

Scottish Farm Advisory Service

One-to-Many Delivery

2016-17 Annual Report

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1. Introduction

This management report covers the period from 1st July 2016 to 31st March 2017, and specifically addresses the delivery of the One-to-Many component of the Farm Advisory Service (FAS). This report has been written to focus on outputs from the programme and to summarise the performance over the first financial year of delivery.

The Programme started in July 2016 and the financial year ended on the 31st March 2017, providing a 9 month initial delivery year. The delivery was described in and governed by 2 approved business plans.

- The interim business plan for the period 1st July 2016 to service launch in mid-September 2016 (approved in July 2016)
- The 2016/17 business plan for the period July 2016 to March 2017 (approved on 6th Feb 2017)

This management report is accompanied by the annual finance report

2. Reporting Performance

The reporting mechanisms for the One to Many FAS programme in 2016/17 included the preparation of:

- Monthly Management Reports
 - 6 Reports produced
July to October; November; December; January; February; March
- Monthly Invoice Reports
 - 9 Reports Produced
One report per month July 2016 to March 2017

From July 2017 onwards a requirement for a summary finance report was included. As a result no summary finance reports were produced in 2016/17

The monthly invoice reports included the reporting of the invoice amounts by EU measure, sub-measures and focus areas. All of the delivery in this component of FAS is provided under measure 2.0 - sub measure 2.1 – Support to help benefitting from the use of advisory services.

3. Key delivery achieved during the first 9 months

Annex 1 contains a shortened version of the “plan on a page” schedule originally presented in the 2016/17 Business Plan, to which has been added a RAG (Red/Amber/Green) assessment of delivery and where appropriate a metric has been included to quantify the delivery.

Key delivery at or above planned performance (green):

- Launch of FAS One to Many Programme on 20th September 2016
- Website and Advice line go-live on 20th September 2016
- 9,759 Web users since go-live to end March 2017
- 50,597 unique web page views.
- 486 Advice line enquiries dealt with.
- Farm Management Handbook provided in e-format in December 2016
- Publication of Agri-Business News (9 monthly editions)
- Publication of Milk Manager News (9 monthly editions)
- Distribution of ~23,000 cards to land owners and managers across Scotland
- 5,308 beneficiaries in the 9 month period to end March 2017
- 138 events organised and delivered
- 2,924 attendees at events
- 6 regional events
- Attendance at 30 shows with Farming and Water Scotland
- 12 Soil and Nutrient Network Farms identified and sampled
- 9 Soil and Nutrient Network Farm meetings
- 14 New Entrants Groups established and workshops held for each.
- New Entrants conference attracted 119 delegates.
- 1,243 Croft Subscriptions established over the 9 months

Key Delivery below planned performance (Amber):

- Woodland News – one larger issue published in March 2017 rather than two issues - one autumn and one spring.
- Monthly invoicing by 14th of following month. Monthly invoicing was achieved but not within agreed timescale. Timescale was revised to accommodate the necessity to capture monthly timesheet data.
- Business Plan 2017/18 – was to be completed by end on March 2017, but was concluded in July 2017. Prep for 2018/19 business plan to commence in November 2017.

Key Delivery below planned performance (Red):

- Small Farm Subscriptions. – The number started in the 9 months was 49 compared to a target of 275. – Additional guidance notes and delivery agreed within year, and slower growth rate to optimum number identified in Business Plan 2017/18.
- Discounted Croft and Small Farm hours – Small Farm reduction follows from lack of subscribers, but fall in discounted services to crofts is due to change in available discounts and crofters electing not to require further advice.

4. Outputs

4.1 Events in the first 9 months

During the first 9 months a total of 138 workshops and events were organised and delivered compared with an intention to deliver 125 such events. An increase in small farm and croft events largely explains this increase. The table of events by month (see below) shows that the peaks of activity were in November and from January through to March. Seasonal availability and a compressed delivery timetable explain why these peaks occur.

