



# Annual Report

A report on our progress from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024

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# Chair's Report

Pasture For Life has continued to champion the restorative power of grazing animals on pasture through on farm events, research project collaborations and in various forms of media. We have discussed the food that ruminants produce, the ecological engineering they perform in our landscapes and the communities they support all over these islands in the North Atlantic.

Personally, I've met farmers, academics, vets, chefs and many more at events in Ulster, in East Anglia, the Midlands, the North-East, the Borders and the Highlands and we are hosting an event ourselves this month in Fife. I always enjoy the conversations and finding out how we are making a difference in markets, on farm and sometimes with our neighbours and friends too.

Looking forward to the next few years, the team have been working on a 2030 plan which will see Pasture For Life increase our membership significantly and build on the successful projects that have supported our team for 4 years. This is an exciting time to be part of Pasture For Life.

I joined the board of Pasture For Life in 2019 and will come to the end of my second term in 2025. The board will be looking for a new Chair over the next few months to help the leadership team deliver on the promise of our plan. I look forward to following the story from the outside as it develops and more people can eat and drink our products; walk through our environments and talk about the great things that people in our community are doing every day.

There are exciting and informative winter webinars to take part in over the coming months and events on farm next summer. I hope to catch up with as many of you as possible.

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**Johnnie Balfour**

Chair



# Executive Director's Report

I'm delighted to report that we have had another stellar year at Pasture for Life, in terms of the growth of our activity and engagement. There's also been a real sense of purpose in the team delivering it all, most of whom came together at the end of April to celebrate and plan for the future. This excitement has been particularly evidenced in our Farming in Protected Landscapes projects, which have been in full flow this year, delivering activity across 18 Protected Landscapes in England. Thankfully, we now have meaningful activity in Wales and the continuation of a growing presence in Scotland.

With most of our projects ending in March 2025, our current challenge promises to be our biggest yet: maintaining and trying to deliver further growth despite that. To achieve this, the team has put together a new 2030 Business Plan, underpinned by a new vision, mission and theory of change for the organisation, that sees us needing to raise £5m over five years to deliver on the promise we have unlocked via our project work.

In five years, we want to have hit 5,000 members, one million hectares and achieved financial self-sufficiency. Pulling this off will require a big push from the team, in step with the support of the members. Please help us reach this target in any way you can, particularly through the power of your networks.

To deliver on our 2030 Business Plan, we have made some organisational changes and two promotions that deserve

mention. Nikki Yoxall has been made Technical Director and will oversee our Knowledge Generation (research and evidence building) and Knowledge Exchange activity. Kate Bradshaw is now Marketing & Operations Director and will oversee our marketing, digital and operations activity. Both Nikki and Kate have been working with us for four years now and our recent success is down to them as much as anyone else. As we develop our team and Board to build on our successes, I'm thrilled they are demonstrating their commitment to the organisation.

As ever, this drive and excitement we're seeing in our work is matched by the impressive feats being achieved across our membership. Whether it's the Emergent Generation, fledgling farmer consultants, new regenerative conferences and events, or those developing supply chains in fibre or meat and dairy, the power of the Pasture for Life collective is as strong as ever and continues to be bolstered by new recruits. Word of mouth continues to be our strongest recruitment tool, so please continue to spread the word.

A final word on our new theory of change, which was created to articulate the special things we see going on in the Pasture for Life community. One of these I can't help noticing is the common bond quickly developed between a farmer who is new to it all and someone who has been at it for 20 years. This has also been coming through strongly in our mentoring projects, where we've heard that mentors seem to be learning as much from mentoring as their mentees. What we see here is a real cycle of change, not a linear one, where learning is continuous and where our members are constantly seeking out the next challenge. We've captured this in our new theory of change, something you'll be hearing a lot more about in the coming months.

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## Jimmy Woodrow

Executive Director



# 2023-24 Headlines

**1,428**

Members

**c.29,000**

hectares of grazing land under certification

**c.250,000**

hectares of grazing land in the membership

**Version**

**5.0**

of the  
**Pasture  
for Life**  
certification  
standards

**208**

Events  
delivered

**93**

Farmers  
trained as  
mentors

**166**  
mentees

**100%**

of the farmers in our  
South East project feel  
more confident in  
making decisions

**75%**

felt sufficiently confident  
to have made a positive  
change within one year  
of having a mentor

Instagram up

**15%**

year on year

Facebook up

**28%**

LinkedIn up

**69%**

**1.2k**

subscribers and average 800  
views a month on YouTube

**10k+**

email subscribers

# Membership

We reached 1,428 members. Paying members increased from 893 to 930 (4.1% growth). At the time of writing, we had an additional 498 farms receiving free memberships via our projects where the funder was funding the cost.

