

# Scottish Farm Advisory Service One-to-Many Programme 2018-2019 Annual Report



Prepared: April 2019

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## 1. Introduction

The one-to-many component of Farm Advisory Service (FAS) was launched in September 2016. Looking back it is evident that whilst in its first nine months it delivered significant value to Scottish agriculture, there were administrative challenges for SAC Consulting in its delivery of this very large new service. These were amplified by the lack of “brand recognition” amongst the target audience of farmers and crofters.

Over time, a dedicated body of staff working across the country overcame these challenges. By April 2018 (the start of the delivery year this report is concerned with) significant progress had been made. By March 2019 (the end of that delivery year), the one-to-many service was functioning effectively behind the scenes, vastly exceeding most performance indicators and output targets, and receiving enviable levels of user engagement and satisfaction. Whilst the work to ensure the one-to-many programme improves will not cease, this 2018/19 annual report provides an opportunity to take stock and reflect on a successful year.

### “FAS in five”

1. 207 events delivered to 4,674 farmers, crofters and others involved in Scotland’s agricultural community.
2. 98.9 percent satisfaction with events, with 92.5 percent of attendees planning to act on the information gained.
3. 38,587 users benefitting from a redesigned website – 151 percent up on the previous year.
4. Facebook followers up 213 percent on the year, with 70,497 views of FAS videos on Facebook and a reach of 1,149,664.
5. 2,157 crofters and 244 small farmers benefitting from the Croft and small farm advisory service, whilst 1,418 farmers and crofters got help from the Advice Line.

## 2. Vision for the Farm Advisory Service

“Scotland’s Farm Advisory Service is a professional, modern advisory service that continues to facilitate step-changes in the economic and environmental performance of farmers and crofters throughout Scotland. It achieves this through provision of advice, collaboration with industry bodies, promotion and communication of the prevailing themes and policies for the relevant year.”

## 3. Outcomes specified in tender

The following outcomes were specified in the FAS one-to-many tender document. They guide the delivery of the service and aim to help achieve the wider priorities of the Scottish Rural Development Programme (SRDP) as well as supporting the outcomes derived from the Future of Scottish Agriculture initiative:

- Knowledgeable, multi-skilled farmers and crofters capable of delivering business, societal and environmental benefits within a complex legislative and physical operating environment.
- Greater uptake of agricultural practises that deliver increased economic performance whilst mitigating against climate change and enhancing biodiversity status.
- Increasing numbers of dynamic young people successfully entering Scottish agriculture, thereby injecting vigour in the development of thriving farm and rural businesses.
- Easy access to up-to-date and relevant knowledge and information to all farmers and crofters through a network of advisory centres, on-line resources and a telephone advice facility.
- Land managers using key national performance metrics (benchmarks).
- Improved uptake of integrated methods of managing plant and animal health, including the safer use of and reduced reliance on pesticides and antibiotics.
- Improved water quality through a reduction in diffuse pollution and run-off.

## 4. Executive summary

- The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were met or exceeded in 91 percent of reporting periods.
- 207 events were run though 2018-19, with 4,674 attendees and an average attendance of 22.58. Feedback from participants was exceptionally positive, with 98.9 percent saying the events were “excellent” or “very satisfactory”, and 92.5 percent saying they would implement changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event.



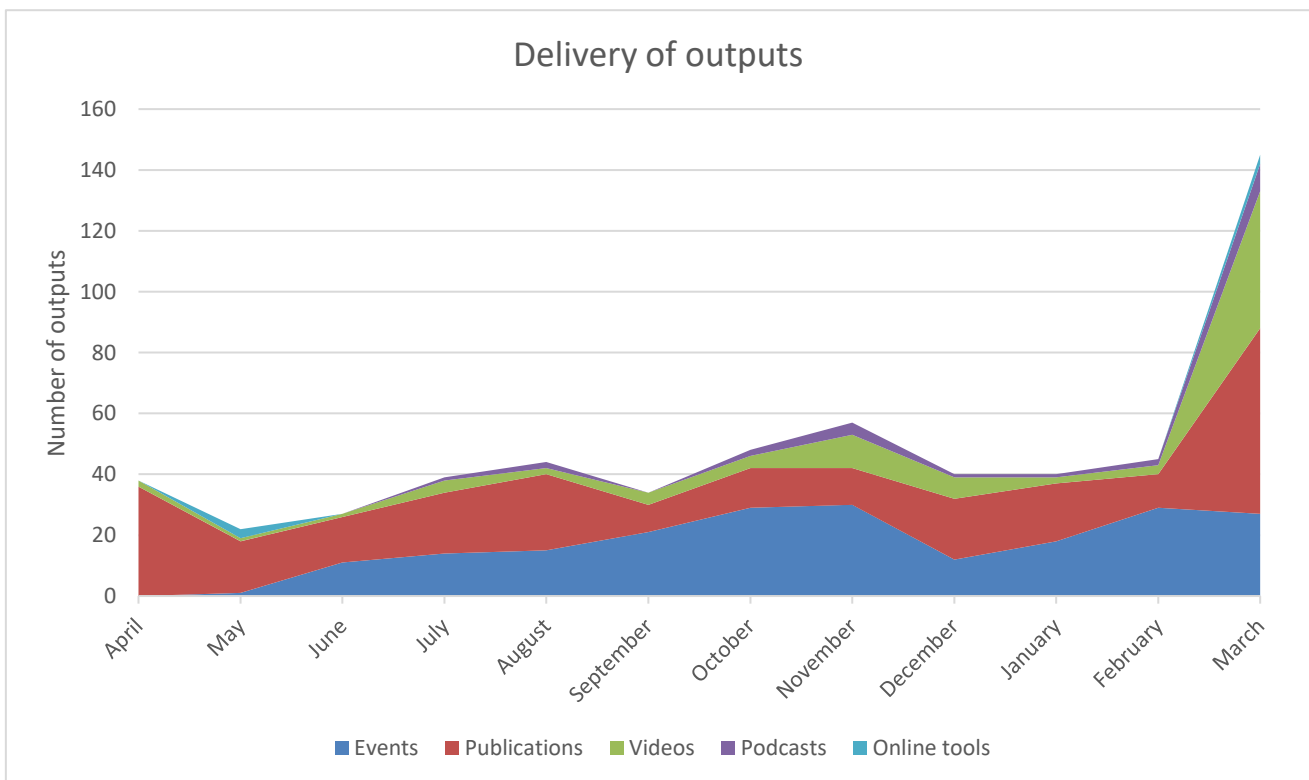
Figure 1 - Argyll Women in Agriculture ‘Starting out in agri-environment’

- 258 publications, 108 videos and podcasts, and six online tools were published. The FAS newsletter was launched and by the end of the year was being distributed monthly to up to 3,967 people.
- With a new FAS website successfully launched during the year, total annual website users grew by 151 percent to 38,587.
- Twitter users grew by 160 percent to 1,181. On Facebook there was a 213 percent growth in followers (to 2,898), 9,438 comments made by users (up 413 percent on 2017/18), 70,497 video views (up 302 percent on 2017/18), and 1,149,664 occasions (called ‘reach’) where users saw FAS content (up 212 percent on 2017/18)
- 2,157 crofters and 244 smallholders subscribed to the Croft and Small Farm Advisory Service.
- There were 1,418 enquiries to the Advice Line, where farmers and crofters received up to 30 minutes of free advice.

