

FAS One-to-Many Annual Report

1 April 2017 - 31 March 2018



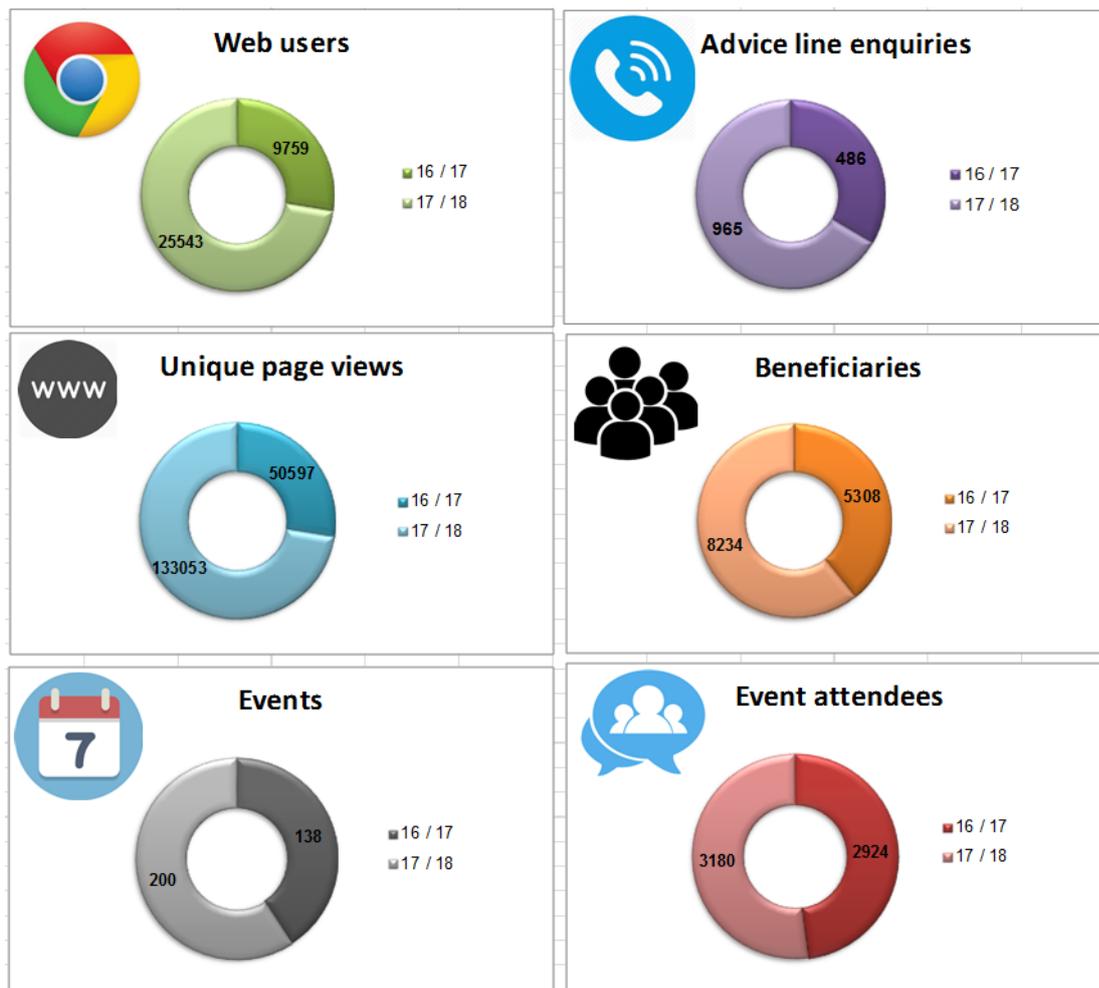
Version 3 – 31 August 2018

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1. Executive summary

2017/18 saw a significant stepping up of delivery and engagement. The diagram below compares key measures in 2016/17 with that in 2017/18, and for every measure it has increased. It should be noted that 2016/17 was not a full delivery year – it was approximately half a delivery year – so a like-for-like comparison does not tell the full story.



Also worth highlighting is that 95 percent of the 2,035 attendees who completed an event evaluation form (64 percent of all attendees completed a form) rated the event they attended as excellent or very satisfactory and 87 percent said they would change their farm management as a result of what they had learned.