## Acquisition

We acquired the majority of our paying members through word-of-mouth and in-person events. We had a very good Groundswell, signing 48 new members (32% of our total new paid-up members for the year). More than last year, membership growth has leant heavily on the free memberships acquired through our projects. By monitoring whether free and discounted members convert to paid-up at the end of their annual subscription, we will discover how these strategies translate to increased engagement and revenue in the long term.

## Retention

We gained 155 new members this year but lost 137. Our retention rate, which has dropped slightly to 85%, is coming under pressure as we grow and our service gets more geographically inconsistent, something we are working on with our new strategy. Our offer has been dependent on grant funding, and we have had to go where the money is. Our new offer will launch in January 2025 and with future funding, we hope to rectify the inconsistencies.

As last year, if any members are frustrated with this, please do get in touch, as you may have good ideas about what we could do in your area that will help us, particularly local funding streams we could be tapping into.

## Serving our membership community

Our 2030 Business Plan gives us the blueprint to expand our membership offering. However, this year we have focused on strengthening our existing offer, by improving how we facilitate connection within the community. We have launched regional and interest-specific WhatsApp groups, promoted the livestock marketplace (29 adverts), and fielded conversation in the Google Forum (40+ posts p/m). Plus, we have renewed and generated new brand discounts, from 10% off FECPAK and £80 off Soilmentor to £500 cash back on a carbon audit with FBAASS and 10% off entry to the Carbon Calling Conference.

The result: consistently positive, powerful feedback from members.

**"The Pasture for Life community is vital for facing the challenges that we face on the farm."**

Ed Dickson, Member and Certified Farmer at Lower House Farm

**"The sharing and learning between farmers have made businesses resilient ... We feel that we are part of a hopeful future."**

Sam Beaumont, Member and Certified Farmer at Gowbarrow Hall Farm

**"I have probably gained more timely, relevant and actionable information from this group than all of the other [carbon accounting] tools put together."**

Andrew Hattan, Member and Farmer at Low Riggs Farm

# Certification

The total grazing land area now under Pasture for Life certification has increased to c.28,529 hectares (up 7.3%).

## Numbers

The number of certified producers has decreased nominally from 158 to 148 (6.3%). However, the total grazing land area now under Pasture for Life certification has increased to c.28,529 hectares (up 7.3%), with c.15,427 cattle (flat) and c.24,216 sheep (up 10.4%) under management. We have 12 certified dairy producers producing more than 6.8 million litres per annum.

To improve our certified producer experience, we developed marketing packs. These include our 'Application Guide for New Producers,' 'Marketing Guidance Notes,' 'Producers User Guide,' 'Marketing 'Butchers' Pack,' 'Marketing 'Certified Business' Pack,' 'Butchers Crib Sheet' and 'Certification Journey' document. We plan to introduce a new approach to managing our supply chain in the New Year, which we hope will positively impact certification numbers and impact.



Challons Combe



Challons Combe

## Standards

We released Version 5.0 of the Pasture for Life certification standards with extended support from colleagues at OF&G.

We are confident that the standards now offer a fully evidence-based certification scheme that is straightforward to interpret and deliver on-farm. To reduce confusion between primary producers and other businesses involved in the supply chain, any post-farm-gate businesses are now 'approved' rather than certified. We have further work to complete on this, which will be wrapped up in our website development activity over the coming months.



## Pasture and Profit

We have successfully rolled out the Pasture and Profit in Protected Landscapes programme across England and receive grant funding from 17 protected landscapes (High Weald, Kent Downs, Surrey Hills, Yorkshire Dales, Lake District, Forest of Bowland, Nidderdale, North Pennines, South Downs, Cotswolds, Chilterns, North Wessex Downs, Shropshire Hills, Malvern Hills, Wye Valley, Dorset and Cornwall). The projects are being professionally evaluated and expect to see more on this in the coming months.

The core activities of the programme are to deliver locally tailored, farmer-led, on-farm, educational activities in the form of farm walks and workshops, as well as running webinars and online workshops, to bring in farmers and other professionals from further afield, to delve deeper on particular topics. We have also now trained 93 PFL farmers as mentors and matched them with 166 mentees, with more mentees being recruited and matched to mentors through the rest of 2024. Some early results have shown that 100% of the farmers in our South East project feel more confident in making decisions and 75% felt sufficiently confident to have made a change within one year of having a mentor. This confidence has led to evidence of improved mental health amongst participants in our South East England project.