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Target measure	Target	Actual	Number delivered versus target	Percentage delivered versus target
Events	142	207	+65	146%
Event attendees	2,679	4,675	+1,996	174%
Average attendance	19.5	22.6	+3.1	116%
Publications	242	258	+16	106%
Videos and podcasts	74	108	+34	146%
Online tools	2	6	+4	300%
Crofter subscribers	2,250	2,157	-93	96%
Small farm subscribers	250	244	-6	98%





## 5. Key performance indicators (KPIs)

From May 2018, Scottish Government set the following 13 KPIs for SAC Consulting in its delivery of the one-to-many contract during 2018/19:

1. At least 2,769 attendees at 142 events (an average of 19.5 per event).
2. Attendance exceeds 75 percent of the predicted number.
3. More than 90 percent of those completing a post-event feedback form rate the overall quality of the event as “excellent” or “very satisfactory”.
4. More than 80 percent of those completing a post-event feedback form rate the relevance of the event as “excellent” or “very satisfactory”.
5. More than 80 percent of those completing a post-event feedback form say they will implement changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event.
6. The bounce rate (the percentage of people visiting the homepage and then leaving without going to another page on the site) is below 50 percent.
7. The website is available for at least 97 percent of the time.
8. 90 percent of call-backs are done within six working hours.
9. 90 percent of routine queries are responded to within one working day.
10. 90 percent of detailed queries are responded to within two working days.
11. 100 percent of complex queries are responded to within five working days.
12. 100 percent of e-mail enquiries are responded to within one working day.

KPI 1 is measured annually and was met two months ahead of schedule. The remaining KPIs are measured and reported on monthly basis. The table overleaf summarises performance across the year.

KPI	Monthly KPI performance (green = KPI met or exceeded, red = KPI not met, yellow = no data)										
	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
3	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
4	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
5	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green
6	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
7	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
8	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
9	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
10	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
11	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green
12	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red

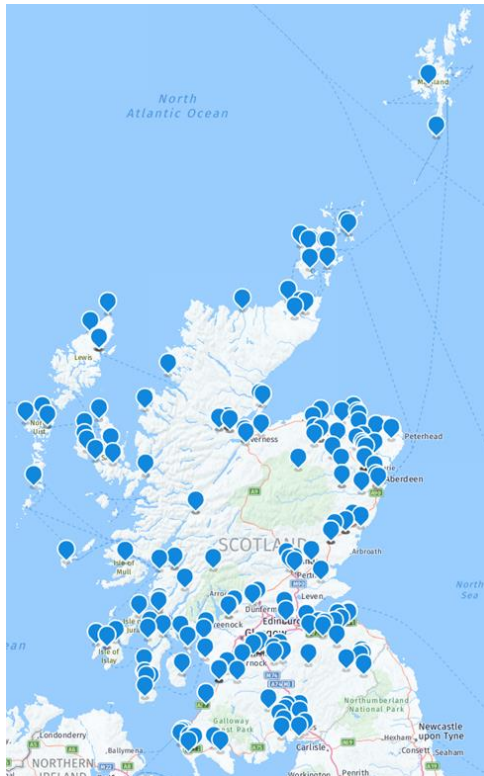
The table above does not weight the relative importance of the KPIs, nor give an indication of what the measured value was (e.g. in January, KPI 5 measured 80 percent – a technical fail as the KPI states it must be “More than 80 percent”). What the above table does highlight is that of the 119 measures (11 monthly KPIs measured over 11 months, less two measures where no data was available), SAC Consulting met or exceeded them in 91 percent of reporting periods.

Regretably there have been several failures of KPIs 11 and 12 – in most cases because queries have been answered quickly enough but the relevant member(s) of staff have not completed and returned the necessary paperwork to confirm this. This is a training and monitoring issue that has repeatedly been raised with staff and will continue to be a priority to resolve.



## 6. Events

Knowledge transfer (KT) events continued to be a very significant element of the delivery in 2019/20, with 207 held between May and March. The total predicted attendance at the events was 4,167 (an average of 20.1 per event) and the total actual attendance was 4,675 (an average of 22.6 per event) – 112 percent of the predicted.).



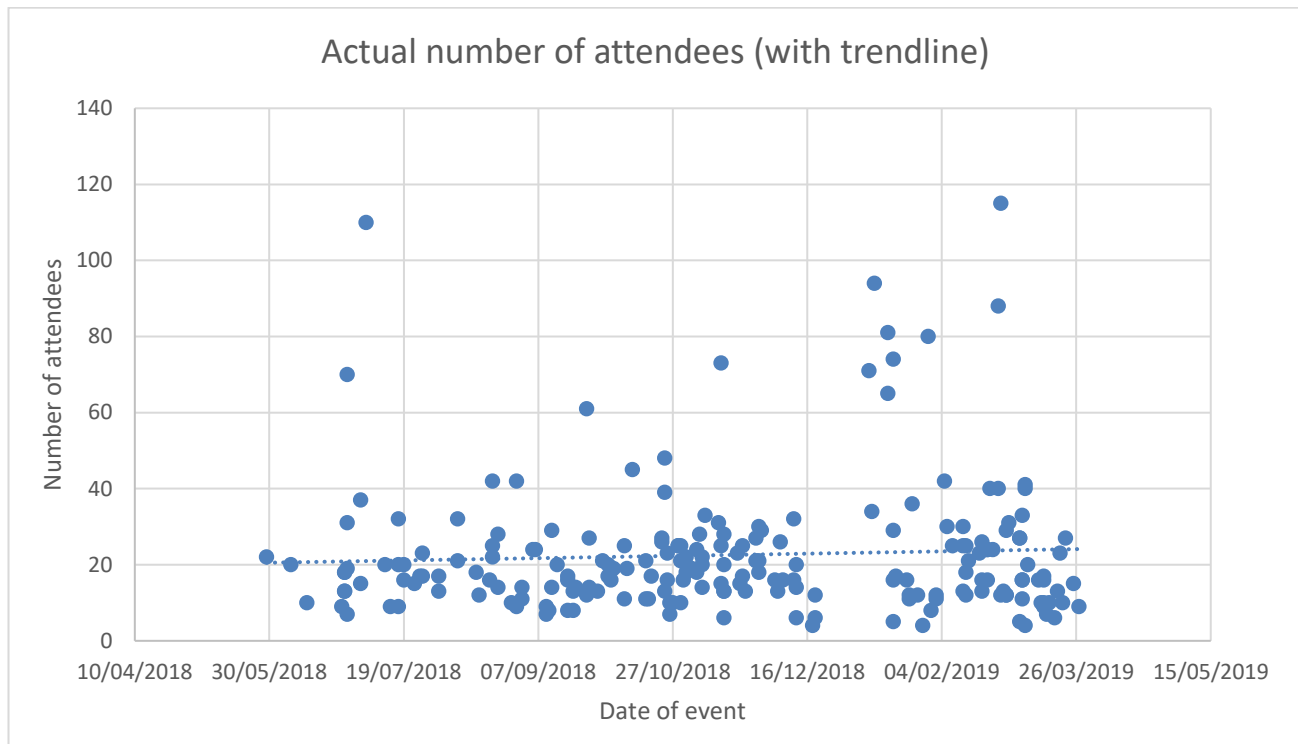
As can be seen from the map, the coverage of events was excellent – an essential characteristic of a truly national advisory service. Although more events were held in areas where farming is a larger part of the local economy (e.g. North East Scotland), many events were held in busy crofting areas (e.g. Skye) and more remote crofting areas (e.g. Coigach). Some parts of the country (e.g. Caithness, Lochaber, Moray) have fewer than might be expected events. This is a conscious decision in areas with Monitor Farms, to not have too many events for the potential audience in the area.

