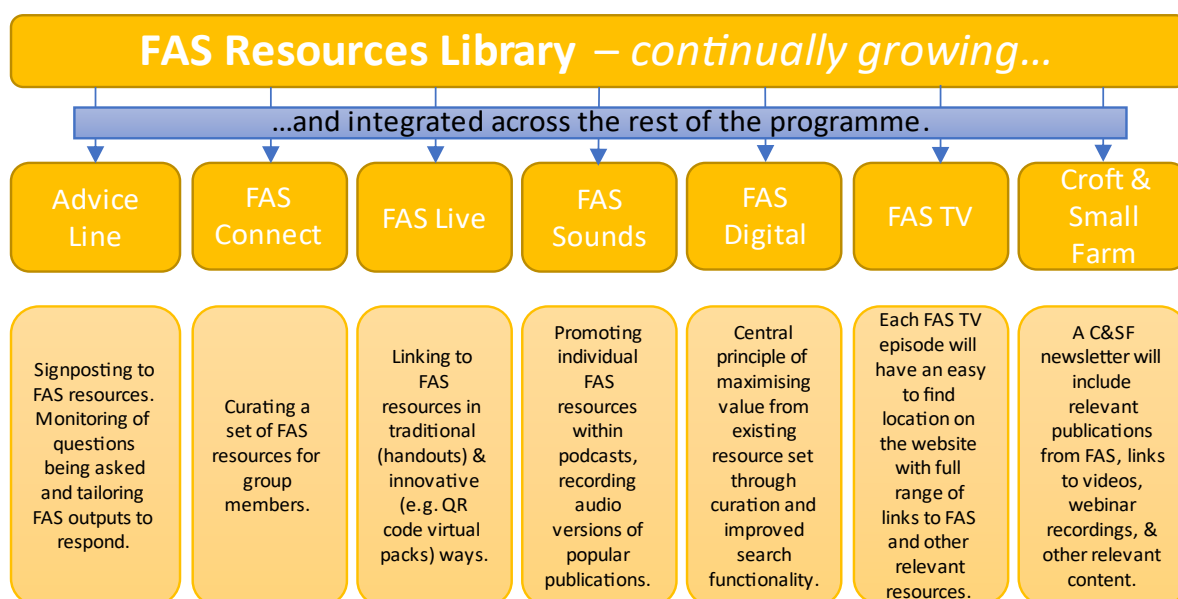
- FAS TV** – a regular series of TV-quality programmes ‘for farmers, by farmers’.

These groupings incorporate the requirement to have events, publications, videos, podcasts, and tools, while recognising that there is significant diversity within each of these output types. The new groupings support a systematic approach to each type of output, creating clear expectations about the purpose and context in which the output will be used.

This approach segments what, from a marketing perspective, is a massive entity into more focused and targetable segments to improve targeting of specific farming, crofting, and land management advice requirements. It will make it easy to direct the target audiences towards the resources they need, and to maximise the accessibility of the service with a clear, digestible structure.

FAS Resources

These will comprise a comprehensive range of materials and outputs which provide high quality information on which to make decisions including **publications, videos, tools, and webinars.**



FAS Connect

The new heading for a variety of FAS **one-to-few** activities. This type of activity, coupled with a strong resource set and the steady drip of ‘mindset change’ activities, will result in an increased rate of uptake of actions by individuals. Current FAS participants and wider industry stakeholders have requested a greater availability of 1-2-few activities. Participants benefits from 1-2-few by

creating safe spaces to explore new ideas and facilitated peer to peer learning, it has proved to be a powerful device in the exiting FAS programme.

A variety of different one-to-few groups will be created under the FAS Connect output grouping. FAS Connect will include both face-to-face meetings and online meetings where these are delivered specifically for these groups.

In *most* cases, one-to-few activities mean groups of 10 – 12 participants (in some cases it may be appropriate to have fewer).

To maximise engagement and uptake there must be ‘something for everyone’ and we will provide a variety of group types. The likelihood of group participation leading to tangible actions is greatly increased if participants are in the *right* group – one which will motivate and interest them, challenge them, and which comprises their peers. The collaboration and support from these groups will accelerate the rate at which participants makes changes to their farming and crofting businesses. These groups will be farmer/crofter-led, meet multiple times and with flexibility to tailor content to their individual issues, within the wider context of the group. Participants will be encouraged to trial new measures or techniques and share their findings with the group, supporting learning by doing and peer to peer knowledge exchange based on practical on farm actions and experiences. All group participants will be encouraged to undertake a carbon footprint as standard.

We will establish groups which will include:

- **Carbon and Biodiversity (CAB) Network** – groups will identify practical opportunities to improve biodiversity and reduce the farm or croft carbon footprint, whilst strengthening the business in the face of climate change.
- **Holistic Management** – groups which will learn how to use a holistic management decision-making framework to manage the social, environmental, and economic sustainability of their own businesses. This whilst being rooted in the fundamentals of ecosystem processes, and regenerative agricultural practices.
- **Net Zero Islands** – groups which respond to specific island issues and challenges. Following the completion of a carbon audit the members agree on common areas for improvement and take collaboration action to reduce emissions or improve performance, examples of this could be actions to reduce use of inorganic fertiliser, use of alternative fodders for livestock improvements or small-scale tree planting to boost carbon sequestration. These actions or activities are taken with the goal of

building strong local economies, that are resilient to change and supportive of the entire island supply chain, from farmer/crofter to consumer.