Some highlights from our FiPL programme include events on: regenerative grazing; extensive and profitable heathland grazing for biodiversity; dung beetles in the farm ecosystem; finishing beef on grass.

# Community

We have delivered more than 176 farmer-to-farmer events and trained 93 farmers to deliver mentoring. 166 farmers have received mentoring, 75% of which have felt confident enough to make positive changes within a year.

## Scotland

Jamie Jack has joined the team as regional manager to support our work with members and to run our new Skills Development Programme, funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. We have developed a new set of training modules with key regenerative farming partners and Lantra Scotland. Aimed at new entrant farmers, our first cohort of eight trainees has worked through the practical training and will continue to complete an applied, farm-based project to deepen their learning.

We have been awarded further funding from the Scottish Government via their Knowledge Transfer and Innovation Fund to run a series of online workshops over the winter of 2024/25 — co-funded by Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park Authority. Plus, we have worked with NatureScot and Vidacyle to run a train-the-trainer session on the Soilmentor app.

## Wales

Having successfully tendered a contract with Plantlife Cymru as part of their Glaswelltiroedd Gwydn (Resilient Grasslands) programme, we have started delivering interactive engagement sessions with students in agricultural colleges across Wales. After a successful pilot at Coleg Llysfas in Spring 2024, we will roll this out to two further colleges for the new academic intake. We are developing a new partnership for delivering on-farm educational events and advice to farmers with the North Wales Wildlife Trust.



**"Farming can be a solitary experience. This programme has enabled me to feel part of my local farming community and to learn from very experienced farming peers."**

Pasture and Profit mentee, South East England

**"Being a part of this programme has given us strength in not feeling alone in the challenges faced due to climate change."**

Pasture and Profit mentee South East England

**"I have gained so much knowledge and have confidence that it is possible to do everything we need to as farmers to produce animals off forage alone."**

Pasture and Profit mentee North England

**"You have truly given me confidence and hope that farming can be a force for good, can be enjoyable and should be more than doing the day-to-day, engaging and seeing people and the world for what it is."**

Pasture and Profit mentee North England

In addition, we are developing a suite of educational resources — video, podcasts, infographics, and how-tos — which we have gathered into an online hub. Our interim evaluation work on the North Pasture and Profit programme revealed anecdotal evidence of the connection and community catalysed by (and beyond) the project.

**"The programme is greater than the sum of the individual events, not only because of the farmer community that is developing but the networking of organisations who have not previously engaged with Pfl or one another such as the local food partnership and a local abattoir campaign group."**

Project Lead

### Other funded programmes & partnerships

Alongside Pasture and Profit, we have delivered a number of other exciting funded programmes across England, including Royal Countryside Fund's Farm for the Future Programme in the East Midlands, East Anglia, and the Thames Valley. We have secured funding from the Farming in Protected Landscapes to run a bespoke programme in the Peak District with the National Park Authority.

In addition, we have collaborated with the Foundation for Common Land to promote their Upland Farmer Toolkit. There are co-funded events coming up in Shropshire, the Lake District, and the Yorkshire Dales. We have also brought in funding for specific series of events with funders such as Southern Water and Anglian Water.

We are building partnerships to add value and develop long-lasting collaborations for the future. Partners include the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, Farmer Network, Innovative Farmers, AHDB, NSRegen, Nethergill Associates, Regenerate Outcomes, Moredun Research Institute, Nature Friendly Farming Network, Southern Water, and Brighton and Hove Council.

### Our focus

Our focus for the coming year is on building a strong legacy from these funded projects. We are working hard to robustly evaluate all of our programme work to generate evidence on why peer-to-peer knowledge exchange is the most effective way to support farmers in making the regenerative transition. We hope to draw on this evidence base to advocate with important funders in the public, charitable and private spheres. We also want to continue and build on our work in the peer-to-peer learning space for the farming community in the UK, through a variety of mechanisms. This has formed a core part of our new business plan.



Dr Shyama Vermeersch from the University of Oxford School of Archaeology and Asheesh Sharma, a PhD student from Bristol University start their placements imminently.