Promotion of events to ensure good awareness, attendances and value for money was an ongoing task. To ensure all ages of potential attendees were aware of events, traditional methods such as written invitations (how 59 percent of attendees heard about the event) and newspaper adverts (seven percent) were used in parallel with options such as website (ten percent) and Facebook advertising (23 percent).

Figure 2 - Location of events

### Event highlights – New Entrants Gathering

A highlight of the events calendar was the New Entrants Gathering 2019. The sixth time this annual event has been held, it continued to draw large attendances (115 this year), significant publicity, and very high satisfaction levels. This year a range of inspiring and informative speakers from across the UK – including successful new entrants, businesses who have added value, those who have found alternative routes into the industry, as well as agricultural professionals – spoke about subjects such as “Building a resilient business” and “Joint ventures in practice”. Feedback from the event was excellent, with live polling on the day indicating that 66 percent of attendees considered the New Entrants Gathering and the FAS New Entrants topic to be “vital” to helping them build their business.



Whilst average attendances were good, this number was dragged down by a number of events with very low attendances. The most common reason for these low attendances was good weather leading farmers and crofters to prioritise farm-based work – even when they had registered to attend FAS events. Staff are given guidance on how to manage situations where they knew their event looked likely to have a low attendance – from running more Facebook advertising, to phoning potential attendees, to ultimately postponing or cancelling events if no turnaround looked possible. During the year, two events were postponed and two were cancelled. The vast majority of the events with very low attendances had many more people booked to attend than actually showed up – unfortunately making remedial action in advance appear unnecessary until it was too late.

**Event highlights – Jura deer impacts**

The first event of 2018/19 delivery year, a biodiversity event about deer impact assessments took place on Jura in late May. It enjoyed very positive feedback (94 percent of those completing a post-event evaluation form rated overall delivery as ‘excellent’ or ‘very satisfactory’) from the 22 participants. The Jura event was not in the Business Plan for the year, but was requested by Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH). Efficiency savings were made to allow the event to proceed, as well as similar successful event on Islay later in the year.

It should be noted that in some cases (e.g. island and remote mainland locations) whilst the attendances might be low in absolute terms, they represented a significant proportion of the local working agricultural population. It is also worth noting that in 2018/19, FAS started to deliver webinars – another excellent way to extend its reach into all corners of the country and to people who would otherwise (e.g. due to caring requirements) be unable to attend events.

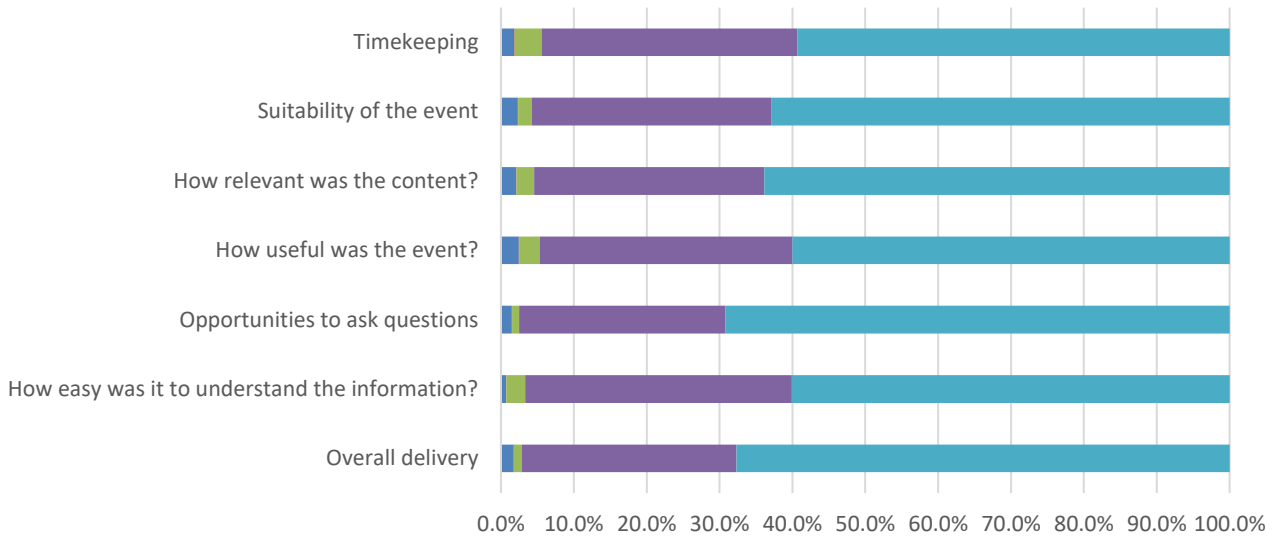
### Event highlights – Polyproduce webinar

The first FAS webinar took place in January 2019. 159 people registered their interest in logging on to the online PolyProduce seminar, and the day 80 people logged onto the live presentations from Audrey Litterick (Earthcare Technical), Rob Black (SAC Consulting) and Calum Johnston (SAC Consulting). The topics covered were soils and crop growing, polytunnel technologies, grant assistance and the marketing and selling fruit and vegetables in a croft and small holding setting. Those not be able to participate could subsequently access a video edit on the FAS YouTube channel – thereby extending the value of the project.

Not only are FAS events largely well attended, they are also very highly regarded by those who attend. All attendees are asked to complete an evaluation form, and across the year 76.8 percent (3,592) did so. The tables below and overleaf summarise the results, but the headline message is that those who attend are overwhelmingly very positive in their feedback. Excluding “no answer”, 99.9 percent of responses are “satisfactory” or better, and 98.9 percent are “very satisfactory” or better.

Question	Number of responses				
	No answer	Less than satisfactory	Satisfactory	Very satisfactory	Excellent
Overall delivery	62	1	39	1,059	2,431
How easy was it to understand the information?	25	1	94	1,314	2,158
Opportunities to ask questions	54	1	34	1,017	2,486
How useful was the event?	88	2	100	1,247	2,155
How relevant was the content?	75	2	86	1,136	2,293
Suitability of the event	84	1	68	1,181	2,258
Timekeeping	59	9	132	1,261	2,131
<b>Total</b>	<b>447</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>8,215</b>	<b>15,912</b>