Events	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16	Jan-17	Feb-17	Mar-17	Total
Number		3	3	8	27	16	24	27	30	138
Attendees		69	48	155	535	377	515	726	499	2924

With an average audience of 21 the events ranged from small workshops and discussion group meetings planned to accommodate 10 – 15 attendees, to larger scale events with up to 119 attendees.

The average attendee satisfaction rating was 3.31 on a scale of 1 to 4 where 3 is very satisfactory and 4 is excellent.

Events were held across Scotland both on-farm and in hotels and other venues. The majority of speakers were from SAC/SRUC, but with a number of invited guest speakers including veterinary practitioners, lawyers, foresters, accountants, other consultants and representatives from Scottish Government including an address by Fergus Ewing MSP at the New Entrants conference and by Mike Russell MSP at the Argyll regional events



4.2 Show attendance

The FAS banners, flags, pop-up and pull-ups were displayed at all of the major agricultural shows across Scotland as stand alone exhibits, as part of Farming and Water Scotland or as part of SAC/SRUC exhibits.

Specifically under the Farming and Water Scotland initiative 30 agricultural shows and events were attended and the FAS One to Many programme provide expertise on the stands at each of these events.

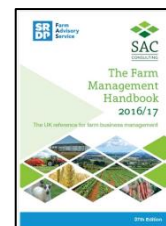


4.3 Publications

The following publications are a selection of the output from 2016/17. All are available from the FAS website. The website has been constructed to allow users to access relevant and current advice whether a specific FAS funded publication, or a previous VAS funded publication. Re-branding of technical notes has taken place as updates are identified and agreed.

The Farm Management Handbook (FMH) 37th edition was published in September 2016 and made available in December 2016 on the FAS website. This ensured that all visitors to the website could access this information for free thanks to the funding from FAS.

<https://www.fas.scot/publications/farm-management-handbook-20162017/>



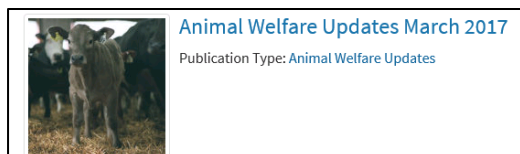
Agribusiness News was published each month over the first 9 months with regular updates on the main agricultural commodities for Scotland in each issue. Features included Greening and cross compliance, Inheritance Tax, Forward Milk Contracts, Scottish

Climate Change Plan, Land Reform Act and Key Economic Data.

<https://www.fas.scot/downloads/agribusiness-news-march-2017/>

Milk Manager News was published each month on the FAS website with a range of technical, business and environmental articles targeted at the dairy sector.

<https://www.fas.scot/downloads/milk-manager-news-march-2017/>



Animal Welfare Updates have been produced monthly throughout the period and each update contains 10 – 12 articles on Animal Welfare.

<https://www.fas.scot/publications/animal-welfare-updates-march-2017/>

The FAS Newsletter (2016 edition) was published and contained 13 articles on environmental issues, animal health, AECS, barley diseases and pollinators etc.

<https://www.fas.scot/publications/fas-newsletter-2016/>



In addition 29 pages each with 10 – 12 downloads have been prepared on the FAS website that operates using a search function. These downloads include the publications above, but also guidance notes, technical notes and case studies that have been prepared and updated.

