

FAS Business Plan 2025/26

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1 Introduction & Purpose

Scotland's agricultural sector is fundamental to delivering high quality, nutritious food as well as playing a critical role in climate adaptation, land stewardship and nature restoration while supporting wider rural economies and communities.

The Agricultural Reform Route Map for Scotland¹ outlines the transition towards sustainable and regenerative agriculture and introduces a new framework of changes to support schemes from 2025, encouraging farmers and crofters to adopt practices aligned with environmental sustainability.

The Vision for Agriculture is Scotland's forward-looking commitment to transformative change, where land use and its management contribute positively to the twin challenges of climate change and biodiversity loss. Regenerative farming practices which enhance biodiversity, improve soil health and contribute to the mitigation of climate change are central to this plan. Food production must use cutting-edge technology to accelerate the rate of progress towards sustainable, efficient systems. Through this transition, Scotland will secure new levels of sustainability in land use, and prosperous, thriving communities.

The purpose of the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) One to Many programme is to offer advice to Scotland's farmers, crofters and land managers which supports them during a period of significant uncertainty and change, whilst maintaining domestic food security, innovating and evolving to meet future challenges.

This Business Plan for 2025/26 has these principles and objectives at its core.

2 Objectives

The FAS should not only support but actively influence farmers to embrace the new practices and technologies that will deliver Scotland's Vision for Agriculture.

It will do this by:

- Building on the strong foundations of the FAS 2016 – 2024 and providing quality advice to farmers, crofters and land managers the length and

¹ <https://www.ruralpayments.org/topics/agricultural-reform-programme/arp-route-map/>

breadth of Scotland, through engaging, innovative, and inclusive delivery methods.

- Understanding audience needs, ambitions and challenges, so that a delivery programme is developed that is accessible to all, promotes inclusivity, and delivers the advice that Scotland's farmers and crofters require.

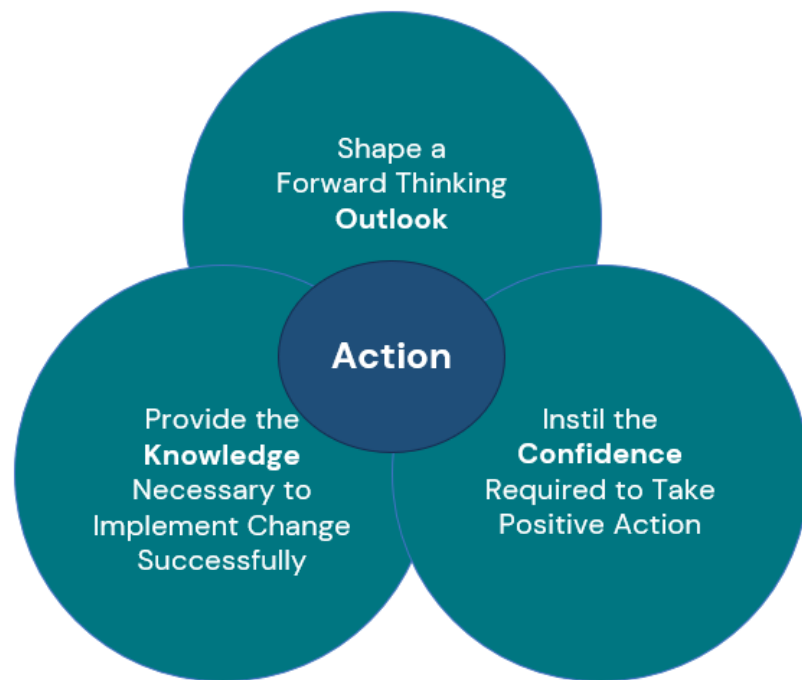


Figure 1 – The three elements necessary for farmers and crofters to make changes to their businesses.

- Continuing to be an ambitious catalyst for change as we target net-zero emissions by 2045 and accelerated landscape scale biodiversity recovery.
- Delivering information and resources aimed at increasing the profitability and sustainability of farms and crofts.
- Intensifying focus on nature restoration and preservation, and climate change mitigation and adaptation, issues core to Scotland's farmers and crofters, and their future livelihoods.

- Continually driving awareness and mindset shift of what biodiversity is, how a range of minor adjustments can be valuable, and that biodiversity is a valuable member of the 'food production team.'
- Raising the level of awareness of national climate and biodiversity priorities and targets amongst farmers, crofters, and land managers through provision of integrated technical advice, information, interactions with NatureScot, and assessment of the outcomes of this provision.
- Driving 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.
- Improving understanding of how soil health and management links to the wider improvement of biodiversity, improving water quality, natural flood management and emissions reductions.
- Providing support and promoting action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions per unit of product from farm businesses across Scotland.
- Complementing and promoting the work of successful current and past initiatives including Farming for a Better Climate, Integrating Trees Network, the ABCC (Agriculture, Biodiversity and Climate Change) Network and Farming & Water Scotland.
- Integrating key themes which have proven successful in the FAS 2016–2024 and adding a dedicated organics topic, ensuring that the programme delivers to the needs of current or aspiring organic producers, as well as effectively driving uptake of organic practices by the broader sector.
- Rapidly rolling out enhanced support for farmers and crofters to understand not only the requirements of the Whole Farm Plan, but also the opportunities for improved profitability and sustainability that implementing the audits and plans can help achieve.
- Remaining far enough ahead of our audience for approaches to be challenging and visionary, yet close enough to immediate issues to ensure

relevance on-the-ground, all to achieve tangible and attainable programme outcomes.

- Providing multiple different ways to learn about any individual subject and providing a diverse range of delivery modes which overcome accessibility barriers.

3 Approach

The Farm Advisory Service is comprised of eight distinct subject matter or demographical topics and delivers advice through a range of engaging and highly effective advisory modes (Figure 3).



Figure 2 – Subject and demographic topics which comprise FAS, together with core delivery modes.

The programme is designed to reach and engage the full range of farmers and crofters, irrespective of their location or preferences about engaging with learning and advice.

There are five critical characteristics of delivery that underpin the approach:

Inclusivity and accessibility

We ensure services are accessible and inclusive, catering to diverse audiences with varying needs.

Flexibility and responsiveness

We adapt to emerging issues, changing needs and priorities, ensuring service remains relevant and timely.

Collaboration and engagement

We promote cooperative approaches and stakeholder engagement, including working with industry stakeholders, government bodies and NGOs to optimise collaboration and KE.

Quality and value

We deliver consistently high-quality, impactful services that offer clear value to participants. This including use of robust quality assurance processes and continuous improvement measures, and the ongoing incorporation of the results of feedback and evaluation.

Promotion and communication

Effectively promoting services, including the FAS One to One offer, and communicating with audiences through various channels, ensuring wide reach and engagement.

Delivery Modes

The FAS programme utilises a diverse range of delivery modes, as shown below in Figure 4.

Mode	Format
FAS TV	<div>Longer form videos which highlight stories from the agricultural industry across Scotland.</div> <div><ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allows the audience to remotely see on-farm experiences, a digital ‘farm walk’.• Peer-to-peer learning.</div>

	Immersive storytelling.
FAS Video	<p>Shorter form videos designed to deliver practical advice, through case studies, vlogs, and technical information.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Factual, information sharing. • Designed to give an answer to a problem. • Opportunity to bring together of a collection of images/video that are connected. <p>Shareable and engaging on social media.</p>
FAS Reel	<p>Shortest form video, designed to promote an output through social media.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds trust with the user, offers them a snippet before committing to/ watching/ using the full output. • Demonstrate brand character. • Opportunity to capture the viewer's attention. • Diversification of content. <p>Build engagement around a specific output.</p>
FAS Podcast	<p>Audio content in which producers can share stories and discuss topics which the user can engage with at any time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows multi-tasking while listening, adding value, and learning whilst working. • Overcomes literacy barriers, dyslexia, learning differences, neurodivergence, and visual impairment. • Provides a platform to go more in-depth on a subject than, for example, a shorter video, TV episode or written resource. • A regular frequency allows the listener to schedule their learning and engagement.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows for both, storytelling, and peer-to-peer learning.
FAS Technical Audio Resource	<p>Allows the user to listen to the content on-the-go at a time that suits them. Useful for delivering information when there is a time pressure on learning.</p> <p>Allows multi-tasking while listening, adding value, and learning whilst working.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcomes literacy barriers, dyslexia, learning differences, neurodivergence, and visual impairment. • Serial nature, come out every month at the same frequency, allowing the listener to schedule their learning and engagement. • Translates dense, text-heavy publications into an easy-to-follow audio format. • Ability to summarise key messages more easily than written publications and documents. • Gives the listener access to expert researchers and academics.
FAS Tool	<p>Specific online and in-app calculators and problem solvers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quick way to get an answer to a problem. • Helps to overcome literacy barriers. • Can be visual and interactive, allowing participatory, action orientated learning. • Gives clear actions.
FAS Technical Note	<p>Detailed summaries of complex, technical topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presenting research data. • Comprehensive information in a limited space format. • Evergreen subject matter, relevant over a prolonged period.

