

# DEVELOP YOUR BUSINESS - September – November 2016

## Registered Businesses (30.11.2016)

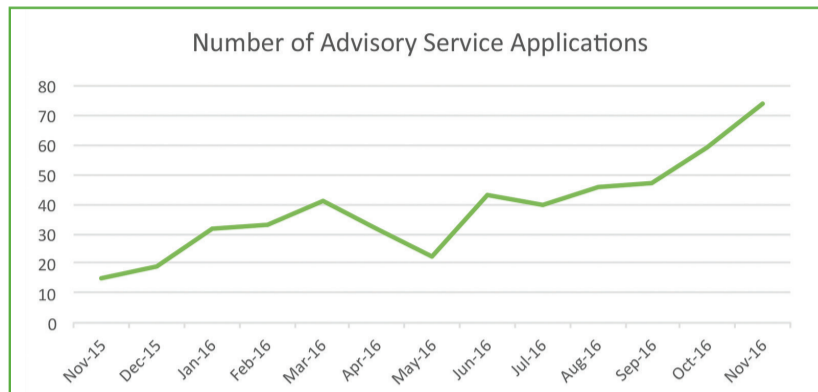
5792 business registered with Farming Connect (65% of the number of businesses that were registered in the previous Farming Connect programme) 11275 individuals

## 1. Advisory Service

The Farming Connect Advisory Service provides a range of subsidised, independent confidential and bespoke advice to:

- farm businesses
- forestry businesses
- small or medium enterprises (SME's) in the food sector

### Number of applications per advice category



INDIVIDUAL ADVICE	Overall number of approved applications 01/10/15 – 30/11/16	Total number of approved applications 01/09/15 - 30/11/16 as a percentage of overall number of applications 01/10/15 - 30/11/16
Business Planning	368	28%
Technical - Grassland and crop management	29	24%
Technical - Livestock Management and performance	14	42%
Technical Diversification and added value	7	28%
Business planning for new entrants	3	
Business planning for Food SME's	3	
Technical – Horticulture	1	100%
Technical – Organic production		
<b>Total</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>28%</b>
<b>Target = 800 instances</b>		

Businesses can also access group advice, which is up to 100% funded. The following number of applications have been made:

GROUP ADVICE	Overall number of approved applications (individual businesses) 1/10/15- 30/11/16	Total number of groups 1/10/15- 30/11/16	Total number of approved applications (individual businesses) as a percentage of overall number of approved applications 01/10/15 - 30/11/16	Total number of group instances 01/09/15 - 30/11/16 as a percentage of Total number of group instances 01/10/15 - 30/11/16
Technical Grassland & Crop Management	60	15	90%	93%
Technical Livestock Management & Performance	8	2	0	0
Business planning (Joint-ventures)	10	5	80%	80%
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>81%</b>
<b>Target = 200 individual instances</b>				

## 2. Business Planning

The Business Plan template and associated guide are available to download from the Farming Connect website.

Number of page views to Business Plan website (September – November 2016)	345
Number of unique page views (September – November 2016)	275
Time spent on page:	00:03:04

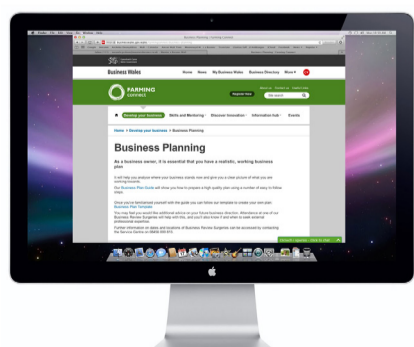
345

views of the Business Plan webpage



average minutes spent on the page:

3:04



To support businesses with the process of developing and following a strategic business plan, Farming Connect have developed a number of mechanisms:

### a) Business planning category of the advisory services

"The business planning category of the Farming Connect advisory services provides comprehensive business planning advice which encompasses the whole enterprise"

### b) Business planning workshops

"A step by step guide to writing a business plan, which will help you assess your own personal and business development and identify any areas of improvement needed"

### c) Business review sessions

"A one-to-one session with an approved Farming Connect advisor to enable you to assess the suitability of your business plan for the future"

### d) Support from Development Officers

"During September, October and November, Development Officers in north Wales have been supporting businesses with completing the business plan templates, helping businesses identify their short and long term business aims"