- **Soil Nutrient Network Focus Groups** – groups which provide an opportunity for growers to get together in their local area to discuss the latest developments, advice and technology related to crops and soils helping to improve the profitability and resilience of their business. Participation in this small group provides the opportunity for members to challenge, be challenged, hear from specialists, and share their own experiences on managing crops and soils in their regional area as we move as an industry towards reducing our emissions, improving biodiversity, and becoming more environmentally and financially sustainable.
- **New Entrants Impact** – groups which bring new entrants with a specialist interest in a specific enterprise together as part of a national group to share their experiences and gain insights into other farm businesses. One such group will focus on ‘adding value to produce’. These groups will complement those existing local groups that have good engagement within a geographical area.
- **Sustainable Dairy** – groups which will bring together dairy farmers to share knowledge, exchange ideas and learn from best practice across the industry along with input from industry experts. To increase the relevance of participation, farmers with similar herd management types e.g., robotic, block calving, grazing herds etc will be grouped to allow them to focus on the specific management practices and benchmarks which are key to the success of their herds. Small groups operating in local areas, creates an important support network for dairy farmers, giving them the confidence to take their herds forward to make the industry more sustainable, profitable, and efficient.
- **Organic Conversion** – groups which cater for farmers who are preparing for, or who are in the early stages of organic conversion. These groups will provide a support network and a syllabus designed to meet the needs of businesses who are early in their organic journey. An existing well established and popular Organic Discussion Group in NE Scotland will continue to be supported.
- **Women in Agriculture Impact** – groups where the common denominator is something other than geography, for example bringing together a group

with a common interest, for instance in diversification, and providing a bespoke programme which will facilitate collaboration, discussion, and networking. These groups will complement the existing local groups that have good engagement within a geographical area.

- **Common Grazings** – groups to respond to the needs of committees and shareholders to modernise regulations, develop people skills and committee skills, understand grazing and habitat management, encourage participation in agri-environment and production of local food and encourage steps to implement changes within the framework of regulated grazings. Work will complement resources and guidance from the Crofting Commission, such as the Common Grazing Regulations template. Groups may be all from within a single Common Grazing or made up of several Common Grazings coming together to discuss wider landscape issues, e.g., peatland management.

We recognise the importance of significant support through the FAS for organic systems. Specific FAS Connect group activity for established organic farmers, other than the existing long-established group in the NE, are not planned since the design of the programme means that these producers will feel at home in **any** of the FAS Connect groups. This approach gives these producers the opportunity to examine issues which are not unique to organic farmers and secure a broader range of perspectives than from a solely organic cohort, and for the others in the group to benefit from their experience and perspective. An extensive range of other FAS activity will support established organic producers.

FAS Live

FAS Live is a new and exciting package of the most widely appealing and impactful face-to-face and webinar events.

FAS Live will include the FAS Roadshow, following the highly successful Farming & Water Scotland model, with attendance at local and national agricultural shows and events on a weekly basis throughout the summer, delivering a carefully curated selection of messages from the FAS programme to crofters, farmers and land managers across Scotland and signposting towards additional resources. A dedicated events team, together with a local and/or specialist consultants, will provide a consistent, high quality and easily recognisable presence at events.

The programme will include attendance at successful established events Arable Scotland, Agriscot, ScotGrass, Scotsheep, and other significant knowledge transfer events in the farming calendar.

FAS Live events will be supported by a dedicated FAS events team who will organise the presence at major shows and events ensuring that all event materials (pop-ups, tents, displays, fliers etc.) are professionally prepared and presented.

FAS Sounds

FAS Sounds will take the FAS podcasts, created during the FAS 2016 – 2021 programme and split it into several targeted feeds. This dividing of the feed allows us to better categorise and target our audio content making it easier for users to find through search, and more amenable to search engine optimisation (SEO).

The targeted feeds will be structured around a three-tier delivery structure, with content being released:

1. Periodical round-up style.
2. Periodical in-depth.
3. Standalone series' form.

FAS Sounds podcasts will deliver high quality advice to meet future challenges on a very regular basis. Our standalone series' will put greater focus on themes and topics that can elevate new ideas and inspire innovation, and new ways of working.

The ability to access not only one-off advisory episodes, and best practice case studies from their peers in industry, FAS Sounds also presents us with the opportunity to provide regular written publication in audio format. Whether Agribusiness News, or other periodicals, this allows more people to access these resources, audio formats remove barriers caused by any literacy issues, dyslexia, and supports those with accessibility issues, such as a visual or learning impairment.

The FAS Sounds schedule will also include content for local radio stations. This removes any barrier to entry posed by the requirement for a smartphone, internet access, and access to a podcast platform. Podcasts tend to still be enjoyed by a younger audience, whilst local radio listeners tend to fall into a later age demographic. We plan to link from the local radio segments back to our main podcast platforms and our other resources/events.

FAS Sounds Producer: Kerry Hammond

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FAS TV

FAS TV has been a hugely successful and popular output in 2021. A fundamental part of FAS TV has been to recreate the farm visit and has allowed viewers to visit over 40 farms and crofts from the comfort of their own home whilst gaining knowledge and advice from their peers with its farmer-to-farmer format. Farmers and crofters across Scotland have been proud to showcase their businesses whilst passing on their knowledge and expertise to others.