## Dissemination of our research

We extended our impact through the generation and publication of public-facing content, synthesising and analysing a range of research topics and themes we have published on the PFL website. Articles have covered sustainability assessments, the need for a holistic assessment of complex farm systems, the role of livestock in a low-input future, rethinking efficiency, the hay and silage debate, and biodiversity and the wider environment.

We have developed a relationship with Dr David Unwin who is offering an hour a month pro bono to help us develop our thinking and messaging around research related to meat consumption and human health.

## Collaboration & partnerships

Research Officer Charlotte Wheeler became an AFN Champion for 2024, running a series of workshops, researcher meetings, and knowledge exchange events on Circular Food Systems.

We have worked on the 'Local Food Plan' project alongside the Food Farming & Countryside Commission, Landworkers Alliance, Sustainable Food Trust, and Sustain, and assisted with the design, delivery, and evaluation of the 'Routes to Market' workshop series with Forum for the Future. We have extended PFL's reach across a range of communities of practice, including developing a relationship with TABLE Debates as part of their Regenerative Agriculture Sprint project as a key stakeholder.

Pasture for Life remains a member of Agroecology Research Collaboration and we continue to join various stakeholder and advisory groups including the Scottish Government's Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board (ARIOB), The Cairngorm National Park Agriculture Advisory Group and the Moredun Institute Regenerative Agriculture Advisory Group.

## Funded projects

Within the Pathways project, the Living Lab we successfully secured 20,000 euros funding for started this year. This brings together a group of Pasture for Life farmers in the South of England who secured funding to compare the vitamin B12, B6 and macronutrient content of certified Pfl beef with beef purchased in supermarkets. A third of the beef has been tested, with the rest being submitted this autumn and in early 2025.

# Credibility

We have continued to engage with projects and activities across a range of scales, from field-based trials to multi-partner European projects.

## Research events

On refreshing our Research Group membership, we received almost 50 expressions of interest from PFL members. We now have an active group of around 25 members, with some of our academic partners represented on a rolling basis by staff. The group has met 20 times, including hearing from 9 academics.

We continue to meet monthly, hearing from academics working in the fields of food systems, grazing livestock and grassland management. This year, we heard from: Dr John Langley-Randall (ADAS), Professor Siobhan Mullan (University College Dublin), Dr Paul Smith (Teagasc), Victoria Leggett (Union Bancaire Privée), Dr Taro Takahashi (AFBI), Professor Anemmie Martens (University of Sussex), Dr Richard Kipling (Sustainable Food Trust and Global Farm Metric), Chris Burnett (Map Impact) and Kari Bækgaard Eriksson (The University of Copenhagen). Our 2025 programme is already taking shape.

## Student research placements

Bristol University PhD student Sara Hall has been on placement with us which will continue into spring 2025. She has continued her research into holistic assessments of 30 dairy farms covering regenerative, conventional, and sustainable intensification systems. On his 8-week placement, University of Reading student Maxwell Abonyo Gero analysed results from testing of Pfl produce carried out by the Bionutrient Institute. His report will be available before the new year.

As part of this project, we have continued to support the development of future European livestock scenarios, including a 100% pasture-fed ruminant option as part of the 'Feed no Food' scenario, which is predicated on removing competition between food grown for humans and animals. The Public Goods Tool assessments of 20 Pasture for Life certified farms were completed by PFL and University of Reading staff, and the most representative farm of the cohort underwent a full Life Cycle Analysis. We travelled to Cluj Napoca in Romania to take part in the annual General Assembly for this project, gaining insight into food system challenges in Eastern Europe and learning more about the connections between sustainable grasslands and cooperative supply chains.

As part of the Re:Livestock project Nikki Yoxall and Sara Hall attended the General Meeting in Edinburgh, and we held our second Stakeholder Forum at Groundswell ahead of the event start. We have undertaken sustainability of 15 PFL certified farms in the North of England and Scotland, results are still being analysed but early indicators show that PFL farms are more profitable than average UK farms. We will be sharing the outputs as they become available.

We continue to promote the outputs from both the SEEGSLIP and SusCatt projects which give us meaningful insights into 100% pasture-fed systems, both from an environmental and social perspective as well as nutritional quality. We continue to develop the latest It Can Be Done report, which aims to document the financial resilience of Pasture for Life certified farms, and to work with AHDB to assess the financial performance of farms across the UK. This has led to the development of two discussion groups in England which kick off this autumn and the establishment of a Scotland PFL discussion group being facilitated by a freelance consultant using funding available north of the border.