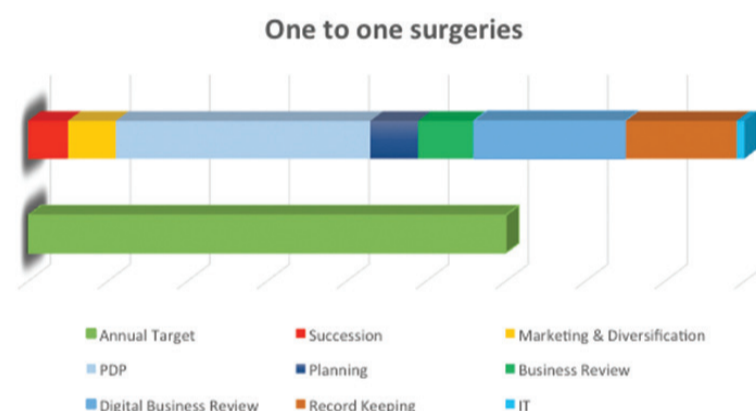
Number of Business Planning workshops held (September – November 2016)	6
Number of Business review sessions held (September – November 2016)	26
Number of Business Planning advice accessed (September – November 2016)	104

## 3. One to one surgeries

The surgeries are offered in slots of an hour one to one with a consultant, some held on farm and some at designated venues. The programme is flexible to allow new topics and surgeries to be held in the future.

**Annual target number of surgeries = 60**

**Number of events (Sept - Nov '16) = 90**



## NEW MARKETING & DIVERSIFICATION SURGERIES

→ 41 attendees

→ Average feedback score = 5.8/6

→ 100% learned something new

### Quotes from beneficiaries:

"I now have a better overview of the requirements within the tourism industry" – Marketing and Diversification Surgery

"Step in the right direction – very beneficial" – Succession Surgery

"We discussed a lot within an hour! Things look a lot clearer now whereas before things were cloudy – Thank you" - Succession Surgery

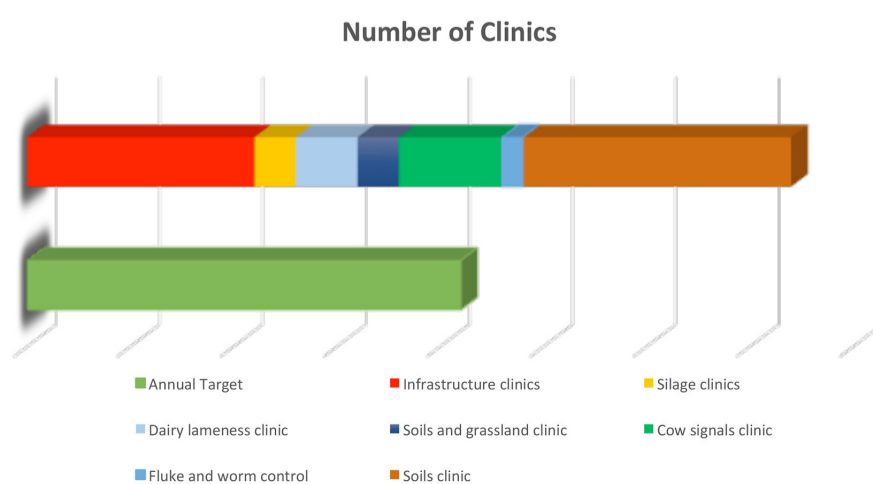
"Has made things clearer and confirmed some ideas" – Planning Surgery

## 4. Clinics

...one to one advice on specific topics to raise awareness and technical skills.

**Annual target number of clinics = 21**

**Number of clinics (Sept - Nov '16) = 37**



## Focus on Infrastructure Clinics:

During this quarter, Farming Connect provided a series of Infrastructure clinics, with Jamie Robertson, a farm and livestock management consultant. The aim of the clinic was to provide tailored and on-farm support and advice for farmers on building design in order to improve performance, health and welfare of livestock.

Each participating farmer received bespoke advice on their existing or planned farm building design to identify areas for improvement and to optimise animal health, welfare and livestock performance.

*"The Infrastructure Clinic was the best service I have ever received from Farming Connect, I made the suggested improvements straight away, and I have already seen improvements, and it's only been a week!"* Mathew Roberts, Ty Draw, Llanasa

## 5. Strategic Awareness Events

...Sector specific roadshows, drop in events and workshops.

**Annual target number of events = 70**

**Number of events (Sept - Nov '16) = 33**



## Women in agriculture - inspired, motivated and empowered... and influencing the rural agenda post-Brexit

*"It's great to know that women are finally being recognised as a core part of our industry. Women in farming don't always appreciate that we face the same constraints and challenges. The Women in Agriculture forum was a fantastic networking event which will ensure we overcome our difficulties together,"* this was the view of Sarah Lewis who farms in Llanrhaeadr ym Mochnant, one of the 160 delegates who attended this year's Farming Connect Women in Agriculture forum held at the Royal Welsh showground in Llanelwedd.

