

ABOUT THIS MONITOR FARM

Farm name **Strone Farm, Lochaber Monitor Farm, Banavie, Fort William, PH33 7PB**
 Next Meeting **25th January 2018 - A Strategic Vision for Hill Farming**

Strone Farm is run by Chris and Malcolm Cameron as a family partnership and in total the business farms 1,788 hectares.

Cattle: 40 Limousin cows producing store calves. Cows are in-wintered.

Sheep: 500 Cheviot ewes, producing store lambs. Mainly Lleyn tups and hoggs kept as replacements. Ewes lambed away.

Vision and Aims of the Strone Farm Business

- Financially sustainable and provide a living for the family – a fair return on the time invested.
- To make enough net profit to allow for re-investment back into the business.
- Mixed farming is important to ensure all land is actively farmed.
- Chris takes more control of the management of the business, including bookwork and livestock records over the next five years.

Meeting Topics

The meeting topics were decided by a Management group made up of the Monitor Farmers, facilitators, five local farmers and the farm vet. They were designed to explore the main issues facing Lochaber farming, which is predominately cattle and sheep hill and mountain farming, producing store progeny.

Plan for Future Meetings	Proposed Topics
Thurs 18 th January 2018	A strategic view of land use in the future. A vision for the hills for the next 20 years from a variety of viewpoint.
Thurs 8 th March 2018	Soil Nutrients
June 2018	Open Day - Summary of project to date
Sept 2018	How to make best use of marginal land

Year 1 Meeting Summary

Date	Attendance	Aims	Outcomes
Jan 17	46	Getting to know the farm Establishing a functioning group	Overview of the farm policies SWOT analysis completed Topics for future meetings suggested
<i>Management Group Established – two meetings held in year 1</i>			
March 2017	33	Ewe Management	Condition scoring of ewes Supplementation explored Sheep health issues
May 2017	40	Grassland Management	Grass establishment trials Importance of pH Soil compaction investigated
June 2017	33	Suckler cow systems	Gross margins from sucklers KPI's agreed that are relevant to Lochaber High input/output vs low input/output systems
Sept 2017	25	Soil Health	Bury underwear test for soil health Soil structure and soil pits Compaction layers explained
Nov 2017	30	Winter Management of Cattle	Calving spread critiqued Winter rations prepared
Nov 2017	<i>Benchmarking Group Established and first meeting held</i>		

Attendance

Those attending the meetings at Stone travel for up to 2 hours, from Cowal in the south, Inverness-shire in the north and Mallaig in the west. With the spread-out nature of farming in this remote area, attendance are judged as being good

- Total attendance so far 207, with an average of 35 at each meeting
- Some attend all meetings, other will pick and choose by the topic.

Year 1 has provided a solid platform in which to develop the concept and focus on specific issues that are of real concern to the local farmers.

FACILITATOR CONTACT DETAILS

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