FAS Newsletter	<p>Regular updates on a variety of topics distributed to subscribers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote new, timely, or high-profile content. • Supporting role to other publications on the website and other platforms. • Allows for the targeting of a pre-existing audience with a confirmed interest in the subject matter.
FAS Publication	<p>Written content published on the FAS website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often takes the form of 'keystone' content that is central to a reader's understanding of a topic. • Specific and targeted output. • Often produced in partnership with or paired alongside other resources (videos, audio, etc.). • Less time-demanding than some other formats. • Helps with indexing and SEO of the website.
On-Farm Event	<p>Large group gatherings on farms to see and hear about a topic in context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can physically show users a site. • Opportunity for practical demonstrations. • Opportunity to discuss with peers, connects users with shared interests.
Speaker Presentation	<p>In person larger group event, presentation of information to a large group of people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More listening and information delivery. • Opportunity to involve industry experts to share information.

	Useful for sharing more universal information that would benefit a wider user group.
Online Meeting	<p>Online gathering to discuss a specific topic with a smaller group of attendees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often a closed group or limited number of places available. • Opportunity for more personal topic discussion. • Allows us to identify and speak with a more niche user group. • Two-way conversation for users who may want to ask more questions. <p>Hosting more interactive sessions.</p>
Webinar	<p>Online presentation of information to a larger group of attendees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access remotely. • Potential for Q&A session. • More information delivery than a discussion. • Opportunity to watch a recording later. • Allows flexible delivery around the time of day to suit the target audience.
Conference	<p>Larger formal gathering, often bringing people together from across the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can communicate messages to a large audience. • Offers networking and socialising. • Opportunity to involve more stakeholders. • Brings together sub-groups from various locations. • Opportunity to summarise and conclude a larger project.

Workshop	<p>In person or online, typically a smaller group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful for more on hand training and teaching. • Opportunity to show real life examples. • Opportunity for discussion of specific situations. • Focus on developing current skills. • Uses practical activities to demonstrate to the user how they could use the information in their own situation. • Builds confidence in a controlled environment.
FAS Connect Group Meeting	<p>Small groups of 12–15 people, selected to participate in regular peer-to-peer learning meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes a group on a journey together on a subject which requires more than one stand-alone event. • Builds relationships and encourages collaboration between group members.
Learning Journey	<p>Providing opportunities for groups to learn together and to see first-hand ideas and successful approaches that they can implement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows participants to collaborate. • Immersive. • Feel part of a group, more cohesion. • More likely to facilitate discussion. • Time away for reflection, allows removal from the everyday. • Develops perspective. • Global outlook.

Printed Advertorial	<p>Articles and written advisory pieces in print media, often aimed at the non-digital audience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Short, easier read articles.• Contain enough information without having to visit the website to find out more.• Non-region specific.• A regular space, users know it will be there on a regular basis.
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Figure 3 – FAS Delivery Modes

The selection of a mode of delivery (or mix of modes) reflects a range of factors including the subject matter, target audience, geographical considerations, the time of year (to consider factors such as lambing, calving, harvest, and winter weather making travel difficult), the policy and regulatory context, and market conditions.

4 FAS Content

Comprehensive Programme

A minimum of 70% of delivery will include climate change and biodiversity advice, helping farmers and land managers to consider these aspects as part of day-to-day activities and forward planning, addressing Scottish Government priorities for action (Figure 2).

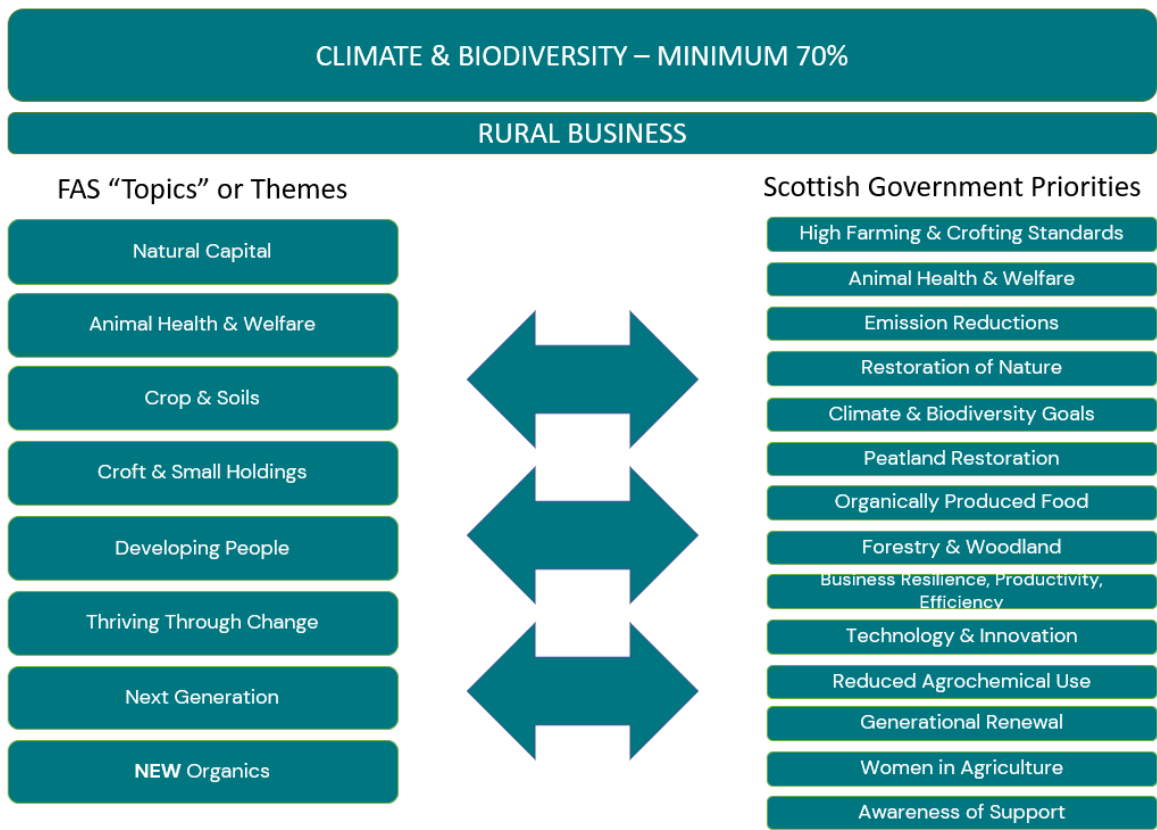


Figure 5 – FAS topics and linkages with Scottish Government priorities

All programme delivery provides advice on one or more of the following themes:

- Enhancing competitiveness and enhancing viability in agriculture.
- Restoring, preserving and enhancing biodiversity.
- Improving water and/or soil management.
- Pollution prevention and control.

- Promoting resource efficiency and supporting a shift towards a low carbon and climate resilient economy in agriculture.

New for 2025/26: The FAS Newsletter is hugely successful, with a large audience, growing every month, and very high levels of engagement. It provides a selection of FAS content, in a range of formats, and is sent to the audience via a mailing list. In 2025/26 this format will be the model for a new a range of audience-specific newsletters (Beef & Sheep, Dairy, Crops & Soils, Natural Capital, Next Generation and Rural Business). These will incorporate (replace) traditional periodical publications, providing a wider range of content (via links to content, all of which is also hosted on the website and available individually) and enhanced reporting. This adaptation will ensure that FAS continues to meet a changing audience need, whilst enhancing value for money.

Natural Capital

The Natural Capital topic is designed to help Scotland's farmers and crofters build environmental and economic resilience by integrating climate change and biodiversity considerations into their practices. By embedding these themes across all subject matters and delivery methods, the programme ensures that even those who might not typically engage with these topics are informed and motivated to adopt nature-positive solutions. This integrates approach highlights that enhancing biodiversity and addressing climate change can go hand-in-hand with increasing profitability, thereby benefiting both the environment and the farm business.

Our Natural Capital activities will upskill and fill knowledge gaps amongst farmers, crofters and land managers on the topics of carbon, natural capital, biodiversity and climate change, and a forward-looking approach to climate change adaptation and mitigation will be provided. This will integrate research from leading institutions including SRUC, Moredun Research Institute and James Hutton Institute and translate it into practical, actionable advice.

Objectives:

- Provide events and resources to help farmers and land managers understand how to recognise and map habitats on their holding to assist with creating a baseline of biodiversity across Scotland and meeting Whole Farm Plan requirements.

- Help farmers and land managers protect and enhance water quality through margins and riparian zones.
- Raise awareness of peatland restoration for farmers, land managers and crofters and sustainable upland management through a range of on farm or estate meetings.
- Provide resources and support to farmers, land managers and crofters to complete and understand the value of carbon audits.
- Promote practical, nature positive solutions farmers and land managers can consider incorporating to boost biodiversity on their holding.
- Provide advice about contemporary resilience issues, such as drought or flooding, including both response measures and proactive planning activities and measures.
- Provide resources on how to assess energy use on farms and the opportunities that renewable energy may present.
- Consistent highlighting of farm profitability benefits from nature positive solutions.
- Provide timely content including about updates and/or reminders about the Agri Environment Climate Scheme (AECS) timeline and key Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ) dates.

Highlights:

- **Biodiversity Audit Workshops and Habitat Explanation Videos:** suite of videos and events across Scotland which will help farmers identify and map their farmland habitats and carry out the biodiversity audit option of the Whole Farm Plan.
- **Creation and Management of Habitat Package:** explanatory videos highlighting how to and best practice for coppicing hedges; cutting species rich grassland and creation/management of grass margins.
- **Carbon Audit Resources:** a suite of activity to assist farmers, land managers and crofters to understand how to complete a carbon audit and

what it means for their business. This will include the creation of a carbon audit matrix for those who wish to complete their own carbon audit and a decision making tool for identifying carbon management options following completion of a carbon audit.