The event, billed as 'inspiring, motivating and empowering', lived up to expectations with the day's packed programme of presentations and workshops clearly striking a chord with those present.

One of the key aims of this year's event was to encourage delegates to join a Women in Agriculture Forum for Wales, with branches since established in each of the three Farming Connect regions (North, South West and Mid and South East Wales). Discussions from the regional forums will help influence the development of a post-Brexit Agricultural Policy.

Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs, Lesley Griffiths, gave the keynote address at the start of the afternoon session.

The Cabinet Secretary's message included an acknowledgement of the important role women play in many farm businesses as drivers for change, business development and modernisation.



## 6. Discussion Groups

Farming Connect discussion groups allow businesses to learn from each other discuss challenges, consider opportunities and potentially find new and improved ways of doing things. 100% of discussion groups are benchmarking.

Total groups established in year 1	41
Total new groups established Sept – Nov 2016	20
<b>Total Discussion Groups established Oct 2015 – Nov 2016</b>	<b>61</b>

New discussion group established (September – November 2016)

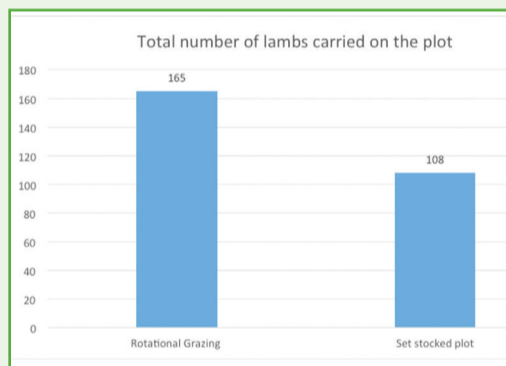
SECTOR	Number of groups	Number of businesses registered on BAS from sector%
Sheep Discussion Groups	10	3982
Dairy Discussion Group	5	1010
Beef Discussion Groups*	4	3484
Horticulture discussion groups	1	143

% most businesses have noted more than one sector when registering

\*Members of sheep discussion groups may also have beef enterprises and vice versa  
A further 18 new discussion groups will be established in the next quarter, including a pig discussion group in north Wales.

## Focus on a sheep discussion group:

This Sheep discussion group have focused their time in the first year on getting their soils right and focusing on grass growth. The group undertook a grass growth trial on one of the group member's farm between April and June 2016. The trial looked at rotational grazing v's set stocking on 8 acres. For the rotational grazing plots the 8 acres was split into 4 x 2 acre plots. The results were clearly in favour of rotational grazing, and members of the discussion group were able to make management decisions based on the trial findings on one of the member's farm. Ewes were introduced late April until the 20th of June.



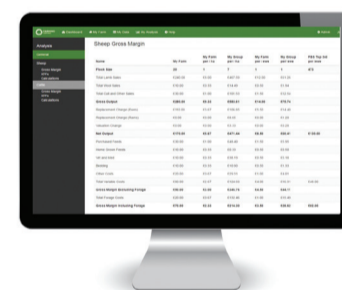
### Key results:

57 more lambs carried on the rotational grazing plot - 1874.1Kg more of lamb produced on the rotational grazing plot which equates to a difference of £3,504.57 - 728 more grazing days on rotational grazing system in comparison to a set stocked plot.

## 7. Measure to Manage

Farming Connect have developed a new and innovative approach to benchmarking for businesses, through the Measure to Manage programme. The Red Meat module is ready for discussion group members and individual farming businesses to use. The tool includes:

- Physical data collection (*scanning percentages, rearing percentages, selling percentages etc*)
- Simple data collection forms
- A comparison with Farm Business Survey results



## 8. Farming Connect Website and Social Media

Number of unique page views (September – November 2016)	76,585
Average time spent on website	00:05:04
Number of followers on Twitter as of 30.11.2016	3,119
Number of likes on facebook as of 30.11.2016	5,123

## 9. Shows and Exhibitions

Our team of Regional Development Officers have continued to attend local livestock markets to register new businesses and to provide information on Farming Connect services. In addition, Farming Connect attended the following shows during September – November 2016:

- Llanfair Caereinion Show (03/09/16) • Usk Show (10/09/16)
- Welsh Dairy Show (25/10/16) • Royal Welsh Winter Fair (28 & 29/11/16)

[www.gov.wales/farmingconnect](http://www.gov.wales/farmingconnect) - 08456 000 813

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