For a range of reasons – some foreseeable and others not – within SAC Consulting there were a number of changes to the staff managing the contract. Whilst this did have an impact, changes have now been made to ensure a consistently higher level of management and delivery.

2. Background

This management report covers the period from 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, and summarises the delivery of the one-to-many component of the Scottish Farm Advisory Service (FAS) by SAC Consulting. This report has been written to focus on outputs from the programme and to summarise performance. The delivery during the period was described and governed by the approved 2017/18 business plan for the period April 2017 to March 2018. This management report is accompanied by the annual finance report.

3. Key delivery

Across 2017-2018, the FAS one-to-many programme delivered a huge range of events, publications, and tools to a large number of land managers across Scotland. This picture is illustrated by the following statistics:

- 1 edition of the Farm Management Handbook
- 1 edition of the Farm Woodland News
- 12 monthly editions of Agri-Business News
- 12 monthly editions of Milk Manager News
- 12 Soil and Nutrient Network Farms identified and sampled
- 14 New Entrants Groups established and 2 workshops held for each
- 21 Soil and Nutrient Network Farm meetings
- 36 local and regional shows had the Farming and Water Scotland stand
- 90 attendees at the New Entrants Gathering
- 210 workshops, events and discussion groups
- 248 small farm subscribers
- 965 advice line enquiries dealt with

- 2,031 crofter subscribers
- 3,192 attendees at events
- 8,234 beneficiaries in the 11 month period to the end of February 2018
- 25,543 web users
- 133,053 unique web page views

The contingency was used to support two initiatives that had high levels of participation and engagement and which highlighted the value of FAS being flexible and responsive to the changing external environment. These initiatives were:

- FAS responded to the recommendations of the Agricultural Weather Advisory Panel to run six weather resilience meetings in key regions affected by the weather.
- Following on from the recommendations of, and discussions with, existing Women in Agriculture Groups run by NFU Scotland, it was agreed to run events for women in agriculture.

There were a limited number of issues where delivery did not meet targets:

- Invoices were, on occasion, submitted later than the agreed target of the 18th day of the following month. SAC Consulting has improved its internal reporting and processing to capture the detail required as early as possible in the month. This should reduce the risk of late submission of future invoices.
- There was a fall in the number of discounted Croft and Small Farm consultancy hours. This was due to a change in the pricing system. SAC Consulting has had several discussions with Scottish Government about the case for further changes to promote uptake and will table formal proposals early in the 2018/19 delivery year.
- The total of 210 events, workshops and discussion groups delivered narrowly missed the target of 227.
- The total of 2,031 crofter subscriptions and 248 small farm subscriptions narrowly missed the targets of 2250 and 250 respectively.

4. Reporting performance

The reporting mechanisms for the one-to-many FAS programme in 2017/18 included the preparation of 12 monthly management reports and 12 monthly invoice reports. From July 2017 onwards a summary finance report was included.

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 the FAS is provided under:

- Measure 2.0 - sub measure 2.1 – support to help benefitting from the use of advisory services

5. Events

Over the year a total of 210 workshops, events and discussion groups were organised and delivered. The table below shows that the peaks of activity were in July, September to December and February to March. The farming calendar affecting the availability of participants largely explains why these were the busiest times, but it is recognised that more must be done to ensure good use is made of every available window throughout the year.

	Apr-17	May-17	Jun-17	Jul-17	Aug-17	Sep-17	Oct-17	Nov-17	Dec-17	Jan-18	Feb-18	Mar-18	Total
Number of events	0	6	6	25	11	19	15	26	20	9	27	36	210
Attendees	0	63	94	459	192	313	270	411	256	108	514	512	3192

With an average audience of 15.2, the events ranged from small workshops and discussion group meetings with an average of 10-15 attendees, to larger scale events with up to 90 attendees.

Events were held across Scotland, both on-farm and in hotels and other venues. The majority of expert speakers were from SAC Consulting/SRUC, but there also a number of invited guest speakers including veterinary practitioners, lawyers, foresters, accountants, other consultants and representatives from Scottish Government.

