

## ABOUT THIS MONITOR FARM

Farm name	<b>Bigton Farm, Bigton, Shetland, ZE2 9JA</b>
Next Meeting	<b>Saturday 13<sup>th</sup>/Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January 2018 – Shetland Marts, Lerwick</b>

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

**Sheep:** 240 Shetland x Cheviot breeding ewes which are put to a Suffolk tup. Replacements are bought in.

## 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:

- Lamb finishing rations
- Finishing cattle rations
- Trevor Cook – improving flock performance
- Efficient use of home grown manure
- Trialling barley varieties
- Advantages of early lamb weaning
- Increasing the cattle herd
- Ewe replacement strategy
- How to use results from a plate meter

### Meeting Dates 2018

14<sup>th</sup> / 15<sup>th</sup> Jan  
3<sup>rd</sup> March  
2<sup>nd</sup> June  
4<sup>th</sup> August  
8<sup>th</sup> October  
1<sup>st</sup> December

## Year 1 Meeting Summary

Date	Attendance	Aims	Outcomes
4th Feb 17		Introductory meeting Farm tour	Community group established
Management Group Established 22 <sup>nd</sup> March 2017			
1st Apr 17		Condition scoring Lambing Importance of protein	Condition scored ewes and housed thin ewes pre-lambing Trialling rotational grazing with cows
17th Jun 17		Rotational grazing results Grass heights Weed control in grass and barley	DUP blocks trialled Earlier weed control in barley Use of growth regulator on barley Use of plate metre to assess available grass
10th Aug 17		John Scott Seed merchant	Early weaning of lambs Kept more gimmers to expand and improve flock Bought tup on EBV figures Bought in NZ Suffolk tup
8th Oct 17		Pre-tupping checks Ewe and tup health	Checked all tups Ewes blood tested for mineral deficiencies Trialling selenium or cobalt boluses
2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec 17		Agri-environment possibilities Soil health	Apply for AECs Soil testing and monitor potash levels

## Attendance

- Total attendance so far 291, average of 48 at each meeting

### FACILITATOR CONTACT DETAILS

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