- **Peatland Restoration:** continuation of previous activity with a further three in person events to raise awareness of peatland restoration, the benefits for the farm landscape and the funding streams available. Participants will hear from Peatland Action and Peatland Code as part of these events.
- **Energy Efficiency and Renewables:** continuation of popular 2024 project will see a further two on-farm events looking at examples of renewable technologies and including technical information about the installation.
- **FAS Newsletter: Woodland & Natural Capital Edition:** an expansion of our current Farm Woodland News to include a greater range of topics that are all linked to wider environmental management on farms and crofts. Distributed by email we will release newsletters at three intervals throughout the year and allow us to deliver both woodland, and broader biodiversity and habitat management content specifically selected for its relevance to an audience with an interest in woodland.
- **Farm Wildlife Walks:** continuation of the highly popular series with events held on farms across the country. These events will promote grass-roots conservation discussions and positive actions to tackle nature.
- **Muirburn Events and Resources:** working with NatureScot to disseminate and raise awareness of the recent changes to Muirburn legislation through events, webinars, updates to existing videos and other resources as required.
- **Cattle and Biodiversity** – an on-farm event and trio of case studies focusing on how cattle can be used to improve biodiversity through hill grazing. Different hill grazing issues along with different types of grazing plans will be discussed.
- **Landscape Scale Conservation and Collaboration:** Case studies highlighting the benefits of collaborative, landscape-scale conservation by

farmer clusters and different methods of funding covering corn bunting; white-fronted goose and river management.

- **Natural Capital Season 3: A ten episode** podcast series focussing on environmental sustainability issues. Hosted by Harry Fisher, an environmental consultant and natural capital specialist, and featuring a range of guests. Ten episodes will be produced for this show, but one episode will sit (for reporting purposes) in the new Organics topic to ensure that we cover Organics across all FAS Sounds audiences.
- **Thrill of the Hill Season 4: A ten episode** podcast series exploring the issues facing the farmed upland environment. Hosted by Alexander Pirie, a consultant with specialist expertise in sustainability, biodiversity, and the upland environment, with each episode interviewing an important stakeholder or expert in a key topical area. Ten episodes will be produced for this show, but one episode will sit (for reporting purposes) in the new Organics topic to ensure that we cover Organics across all FAS Sounds audience.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
Baselining Riparian Zones Video			1			
Biodiversity Audit Suite			7			4
Carbon Audit Resources	2	2			1	
Caring for Trees	2					
Cattle and Biodiversity Suite	2					1
Collaborative: landscape-scale conservation publications	3					
Corncrake Tool Case Study	1					
Creation and Management of Habitats Videos			4			
Emerging Carbon Markets Publication Update	1					
Farm Wildlife Walk Events						10
FAS Newsletter: Woodland & Natural Capital Edition (Formerly Farm Woodland News)	3					
FAS Resources - Printed Press Advertorials + General FAS Newsletter	10					
FFBC Legacy Publications Update	3					
Magic Margins Suite	1		1			
Muirburn Suite			6			3
Natural Capital Podcast				9		
Natural Capital: Social Media Highlights Reels			2			
Net Zero Arran Case Studies	3					
Peatland Restoration Events						2
Renewables Events						2
Soil Myth Busting Events						4
Technical Note Updates	1					
Technology and Conservation Management Suite	3		3			
Thrill of The Hill Podcast				9		
Topical Messages on Biodiversity	1					
Unsung Heroes of Climate Friendly Farming Podcast				5		
Willow Coppice	1					
Woodland Tool Case Studies	2					
	39	2	24	23	1	26

Figure 4 – Natural Capital Summary

Topic Lead: Mhairi Dalgliesh

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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.

The topic will deliver timely, relevant information and advice to livestock farmers and crofters, regardless of their system, knowledge level, or location, resulting in enhanced animal health and welfare, improved productivity and profitability. This will provide enhanced industry integrity and reduce negative impacts on the environment.

Combining the expertise of local and specialist consultants, vets, and researchers from SAC Consulting and SRUC, livestock farmers and crofters will benefit from local and national observations of the issues facing the industry and how these can be addressed. This information will be fed into the campaign plan

agreed with Scottish Government in advance, with flexibility built in to quickly adapt to emerging issues as they occur throughout the year. Highlights within the Animal Health and Welfare topic include:

Objectives:

- Promote best practice for animal health and welfare management to maximise performance and reduce disease throughout Scotland.
- Provide and integrate advice on nature-based solutions routinely throughout delivery and highlight the dual benefit of actions such as small scale agroforestry or hedge planting on both nature and livestock welfare.
- Provide farmers with high end technical knowledge on a wide range of topics to boost welfare and productivity.
- Raise awareness of diseases which are evolving as a result of climate change.
- Encourage and support farmers to improve technical efficiency to improve sustainability and reduce emissions at farm gate level.
- Showcase the latest developments from research and farming peers to initiate change.
- Provide a range of resources and toolkits to encourage strategic business planning to build resilience within livestock enterprises.

Highlights:

- **Sustainable Sheep Systems:** Continuation of the highly successful series. The focus of the fourth series will be on simplifying systems and reducing reliance on labour and inputs associated with labour intensive systems.
- **Sustainable Beef Systems:** Continuation of an increasingly popular campaign which will focus on finishing enterprises during the third series. Covering topics relating to health, nutrition, technology, supply of calves and slaughter selection to maximise margins and reduce emissions.

- **Sustainable Parasitology:** Following a successful pilot in 2024, a further 3 face to face events will be held, delivered by vets, researchers and local and specialist consultants to equip farmers with the latest developments in sustainable parasite control and provide practical advice. Key focus areas include gastrointestinal parasites, liver fluke, sheep scab and will expand to include ticks and lice.
- **Health Planning Workshops:** Provision of a further 4 livestock health planning one-to-few workshops to build on the success of the 2023 pilot events which were well attended. With the introduction of the Whole Farm Plan animal health and welfare plan, the workshops were considered a highly valuable resource to promote animal health planning.
- **Monitoring Flock Performance Farmer Vlogs:** Completing the cycle of the 2024 vlog series which followed 3 farmers focusing on how they use data to make flock decisions. The final vlog will conclude the series by documenting the data gathered at lambing time and how that drives management decisions for the next breeding year. A technical video and case study for each farm will complete the suite of resources on this topic.
- **Beef Calving Efficiency Roadshow:** Four on farm national meetings covering suckler beef calving efficiencies with a particular focus on improving calving intervals through nutrition, body condition and culling strategies. Including a focus on utilising the data held on MyHerdStats to align with the forthcoming policy changes in the Scottish Suckler Beef Scheme to help producers improve and reach 410-day calving intervals.
- **Robotic Milking System Management:** A series of on farm events and webinars complimented with a publication focusing on best practice on robotic milked herds. Focussing on health, nutrition, robot management, and performance KPIs.
- **Sheep Nutrition Workshops:** Expanding on the highly successful one-to-few workshops first delivered in 2022, bridging the gaps in geographical areas not covered and re-visiting areas that were oversubscribed.
- **Calf Milk Replacer Guide:** A suite of videos and publications on assessing and selecting the correct milk replacer by providing advice on interpreting

labels, understanding the key ingredients and the quality of the fat and protein sources and other additives.

- **Dairy Forage Budget Factsheet:** Provision of a new factsheet covering forage budgeting specifically for dairy cattle which can be more complex than beef and sheep requirements due to higher variation in milk yield, grazing periods and milking system.
- **Livestock Traceability Pop Up Stands:** A series of pop-up stands at livestock markets to inform and remind producers of the livestock tagging and traceability requirements.
- **Sheep Slats Campaign:** A new series of outputs to include an on farm event, video and case study to provide advice, information and costings on the provision of sheet slats to accommodate sheep over the winter period ahead of lambing. Speakers will include vets, consultants and specialists covering topics such as nutrition, health, grassland and financial gains as well as the impact on livestock performance, labour and output.
- **Weaning Beef Calves:** Building on the weaning beef calves publication, two on farm meetings will focus on preventing pneumonia in calves through minimising risks in key areas to include best practice at weaning, creep feeding, ventilation at housing and vaccination strategies. Speakers will include vets, specialist consultants and Moredun representatives. The meeting will include new work from the USA on calf behaviour and stress as well as using existing FAS materials. A video interview highlighting each speaker's key points will be produced to compliment the resources already available.
- **Finishing Pigs in Straw Courts:** Updating of technical note TN437 to reflect current advice, highlighting the requirements with buildings, resources, labour and biosecurity measures.
- **Livestock Biosecurity Technical Note:** Update technical note TN617 from March 2009 on biosecurity which is now out of date and excludes new and emerging diseases such as Bluetongue and Schmallenberg. It will also include information on phase 6 of BVD regulations being rolled out in 2025.