Worth noting was the involvement in the round of 12 tenants amnesty meetings of Bob McIntosh (Tenant Farming Commissioner), Hamish Lean (agricultural solicitor), Martin Hall (land agent), Tom Oates (land agent), Watson Bell (land agent) and James Petty (land agent). These meetings were well received with good attendances. An extra effort to secure such expert outside speakers will be made during 20178/18 and beyond.



2037 event evaluation forms were completed and entered a database. More detail from the event evaluation forms is included overleaf.



Summary of event evaluation

Overall delivery?

Excellent	62%
Very satisfactory	33%
Satisfactory	2%
Less than satisfactory	0%
No answer	2%

How easy was it to understand the information provided?

Excellent	50%
Very satisfactory	29%
Satisfactory	3%
Less than satisfactory	0%
No answer	18%

How useful was the event?

Excellent	53%
Very satisfactory	30%
Satisfactory	14%
Less than satisfactory	0%
No answer	2%

Will you implement changes to your farm management because of the information you have gained at the event today?

Yes	87%
No	5%
No answer	8%

What did you learn from the event?

Better decision making	35%
Livestock/crop improvements	22%
Improved profit margin	19%
Reduced cost	18%
Improved soil/nutrient management	18%
Improved knowledge of legislation	15%
Take forward diversification	13%
Know how to access grant support	11%
Identified training needs	9%
Restructuring business	9%
Improved knowledge of environmental issue and opportunities	9%
Greater willingness to work with other farmers	8%
Clearer planning for retirement/exit	8%
Improved knowledge of waste/pollution issue	5%
Improved knowledge of health and safety issues	4%
Improved knowledge of climate change	3%

What people have said



"I've just generally found them really informative"

"The events that are run through FAS, and particularly the New Entrants events/ courses are invaluable to those of us who are new to the agricultural sector. They have provided access to both practical and commercial expertise that I would otherwise not been aware of nor been able to afford. Through these events I've also met a lot of other new entrants who are on a similar journey. I'm sure in the coming months and years these contacts will become an invaluable support network and source of knowledge."

"It's so nice to have something you can go to where you can network"

"As someone who's not been born or brought up on a farm but has married in to it, I just wanted to come to an event and be surrounded by females who are going to encourage and support me and make me feel like I have something to input to our craft"

“I only decided to come along this morning as it’s a busy time but I’m glad I did. It’s given me a boost as I feel quite isolated sometimes”

Show attendance

The FAS banners, flags, pop-up and pull-ups were displayed at 36 agricultural shows across Scotland – including the Royal Highland Show, AgriScot and Turriff Show – as shown below.



6. Publications

The following publications are a selection of the output from 2017/18. 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) 38th edition was published and made available in October 2017 on the FAS website. The SAC Farm Management Handbook is a budgeting book. Provision of physical information upon which the financial measures are based enables the user to adjust data, where necessary, to account for differences occurring locally or on individual farms:



www.fas.scot/publications/farm-management-handbook-20172018/

Agribusiness News was published each month over the 12 months with regular updates on the main agricultural commodities for Scotland in each issue. Features included Greening and cross compliance, Inheritance Tax, Future of Agricultural Support, Sector Focus, Scottish Food & Drink, Brexit, Healthy Eating and Key Economic Data:



the main agricultural commodities for Scotland in each issue. Features included Greening and cross compliance,

<https://www.fas.scot/publications/agribusiness-news-march-2018/>

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/publications/milk-manager-news-march-2018/>



Home » Publications » Animal Welfare Updates March 2018

Animal Welfare Updates March 2018

Topic: Animal welfare

Animal Welfare Updates have been produced monthly throughout the period and each update contains around 12 to 16 articles on Animal Welfare:

www.fas.scot/publications/animal-welfare-updates-march-2018/

A total of 419 documents have been published on the FAS website. These include the publications above, but also guidance notes, technical notes and case studies – all of which can be searched for: www.fas.scot/downloads/

7. Examples of press coverage

New campaign is aimed at beating gender bias in farming

By **BRIAN HENDERSON**

The Borders will next week host the first in a series of free events offering inspiration and advice to the thousands of women across the country working in Scottish agriculture.

The women-only events have been organised by the Scottish Government's Farm Advisory Service (FAS) programme, delivered by Scotland's Rural College (SRUC).

The organisers said the meetings, taking place the length of the country from 13-28 March, will cover a range of topics, from accounts and mental

health awareness to diversification opportunities and even the role of social media in farming circles.