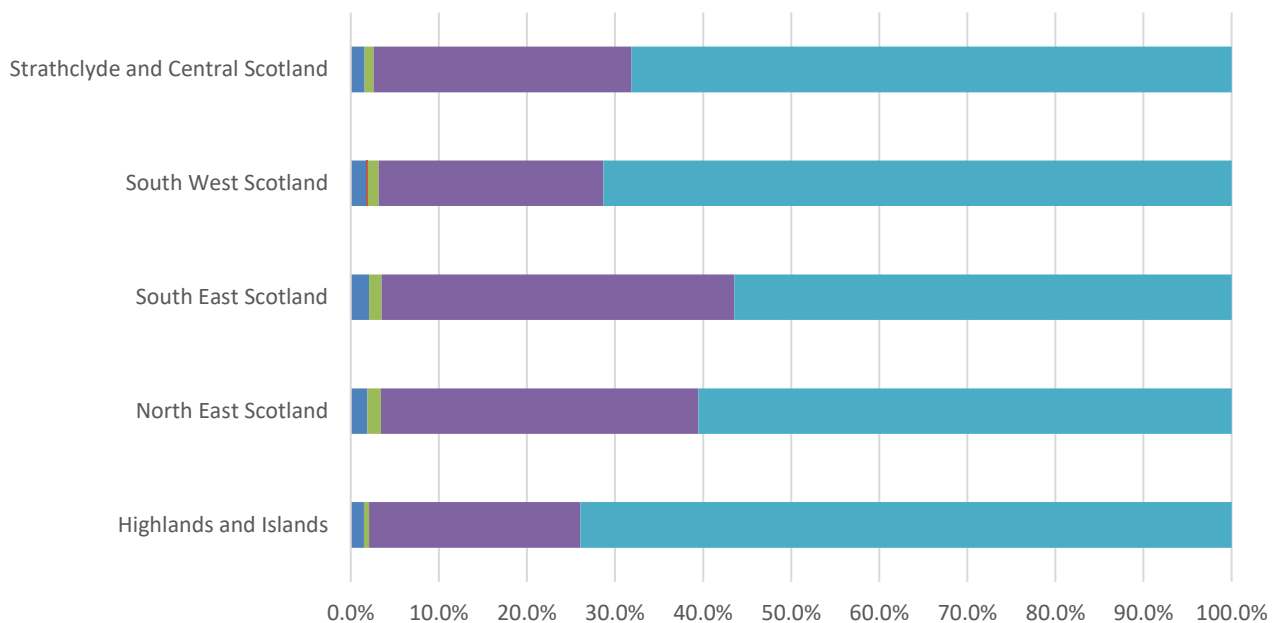
### Event evaluation form responses



	Overall delivery	How easy was it to understand the information?	Opportunities to ask questions	How useful was the event?	How relevant was the content?	Suitability of the event	Timekeeping
No answer	1.7%	0.7%	1.5%	2.4%	2.1%	2.3%	1.6%
Less than satisfactory	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%	0.3%
Satisfactory	1.1%	2.6%	0.9%	2.8%	2.4%	1.9%	3.7%
Very satisfactory	29.5%	36.6%	28.3%	34.7%	31.6%	32.9%	35.1%
Excellent	67.7%	60.1%	69.2%	60.0%	63.8%	62.9%	59.3%

There is some regional variation in event evaluation (see table overleaf for more details), with attendees of events in the Highlands and Islands, South West Scotland, and Strathclyde and Central Scotland being particularly positive about the overall delivery (74 percent, 71.3 percent and 68.1 percent “excellent” respectively). It must be stressed that attendees in North East Scotland and South East Scotland were also very positive, with the combined “very satisfactory” and “excellent” values for all regions being in a range from 96.4 percent (South East Scotland) to 98 percent (Highlands and Islands).

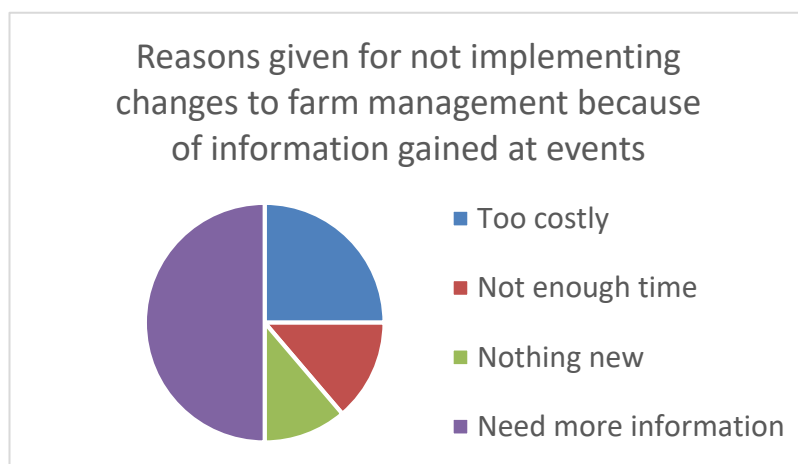
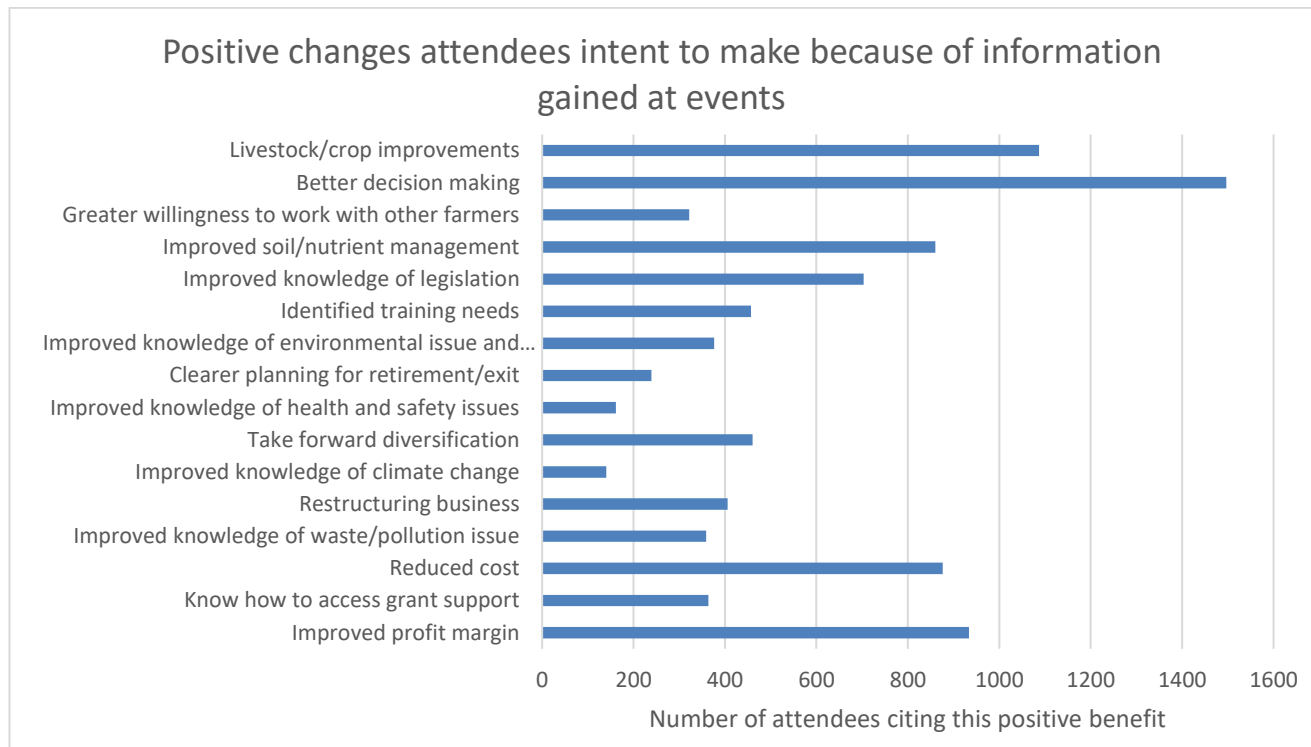
### Overall delivery by region event held in



	Highlands and Islands	North East Scotland	South East Scotland	South West Scotland	Strathclyde and Central Scotland
No answer	1.5%	1.9%	2.1%	1.8%	1.6%
Less than satisfactory	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%
Satisfactory	0.6%	1.5%	1.4%	1.2%	1.0%
Very satisfactory	24.0%	36.0%	40.1%	25.5%	29.3%
Excellent	74.0%	60.5%	56.4%	71.3%	68.1%

The objective of FAS is to “facilitate step-changes in the economic and environmental performance of farmers and crofters throughout Scotland”. It is therefore important that event attendees do something positive with the information they have gained. It is therefore very positive that of those who answered the question, 92.5 percent of these said they would implement changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event. The graph overleaf shows the positive changes the attendees thought there were likely to be on their businesses because of the knowledge they had gained at the event. Most of the most frequently cited positive changes are ones that are explored at all meetings (e.g. better decision making (1497), improving profit margins (934), reducing costs (876)) but there is a long tail of others. It should be noted that whilst “Improved knowledge of Climate Change” is the least frequently cited (140), others such as “Livestock/crop improvements” (1,087) and “Improved soil/nutrient management” (860) are