- **Keeping Hens Entertained** – Large Scale: Covering range management, access, useability, environmental enhancements and bird enrichment, these videos will demonstrate the benefits to both flock welfare and the environment.
- **FAS Newsletter: Dairy Edition** (formerly Milk Manager News) & **FAS Newsletter: Beef & Sheep Edition** (New). These are bi-monthly newsletters distributed via email mailing list containing a range of resources, information and advice relevant to dairy and livestock farmers. These are part of a suite of new audience-targeted FAS Newsletters which contain a curated selection of publications, videos, podcasts and upcoming event information. This approach will enable us to develop a mailing list of farmers with a specific interest in dairy farming/livestock farming to whom relevant content can be assembled and sent, rather than relying on the audience coming to the website.
- **Stock Talk Season 4:** A ten episode podcast show of high standing in livestock focussed circles. Featuring timely updates from vets, specialist consultants, and industry, innovative ways of improving animal health and welfare and tackling the climate and biodiversity crises are at the forefront for listeners. Ten episodes will be produced for this show, but one episode will sit (for reporting purposes) in the new Organics topic to ensure that we cover Organics across all FAS Sounds audiences.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
Animal Health & Welfare: Social Media Highlights Reels			2			
Beef Calving Efficiency Roadshow						4
Calf Milk Replacer Guide	4		3			
Dairy Forage Budgeting Factsheet	1					
FAS Newsletter: Dairy Edition (Formerly Milk Manager News)	6					
FAS Newsletter: Livestock Edition	6					
FAS Resources - Printed Press Advertorials + General FAS Newsletter	14					
FAS Website Review & Updating: Key Animal Health & Welfare Subjects	9					
Finishing Pigs in Straw Courts	1					
Keeping Poultry Entertained - Large Scale			2			
Livestock Biosecurity Technical Note	1					
Livestock Health Planning Events						4
Livestock Traceability Pop Up Stand						7
Monitoring Flock Performance Vlog Series	3		4			
Robotic System Management	1				1	2
Sheep Housing Suite: Slats	1		1			1
Sheep Nutrition Workshops						4
Stock Talk Podcast				9		
Sustainable Beef Systems	1				3	1
Sustainable Parasitology						3
Sustainable Sheep Systems					3	
Weaning Beef Calves Suite			1			2
	48		13	9	7	28

Figure 5 – Animal Health & Welfare Summary

Topic Lead: Hazel Laughton

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Crop & Soils

Protecting our soils is pivotal in ensuring Scottish farmers, crofters and land managers can protect food production, mitigate the impact of climate change, and improve the environment in which humans and wildlife live.

The crops and soils programme will reach out to farmers through a combination of in person events, videos, podcasts technical guides and timely communications distributed across social media channels, FAS website and farming press. The programme will combine the knowledge from research, industry, and farmers to deliver the best practice, practical advice which is relative to growing conditions in Scotland and delivers benefits to nature, environment, and the profitability of agricultural businesses.

The Crops and Soils programme will encourage farmers to think more dynamically about how they manage their soils and the crops that they grow. This will be promoted through interactive workshops and roadshows where farmers can share experiences on a peer-to-peer level but also access the specialist knowledge, they require to make decisions and apply that within their own business. Every farm and farming business is different, and the crops and

soils programme will encourage farmers, land managers and crofters to make the adaptations to improve the business and climate resilience of their business.

The Farm Advisory Service will promote good practice and conscientious approaches to crops and soils management in Scotland. Every output from the crops and soils programme will promote cross organisation messages from partner agencies such as NatureScot, SEPA and RPID, ensuring farmers, land managers and crofters are well informed on evolving agricultural policies and cross compliance regulations. FAS also operates a sign posting system, promoting literature and information available from partner organisations such as Farming and Water Scotland, AHDB, AFBI and the Voluntary Initiative.

Objectives:

- Promote best practice for management of our soils, environment, natural resources, diversity, and crops in Scotland.
- Share and encourage the practical application of evolving research and innovations within industry.
- Promote organic farming regenerative practices and nature-based solutions and encourage the understanding of their living soil as a fundamental farm asset. Sharing the lessons we can learn from organic and regenerative practices more widely across sectors.
- Provide farmers with the knowledge and confidence to make strategic business decisions.
- Support farmers and crofters on their journey to Net Zero.
- Encourage technical efficiency to improve sustainability and profitability and reduce emissions.
- Promote and support farmers to reduce diffuse pollution and improve nutrient management in support of Nitrogen Balance Sheet activity, Nitrate Vulnerable Zones, and Protected Waters policy areas.
- Provide the opportunities to connect farmers and build their knowledge networks

- Provide the advice and information necessary for farmers to carry out Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plans as part of their Whole Farm Plan. These will be promoted across all sectors of Scottish agriculture.

Highlights:

- **FAS Newsletter: Crops and Soils Edition** (formerly Crops & Soils Bulletin): Timely bulletin dedicated to crops and soils. Short articles providing agronomic information, market intelligence, cross compliance, emerging technologies, best practices for soil health and crop management, organic and regenerative principles, topical issues, and biodiversity. This is one of a suite of new audience-targeted FAS Newsletters which contain a curated selection of publications, videos, podcasts and upcoming event information.

- **Grassland Roadshow** –Following successful events in 2024, 8 regional events will be held across mainland and islands. These events will challenge how we manage our grass and forage crops to balance improving biodiversity and responding to changing weather patterns.

These events will be tailored to the delivery locations looking at what we grow, when we grow it, how we grow it and the impact on the environment and farm sustainability. We will promote tools to aid farmer planning and allow improvements to be tracked, including the use of an integrated pest management tool for grassland and the FAS companion app, organic manures calculator and feed budget tool.

- **An Arable Journey towards Net Zero Year 2:** This project will form a co-ordinated series of vlogs and supporting case studies following a farmer in Year 2 on their journey towards net zero, answering the question of how we achieve this at farm level.

Year 2 will build on the baseline carbon audit completed in 2024, which will be used to help the farmer identify mitigations such as cultivation methods, crop biodiversity and reducing fertiliser use, which can reduce their emissions. Their journey to implement these mitigations will be documented through vlogs and supporting case studies with signposting

to further information so farmers can apply the actions which may apply to their business.

- **Arable Roadshow:** staple of the crops and soils schedule is the popular arable roadshow enabling farmers to get together and hear from researchers, industry, and fellow farmers. Subject areas covered include research, technology, grain markets, achieving net zero, and seeing breeding advances and regulatory changes which will influence their business.

The roadshows will promote the continued maintenance of Scotland's high plant health status, and greater awareness and uptake of more integrated and sustainable crop protection strategies amongst Scottish farmers, linked to a reduced reliance on artificial inputs and more holistic management of soils. Events will be held over 3 locations with a summary video to distribute key learnings more widely.

- **Crop Trials Technical Night:** plant breeding advancements are a key element in making our industry more efficient and reducing reliance on fertiliser and pesticides, and these crop trial evenings provide the ideal forum to show farmers what options are available to them and the impact it can have on their business. SAC Consulting researchers and specialists are also on hand to discuss innovations to accompany variety selection that will increase crop resilience and introduce greater diversity into rotations using cover crops, under sowing and intercropping. This brings opportunities to increase soil health and fertility.
- Crop trials events are the 'show and tell' of the plant breeding world, providing farmers with a direct connection to the research and science of crop production and are an essential part of how we educate farmers to the reality of farming with lower fertiliser and pesticide inputs.
- **Nutrient Management and Integrated Pest Management Workshops:** The NMP workshops have been highly popular over previous years and the inclusion of IPM will expand the scope of these workshops. These workshops will be targeted at varied levels of ability, from new entrants to those who have previously attended a workshop and are looking for the next level. The nutrient management workshops encompass soil

management, the storage and use of organic manures, technology, crop requirements and cross compliance.

The IPM segment of the workshops will be designed to both inform farmers on why they should complete IPM but also facilitate the discussions around what practices could be considered and adopted to reduce our reliance on synthetic inputs. The workshop will also signpost farmers, land managers and crofter to where they can complete an IPM. The workshops are based around smaller groups, creating a more practical session where farmers can work through hands-on examples.

All sessions are led by Fertiliser Advisor Certification Training Scheme (FACTS) qualified advisors. The content at these workshops will remain dynamic and be tailored to the location in which they are delivered.

- **Technical Publications:** a suite of technical publications will be maintained, and updated or renewed, to ensure the latest recommendations for nutrient management, crop inputs and soil health are complying with evolving legislation and cross compliance and are in line with proven research.
- **Forage Focus Field Days:** Now going into Year 2 two field days will follow the progress of our host farmer in developing the forage system for their suckler beef system to be more climate resilient and profitable. Year 1 demonstrated the benefit from minimum tillage and multi species forage crops. This will be explored in further detail in 2025 whilst also sharing progress on pasture rejuvenation, management of organic manures and use of biproducts for soil health. Events will combine in field demonstrations with technical presentations and conclusions on how integrating forage and livestock systems can reduce emissions and improve efficiency.
- **Arable + Field Days:** A series of arable field days, held on a host farm exploring the measures which are already being adopted to tackle climate change and the measures which could be employed and integrated into that farming system. The events will be used to demonstrate the measures being undertaken, disseminate the data gathered on the impact

these measures have had and to follow the progress of that business in becoming more climate resilient.

These events will collaborate with researchers, industry, and fellow farmers to ensure a full appraisal of the mitigations are presented to farmer and land managers upon which they can make informed decisions.

- **CropCast Season 4:** A sixteen episode podcast show, ten episodes being “Cropcast Technical” episodes featuring researchers, agronomists, arable consultants, and arable farmers discussing plant and soil health, highlighting biodiversity, regulatory advice, agronomic developments, and technology for more efficient crop production systems.

These technical episodes will take an entire system approach linking advice and activity on plant health to broader rotational issues, thereby optimizing the chance to link sustainable plant health actions to other positive outcomes for whole farm profitability and allowing for plant and soil health benefits to be linked to climate and biodiversity.