The events follow on from recommendations in a report last summer – Women in Farming and the Agriculture Sector – which highlighted that there was a need to set up a series of measures to address the “conscious and unconscious” gender bias within the industry.

Siobhan Macdonald from SRUC, who has been setting up the project, said that while women in agriculture faced a number of challenges, there were also many opportunities. “These free events are a

great chance for women to find out more about these opportunities, to learn, to share ideas and to be inspired by a range of speakers and interactive sessions,” she said.

With the announcement coinciding with today's International Women's Day, SRUC principal Wayne Powell said: “I am delighted that SRUC is able to support the Scottish Government's Women in Agriculture initiative through these events.”

The first meeting takes place next Tuesday at 11am at the Carfraemill Hotel in the Borders and will focus on accounts and business planning.

The Scotsman – 08/03/2018



Warning of damage voles cause to woodland

Farmers have been urged to take steps to stop the potentially “catastrophic” damage voles can cause to young woodlands.

The plea comes following the publication of guidelines by the Scottish Government's Farm Advisory Service (Fas), delivered by SRUC through its Sac Consulting division.

The guidelines provide advice on the various protection measures available to protect woodlands from voles.

These include tree shelters or guards, thorough spot weeding, mowing and encouraging predators such as owls and kestrels, which can eat up

to four voles a day, into the woodland.

According to Fas, both bank voles and field voles attack young trees, mostly during the winter.

The voles gnaw the bark from the roots and lower stem, and while severe damage will girdle the tree and kill it, less severe damage can weaken the tree and allow fungal infections to enter the wood.

“It's remarkable how destructive voles can be to broadleaved trees on grassy sites,” said Sac Consulting's senior woodlands consultant, Simon Jacyna.

“Good maintenance is essential to

minimise damage but, of course, this also helps the trees to grow strongly.

“It can be very rewarding though to see owls, and possibly even wildcats, hunting over the young woodlands and protecting the trees for you.”

As well as its advice on protecting trees from voles, the advisory service has also published a technical note on the value of pruning.

It advises farmers and crofters to prune trees to prevent the development of major structural defects and to ensure that the majority of trees in a crop have the potential to produce high-quality timber.

The Courier – 03/03/2018

Advice on offer for new entrants to industry

Experienced farmers will share their tips and advice on how to succeed in the industry at a special event for new entrants to farming later this month.

The New Entrants to Farming Gathering, organised by SAC Consulting on behalf of the Scottish Government's Farm Advisory Service, takes place at Perth Racecourse on Tuesday February 27.

Among the line-up of speakers is Lanarkshire farmer and butcher Michael Shannon, who

owns Damn Delicious.

He will share the story of his business selling Aberdeen-Angus and Texel meat online and encourage new entrants to look at farming in a different way.

"I am looking forward to the event because, as a first-generation farmer who has had a previous career in the supply trade, I hope that I can encourage new entrants into the industry," said Mr Shannon.

Other speakers include Lantra Scotland chairman Henry Graham.

The Courier – 10/02/2018

Advice on using biosolids to boost farm fertility

THE ADVANTAGES of using organic fertilisers have been highlighted in a new, free online resource.

A new technical note explaining how biosolids, composts, anaerobic digestates and industrial wastes can be useful and cost-effective crop nutrients has been produced by the Scottish Government's Farm Advisory Service programme.

Delivered by SAC Consulting, the technical note also provides guidance on how to comply with relevant legislation. Used properly, organic materials add nutrient value to soil and crops, and in some cases provide significant savings on the cost of

bought-in fertilisers. Regular applications of bulky organic materials can improve water-holding capacity, drought resistance and soil structure.

SRUC consultant, Dr Alex Sinclair, said: "Using organic fertilisers can be a useful and cost-effective way of improving soil fertility and quality. However, the nutrient value of applied organic fertilisers must be included in a farm's fertiliser management plan to fully realise the financial benefit."

To read the note, go to <https://www.fas.scot/publications/tn699-agricultural-use-of-biosolids-composts-anaerobic-digestates-and-other-industrial-organic-fertilisers/>

Scottish Farmer – May 2018

8. Crofter and small farm advisory service

A net total of 2,031 crofters and 248 smallholders took out a subscription to the Crofter and Small Farm Advisory Service in 2017/18. Alongside direct advice, more emphasis was placed on videos and publications to reach crofts and small farms in remote areas.