Our 'Bale Grazing' field lab, funded by Innovative Farmers, has been going from strength to strength with a panel at ORFC in January 2024 and a co-hosted event with AHDB at field lab member and AHDB Monitor Farm, Alnham Farm in Northumberland and another at Gowbarrow Hall in Cumbria. AHDB provided additional support to this project, funding a Cost Benefit Analysis of each farm, including their own Northumberland Monitor Farm, to help quantify the impacts of this outwintering approach, which is being launched in November 2024.

We have been successful in collaborative bids for the LUNZ Grassland (Grassland Resilience for Net Zero) and NEIRF (Natural Environment Investment Readiness Fund) projects. We have also been invited to join an AFN Scoping Study with The Allerton Project and Greenwich University to support the testing of a photographic soil carbon assessment tool.

Honeydale Farm



Our BBSRC-funded project in collaboration with Rothamsted Research, Sustainable Pasture-fed Systems: Unifying Science and Practice, started this year, led by board member Dr Catherine Broomfield.

## Our focus

Staff from the research and community teams attended a training session with The Farm Carbon Toolkit and are now able to undertake carbon audits for member farms. We have built our experience of undertaking holistic assessments of farms for a number of research projects and completed carbon audits for member farms. This has been further supported by a collaboration with consultant Daniel Stout in Scotland, who has been able to deliver advice to farms based on the audit outcomes, funded by the Farm Advisory Service. This ability to work in collaboration with consultants and deliver meaningful outcomes for our members is the basis for our work going forward in alignment with the new business plan, and these early small-scale pilots have demonstrated both process success and user impact.



# Policy

Pasture for Life continues to be well represented in policy arenas and discussions, including in the Abattoir Sector Group and Small Abattoir Working Group, FFCC Farming Leadership Group, Farming and Land Use Network, Dynamic Food Procurement Advisory Board, NatureScot Board, the Scotland Agriculture Reform Implementation Oversight Board (ARIOB) and the Scottish Suckler Beef Support Scheme (SSBSS) working group, as well as the Scottish Agroecology Action Group.

## CLEAR

CLEAR, the labelling campaign that Pfl founded, now has over 50 organisations signed up to it and has made positive progress in its lobbying efforts directed at the industry-led labelling initiatives coming into use. The research project, initiated by CLEAR, to review the current slew of eco-labelling schemes in the process of reporting and we hope will be

looked at by DEFRA as they develop their approach in the area of labelling. CLEAR continues to be chaired by Fidelity Weston and is in the process of being 'handed over' to the Sustainable Food Trust as an initiative they run and seek further funding for.

## Open letter to DEFRA

While policy activity is not something we have funding or time for to a significant degree, Research Officer Charlotte Wheeler led the development of an open letter to DEFRA, which was supported by over 30 co-signatories, calling for a review of SFI action Herbal Leys "CSAM3" to ensure its use does not put permanent pasture suitable for restoration at risk. This got significant attention from the farming media, including Farming Today and Farmers Weekly, and suggests if we did have the money and time to put towards policy work, it might.



Macknade Food Hall

# Marketing

## Ambassadors amp up our voice

Many members champion Pasture for Life without being asked — advocating for the organisation at events, in the press, and through their independent digital marketing activities. This year, we formalised that relationship by inviting 13 farmers and butchers to become brand ambassadors, advocating for pasture-fed systems and sharing our brand and events.

- Silas Hedley-Lawrence, Regenerative Farming Consultant
- Simon Maynard, Macknade Food Hall
- Claire & Sam Beaumont, Gowbarrow Hall Farm
- Kate & Will Martin, Treway Farm
- Hollie & Francesca, Nunwell Home Farm
- James Ferguson, Kinneuchar Inn
- Neil & Leigh Heseltine, Hill Top Farm
- Mark & Jen Lee, Torpenhow Cheese Co

Already we are seeing the success of this strategy. In the Cotswolds, Silas Hedley-Lawrence clocked up over 18,000 views on three joint-promotion social media posts to promote the launch of Pasture and Profit in Protected Landscapes in the CCWND region. The result: attendance increased threefold.

Another Ambassador, Simon Maynard at Macknade Food has been fantastic in sharing our brand, wearing our Pasture for Life merchandise whilst hosting the successful Beer & BBQ Festival to over 2,000 people in Kent.

## Newsletters

We now have 10.6k unique subscribers to our newsletter due in part to a refresh of how email addresses were counted. In the last 12 months, we have sent over 11.5k emails with an industry beating open rate of 51% and a click rate up 27% YOY to 4.2%.