Moving forward with FAS TV, we will have a larger geographical spread of segments across Scotland. In the next series, we will have regular farmers and crofters who we follow throughout the year to highlight all aspects of the farming calendar. Furthermore, we will be moving to a weekly release schedule. Reducing the time between episodes from fortnightly to weekly is an opportunity to increase the reach of FAS TV as viewers will be primed to watch the new episode as it comes out on a more regular basis. Future episodes of FAS TV will link even more closely with other parts of the FAS programme to strengthen links with key topic areas, ensuring that we are covering topics that are relevant to our viewership.

The main ethos of FAS TV will continue to be farmer-to-farmer knowledge exchange and future episodes will showcase this community spirit between peers.

FAS TV Producers: Cara Campbell & Calum Johnston

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Calum.johnston@sac.co.uk

FAS Digital

FAS Digital encompasses the creation of new tools and optimisation of current resources that reflects the twin shift in society to increased smartphone working, and optimising engagement with online content via improved curation and targeted content delivery to the end user.

The 2016 – 2021 programme developed a 'FAS App' and we will build on this, specifically the on ease of use and to take both immediate and longer-term problem solving to where businesses and workers are at that time; be it in the middle of a field or at the heart of a busy shed. It is essential to emphasise this is not a website in an app, but rather a suite of tools which respond to an end user defined need, such as feed planning or unit conversion.

Pairing the FAS app and website with user logins and data tracking will allow us to keep a close focus on subjects that are of interest to our audience at both a macro and micro level. By collating personalised data, we will be able to better serve timely and useful information to each individual user, while at the same time identifying areas of the website which are being overlooked or need an update. Collating this data by tracking users partially reduces our dependence on direct feedback through forms and will give us a much clearer idea of our whole audience, rather than the most vocal figures within it.

The FAS Digital theme of the programme connects across all topics to offer a user guided experience through existing and newly created resources in the FAS website and its companion app. Relevant information and resources from the topics will be interwoven through the user experience to create a bespoke journey for the end user.

FAS Digital Producer: Sascha Grierson

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Accessibility

Many farmers and crofters can find it difficult to travel to access advice. We also know that dyslexia is disproportionately prevalent in agriculture. We have developed a range of methods to deliver services and engage with individuals based upon their different situations and requirements. We understand that it is vitally important that FAS reaches the whole of the farming community, not just those businesses who are already in the habit of engaging with it.

We will provide a range of access methods which are specifically designed to help participants to engage with the service, including those with dyslexia, those who prefer to access the service non-digitally for technical reasons, or for those with lower levels of digital and/or written literacy. These include reading topical advisory messages every week in the farming publications known to be particularly popular with a less digitally literate audience. This will take the form of specially curated and edited 'easy read' articles.

Topics

The topic areas established during 2016 – 2021 will be retained for operational purposes, however it should be recognised that climate and biodiversity is the primary overarching theme and crosses all topics (i.e., Natural Capital topic is only one of the places where climate and biodiversity-focussed activities are found).

Furthermore, some types of activity (including podcasts) are more successful in reaching and engaging the audience if they are designed as a single coherent and coordinated package. For this reason, FAS Sounds and FAS TV episodes sit as a distinct package, however they incorporate the normal variety of topic-specific episodes and segments which, formerly, would have been included by topic.

Natural Capital

The Natural Capital topic will, as its focus, help farmers and land managers understand and tackle the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity. Woodland creation and management, pollution prevention and protection, and improvement of water quality will also be addressed.

Highlights:

- **National Priority Species Management Advice:** A series of publications and videos providing advice, and raising awareness of, Great Yellow Bumblebee, Lesser Butterfly Orchid, Atlantic Rainforest, and Juniper.
- **Managing Peatlands:** A package of supporting materials about peatland management, including podcasts, publications, and videos.
- **Branching Out With Trees:** FAS TV episodes looking at how native tree stock provenance can enhance the establishment of trees in the harshest of environments.
- **Protecting Water Quality:** A package of materials which explore options and technology that land managers can adopt to mitigate water scarcity and flood plains.
- **Biodiversity Background Notes:** A series of outputs (events, videos, podcasts, publications) which provide information about integrating biodiversity into the farm business, showing examples of how other farmers and crofters have improved biodiversity alongside routine business.

- **Climate & Biodiversity Network:** FAS Connect groups and supporting materials which promote practical activities all farmers can consider to support biodiversity and/or reduce emissions.
- **Farm Wildlife Walks:** A package of events and videos to showcase how other farmers have adapted to measures to support biodiversity.
- **The Need to Know on NVZ:** A package of NVZ rules refresher outputs, including webinar, publication, and video.
- **Slurry Management:** A video providing information about slurry management, including storage and low emission spreading equipment.
- **Taking the Plunge:** Events and supporting materials to introduce a broader audience to the benefits of ponds and other water features (such as constructed farm wetlands).
- **Grazing for Biodiversity:** Events, videos and publications which explore how grazing strategies can promote conservation and biodiversity on improved grassland farms.

Topic Lead: Rebecca Audsley

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Animal Health & Welfare

The Animal Health & Welfare topic will promote best practice that supports higher farmed animal health and welfare standards, thereby enhancing the productivity and integrity of Scottish livestock production and its brands and improving awareness and uptake of measures to support Scottish climate and biodiversity goals.