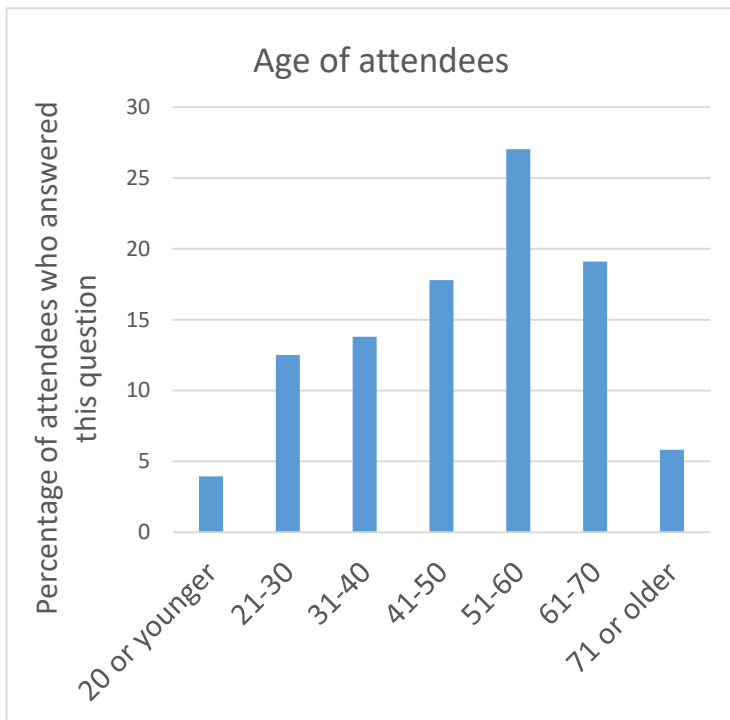
implicitly talking about improving efficiency and therefore reducing waste – all things that help reduce Climate Change emissions.



5.2 percent (245) of attendees said that they would not implement changes to their farm management because of information gained at the event. Of those who provided reasons why, half said it was because they needed more information, one quarter said it was because to make the necessary changes would be too expensive, and the remaining quarter was split almost evenly

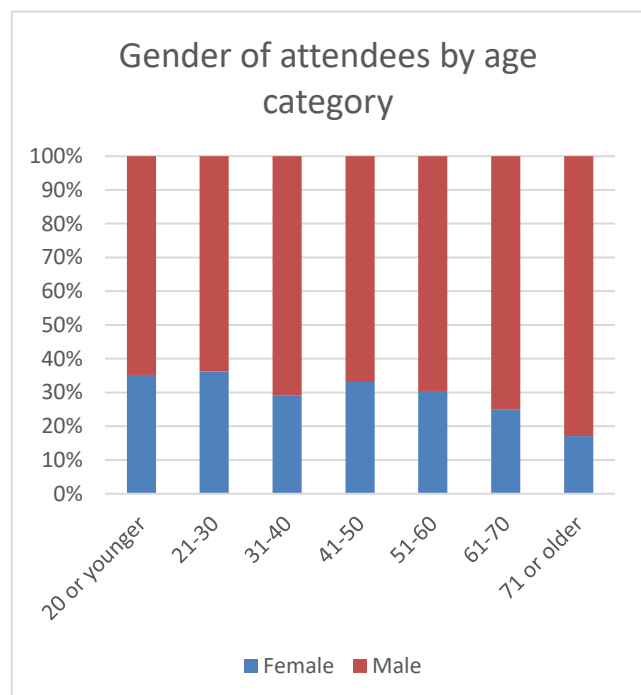
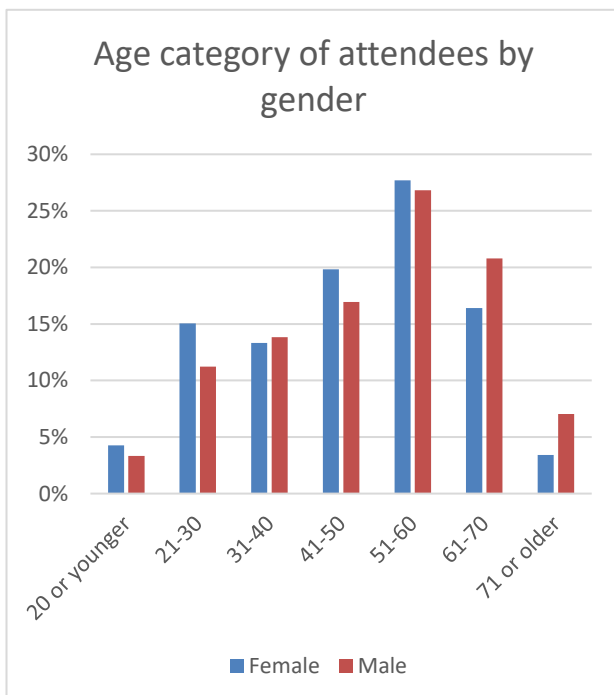
between those who said they did not have enough time and those who said they had learned nothing new. It is potentially this last group (numbering only 11 people) that is of concern, but given that it is 11 out of 3,592 (i.e. 0.3 percent), it is a very small group.





Whilst overall the attendees at FAS events are predominately (70 percent) male, this varies greatly between events depending on the topics being covered. For example, there were 19 Women in Agriculture events where the audience was overwhelmingly female, and 43 New Entrant events with a high proportion of female attendees.

The age profile of attendees is diverse and outlined in the graphs to the left and below. Two things these graphs highlight is that: almost half of all attendees of both gender (44 percent for males, 48 percent for females) are aged 41-60; and that female attendees are on average younger than male attendees.



## 7. Publications

As the national advisory service covering a diverse agricultural sector, it is not surprising that a wide range and large number of publications were produced in 2018/19. In total, 258 were produced (107 percent of the planned number) – ranging from large, detailed publications like the Farm Management Handbook and Agribusiness News, to technical notes, through to case studies and advertorials in the farming and mainstream press.

### Balancing the needs of cattle and corn buntings in Aberdeenshire

#### Case study



TECHNICAL NOTE TN711 October 2018 • ELEC

#### Black Grouse

#### Management on Farmland



### Thinning a Timber Crop



#### Case Study



TECHNICAL NOTE TN699 JANUARY 2019 • ELEC

#### Agricultural use of biosolids, composts, anaerobic digestates and other industrial organic fertilisers

Figure 3 - Examples of publications

There is a wealth of information on the website – some of it produced in 2018/19 and some prior to that. During 2018/19, 8,128 documents were downloaded. The table below shows the top five most downloaded documents.