- A further six episodes will be “CropCast Conversations” featuring supply chain conversations with arable producers, processors, merchants and more. These episodes will inspire mindset change, help arable producers to futureproof, and find new opportunities for supply. Sixteen episodes will be produced for this show, but one episode will sit (for reporting purposes) in the new Organics topic to ensure that we cover Organics across all FAS Sounds audiences.
- **Grassland Productivity Suite Publications:** A series of publications providing condensed practical guides on topics such as grassland management, soil health, forage management, forage crops, optimising water use and improving biodiversity. These guides will have varied knowledge levels and will build upon materials already available on the FAS website whilst also providing supplementary information for themes covered at in person events.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
Arable Journey to Net Zero Toolkit	2		3			
Arable Roadshow Events & Video			1			3
Arable+ Field Days						4
Crop Update Videos			10			
Cropcast Podcast				15		
Crops & Soils: Social Media Highlights Reels			2			
Crops Trials Night						3
FAS Arable Technical Notes	3					
FAS Newsletter: Crop & Soil Edition (Formerly Crop & Soil Bulletin)	9					
FAS Resources - Printed Press Advertorials + General FAS Newsletter	15					
Forage Focus Field Days						2
Grassland Productivity Suite Publications	1					
Grassland Roadshow Events						8
IPM Webinar					1	
Nutrient Management & IPM Workshops						8
	30		16	15	1	28

Figure 6 – Crops & Soils Summary

Topic Lead: Lorna Galloway

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Croft & Small Farms

The Crofts and Small Farms topic will support crofters' and smallholders' ability to increase biodiversity, protect natural resources and the crofting landscape, reduce emissions, meet crofting regulatory requirements and Whole Farm Plan requirements, and enhance crofting businesses.

Responding to the recent crofting bill consultation, the resources for common grazings will be increased, to include Sheep Stock clubs, and in conjunction with Developing People, the formation and running of CG committees. In keeping with the Crofting Development Plan, events for new entrants will increase confidence in livestock keeping.

Building on previous FAS activities, proposed outputs include a mix of interactive face-to-face events, publications, podcasts, web-based tools, videos, and FAS TV episodes to cater to different learning styles. As in previous years, collaboration with the Crofting Commission, Woodland Trust, NatureScot, Peatland Action, Teagasc, Moredun Research Institute and others feature throughout, boosting reach and range of topics and drawing on expertise. In conjunction with the FAS Connect topic, sharing information between the CG clerks can continue; with the Natural Capital topic, events on beekeeping aimed

at smallholders; with the Developing people topic, events on succession planning for crofters.

Objectives:

- Encouragement of correct financial governance of Common Grazings.
- Enhancing biodiversity through cropping of the machair and horticulture.
- Promote regenerative and organic practices and nature-based solutions and increase understanding of the importance of the living soil as a fundamental croft asset.
- Encourage local horticultural food production.
- Inspire and support crofters from a common grazing to form a committee and appoint a clerk.
- Increase understanding and use of Crofting Commission processes.
- Encourage succession planning and the transfer of crofts.
- Cross Compliance Rules reminders
- Ensure that crofters understand how to meet the requirements of the Whole Farm Plan and the wider benefits of engaging in the audits and plans.
- A mix of media to ensure information is accessible to all.
- Connect crofters and clerks and build their knowledge networks.

Highlights:

- **Common Grazing Finance Management:** continuation of the highly popular series of in-person meetings, in conjunction with the Crofting Commission, to encourage the formation and retention of Common Grazings committees, by explaining financial regulations to operate within the law.
- **Common Grazings Development Opportunities:** for committees to organise developments on the common such as habitat management

schemes, renewable energy schemes, or peatland restoration, they need the skills to manage shareholder expectations and understand the management of income and expenditure according to their Regulations. Face-to-face events will explain systems, provide written resources and templates, and give confidence to clerks and committee members.

- **Sheep Stock Clubs:** Events in Sutherland and Skye to help Sheep Stock clubs continue in the face of increased costs and labour issues.
- **Cross Compliance:** aimed at crofters and small farms, a series of in person meetings to cover record keeping, common penalties, wetlands and peatland, incorporating animal health best practice, such as quarantine.
- **The Smallholder Festival:** attendance at this event is an opportunity to reach a large, highly motivated audience, and demonstrate the pertinent areas of FAS to smallholders. FAS has a stand with different displays each year, plus delivers talks, workshops, and advice. Positioned alongside the stands for SRUC animal disease surveillance sheep and goat “MOTs and Farming and Water Scotland, this allows signposting to further resources.

A combination of talks and workshops, such as practical grassland management, introduction to livestock keeping and WFP are always popular and increase footfall to the stand.

- **Whole Farm Planning:** a series of in-person meetings across the crofting counties to support crofters and smallholders as they adjust to the new policy landscape. Workshops will help crofters understand the results and reports from carbon audits and discuss small scale positive changes.
- **Crofting Clubs:** continuation of the successful Crofting Club discussion groups and expansion to North Uist. Club meetings will be crofter-led and will bring together stakeholders to share information and exchange ideas and debate current issues. Regular meetings throughout the year bring a sense of belonging and allow time for reflection.

Crofting communities are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events, shifts in growing seasons, and changes in precipitation patterns. This club format strengthens the resilience of rural communities and local food systems.

- **Machair Cropping:** building on a UIF project in Uist, and work undertaken by Orkney college, with crofters growing bere barley on the machair, events will look at management of weeds, biodiversity considerations, the use of trace elements, seed sources, and the needs of the end users for distilling or feed.
- **Crofting Matters Season 4: An eight episode** podcast show specifically tackling the opportunities and challenges facing Crofting, which is unique to Scotland, and is an integral part of life in the Highlands & Islands. Crofting can deliver a wealth of benefits to crofters and the crofting communities they live in, this podcast aims to provide advice on common challenges, highlight successes and opportunities, whilst building resilience and driving innovative practices. Hosted by Siobhan Macdonald, topic leader for the Crofts and small farms topic.
- **Getting started in horticulture:** in person events to encourage uptake and development of small scale food production for smallholders. These build upon new and existing resources for next generation farmers and includes organic farming principles.
- **West Coast Calves:** Events, publications and videos to link store producers on the west and islands with the finishers and buyers of the calves, to increase understanding of the needs of the market, and network with crofters, mart staff, buyers and QMS.
- **Poultry for smallholders:** A series of webinars aimed at small scale producers covering health and welfare and husbandry, to complement the current video resources.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
Agri Culture Podcast: Croft & Small Farm Edition				2		
Beekeeping Events						3
Carbon Audits for Crofters Workshops						6
Common Grazings Finance & Development Practical Workshops						12
Crofting Club: Gairloch						3
Crofting Club: Inner Hebrides						3
Crofting Club: Kilmuire						3
Crofting Club: Lairg						3
Crofting Club: Lewis						3
Crofting Club: Shetland						3
Crofting Club: Uist						3
Crofting Matters Podcast				8		
Crofts & Small Farms: Social Media Highlights Reels			2			
Cross Compliance crofting						3
Machair Crops						3
Managing Sheep Stock Clubs	1				1	2
Poultry Health for smallholders					4	
Profitable West Coast Calves	1		1			2
Smallholder Festival 2025						1
Update Common Grazings Videos			2			
Update Performance Targets for Small Herds	1					
Update tools	1	3				
	4	3	5	10	5	53

Figure 7 – Crofts & Small Farms Summary

Topic Lead: Siobhan Macdonald

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Developing People

Work through the Developing People topic will boost farmers' and crofters' confidence in making decisions and help to encourage an open mindset. We will also focus on building confidence in specific groups including Women in Agriculture and Next Generation farmers and crofters.

The Developing People topic will continue to run Women in Agriculture (WIA) groups across Scotland, and events focussing on farmer resilience, personal development and wellbeing. The topic aims to develop personal skills that empower farmers and crofters to make confident decisions, communicate effectively, and understand their skills and business to drive it forward.

The WIA topic continues the work done since 2017 through FAS, by providing women only workshops and networking events across Scotland. Mary-Jane Lawrie is collaborating closely with the Women in Agriculture Scotland

committee (<https://womeninagriculturescotland.com/>) to share and promote activities to benefit women across Scotland.

Objectives:

- Build the confidence of women in agriculture and create opportunities to develop and learn new skills in a women only environment. This year will have a particular focus on highlighting women led diversified businesses.
- Continue to facilitate the Women in Agriculture Facebook group which has been a successful online forum for open discussion, networking, and education.
- Help farmers and crofters prepare for the future, build resilience, and overcome challenges.
- Integrate Health and Safety best practice across all FAS topics, with a focus on raising awareness of Health and Safety and it's link to wellbeing. This will be done through established groups such as FAS Connect and Women in Agriculture by starting conversations and providing resources in conjunction with the Farm Safety Foundation.
- Provide young farmers and crofters with some of the skills they need to improve their employability.
- Continue to add to the resources on succession planning, including understanding the basics of succession planning for different business types (owned, tenant farms and crofts) and equipping farmers with the tools to have difficult conversations.

Highlights:

- **Women in Agriculture Groups:** events and online meetings specifically catering to women in agriculture and crofting. This extensive package covers 13 in-person groups including a new Islay group: Argyll, Ayrshire, Borders, Caithness, Inverness-shire, Lothian, Morayshire, Orkney, Perthshire, Wester Ross, Western Isles, Ross-shire, and Islay. In addition, an online group provides the opportunity for women in areas where limitations in demand does not permit an in-person group.