Highlights:

- **Cattle & Sheep Record Keeping:** Providing farmers and crofters with information, knowledge and best practice on tagging and maintaining livestock records including identification, best practice for tagging neonates, re-tagging sheep, movements, deaths, and medicines.
- **Timely Communications:** Timely articles remain one of the most read and downloaded sources on the FAS website and prove popular amongst farmers and crofters. The topics for these articles will be flexible to meet the requirements of the industry and be reactive to the current climate.
- **Mitigating Dairy Carbon Emissions:** A meeting on Orkney with dairy farmers and the creamery to discuss the results of the group's carbon footprints and present ideas to reduce emissions from key sources.

- **Dry Cow Nutrition & Management:** Resources for dairy farmers on the various non-nutritional factors that are important for dry cows transitioning into the milking herd.
- **Calving Heifers VLOG Series:** As more suckler herds undertake carbon audits as part of the drive to reduce emissions from beef production, a common recommendation is to calve heifers at 24 months of age. A series of videos and social media vlog updates will be produced based on 3 “focus farmers” with different calving patterns showing how they successfully manage their heifers calving at various ages.
- **Deferred Cattle Grazing:** Deferred grazing is the ultimate in low cost wintering systems for cattle. This project will follow a farmer with an established deferred grazing system and explain the benefits and challenges of the system.
- **Sheep Nutrition Workshops:** A series of workshops to empower farmers and crofters to develop a ration that is best for their ewe welfare, delivers lamb survival results and improves their profitability.
- **Sustainable Sheep Systems:** A continuation of the highly successful 2021 project which will focus on improving grazing strategies and disease control to develop systems that are more efficient and sustainable whilst reducing the enterprise carbon footprint.

Topic Lead: Hazel Laughton

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Crop & Soils

The Crop & Soils topic will advise conventional and organic farmers and crofters on crop and soil health and productivity. Events and publications will be supported by regional Soil Nutrient Network focus groups where farmers and crofters can adapt the research and theory into practice with the support of like-minded farmers and industry specialists.

Highlights:

- **Arable Scotland:** In partnership with AHDB and the James Hutton Institute this event will show case the research and commercial innovations that will help the arable industry transition to net-zero and combine productivity with more-regenerative farming systems that benefit biodiversity and other environmental impacts.
- **Winter Agronomy Roadshow:** This live event, partnering with AHDB, will be held at Carfraemill and will build on the established Winter Agronomy

events which give technical updates on integrated pest management, soil health, markets, locally suited varieties, and crop choices.

- **Crop Trials Technical Nights:** Integrated Crop Management underpins our Arable industry and interaction between research, trials and industry is essential to ensure farmers have the knowledge to overcome issues arising from the diminishing options available to them from chemical control. SRUC has 3 cereal crop trials sites across Scotland, Drumalbin, Ormiston Mains and Kirkton. These sites have been running for 11 years and provide invaluable information to farmers on how different cereal varieties are performing under pressure in their area.
- **Crops & Soils Timely Articles:** Topical plant health and crop agronomy articles will be published on the FAS website and in the farming press to include active promotion of changes to pesticide regulation and awareness, raising articles on key issues and threats to Scottish crop productivity.
- **Adapting Grassland Management to Climate Change:** This project will provide farmers with information on the changes they can make on their grassland and forage crop management in response to the varied weather patterns we are experiencing as a result of climate change.
- **Nutrient Planning Workshops:** Farmers are being faced with soaring fertiliser prices, market volatility which is set to continue over an extended period, pressure to reduce emissions and changes to how we store and manage slurry. Understanding the principles of a nutrient management plan can help farmers make better decisions around their timing and use of fertiliser and manures which will help ensure sustainable crop production and business profitability.
- **Profiting from Reducing Tillage & Lowering Emissions:** A comprehensive project which will focus on different arable establishment techniques which can help to reduce carbon emissions, including events, videos, and publications.
- **FAS Crop Series – Grassland Productivity/Companion Crops/Growing Rye:** A series of videos, crop guides and events which aim to inform farmers on the management, agronomy, economic and environmental benefits of different crops.

Topic Lead: Lorna Galloway

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Croft & Small Farms

The Croft & Small Farms topic will provide advice in a way tailored to meet the needs of crofters and small farmers. It will increase understanding and use of the Crofting Commission processes, and provide practical solutions to increase efficiency, reduce emissions and support biodiversity net gain.

Highlights:

- **Common Grazing New Ideas:** The north-end of Skye many years ago used to have very interesting Crofting/Agricultural debating evenings which brought much discussion and new ideas to the area. The group will consist of members from Common Grazing's spanning from Ulg to Staffin who will look at present and potential practical issues they are experiencing and together work on solutions.
- **From Croft Gate to Croft Plate (Food – Adding Value at Small Scale):** Local food production in the Hebrides can be seasonal in the extreme but opportunities to extend the season, source outlets for produce, and adding value are all paramount to maximize the return. A range of food and drink specialists, local authority economic development and recipients of produce will be in attendance to share their knowledge and experience.
- **Butchery Video Demonstration:** A video demonstrating how to get the best from carcasses through butchery and selection of cuts. The aim being to give a better understanding of meat cuts and how to add value to carcasses for those looking to sell their meat direct.
- **At the Mart:** Following on from the successful 'At the Mart' webinar series attendees asked for a video guide to buying and selling at the mart. This video would allow those new to buying and selling stock at the mart to see first-hand what happens on a sale day and understand the process of buying and selling stock at the mart from unloading, penning and stock going through the sale ring.
- **Carbon Audits for Crofters:** An introduction to carbon audits specifically targeted at crofters.
- **Crofternomics Videos – Bagged Fertiliser vs FYM:** A tik-tok style video contrasting the amount of bagged fertiliser vs FYM needed and prices. Filmed in location on Skye. Explain the value of soil testing and feeding the soil and relying less on bagged fertiliser with GHG associated.
- **Setting up a Common Grazing Committee:** Boardroom and financial skills to encourage crofters to set up common grazing committees.