With a subscriber list of 10,000+, we will implement a marketing strategy to engage with our audience in a consistent, quality, and highly personalised way that, ultimately, drives revenue. This will include implementing an automated welcome series and sunset flow for subscribers, members and certified producers. Plus, we will use preferences and data to tailor content to specific audiences to increase engagement. We firmly believe in email marketing as a tool to retain connection with our members and an effective channel for retaining Pfl in people's.

## In print

We maintained last year's notable PR success, featured in a steady flow of quality, full-length feature articles in the farming press. These include Farmers Guide (90k+ readers), British Farmer & Grower Magazine (48k+ readers), and multiple articles in Farmers Guardian (70k+ readers), The Scottish Farmer (100k+ readers), and Farmers Weekly (100k+ readers). Our bale grazing project with Innovative Farmers and Pasture and Profit programme held the spotlight. Plus, Pfl certified farms were featured across everything from 'Soil just got sexy!' in Country and Town House (150k+ readers) to 'Best Farm Shops' in The Times (1m+ readers).

**"Pasture for Life members supported me when I had almost zero knowledge of the situation I found myself in."**

Farmers Guardian's full profile on Kate Bradshaw and her certified farm, Penbanc Pasture

British Pasture Leather (BPL) is an excellent example of how brand partnerships leverage content. BPL have helped to broaden our reach outside of the farming press, introducing Pasture for Life in International Leather Maker (30k readers), Fashion United (1m readers), and Vogue Business as they were named 'Sustainability Thought Leaders' for 2023. Their book, *Field, Fork, Fashion*, published in October 2023, has generated an uptick in conversation around pasture-raised fibre.

### On the radio and screen

The Pasture for Life team is frequently called on as a voice for nature-first farming practices. We have joined discussions on the BBC's *Scotland Outdoors*, *Growing Solo*, and BBC Radio 4's *Farming Today*. Johnnie Balfour contributed to the BBC's *Last Word* on Lady Eve Balfour, his great-aunt. Certified Pfl farmers have been featured on everything from BBC News to Radio 5 Live. At the time of writing, Alice Robinson of British Pasture Leather had just appeared on BBC Radio 4's *Start the Week*, giving special mention to Pasture for Life and our farming community. Podcast appearances stretch from multiple contributions to *CLEAR* and *Tree Amble* to *Lantra Scotland* and *Talking Natural Capital*.



**"We now work with a community of farmers that are all certified by Pfl. We work to identify which abattoirs they take their cattle to, to ensure when the hides are removed their value is retained."**

Alice Robinson on *Start the Week*, BBC Radio 4

Our support of the documentary film *Six Inches of Soil* further promoted Pasture for Life as a pioneer of change in the press. We have been involved in the curation of two film projects, just released at the time of writing — two short *Chalk Grassland Films* by Pasture and Profit SDNP, and the collaborative film *Growing Rich with Nature*. Pfl-certified farms also appeared on two episodes of BBC's *Saving our Wild Isles* (10.7m views) and *Countryfile* (5.66m views).



## Social media

Our social media following continues to grow steadily. While our following remains strongest on X, we've seen the biggest increase on Instagram (15% y-o-y), Facebook (28%), and LinkedIn (69%). Research articles perform best on X. Top performing posts include our report on the nutritional benefits of pasture-fed (30 shares, 32k views), mob grazing research (48 shares, 9k views), and evidence for pasture-based systems (29 shares, 5.2k views). On Instagram, creative visuals deliver the best. Engagement peaked at the on-farm photography and videos we captured in-house as part of our Bale Grazing Field Lab (Innovative Farmers), generating 60k views.

The success of our digital communications strategy can be seen in the three online-only campaigns that we delivered this year — the Big Give, Soils Challenge Week, and Winter Webinars. We totalled over 40,000 views from our pledges on social media to donate to our Big Give. In our second year of Winter Webinars, we created bespoke campaign content ranging from social media assets, email signatures and photography to promote the events themselves and incentivise new members to join us.

At the time of writing, we have just launched our most evolved Winter Webinar campaign to date. With 20+ online events to promote, the first event on agroforestry and the second event on herbal leys generating 109 and 140 tickets respectively.