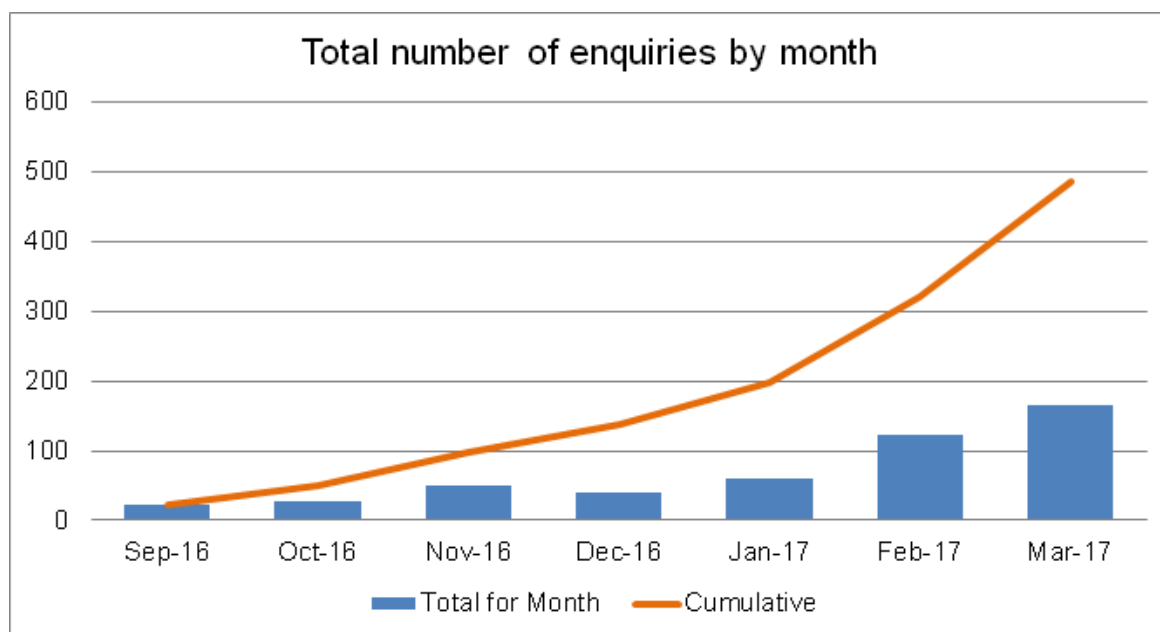
<https://www.fas.scot/downloads/>

4.4 Advice Line

There were a total of 486 enquiries submitted to the FAS helpdesk between September 2016 and March 2017.

Some 77% of the calls were dealt with at the point of enquiry with 23% requiring referral to a consultant for further advice and guidance.

During the period September 2016 to March 2017, 97% of complex enquiries that required referral to a consultant were addressed within 5 days of receipt of the enquiry.



4.5 Website

Since the launch in September the website has recorded 50,597 unique page views and 9,759 users. The “programme-to-date” bounce rate was 40.05%. The period from January to March was the busiest quarter for web activity of the 2016/17 reporting period. This was driven by the intensity of delivery, promotional activities and the increasing content and awareness of the FAS website.

The website was developed to host information on other SRDP events, including Monitor Farm and Soil Association events from early 2017.

Annex 1 – RAG Report 2016/17

Increasing Profitability & Sustainability		RAG Rating
Regional Meetings (6)		6
Area Meetings (46)		47
Soil Nutrient Network Farm		
Identify Co-operating farms (12)		12
Hold initial meetings on 9 out of 12		9
Farming For a Better Climate		
Press Articles (8)		7
Case Studies (3)		3
Social Media & website		
Renewables Database		
Farming & Water Scotland.		
Event Attendance (12)		30
PLANET Helpline		
Cross Compliance		
Animal welfare		
Events		9
Animal Welfare Website		
Woodland News		
Prep & Publish 2 editions		1
CDIS		
New Entrants		
Establish 14 New Entrant Groups		14
Workshops (54)		50
Regional Conference (1)		1
Business Efficiency		
Farm Management Handbook (paper)		1
Farm Management Handbook (digital)		1
Agri Business News (Monthly editions)		9
Dataset Maintenance		
Discussion Groups (25)		24
Crofter & Small Farm Advisory Service		
Establish 1,226 Crofter Subs		1243
Establish 275 Small Farm Subs		45
Supply 8,610 hrs of discounted advice		3177
National Advice Facility		
Advice Line		486
Website		9759
Social Media		
Press releases & Promotion		
Programme Management		
Launch FAS		
Business Plan 16/17		
Business Plan 17/18		
Monthly reporting 16/17		
Monthly Invoice by 14th following month		