- **Crofting Regulatory Processes Tools:** An online tool to take crofters step by step through crofting regulatory processes.

Topic Lead: Siobhan Macdonald

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Developing People

The Developing People topic will provide advice on a wide range of people-centred subjects, including further development of the Women in Agriculture network, consideration of how books on personal and time management can be applied to an agricultural and rural environment, mental health literacy for farmers, supporting stock clubs and common grazing committees to thrive.

Highlights:

- **Women in Agriculture Groups:** The women in agriculture groups have been developed in response to the Scottish Government's "Women in farming and the agricultural sector" and the work carried out by the Women in Agriculture Taskforce. In 2022/23 there will be a continuation of the successful WIA groups in Aberdeen & Angus, Argyll, Borders, Caithness, Inverness, Lanarkshire, Lothian, Morayshire, Orkney, Perthshire, Stirling, and Wigtonshire.
- **Adding Value to Farm & Croft Assets:** This project will demonstrate to farmers and crofters how to carry out an appraisal of their farm or croft assets, looking at their businesses as a whole. Through interactive workshops, a podcast, webinar and FAS TV segment, there will be a variety of resources for farmers and crofters to access, either in person or remotely, to allow them to assess their businesses and local market opportunities. We will look at a variety of ways to add value from agri tourism, education opportunities, local community projects, event space, farm shops and adding value to existing produce (food and drink).
- **Support Groups for Common Grazing Clerks:** A surgery/discussion group for clerks and common grazing committee members to share common issues and solutions, facilitated by SAC and the Crofting Commission.
- **Finance Training for Common Grazings:** Workshops to demonstrate and discuss correct procedures and financial management that are crucial for Common Grazing committees.

Topic Lead: Mary-Jane Lawrie

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Thriving Through Change

The Thriving Through Change topic will provide advice on subject including global trade, COVID-19, and other global or domestic issues – including via a ‘Timely Responses to Topical Challenges’ project which will provide rapid, responsive output.

Highlights:

- **NE Organic Discussion Group:** The project is to continue the very successful NE Organic Discussion Group with a Virtual Farm Tour.
- **Modern Farming: Technology to Help:** this package will support farmers and crofters to improve farm efficiency and carbon use by highlighting the value of technology.
- **Agribusiness News:** Agribusiness News (ABN) is an essential independent monthly e-publication and on-line datasets on outlook and business issues for key commodities and enterprises, tailored to the needs of Scottish agriculture.
- **Carbon Trading:** A webinar to inform and update farmers on the current activity in carbon markets beyond the farm gate both in this country and abroad. Information will be provided on which platforms are operating, what are the current carbon values, how are they calculated and what is the current private sector involvement.
- **Milk Manager News:** A bi-monthly dairy industry technical and business newsletter. This provides dairy information tailored to match Scottish conditions and convey relevant wider FAS messages to the dairy sector. The Scottish dairy sector has strong ambitions for the future to increase production by 50% to 1.6Bn litres by 2025 based on the Scottish Dairy Review Ambition 2025 plan. Achieving this stretching target while also protecting the environment and enhancing animal health and welfare will require an increased pace of technical and management improvement on farm. This will help the Scottish dairy industry meet its ambitious growth targets while meeting wider public good requirements. Practical technical and business solutions and examples will be highlighted building on the focus of the wider FAS topics.
- **Farm Management Handbook:** The Farm Management Handbook is one of the main business reference texts for Scottish agriculture. This project will involve completing the annual update of the Farm Management Handbook text and gross margins for various agricultural outputs reflecting price

levels during the summer of 2022. The project involves input from a wide range of specialist contributors.

- **FAS Whole Farm Benchmarks:** Data from the Scottish Farm Business Survey latest crop year results is collated into group averages for the common farming types in Scotland. The figures allow farming businesses to compare their management accounts data with farms of a similar size and type to their own.
- **Timely Responses to Topical Challenges:** Farming is currently facing a distinct period of change and opportunity – changing Government priorities, changing markets and trade and the climate crisis are just a few of the ever evolving challenges that farmers currently face. This project is the means by which we can inform and support farmers facing these challenges and maintain up to date resources and help.
- **Cattle EID – The Opportunity:** This webinar and publication will help farmers to understand new regulations, identify the positives for their production systems in implementing new technology associated with UHF tags, and support farmers in designing a system which will meet the requirements, can be built upon, but which minimises the level of capital investment required and which will dovetail most easily with their current systems.
- **Embracing Digital Farming:** To equip farmers with knowledge and confidence to use more software and digital platforms within their farming business. To allow farmers to understand how to complete a SAF form online and the benefits of doing this in relation to a reduction in errors. To allow farmers and land managers to gain confidence in using software programs related to equipment and technology on farm.
- **Farm Labour Management:** A toolkit of information and resources to assist farmers and land managers with the skills and knowledge to tackle the current issue within farming of a lack of labour. The project will discuss how to market jobs on their farms correctly to ensure that they get the best person for the job and also how those staff should be treated so that they remain with the business for a good period of time, increasing business stability.
- **Cross Compliance Videos:** A series of short, informative videos which highlight the top 5 cross compliance challenges across Scotland.
- **Organics in Scotland:** A series of videos focussing on organic farming in Scotland, and which will promote the opportunity for organic farming, as well as providing practical advice and ideas for common challenges.