Top 5 downloads	Downloads
<a href="#">Farm Management Handbook 2017/18</a>	1,944
<a href="#">Farm Management Handbook 2018/19</a>	714
<a href="#">Integrated Land Management Plan application form</a>	155
<a href="#">Cash flow budget blank</a>	110
<a href="#">Output prices</a>	102

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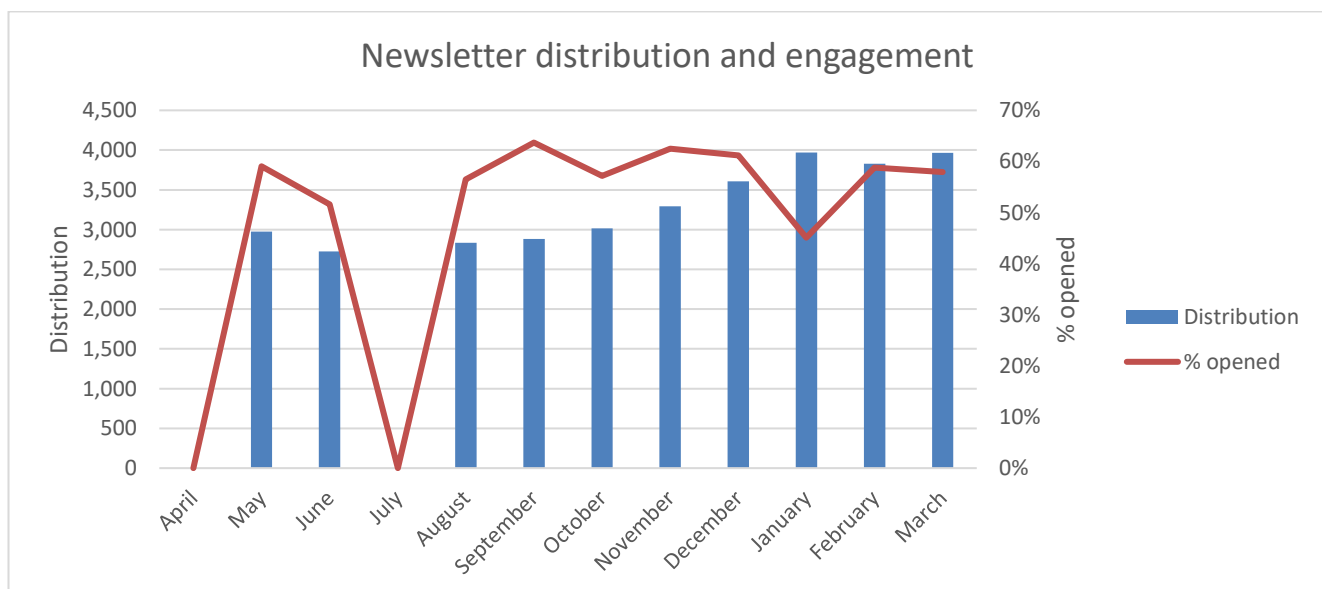
### Publication highlights – response to dry weather

With the prolonged dry weather and high temperatures having a significant impact on much of Scottish agriculture during July, the FAS one-to-many service responded by producing four articles and one advertorial that appeared in the Scottish Farmer and FAS website on two consecutive weeks. Positive feedback on this was received from individuals and trade bodies.



Figure 4 – FAS articles and advertorials in Scottish Farmer

In addition to documents that are downloaded, there are also documents such as the monthly newsletter – started in May 2018 – that are pro-actively sent to those who are registered to receive them. The newsletter was sent to up 3,967 people. As the graph below shows, the distribution of the newsletter has grown by 33 percent (to 3,967) through the year. The percentage of recipients who open it is far ahead of the benchmark figure (16 percent) for similar publications.



## 8. Videos, podcasts and online tools

Videos are an increasingly popular aspect of FAS output and, as with publications, cover a wide range of subjects. 86 videos were produced and posted online – on both YouTube and Facebook – during 2018/19. The FAS YouTube account has seen significant growth in use and time spent watching videos, as outlined in the table below.

Measure	2018/19	2017/18	% difference 2018/19 versus 2017/18
Minutes watched on Youtube	15,900	1,300	1,223%
Sessions on Youtube	8,000	787	1,017%
Average minutes per session on Youtube	1.98	1.65	120%

Whilst the figures above are very positive, it is actually via Facebook that FAS videos are reaching the widest audience. During the year, FAS videos were viewed 70,497 times on Facebook during the year (up 302 percent from the previous year). Videos designed to inspire and inform the next generation into agriculture feature highly. Three of the top five most viewed videos on Facebook (see table overleaf) are those aimed

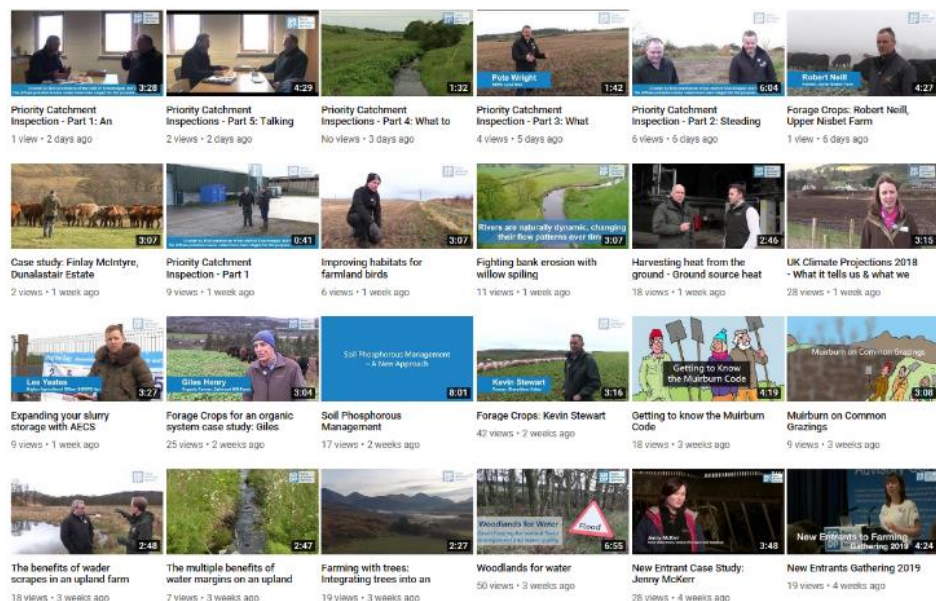


Figure 5 - FAS videos on YouTube

at new entrants – perhaps an indication of both how hungry this generation is for guidance and encouragement, and also how comfortable they are with consuming digital content.

Top five videos on Facebook	Views
<a href="#">New Entrants Case Study: William Law</a>	12,000
<a href="#">New Entrant Case Study: Amy Jo Reid</a>	8,400
<a href="#">Calving the Suckler Cow Part 2</a>	4,600
<a href="#">Controlling rushes on your farm</a>	4,500
<a href="#">New Entrant Case study: Jenny McKerr</a>	3,300

During 2018/19 there was a concerted effort to produce more podcasts and ensure this content was easily available online. 22 podcasts were produced, covering a wide range of subjects. These were then put online on five podcast streaming services (Apple podcasts, Spotify, Google podcasts, Deezer, and RadioPublic). During the year, all FAS podcasts were listened to a total of 2,305 times. The most popular podcasts are outlined in the table below, but this does not include the listeners that have been achieved through some of the podcasts being broadcast on local radio in the Highlands and Islands – an effective mechanism to reach a wide agricultural and lay audience.

Top five podcasts	Listens
<a href="#">Finishing Lambs - dealing with the challenges</a>	244
<a href="#">Fodder beet: alternative feeding for sheep</a>	241
<a href="#">Practical grassland: making the most of your forage</a>	211
<a href="#">Moray Soil &amp; Nutrient Network - Using organic manures to save on artificial fertilisers</a>	194
<a href="#">Growing crofting and smallholding</a>	185

During 2018/19, six online tools (300 percent of the planned number) were produced to assist farmers and crofters in navigating complicated issues. These tools covered such subjects as soil pH, farm business management, and treating hypothermia in new-born lambs. The latter seems to have particularly struck a chord, as in March alone the webpage associated with it was viewed 366 times for an average of 15 minutes 24 seconds – much longer than the average time spent on most webpages. Cognisant that some farmers and crofters use smartphones to access information, several of tools are optimised for use on mobile phones.



