Bigton Farm is a family run farm, managed by Kirsty and Aimee Budge, with help from their Grandad, Jim and other family members at busy times throughout the year.

**Land:** Two units are run together, covering 305ha of inbye and rough grazing.

**Crops:** Around 25ha of spring barley is grown, 4ha of forage rape and about 40ha of silage cut.

**Cattle:** 82 Shorthorn x Saler cows producing Saler or Charolais x calves which are sold store.

**Sheep:** 350 Shetland x Cheviot breeding ewes which are put to a Suffolk tup. Replacements are bought in.

**Management group members are:** Jamie Leslie (Chairman): Scholland Farm, Graham Fraser: SAC Consulting, Kirsty Budge: Bigton Farm, Aimee Budge: Bigton Farm, Lauraine Manson: Hestigarth, Walls and Shetland Livestock Marketing Group, Hilary Burgess: Quendale Farm and Shetland Animal Health Scheme, Eric Graham: Gremista Farm, Jim Tait: Shetland Vets, John Abernethy: Verdaill, Twatt, Johnina Henderson: Breckon, Yell, John Sandison: Parkview, Bigton, Aaron Sinclair: Sandlodge Farm, Jacob Eunson: Uradale, Matthew Westmoreland: Hoversta, Bressay

**MEETING TOPICS**

Topics for discussion are prompted by the management group, made up of 10 local farmers and the farm vet, as well as the Budge family and the facilitators. The management group were chosen from the wider community to ensure they are representative. They act as a link between the facilitators and hosts and the community group as well as using their experience to help drive the project. The topics are chosen to benefit the community group as a whole, and reflect the challenges faced on Shetland.

Future topics include:
- Karen Scholes - Accountancy and software
- Derek Hanton - Bigton Farm audit update
- Jim Logan – rotational grazing
- Bigton Data – workshop
- Charlie Morgan – grass and soils
- Dr Philip Skuce – fluke and worms
- Jamie Robertson – livestock building ventilation

**Meeting Dates 2019/20**
- 2nd March
- 8th June
- 17th August
- 6th October (Sunday)
- 30th Nov or 14th Dec
- 8th February 2020
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>Aims</th>
<th>Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13th &amp; 14th</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Growing and finishing cattle Live grading followed by carcase grading in Shetland Abattoir Lamb finishing rations.</td>
<td>Adding value to sheep by feeding concentrates aiming to market them locally in Shetland and getting the correct ration for growth rate and profit. Assessing when lambs are ready for slaughter and given suitable feeding almost any animal can yield a useable marketable carcase.</td>
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<tr>
<td>January</td>
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<tr>
<td>17th March</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Personal Development Marketing Shetland hill lambs Animal health planning</td>
<td>Getting started in farming, Rural Leadership Programme and encouraging young people into farming. Targeting the Christmas lamb market for small lambs. Health planning can reduce losses and save costs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3rd June</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Making profit from grassland Maximising ewe performance</td>
<td>Grow lots of pasture and utilise 80% Allocate minimum pasture to achieve production objectives Aim to consistently maximise the number of lambs born and improve the weight of lambs sold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25th August</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Improve grassland productivity and utilisation</td>
<td>Concentrate on managing grass which is more cost-effective that spending money on inputs. Rotational grazing can be simple shift over long periods. Using rotations will extend the growing season. Consider winter forage crops</td>
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<tr>
<td>7th October</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>Nutrition and reproduction of the beef cow Selecting replacement tups</td>
<td>Analyse your silage and calculate how much dry matter is available. Match best feed to most demanding stock. Check feed labels. Energy most important but protein deficiency can impact on calf birth weight, colostrum, and calf survival. Decide what you want from your tup. EBVs are a valuable tool in conjunction with a visual and physical inspection.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1st December  | 34  | Succession planning | Have a succession plan and make a will
           |     | Footrot in sheep    | Discuss succession issues with your accountant.
           |     |                    | Discuss your footrot reduction programme with your vet.

**ATTENDANCE**

Total attendance in year 2 was 253, average of 42 at each meeting

**FACILITATOR CONTACT DETAILS**
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