- **Breeding Stock:** A series of meetings and publications aimed at beef and sheep farmers who focus their farming enterprises on the production of breeding stock. Topics covered will include health schemes, KPIs for producing breeding stock, genetics/EBVs and marketing.
- **Virtual Fencing:** On-farm meetings to showcase how the novel technology of virtual fencing can be used to improve business efficiency and manage grazing and upland environments to improve biodiversity.

Topic Lead: *Mhairi Dalgliesh*

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New Entrants

The New Entrants topic will provide a means for a new generation of talented, skilled, and dynamic individuals to hear from others that have been in similar circumstances, to give them an insight into some of the challenges they may face, and to visualise success. It will help them expand their knowledge of technical subjects so they can have productive, sustainable, and resilient businesses.

Highlights:

- **New Entrants Groups:** This project is a continuation of the new entrants' activities provided during 2020 and 2021. The aim of this project is to facilitate knowledge transfer to new entrants to assist in their skills growth and provide them with the knowledge required to build sustainable businesses for the future. Groups will be run in Aberdeenshire, Ayrshire, Caithness, Lanarkshire, Morayshire, and Inverness.
- **Dragon's Den Programme for New Entrants:** This project will provide a tailored content of business skills, PR, marketing for new entrants from a range of backgrounds including crofting, joint ventures, successors, agri-tourism, and no agricultural experience. It will be facilitated by a core group of experienced SAC Consulting staff and invited specialist speakers who will enthuse and motivate new entrants through their own experience and knowledge. The project works hand-in-hand with the one-to-one mentoring service as it will allow participants to be paired up with a mentor at the end of the workshop who they will work with over the course of the year.
- **Engaging with Consumers:** This project looks at ways farmers and crofters can connect with consumers, celebrate their farming story, add

value to their produce, farm assets, environmental initiatives through social media, farm tours and on farm experiences, children's initiatives, agritourism etc. Combination of outputs including publication, podcast with business case study, webinar with industry collaborators, NFUS, Go Rural, etc.

- **Engaging with SAYFC:** This project is to provide tailored workshops, sessions and in-person meetings with young farmers across Scotland. This project is to stimulate ideas and knowledge transfer between young farmers. We will invite guest speakers depending on the topic and integrate with other FAS topics e.g., AHW, NC, Croft & Small Farms.
- **Inspirational Case Studies:** This project is a continuation of the highly successful video case studies that have been produced in previous years. These videos have been some of the most popular FAS outputs, with over 15,000 views on one video alone. Each case study will inspire new entrants through showing the different routes people have taken to gain a step on the farming ladder. Four case studies will support the FONE group and focus on promoting good environmental practice. The other four will illustrate the pathway some inspirational new and established businesses have taken to add value to their produce.
- **New Entrants Calendar:** This project is a continuation of the new entrant's calendar started in January – March 2022, to complete the calendar year and provide an annual overview. Each video will showcase business and technical skills in a bite size format (up to 5 minutes) for new entrants that is topical to the month of delivery.

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Table 1 – Topic Outputs Managed In-Topic

	FAS Live Events	FAS Webinars	Videos	Tools	Publications	<i>Total</i>
Natural Capital	11	3	22	3	24	63
Animal Health & Welfare	13	5	32	0	59	109
Crop & Soils	11	1	12	0	27	51
Croft & Small Farms	9	2	8	2	3	24
Developing People	22	38	4	0	2	66
Thriving Through Change	8	7	15	3	50	83
New Entrants	6	16	19	0	6	47
<i>Total</i>	<i>80</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>171</i>	<i>443</i>

Table 2 Topic Outputs Managed as Packages

	FAS Connect Group Events	FAS Live Roadshow Events	Videos	FAS TV Episodes	Podcasts & Audio	Tools	Publications	<i>Total</i>
FAS TV				30				30
FAS Sounds					83			83
FAS Digital¹			3			6	5	14
FAS Connect	120						40	160
Advice Facility		15					52 ²	67
<i>Total</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>30</i>	<i>83</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>97</i>	<i>354</i>

¹ “Quick FAS Tool” plus associated video guides and publications to support its use.