A video was produced in partnership with the University of Edinburgh Veterinary School, to explain the basics of calving a cow. The video was aimed at crofters, smallholders and new entrants, and gives very clear instruction and the simulator allows a demonstration of the position of the calf within the cow during the calving process.



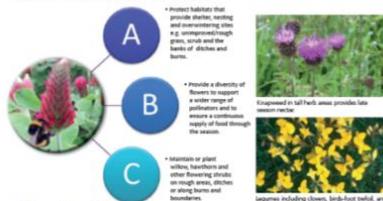
Pollinator: Types and Food Sources on Small Units Practical Guide



Bumblebees, hoverflies and solitary bees are amongst the many pollinating insects that are a vital part of ecological systems, including agriculture and croft production. There are key habitats and crops that can help provide for pollinator populations on small units.



Providing for pollinators in three easy steps:



Crofting is often described of as a High Nature Value type of farming, with species such as corncrake and the Great Yellow Bumblebee only found in crofting areas. A colourful and easy to read guide of ten steps for helping pollinators, along with a pollinator calendar and food source guide were produced, aimed at crofts and small units. For corncrake, in partnership with RSPB Scotland, a leaflet and video were produced to explain corncrake habitats and how to create cover (including through agri-environment

schemes).

Small shelterbelts can be useful additions to smaller units, providing shelter for livestock and crops as well as providing habitat for wildlife. In a podcast made in with the Woodland Trust and Croft Woodland Project, the importance of the choice of suitable species and location was discussed.

9. Discussion Groups

The Common Grazings groups held several meetings and worked on solutions to problems. The Crofting Commission worked closely with stakeholders to create a simplified and revised common grazings regulations template. To help Common Grazings groups to understand why and how to use the new regulations, written and video guides were produced in Gaelic and English.

Riaghailtean Fearann Ionaidh

Riaghailtean Ionaidh Ùr

Tha Coimisean na Croitearachd air teampaid Riaghailtean Ionaidh ùr fhoillseachadh. Chan eil an teampaid cho mionaideach ris an fheadhainn a chaidh fhoillseachadh a-cheana, mar thoradh air nach robh uimhir de na riatanasan a bha air an sònrachadh sna riaghailtean roimhe, gan solarachadh taobh a-staigh Achd na Croitearachd.

Tha beagan troimh-chèile mu thimcheall a' phròiseis seo ann am mòran chomataidhean co-cheangailte ri gabhail ri riaghailtean ùra, agus tha an nota fiosrachaidh seo a' dèiligeadh le cuid de na ceistean coitcheann agus a' mìnachadh a' phròiseis an lùib gabhail ri seat ùr de riaghailtean, no dèanamh atharrachaidhean air na riaghailtean làithreach agad.

Am feum sinn gabhail ris na riaghailtean ùra?

Chan eil e èiginneach gabhail ris na riaghailtean ùra ma tha na riaghailtean làithreach a tha agad ag obrachadh gu math agus a' coileanadh riatanasan an Ionaidh Choitcheann agad. Ach, 's e deagh chleachdadh a th' ann na riaghailtean agad ath-sgrùdadh gu cunbhalach, oir dh'fhaodadh nach bi na seann riaghailtean a' freagairt air an reachdas làithreach no mar a tha an t-ionaidh coitcheann agad ag obrachadh san latha an-diugh.

Cuin bu chòir dhuinn gabhail ris na riaghailtean ùra?

Ma cho-dhùineas tu gabhail ris na riaghailtean ùra, bu chòir dhut àm a thaghadh a tha freagarrach do dhòigh-obrach na comataidh agad. Bhiodh toiseach teirm oifigeil ùr na àm loidsigeach airson an eacarsaich seo a ghabhail os làimh, mura robh adhbharan deatamach ann gus do riaghailtean ath-ùrachadh sa bhad.