- **Women in Agriculture Conference:** following the success of the first Women in Agriculture Conference in 2023, we will host a second national event to bring together all the women in agriculture groups.
- **Agri Culture Season 4:** A ten-episode podcast show platforming inspirational and thought-provoking conversations from people living and working in the agricultural sectors. This show deals with diversity, mental health and resilience, business resilience, agri-business diversification, and succession amongst many other important topics. This podcast highlights innovation, mind-set change, and provides confidence to listeners to try something different or new. Ten episodes will be produced for this show, but several episodes will sit (for reporting purposes) in the new Organics topic, in Crofts & Small Farms, and in Next Generation to ensure that we cover Developing People across all key topics.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
Agri Culture Podcast: Developing People Edition				3		
Argyll Women in Agriculture Group						3
Ayrshire Women in Agriculture Group						3
Borders Women in Agriculture Group						2
Caithness Women in Agriculture Group						3
Developing People: Social Media Highlights Reels			2			
Employment Rights Bill: What it Means for Farmers					1	
Farm Health & Safety Resource Kit	1					
How to Run a Common Grazing Committee						2
Invernesshire Women in Agriculture Group						3
Islay Women in Agriculture Group						2
Lothian Women in Agriculture Group						2
Morayshire Women in Agriculture Group						3
Online Women in Agriculture Group					3	
Orkney Women in Agriculture Group						2
Perthshire Women in Agriculture Group						2
Rossshire Women in Agriculture Group						3
Succession - SLMS Video			1			
Wester Isles Women in Agriculture Group						3
Wigtownshire Women in Agriculture Group						2
Women in Agriculture conference						1
	1		3	3	4	36

Figure 8 – Developing People Summary

Topic Lead: Mary-Jane Lawrie

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Thriving Through Change

The package designed in this topic will provide farmers and land managers with the knowledge and skills to help build resilient businesses. It provides a useful resource where answers to regulation and compliance queries can be found. It

will be delivered using a combination of formats including online publications, face-to-face meetings, webinars, videos, and online tools.

Objectives:

- Farm business resilience (including financial).
- Keep farmers and readers up to date with policy change.
- Use of technology and data gathering to support business resilience.
- Introduction and support for new diversification opportunities and how they can help build business resilience.

Highlights:

- **Agricultural Policy Change:** a suit of deliverables (podcast, video, and meetings) to help farmers keep abreast of regulatory changes, such as amendments to greening rules which are proposed for 2026.
- **Financial Management Workshops:** A series of workshops which aims to help farm business managers better understand financial management reports (profit & loss, balance sheet), cashflow budgets, tax planning, and benchmarking.
- **FAS Newsletter: Rural Business Edition** (formerly AgriBusiness News). This is a monthly newsletter distributed via email mailing list containing a range of resources, information and advice about rural business management, finance, and policy. This is one of a suite of new audience-targeted FAS Newsletters which contain a curated selection of publications, videos, podcasts and upcoming event information. This approach will enable us to develop a modern email mailing list of farmers with a specific interest in rural business to whom relevant content can be assembled and sent, rather than relying on the audience coming to the website. We will continue to produce a monthly episode of ABN Audio, made available through FAS Sounds.
- **Farm Management Handbook:** vital source of financial and technical data relating to all aspects of farm management in Scotland. Provides

everything from gross margins for growing spring barley, to the detailed requirements for Scottish Government support schemes. The handbook is made available as a PDF download from the FAS website and is undergoing a digital modernisation.

- **UK Autumn Budget Response:** Podcast available through FAS Sounds to highlight some of the key tax changes announced during the autumn budget and discuss how these changes will impact upon farm businesses.
- **Whole Farm Benchmarks:** whole farm benchmarks tool updated with the most recent data from the Scottish Farm Business Survey. This online resource allows farmers to establish how their business is performing compared against similar businesses, and to identify areas where change might be required.
- **Deer Farming:** continuation of popular event series, providing in-person events on farms, processing sites or with industry bodies across Scotland. Provides **opportunities** for those already involved in deer farming to meet with individuals who have an interest in establishing a new deer farming enterprise.
- **Rural Roundup Season 4:** An 18 episode podcast show providing a timely and regular source of agricultural news, transferring knowledge to the audience about the latest relevant news in agriculture over that month, reminders of deadlines, policy updates, funding applications, upcoming events, webinars, resources, and other Scottish Government funded resources to help them to build confidence, resilience and expand their farming knowledge and networks. In 24/25 we are adding 6 additional episodes to the show, that highlight “unsung heroes” Farmers, doing small but impactful things for improving biodiversity, lowering emissions, organic practices or improving water quality. Twelve dedicated Rural Roundup episodes will be produced for this show, but one episode will sit (for reporting purposes) in the new Organics topic to ensure that we cover Organics across all FAS Sounds audiences.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
Agri Business News Audio Podcast				12		
Business Resilience: Social Media Highlights Reels			2			
Deer Farming Farm Visit Suite						4
Farm Management Handbook	2					
FAS Newsletter: Business & Policy Edition (Formerly Agribusiness News)	12					
FAS Newsletter: Dairy Edition (Formerly Milk Manager News)	6					
FAS Resources - Printed Press Advertorials + General FAS Newsletter	10					
FAS Website		5				
Financial Management Practical Workshops						12
Policy Update Resources (Greening)			1			1
Preparing for the Future: Resource Kit	5		2		1	
Rural Roundup Podcast				11		
Scottish Farm Business Survey - Update Tool		1				
Scottish Farm Business Survey - Workshop						1
UK Autumn Budget Response - Wills/POA/Succession	1					
	36	6	5	23	1	18

Figure 9 – Thriving Through Change Summary

Topic Lead: Alastair Beattie

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Next Generation (formerly New Entrants)

FAS Next Generation is how we support newcomers to the industry from a range of backgrounds (e.g. direct successors, employment within the industry, and no agricultural background).

The change in name of this theme is timely, prompted by a broad recognition that support for newcomers to farming and crofting needs to extend beyond those under 41 who are likely to, or recently have, become the head of a farming business.

Our design of the FAS Next Generation programme has evolved in response to the changing needs of this cohort and evolution in the policy, economic, and social landscape, necessitating a new approach to delivery.

We will combine three core elements, a specialist peer-to-peer learning initiative to provide foundational learning and support for newcomers, and a suite of FAS videos, publications and podcasts. This approach will provide a solid foundation of skills and knowledge that will support the next generation.

Objectives:

- Develop and enhance the one-to-many Next Generation support.
- Promote the new entrant mentoring service.

- Facilitate social cohesion between new entrants/next generation and prospective new entrants and encourage peer-to-peer knowledge transfer.
- Share first-hand examples of the many different routes prospective new entrants may take to enter the industry from those who are existing new entrants/next generation.
- Engage with other stakeholders e.g., NFU Next Generation, SAYFC, SLMS, Lantra, QMS (in the context of the new entrant monitor farmer) and FONE who are also collaborating with new entrants/next generation.

Highlights:

- **FAS Next Generation Groups:** Continuation of the two pilot groups launched in 2024 to build on the established FAS Connect model, focusing on personal development, mentoring, and peer-to-peer learning for forward-thinking farmers and crofters. The programme emphasises personal development over technical knowledge, helping participants build confidence, set goals, influence others, and develop a network. The structure develops peer-to-peer support and creates a safe environment for learning and idea exchange. Alongside a FAS Connect facilitator, an experienced farmer facilitator provides stability, coaching and mentoring.
- **Profitable Crofting:** Series of events in mainland crofting areas demonstrating practical cattle and sheep keeping for Next Generation crofters and highlight diversification opportunities to remain profitable in the future.
- **Succession Planning for Tenant Farmers:** Building on the succession planning webinars and publications produced in 2024, this webinar will explore additional elements tenant farmers need to consider during succession planning.
- **Succession Planning for Crofters:** Expanding on the Guide to Succession Planning for Crofters produced in 2024, a series of events will take place in mainland and island crofting areas to support Next Generation crofters discuss succession planning.

- **Nutrient Management & IPM Workshops:** Continuation of practical workshops covering soil and nutrient management and integrated pest management targeted at the Next Generation audience (Knowledge Level 1 content). These workshops will provide the Next Generation with the knowledge and skills required to complete Nutrient Management and Integrated Pest Management Plans required as part of the Whole Farm Plan.
- **Biodiversity Training Events:** Series of on-farm workshops covering identification and mapping of farmland habitats targeted at the Next Generation audience (Knowledge Level 1 content). These events will provide the Next Generation with the knowledge and skills to complete Biodiversity Audits required as part of the Whole Farm Plan.
- **Getting Started in Horticulture:** A series of in person events and webinars will pull together new and existing resources for next generation smallholders.
- **FAS Newsletter: Next Generation Edition** (Formerly New Entrant Newsletter) – a bi-annual newsletter distributed via email mailing list containing a range of resources, information and advice relevant to New Entrants and Next Generation farmers and crofters. This is one of a suite of new audience-targeted FAS Newsletters which contain a curated selection of publications, videos, podcasts and upcoming event information.