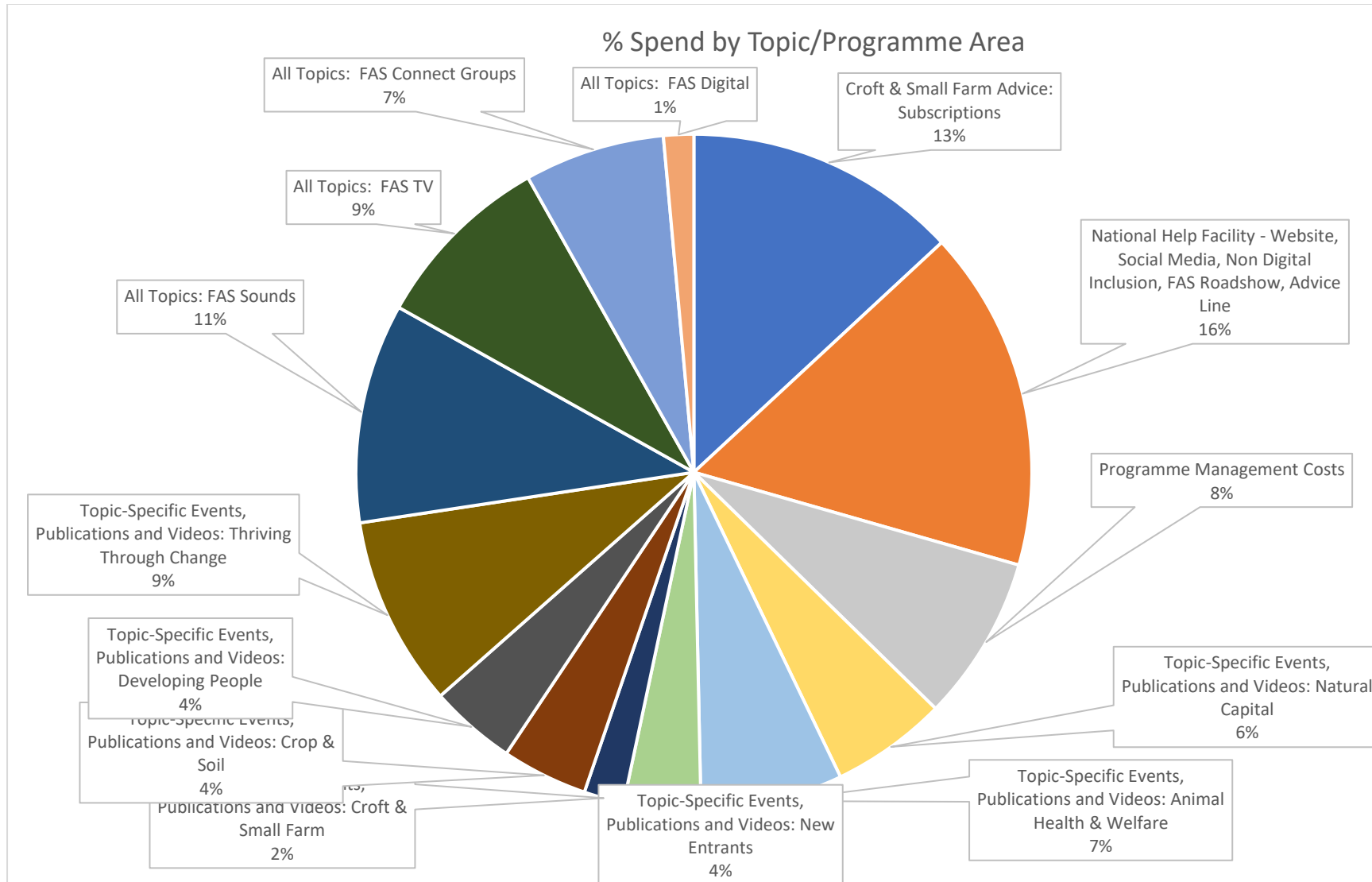
² Weekly ‘easy read’ versions of FAS publications in farming press.

FAS Business Plan 2022/23

Table 3 – Total Output Number

Output Type	Number
FAS Live Events	95
FAS Live/Resources Webinars	72
FAS Connect Events	120
FAS Sounds – Podcasts & Audio Recordings	83
FAS TV Videos	30
Videos	115
Tools	14
Publications	268
Total Outputs	797

Chart 1 – Proportion Spend by Topic/Programme Area



Event KPIs & Evaluation

Evaluation forms will be used to collect information from event participants, and this will include qualitative and quantitative information including on a range of protected characteristics. In addition, the KPIs in Table 5 are recognised:

Table 4 – Performance Targets

Description	
1	At least 4,086 attendees at 160 events.
2	Attendance exceeds 75% of the predicted number
3	More than 95% of those completing a post event evaluation feedback form rate the overall quality of the event as 'excellent' or 'very satisfactory' (feedback form structure to be discussed on award of contract with Scottish Government).
4	More than 80% of those completing a post event feedback form say they will implement changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event.
5	The bounce rate (the % of people visiting the homepage and then leaving without going to another page on the site) is below 50%.
6	Minimum 70% inclusion of biodiversity and climate change actions.