## 9. Website and social media

A key development for the one-to-many service during 2018/19 was the launch of the new FAS website on 3 October – five days ahead of schedule and to widespread praise for its usability and feel. The website and its content were improved throughout the year, with the ambition that it be the “go-to” website for those in Scottish agriculture.

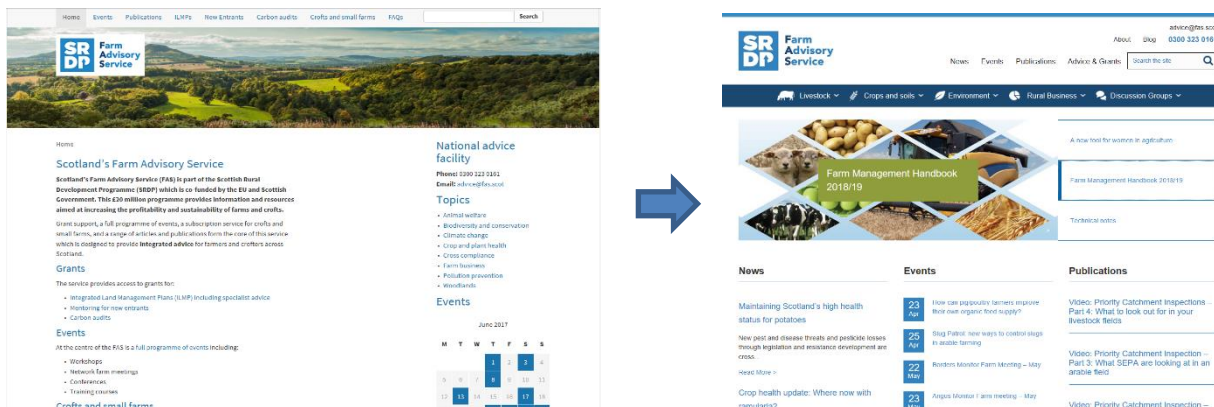


Figure 6 - The old and new FAS websites

The table below outlines some of the key statistics about use of the website. Use of the website has grown since it was first launched (136 percent up on 2017/18 and 254 percent up on 2016/17), to the point where on average last year there were 186 sessions every day. Whilst there has been a decrease in the average page views per sessions, this is a positive reflection of users finding information more quickly as the layout, content and search engine optimisation of the website has improved over time (including due to 2018/19 relaunch).

Measure	2018/19	Percentage change 2017/18 versus 2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
Sessions	67,899	136%	49,775	19,149
Users	38,587	151%	25,543	9,828
New users	36,714	146%	25,053	9,828
Page views	153,737	115%	133,053	72,818
Average page views per session	2.26		2.67	3.8



There are several ways that users to website find their way to it, outlined in the table below. Whilst using search engines remain the most common route, it is a positive development to see the significant growth in traffic via e-mail links – most of which is due to the launch and success of the FAS newsletter. This indicates that not only are large numbers of people opening the newsletter, but also a significant number are interested to learn even more and follow links to the website.

Route to website	Audience (%)	
	2018/19	2017/18
Organic search (using a search engine to find us)	13,096 (31.9%)	8,854 / 32.7%
Social (accessing the FAS website via link from social media)	10,028 (24.4%)	6,035 / 22.3%
Direct (direct links to access specific pages)	11,146 (27.1%)	8,543 / 31.5%
Referral (links to FAS from other sites)	3,841 (9.4%)	3,521 / 13%
Email (links to FAS embedded within e-newsletter emails)	2,951 (7.2%)	135 / 0.5%

Once on the website, as already outlined, there is a vast amount of information for visitors to choose from. The table below shows the top five most popular webpages. The results would seem to indicate that alongside using the website to find out about, and book onto, events, visitors are particularly keen on technical information such as the Farm Management Handbook and other publications.

Top 5 webpages	Page views	Average time on page (hr:mn:sc)
<a href="http://www.fas.scot">www.fas.scot</a>	16,066	00:01:08
<a href="#">/events/</a>	4,998	00:00:35
<a href="#">/publication/farm-management-handbook-2018-2019/</a>	2,768	00:02:23
<a href="#">/publications/</a>	2,713	00:00:38
<a href="#">/publication/farm-management-handbook-20172018/</a>	2,574	00:04:53

## 10. Social media

The one-to-many service operates two social media accounts – on twitter and Facebook. Both have seen growth over the last year, but it is on Facebook that most engagement with farmers and crofters (including new entrants) has occurred, and it is therefore there that more effort has been expended.

As the table below shows, the FAS twitter account has grown reasonably in followers over the last year, but the growth in engagement has been more modest. Twitter is a useful tool for informing people (particularly other stakeholders) about what FAS is doing – especially on policy relevant issues – but it is less effective in stimulating dialogue or engagement with technical subjects. Despite this, the second table shows that on some issues, twitter is a useful tool to communicate key messages.

Twitter measures	2018/19	2017/18	Change 2018/19 versus 2017/18	Percentage change 2018/19 versus 2017/18
Followers	1,181	734	+447	160%
Tweets	712	689	+23	103%
Link clicks	2,059	1,911	+148	108%
Retweets	1,465	1,248	+217	117%
Likes	1,153	924	+229	125%
Impressions	525,091	496,598	+28,493	106%
Engagements	9,178	8,433	+745	109%

Top five tweets	Retweets	Likes	Impressions
<a href="#">Women in agriculture events</a>	16	10	5,516
<a href="#">Agronomy roadshow</a>	7	5	3,588
<a href="#">International Women's Day</a>	8	19	3,560
<a href="#">Hypothermia tool</a>	11	11	3,126
<a href="#">Animal Welfare updates June 2018</a>	8	4	2,736

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Through sustained effort and appealing content, the FAS Facebook page has grown into a well-used and engaging space where not only can events and other outputs be promoted, but productive dialogue about key technical and non-technical subjects can occur. As the first table below highlights, although fewer Facebook posts were made in 2018/19 than previously, there has been massive growth in followers and most measures of engagement. Particularly noteworthy are the 9,438 comments made by users (up 413 percent on 2017/18) and that there were 1,149,664 occasions (called ‘reach’) where users saw FAS content (up 212 percent on 2017/18). The second table highlights the diversity of subjects that particularly engage people on the FAS Facebook page.

Facebook measures	2018/2019	2017/2018	Change 2018/19 versus 2017/18	Percentage change 2018/19 versus 2017/18
Followers	2,898	1,360	+1,538	213%
Posts	782	871	-89	90%
Post likes	2,601	3,084	-483	84%
Post shares	1,094	736	+358	149%
Comments	9,438	2,284	+7,154	413%
Link clicks	4,390	4,825	-435	91%
Other clicks	32,855	11,925	+20,930	276%
Photo views	5,856	1,466	+4,390	399%
Video views	70,497	17,545	+52,952	302%
Total reach	1,149,664	541,379	+608,285	212%
Total impressions	1,811,516	882,970	+928,546	205%

Top 5 posts	People reached	Impressions	Likes	Shares	Comments
<a href="#">New Entrant: William Law</a>	20,741	42,258	302	70	22
<a href="#">Women in Agriculture events</a>	18,394	43,075	117	44	40
<a href="#">Controlling rushes on your farm video</a>	16,942	23,732	37	25	9
<a href="#">New Entrant: Amy Jo Reid</a>	15,598	26,780	287	46	33
<a href="#">Calving the Suckler Cow Part 2</a>	15,060	20,868	25	12	3

## 11. Croft and small farm advisory service

The Croft and small farm advisory service offers both a subsidised subscription to eligible (typically very small scale) businesses so that they can receive up to two hours of remotely delivered advice from SAC Consulting plus a dedicated magazine, and a subsidised consultancy service that provides up to two hours of face-to-face advice.