In addition to the activities planned in this topic, New Entrants & Next Generation farmers and crofters are a key audience for a range of other materials planned during the period.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event	Connect Group
Agri Culture Podcast: Next Generation Edition				3			
Biodiversity Audit Suite						2	
FAS Newsletter: Next Generation Edition (Formerly New Entrant Newsletter)	2						
Grassland Productivity Suite Publications	3						
New Entrant Group Central							3
New Entrant Group South							3
New Entrants: Social Media Highlights Reels			2				
Nutrient Management & IPM Workshops						2	
Profitable Crofting						3	
Succession Planning for Crofters Roadshow						3	
Succession Planning Webinar (tenancies)					1		
	5		2	3	1	10	6

Figure 10 – Next Generation Summary

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Organics

The Scottish Government is committed to expanding the organic farming sector, aiming to double the amount of land under organic management by 2026.

This is because Organic Farming has many benefits that aligns with Scottish Governments “Vision for Agriculture” to become a global leader in sustainable agriculture and delivers the following benefits:

- Reductions in Green House Gas (GHG) emissions,
- Improved biodiversity and natural capital,
- Improved soil health and reduced soil erosion,
- Reduced risk of water pollution,
- Provision of resilient farming systems that have a holistic approach,
- Promotes high standards of animal health and welfare,
- Contributes to Good Food Nation and Local Food strategies.

The Organic section of the Farm Advisory Service (FAS) will support three key target audiences:

- Existing Organic Farmers
- Farmers planning/starting conversion to Organic
- Farmers & Land Managers who are interested in sustainable farming and agroecological/regenerative practices.

With a range of sector bodies in Scotland providing the essential role of certification to ensure that producers and processors are fully compliant with the legal organic standards, the FAS will seek to work with these bodies to provide farmers and growers with essential knowledge transfer support to help enable them to develop their businesses.

Although Organic Farming has a legally defined set of principles and a set of standards that producers need to comply with to maintain their certified organic status, there are many other terms used to describe farming practices that are traditional or environmentally sympathetic, such as agroecological or regenerative. The influence of the organic sector therefore extends well beyond the specific boundaries of organic production and markets, and it has long played an important role in leading the wider industry agroecological practices and knowledge generation practices.

To ensure the organic section of the FAS has as wide an appeal as possible it will therefore seek to link (where relevant) to topics similar to these types of farming systems, fostering knowledge transfer and exchange using the full range of communication methods adopted within the FAS, e.g. on farm events, discussion groups, publications, podcasts etc.

Objectives

- Provide a trusted source of information to support knowledge transfer amongst organic farmers and others adopting agroecological approaches in the management of their farming system.
- Highlight the benefits that organic farming and its techniques can bring to reducing farmers and crofters greenhouse gas emissions and improve their sustainability.
- Highlight the associated benefits that organic farming can bring to farming systems such as improved biodiversity and nature restoration,
- Provide clear pathways and information to support farmers and crofters who wish to consider (or start) conversion to organic farming.
- Engage with stakeholders and certifying sector bodies such as Scottish Organic Stakeholder Group, Scottish Organic Producers Association (SOPA) and the Soil Association.

Highlights

- **Organic Discussion Group:** – continuation of a long-running organic discussion group with events, webinars and videos.

- **Farm Wildlife Walk Series** –An organic farm will be the venue for one of the wildlife walks.
- **Sustainable Parasitology for Organic Producers** – key elements of this animal health and welfare campaign will be geared toward organic producers including the 'Test Before You Treat' resources about testing for parasites.
- **Small Scale Organic Horticulture** – webinars for small growers on the benefits and opportunities from organic production and practical advice about agronomy.
- **FAS Connect** – continuation of the Holistic Farm Management group with producers managing a range of agroecological farming systems.
- **Organic Technical Farming Summaries** – A series of information sheets with tips on practical organic farming techniques.
- **FAS Sounds** – Podcast in Lowering Emissions & Decarbonizing series about the contribution organic farming techniques can make
- **Nutrient Management & IPM Workshops** – lessons learned from organic farming systems will be highlighted at these workshops.
- **Grassland Roadshow – Organics Farm Walk** – an organic farm walk will be held to demonstrate soil and grassland management under organic management systems.
- **FAS Newsletter: Organic Farming Edition** – provision of a quarterly organic farming newsletter. This is one of a suite of new audience-targeted FAS Newsletters which contain a curated selection of publications, videos, podcasts and upcoming event information.

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
Agri Culture Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
Agri Culture Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
Cropcast Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
FAS Newsletter: Organic Edition	4					
FAS Resources - Printed Press Advertorials + General FAS Newsletter	3					
Horticulture for Smallholders					2	2
Natural Capital Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
NE Organic Discussion Group	1		1		1	3
Organic Technical Summaries	6					
Organics: Social Media Highlights Reels			2			
Rural Roundup Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
Stock Talk Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
Thrill of The Hill Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
Unsung Heroes of Climate Friendly Farming Podcast: Organic Edition				1		
	14		3	8	3	5

Figure 11 – Organics Summary

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FAS Connect

The Vision for Scottish Agriculture explicitly states that there should be “co-operative approaches to optimise collaboration and knowledge exchange.”

FAS Connect is an innovative peer-to-peer learning programme bringing together 12–15 farmer or crofter participants in a facilitated environment to improve their technical skills and personal development. Groups are closed, meaning the same participants meet each time, helping to build relationships and trust. Topics are participant led with between three and six meetings held annually.

Meetings are centred around the peer-to-peer principle of learning, with less focus on delivery from ‘experts’ and more about sharing information and learning from other group members and other farmers. Personal development and fostering positive attitudes are a significant component in the ethos of FAS Connect. Members are encouraged to learn and improve their technical knowledge but also to take the time whilst with their FAS Connect peers to ‘get out of their business’ and think about the future and how they achieve their goals. Delivery of FAS Connect is as much about ‘soft skills’ such as building trust and relationships and developing problem solving skills as a group as it is about knowledge exchange (Figure 6). It integrates well into the Developing People theme to build confidence amongst attendees, create social and business

connections, and foster mindset change to create resilient farmers running thriving businesses.

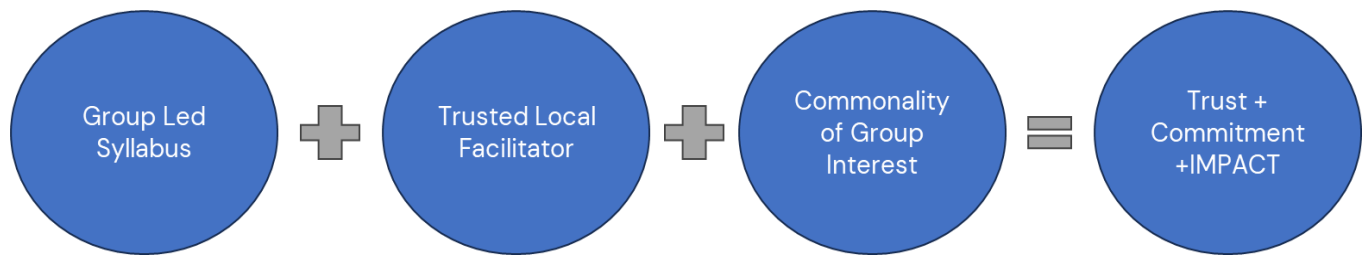


Figure 6 – Features of the FAS Connect model

Farmers and crofters are seeking FAS Connect as a means to develop the network of knowledge and support which can help them adapt their business in the face of climate and market challenges. As a collective of farmers who appreciate modern agriculture is adapting and evolving constantly, they are more responsive to applying change to their business and encouraging others to do so.

FAS Connect groups are unique, the syllabus for any individual group reflects the objectives and interests of the individual participants and the group as a collective. Groups are formed based on geography and farming enterprise rather than being defined by being organic, conventional, or regenerative and as such the range of topics covered in any one meeting can be very broad. Peer to peer learning is most effective where we have farmers and crofters coming together to discuss the diverse ways in which they can achieve their common goal. This year, there will be focussed discussions throughout all FAS Connect groups on Health and Safety best practice, with a focus on raising awareness of Health and Safety and it's link to wellbeing. This will be done by starting conversations relevant at the farm businesses being visited and providing resources in conjunction with the Farm Safety Foundation.

Groups typically sit within one of the following types:

- **Sustainable Livestock:** these cover beef, dairy and sheep. These groups bring together forward thinking and progressive livestock farmers who are actively open to change and adaptation to improve the sustainability of their businesses in an increasingly challenging environment. Efficiency measures, which go hand-in-hand with reducing emissions, have and are likely to continue to be front and centre of these groups. Those who have not already completed a carbon audit will be encouraged to do so.

- **Natural Capital & Net Zero:** these are broadly based around the successful Net Zero Arran group – a forerunner of FAS Connect and complementary to Scottish Government’s Carbon Neutral Islands project. They use areas highlighted in their carbon audit as opportunities for improvement as the main focus of discussion, but biodiversity and habitat improvement are also a common theme.
- **Crop & Soils:** these continue the activities of those groups formed under the Soil & Nutrient Network, but with an increasingly holistic approach to crop production. They focus on a range of arable and grassland situations in order to make the best use of inputs and maintain and improve soil condition. Specific topics range from group to group – in some areas these are highly arable focussed, whilst on others there is a significant grassland-emphasis.

FAS Connect will have 45 groups , is planned to hold 144 events and produce an end of year summary report during the period.