Advice Facility KPIs

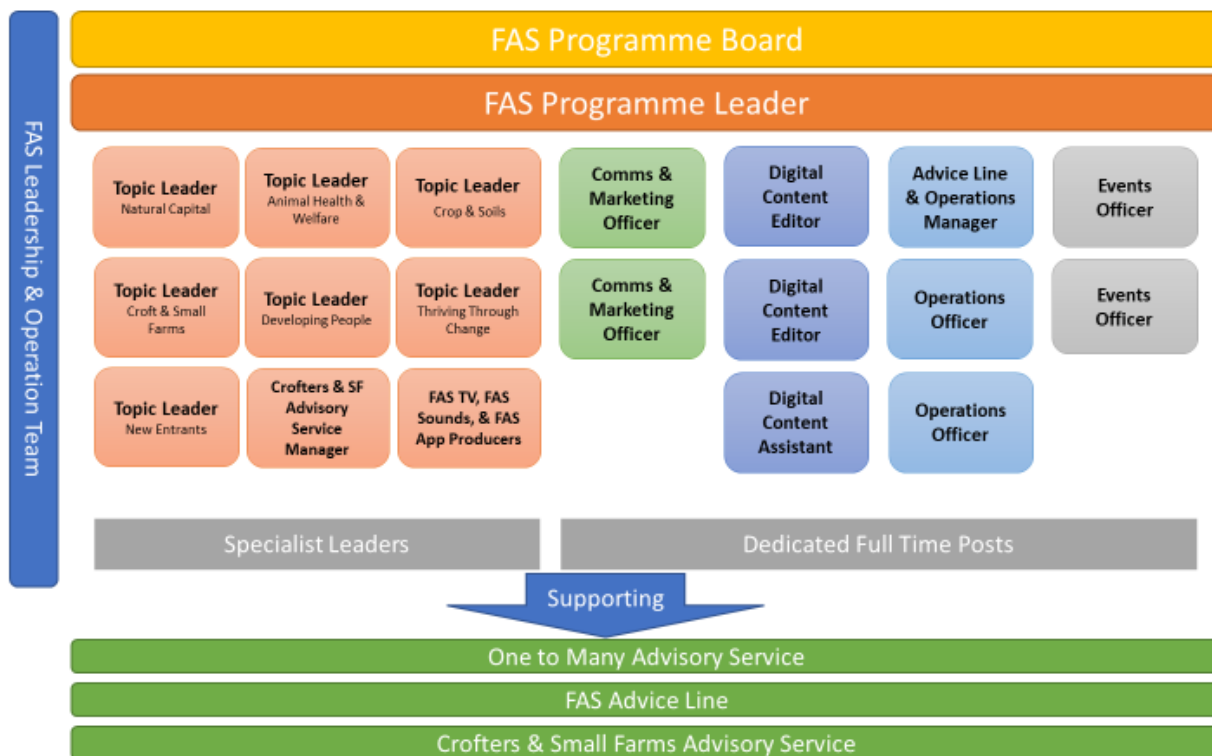
Table 5 sets out the KPIs which will be included in the advice facility evaluation.

Table 5 – Advice Facility KPIs

Key Performance Indicator (KPI)	Key Performance Indicator (KPI)
1	The website is available for at least 99% of the time.
2	95% of call backs are done within six working hours (in relation to the helpdesk).
3	95% of routine queries are responded to within one working day (in relation to the helpdesk).
4	95% of detailed queries are responded to within two working days (in relation to the helpdesk).
5	95% of complex queries are responded to within five working days (in relation to the helpdesk).

6	95% of email enquiries are responded to within one working day (in relation to the helpdesk).
7	Record and feedback referrals from the FAS one-to-many contract to the FAS one-to-one contract.

Delivery Model & Key Personnel



Delivery will be led by Programme Manager Chloe McCulloch, supported by the Programme Leadership Team (see table 6) and Delivery Operations Team (see table 7), and overseen by the Programme Board (see table 8).

Table 6, 7 and 8 in the following pages provide details of the individuals within each role.

Table 6

FAS Programme Leadership Team		
Name	Role	Location
Chloe McCulloch	Programme Leader	Ayr
Rebecca Audsley	Topic Leader Natural Capital	Edinburgh
Mhairi Dalgliesh	Topic Leader Thriving Through Change	Perth
Lorna Galloway	Topic Leader Crop & Soils	Stranraer
Laura Henderson	Topic Leader New Entrants	Elgin
Hazel Laughton	Topic Leader Animal Health & Welfare	Lanark
Mary-Jane Lawrie	Topic Leader Developing People	Edinburgh
Siobhan Macdonald	Crofter & Small Farm Advisory Service Manager	Inverness
Will Searle	Communications Officer	Edinburgh
Alex Blott	Communications Officer	Glasgow
Cara Campbell	FAS TV Producer	Campbeltown
Calum Johnston	FAS TV Producer	Perth
Kerry Hammond	FAS Sounds Producer	Aberdeen
Sascha Grierson	FAS App Producer	Perth

Table 7

FAS Delivery Operations & Digital Team		
Name	Role	Location
Lily Reade	Operations Manager	Edinburgh
Lindsay Officer	Operations Administrator	Edinburgh
Fiona Jolly	Operations Administrator	Ayr
Amy Piggott	Events Officer	Glasgow
Euan Mayfield	Events Officer	Edinburgh
Robbie Campbell	Digital Content Editor	Edinburgh
Robbie Paton	Videographer	Oban

Table 8

FAS Programme Board Summary		
Name	Job Title	Location
Andrew Lacey	SRUC Vice Principal Commercialisation and Head of SAC Consulting	Edinburgh
Andrew Bauer	Head of Food & Footprint	Stirling
Gavin Hill	Head of Knowledge Exchange	Edinburgh
Victoria McDowell	Head of Advisory Services	Stirling