On our YouTube channel, we have 1.3K subscribers and an average of 800 views a month. In 2024, our video highlights were:

- Pasture and Profit mentor and mentee video
- Grazing Planning with Silas Hedley-Lawrence
- Introduction to Pfl certification
- Rob Havard on cattle selection and mobgrazing

## Website

Our website has acted as a barrier to growth, both in terms of its functionality and the quality of its content. But thanks to our Green Give fundraising in April 2024 in partnership with The Real Farming Trust, we raised over £100k to invest in our new website.

Work has started already and the site will deliver a new face for the Pfl brand, a functional space to publish events and research and an engaging resource hub for members and certified producers. The site will dramatically improve the experience of becoming a member or a donor, and will fully reflect the breadth of what we offer including paid-for and free events, downloads and merchandise.

# Supply Chain Development

With the volume of knowledge exchange activity hitting new heights this year, supply chain efforts have frustratingly taken a back seat. However, we have hosted 12 sell-out supply chain events and expanded our visibility and outreach at industry events.

We have experienced a lack of direct funding for supply chain work coming with the end of the funding we had that was paying for our two supply chain managers, Rob Bunn and Nigel Franklin. Despite this, over the year we have seen both a steady stream of farms looking to get certified and greater interest in Pasture for Life from the marketplace. Our main funding priority now is to get a supply chain manager in place to really push on this work and deliver the positive results we are overdue.

We're increasingly aware that to provide the butchery trade, and their chef and retail customers, the product they need will require a more joined-up supply chain, working particularly

around the role of finishing farms that can provide the volume and consistency demanded by the wholesale trade. This will be a core focus of any incoming supply chain manager.

Towards the end of 2023, we held two very well-attended events bringing together farmers with butchers and chefs, one at FarmEd in Gloucestershire and one at Macknade in Kent. This work has continued via some of our projects that have responded to interest in supply chain development and certification from their participants, particularly in the North and East of England. We have also held a number of 'direct sales' events to help farmers diversify their businesses.

We hosted six supper clubs, which all sold out with 350 attendees in total. These supper clubs were a brilliant way to showcase the benefits of Pasture for Life, from sampling the very best of 100% pasture-fed meat and dairy to networking with like-minded people.

Supply chain development has also been a key focus of our outreach at events like Food Festivals at Abergavenny and Macknade, Groundswell and other smaller, local events where staff have been asked to speak.

In Scotland, we published a value chain analysis of Pfl beef and convened a roundtable event with supply chain stakeholders and farmers to explore the findings and initiate opportunities for supply chain development. Although there is appetite both from primary producers and wholesalers to develop a cohesive PFL supply chain, efforts have been hampered by the closure of wholesaler MacDuff 1890 and lack of staff capacity to drive this forward. In Wales we held a live-to-kill two day event, helping farmers understand the importance of finishing and the impact this has on the butchery process. We hope to run more of these events in the future given the importance of this area.

On the fibre side, we have collaborated with British Pasture Leather on three events that have brought fashion designers and brands onto Pfl farms to learn about regenerative farming, one at Brightleigh Farm in Surrey and two more recently at Weston Park Farms in Hertfordshire. The latter two events also included the new processing and education facility British Pasture Leather has established in Northampton. At Groundswell, we collaborated with British Pasture Leather, Ethical Butcher, Loopy Ewes and Julie's Restaurant. to design our most ambitious project yet, co-designing the largest space we've held at the festival (12x12m) — space to tell the pasture-fed story from field to fork and fibre.

Our FiPL project manager, Isabella Goggin, has also just been announced as a recipient of the LUND Fellowship by the High Weald National Landscape. Isabella intends to use the time and money to further her interest in developing fibre supply chains in the High Weald.



Salter & King



Gowbarrow Hall Farm

## Operations and Funding

The staff team (both employed and freelance) has hovered around 35-40 throughout this year, though the full-time equivalent continues to be 18-20.

Over the year, we have made significant progress in building the processes and policies to support a team of this size, ranging from HR to bookkeeping. New joiners to the team this year have included: Charlotte Downing, Zoe Charnock, Louise Anderson, Jamie Jack, Sarah Williams, Sonya O'Hea, Tim Bowden, Lisa Guy and Ben Thomas in our Community team, Maxwell Abonyo Gerro in the Research team and Alice Scott in our Marketing team. We continue to be supported by Kellie Chandler for all our HR needs and we have recently taken on Songbooks who are now our bookkeepers.

We had a very successful staff off-site at the end of April in Staffordshire, where c.40 people, including some of our FiPL funders, convened to discuss the new strategy and plans for the final year of FiPL funding. If funding allows, we plan to do two of these per year.