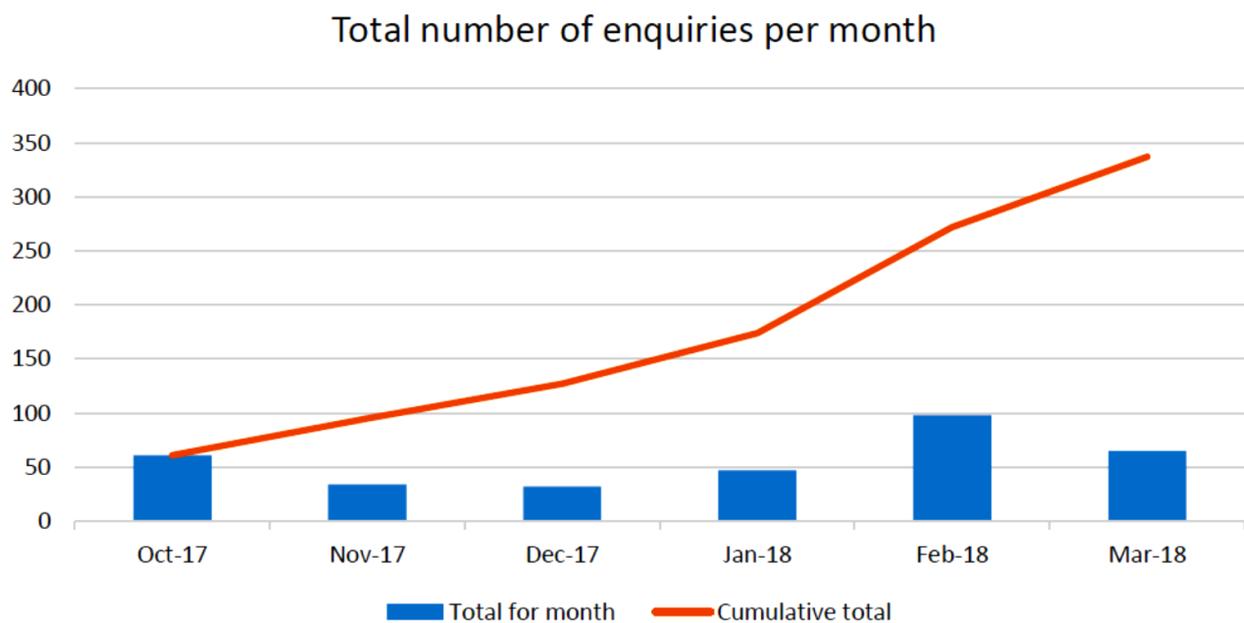
Pròiseas

1. Gairm coinneamh comataidh gus riaghailtean ùra ath-sgrùdadh agus deasbad air atharrachaidhean san amharc.
2. Faigh cead bho mhòr-chuid na comataidh air na riaghailtean ùra agus atharrachaidhean ionadail sam bith. Thathar ag iarraidh co-chomhairleachadh gu farsaing le luchd-earrannan aig an ìre seo.
3. Bu chòir do riaghailtean ath-sgrùdaichte sam bith san amharc a chur gu Coimisean na Croitearachd airson ath-sgrùdadh.

The Scottish Government's report on "Women in Farming and the Agriculture Sector" highlighted a number of issues for women in agriculture, one of which concerned gaining skills and knowledge. In response, ten pilot meetings were held across Scotland to directly address some of the recommendations from the report. The purpose was to help women gain skills to further their roles in the agricultural industry and rural economy, through workshops, talks and opportunities for networking and confidence building. The meetings followed recommendations in the report such as giving consideration to childcare and other commitments when planning courses and events. The topics of the meetings were farm diversification, grants and forms, business account analysis, and livestock records. A session on good mental health was also incorporated in the Orkney meeting. The events were very popular, with a total of 248 women attending.

10. Advice Line

There were a total of 965 enquiries were received between April 2017 and March 2018. 72 percent of these were tier 1 enquiries that were resolved immediately by Advice Line staff. The remaining 28 percent were more complex enquiries that required to be escalated to tier 2 for resolution by SAC Consulting staff. 78 percent of tier two enquiries were addressed within five days of receipt of the enquiry.



11. Website and social media

Since April 2017 the website has recorded 133,053 unique page views and 25,543 users.

Additional resources have been put in place to drive website and social media activity and this is reflected in an increase in digital activity. The period from October 2017 to February 2018 was the busiest for web activity of the 2017/18 reporting period. This was driven by the intensity of delivery, greater emphasis on promotional activities, increasing the content and awareness of the website, and greater use of social media tools and networks.