FAS Connect Lead: Jennifer Struthers

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FAS TV

Since its inception in 2016, video content has been a growing and key component of the FAS delivery, evolving into the rich and diverse offering. FAS TV is now an established, industry leading peer-to-peer knowledge exchange platform which is unique in the rural sector. It showcases farming and crofting businesses, technological innovations, best practice, animal health & welfare, environmental stewardship, climate change, biodiversity, and more, in a format which recreates the farm visit and has allowed viewers to visit a large and diverse range of farms and crofts from the comfort of their own home or office.

The storytelling format of FAS TV presents a terrific opportunity for engagement with our audience. Through it we can put faces to the concepts and methodologies which the programme is promoting. By embedding these ideas into real-life, we invite interaction with the concepts, both through the comments section of the channel and the advice-line service, where people with questions are directed to continue their learning journey.

It continues to be a hugely successful and popular output since its inception and this regular programme attracts extremely large numbers of viewers and drives subscription to the FAS YouTube channel. The growth in FAS TV has also had a positive impact on other digital outputs driving viewership to other videos, reels, and podcasts, to further their learning and engagement through the programme.

Moving forward with FAS TV, we will continue to have a strong geographical spread of segments across Scotland and will build on key strategic priorities such as environmental sustainability, biodiversity, animal health & welfare, among others. We will also re-visit previous contributors to illustrate the developments they've made in their businesses and systems to inspire our audience. Through revisiting key topics, we will explore how farmers and crofters have had to overcome challenges during the implementation of new systems and inspire viewers to learn from their peers.

Objectives

- Provides peer to peer learning through digital media.
- Reduces social isolation and geographical challenges of participating in farm visits.
- Encourages farmers and crofters to engage in new ideas and innovations for their businesses.
- Promotes best practice in Scottish Agriculture and Crofting.
- Encourages farmers and crofters to promote themselves and their businesses.
- Transfers strategic developments to industry in a farmer-friendly way.
- Builds confidence in the agricultural community to engage in digital media and digital learning.

Delivery in 2024/25

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.

FAS TV episodes have a very strong climate and biodiversity inclusion rate, with almost every episode featuring nature-positive actions. The episodes are responsive and flexible and part of their success is the highly current/relevant feel from each episode. The high level plan for 2024/25 includes:

- Biodiversity
- Water management, soils and biodiversity.
- Succession
- Livestock systems
- Organics
- Crofting & Heritage
- Regenerative Agriculture
- Crofting topics
- Next Generation
- Agroforestry and woodland

Project Group	Publication	Tool	Video	Podcast	Webinar	In Person Event
FAS TV			30			
FAS TV: Social Media Highlights Reels			20			
			50			

Figure 12 – FAS TV Summary

FAS TV Producers: Cara Campbell & Calum Johnston

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Table 1 – Outputs by Programme Area

Reporting Topic	Group	Event	Web'	Pub	Video	Pod'	Tool	Total Outputs
Natural Capital		26	1	39	24	23	2	115
Thriving Through Change		18	1	36	5	23	6	89
Crop & Soil		28	1	30	16	15		90
Croft & SF		53	5	4	5	10	3	80
Animal Health & Welfare		28	7	48	13	9		105
Organic		5	3	14	3	8		33
Developing People		36	4	1	3	3		47
Next Generation	6	10	1	5	2	3		25
FAS Connect	144							144
FAS TV					50			50
Integrated Hub		15		18				33
Programme Management								0
Total	150	219	23	195	121	94	11	811

Chart 1 – Proportion Spend by Topic/Programme Area

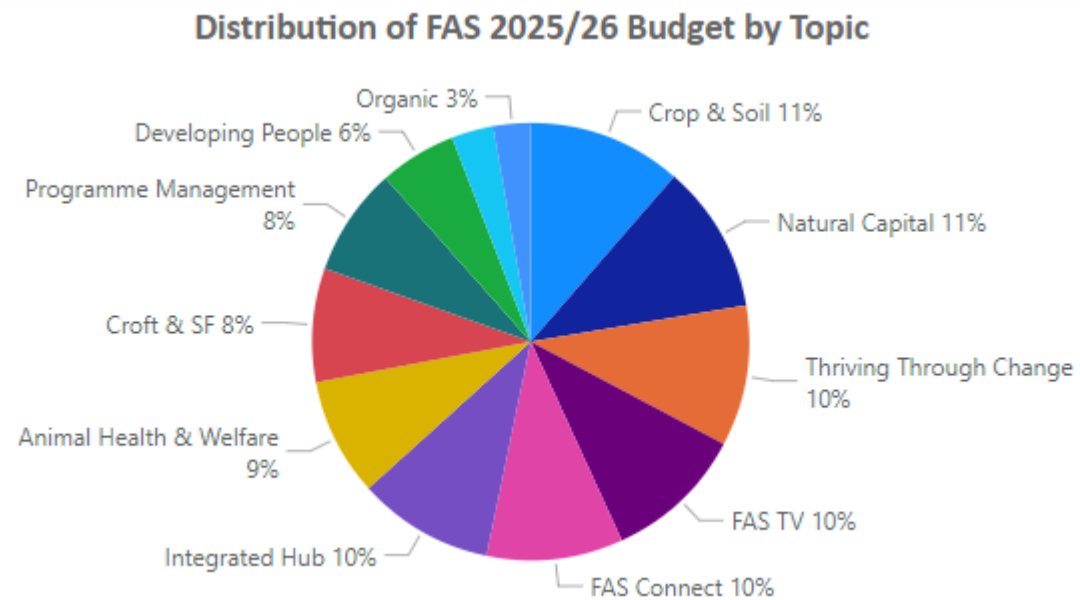
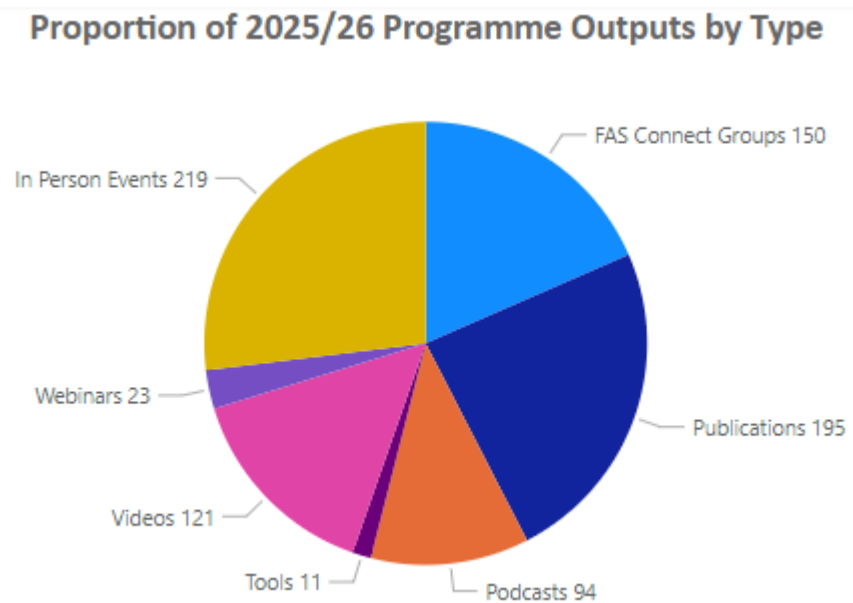


Chart 2 – Proportion of Programme Outputs by Type



Performance Targets, 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	5,000 attendees annually at events.
2	Attendance exceeds 75% of the predicted number for events annually.
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	Website page views and impressions, the degree to which users stay on the website, engage and return on average over a calendar month, reaches 20% or ratio equivalent over the reporting year.
6	100% of CPD requirements are delivered against the annual plan.
7	Minimum 70% inclusion of biodiversity and climate change actions.

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	Website page views per session (the number of pages users of the website view in each individual session) is more than 4.
3	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 Lily Reade, 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
Lily Reade	One to Many Programme Leader	Ayr
Mhairi Dalgliesh	Topic Leader Natural Capital	Edinburgh
Alastair Beattie	Topic Leader Thriving Through Change	Dumfries
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	Topic Leader Crofts & Small Farms	Inverness
Ewan Johnston	Topic Leader Organics	Thainstone
Jacalyn Laird	Communications Officer	Edinburgh
Alex Blott	Communications Officer	Glasgow
Cara Campbell	FAS TV Producer	Campbeltown
Calum Johnston	FAS TV Producer	Perth
Rebecca McBain	FAS Video Producer	Thainstone
Kerry Hammond	FAS Sounds Producer	Aberdeen
Rebecca Audsley	Strategic Advisor – Climate Change	

Table 7

FAS Delivery Operations & Digital Team		
Name	Role	Location
TBC	Operations Manager & Senior Project Manager	Edinburgh
Lindsay Officer	Operations Administrator	Edinburgh
Fiona Jolly	Operations Administrator	Ayr
Amy Piggott	Events Officer	Glasgow
Cameron Waugh	Events Officer	Edinburgh
Robbie Campbell	Digital Content Editor	Edinburgh
Robbie Paton	Videographer	Glasgow
Kieron Sim	Videographer	Edinburgh

Table 8

FAS Programme Board Summary		
Name	Job Title	Location
Chloe McCulloch	Head of Consulting	Ayr

Dr Mary Thomson	SRUC Vice Principal Skills & Lifelong Learning	Edinburgh
Andrew Bauer	Head of Food & Footprint	Stirling
Gavin Hill	Head of Knowledge Exchange	Edinburgh
Anne Seaton	Head of Veterinary Diagnostics and Livestock Health Schemes	Edinburgh
Malcolm Hosie	Head of Physical Service Delivery	St Boswells