As DEFRA's Farming in Protected Landscapes programme ends in March 2025, we will be taking stock and sharing the impressive stories and evidence we have showcasing the success of our projects. We have successfully raised c.£1.5m from the programme and have worked with over 600 farmers across England. It's imperative that we use this success to keep the momentum going with more funding and to help more farmers, for whom we have produced our new Business Plan.

Aside from FiPL, this year we have been successful in a further core grant from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation for £360k and had a very successful first Big Give - Green Match Fund campaign, where we raised almost £110k - thank you to all those who contributed to this. Our Scotland internship programme was also funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. We are also thankful to have received funding from the following donors over the year: Romshed Charitable Trust, Roger Ross, Maria & Mike Spink, Jon Thornes, Jane and Chris Oglesby, Rose Dale, Aurora Trust, Rothschild Foundation and the Golden Bottle Trust.

Despite these successes, particularly with FiPL ending, we face a major funding challenge in the next 12 months if we are to increase or even maintain our current level of service to the farming industry. Members are encouraged to feed in ideas for local, regional or national funding.

# Governance

The 2023 AGM was held online, where we heard from the Pfl team and Board. At the time of writing our Board consists of the following members:

## Non-executive

- Johnnie Balfour, Farmer and Chair
- Ian Boyd, Farmer and Vice Chair
- Dr Gillian Butler, Senior Lecturer, Newcastle University
- Roger Kerr, Chief Executive, Organic Farmers & Growers
- Liz Genever, Livestock Consultant
- Alistair Stobie, Farmer and Business Consultant
- Jon Thornes, Farmer and Entrepreneur
- Simon Cutter, Farmer
- Catherine Broomfield, Farmer, Consultant and PhD researcher
- Denise Walton, Farmer
- Oliver Hemsley, Farmer and Entrepreneur

## Executive

- Jimmy Woodrow, Executive Director

The Board of Directors has met for four board meetings and a number of additional ad-hoc meetings in the last year, all via Zoom. In addition, many of the Board attended the staff off-site in Staffordshire at the end of April. As we move forward with a new strategy, we will refresh the Board to ensure we are fit for the future and can adequately manage succession. At this AGM, three long-standing Directors will be standing down: Simon Cutter, Denise Walton and Alistair Stobie. We are commencing our search for a new Chair via a new Board sub-committee convened for the purpose, with current Chair,

Johnnie Balfour standing down in a year, when he will have served his two three-year terms.

In support of these changes, we have created two new board-level Executive positions and they will be filled by Nikki Yoxall (Technical Director) and Kate Bradshaw (Marketing & Operations Director), both of whom have been working in a part-time capacity for Pfl for four years.



FAI Farms, photo by Peter Haken



## Treasurer's Report

Our turnover for the year to March 2024 was £951,431, up from £581,186 in 2023, realising a small profit of £1,311, leaving us with retained earnings at the end of the period of (£2,415), up from (£3,726) the previous year.

**Johnnie Balfour**

Chair, Pasture For Life

12 November 2024

# Event Highlights

Events play a critical role in Pasture for Life's visibility across all our activities — farmer-to-farmer learning, research, communications, supply chain development and building our community. This year, we have hosted more events than ever, whilst increasing our presence at industry events.

# 176

## Farmer-Farmer Events

131 on-farm  
45 online

# 2,302

## Total tickets

1,826 on-farm  
476 online

### Highlights

- Managing chalk and limestone grasslands through livestock grazing
- Accelerating soil health and business resilience with Allen Williams
- Finishing beef on grass

## PFL Speaking Events

Speaking at a wide range of events with audience reach of

# c.60,000

### Highlights

- Abergavenny Food Festival
- Groundswell and ORFC
- BioFarm

# 12

## Supply Chain Events with 500 attendees

### Highlights

- 'Live to dead' two day event in South Wales
- Farm-fork supper clubs with 350 total attendees
- On-farm fashion industry events with British Pasture Leather

## Research Events

25 regular attendees that met 20 times over the year

# 25

### Highlights

- Dr Paul Smith (Teagasc)
- Victoria Leggett (Union Bancaire Privee)
- Kari Bækgaard Eriksson (The University of Copenhagen)

## Event Partners & Funders

### Highlights

National Parks and Landscapes, Royal Countryside Fund, Foundation for Common Land, AFN Network+, FFCC, Landworkers Alliance, Sustain, TABLE Debates, AHDB, Rothamsted Research, Plantlife Cymru, Regenerate Outcomes



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