The website was developed to host information on other SRDP events, including Monitor Farm, Soil Association events as well as stronger signposted links to Farming for a Better Climate and Farming & Water Scotland.

Website analytics

	2017/18	2016/17*
Sessions	49,775	18,931
Users	25,543	9,832
Page views	133,053	70,469
Bounce Rate	54.32%	39.92%

*Website was launched in September 2016

Type	Audience acquisition	
	2017/18	2016/17*
Organic search (using a search engine to find us)	8,854 / 32.7%	2,230 / 21.4%
Social (accessing the FAS website via link from social media)	6,035 / 22.3%	2,038 / 19.5%
Direct (direct links to access specific pages)	8,543 / 31.5%	4,027 / 38.6%
Referral (links to FAS from other sites)	3,521 / 13%	2,134 / 20.4%
Email (links to FAS embedded within e-newsletter emails)	135 / 0.5%	14 / 0.1%

*Website was launched in September 2016

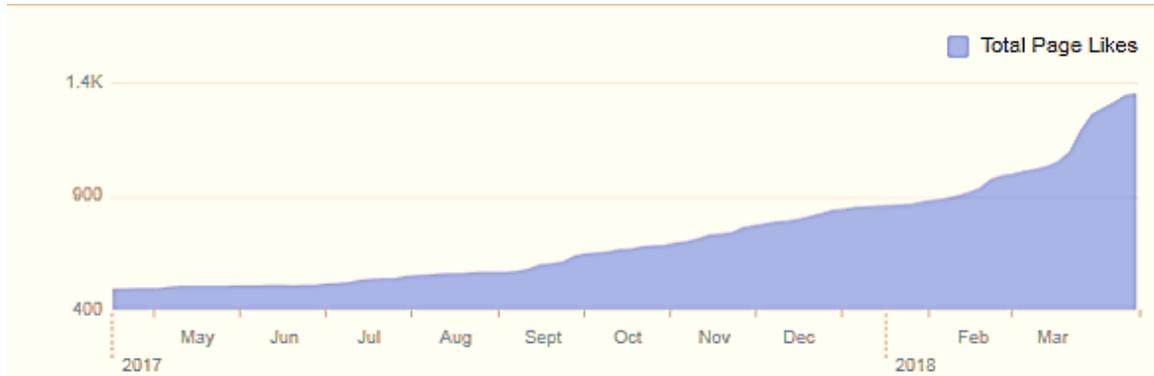
Twitter analytics

Measure	Amount
Followers	734 (+522 on 2016/17)
Tweets	689
Link clicks	1911
Retweets	1248
Likes	924
Engagements*	8,433
Impressions	496,598

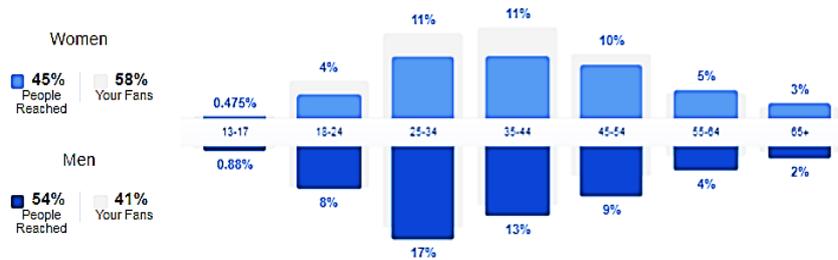
* Engagements are the total number of times a user interacted with a Tweet. Clicks anywhere on the Tweet, including Retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, cards, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo, or Tweet expansion.

Facebook analytics

Page followers: 1351 (+855)



The number of people who saw any content by your Page or about your Page, grouped by age and gender.



Country	People Reached	City	People Reached	Language	People Reached
United Kingdom	18,234	Glasgow, Scotland	986	English (UK)	15,098
Ireland	3,303	Edinburgh, Scotland	897	English (US)	7,357
United States of America	300	Dublin, Dublin	672	French (France)	82
Australia	172	Inverness, Scotland	443	German	67
Canada	132	Aberdeen, Scotland	424	Dutch	49
New Zealand	111	Portree, Scotland	342	Italian	47