The subscription service is very popular, with 2,157 croft businesses (96 percent of the target) taking advantage of it during 2018/19. The map to the right shows the distribution of these businesses across the Crofting Counties. Those shown out with the Crofting Counties are businesses with a contact address that is different from the croft address.

In addition to the crofting subscription, the small farm subscription also proved popular in 2018/19, with 244 small farmers (98 percent of the target) taking advantage of this service. Their locations are shown below.

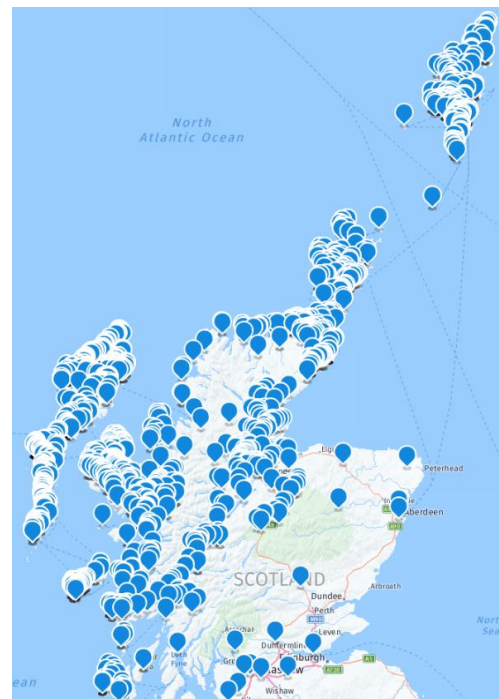


Figure 7 - Location of crofter subscribers

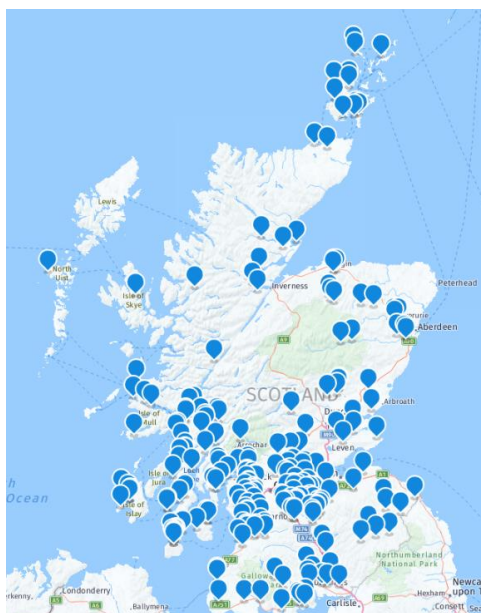


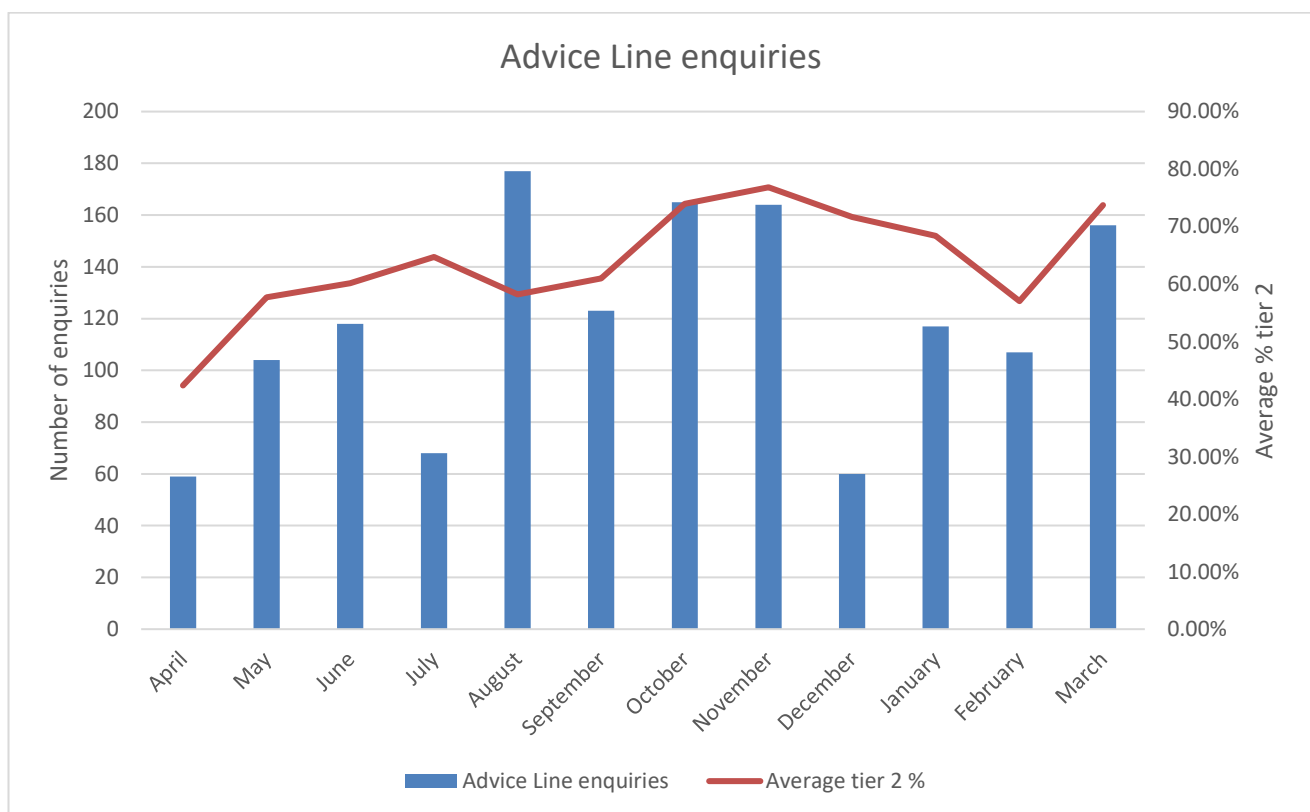
Figure 8 - Location of small farmer subscribers

Due to a range of reasons, including remoteness and cost, the subsidised face-to-face consultancy was not used as much as anticipated during 2018/19. In order to ensure that resources are directed to where they can be put to best use, in 2019/20 it is anticipated that less resource will be initially allocated to face-to-face consultancy.

In addition to the subscription and consultancy service, it is worth noting that there were 28 events (including seven discussion groups stretching from Ayrshire to Lewis), and twenty publications, videos and podcasts focussed on supporting crofters and small farmers. Furthermore, FAS had a presence at key crofting and smallholding events and advertised its offering in key publications such as the Scottish Crofting Federation (SCF) magazine.

## 12. Advice Line

The FAS Advice Line offers eligible businesses up to 30 minutes of free advice. This can range from advice about upcoming events to more complex regulatory or technical questions. During 2018/19, 1,418 enquiries were received – 925 (65 percent) of which were of a more technical nature (referred to as “Tier 2”). The graph below shows the total number of enquiries per month and the average percentage of those that were tier 2.



Since the Advice Line was first established in September 2016, its use by farmers and crofters has grown significantly. In 2018/19 it received an average of 118 enquiries a month. Given that it is only open during office working hours, this equates to approximately one call every 90 minutes.