

Women in Agriculture Scotland (WiAS) Nominations to become Committee Members 2020
(in surname alphabetical order)



Katrina Barclay I was born and raised in rural Aberdeenshire on our family farm. We have a mixed arable tenanted holding with a closed herd of 30 sucklers around 400 breeding ewes and although I no longer live on the farm, I take every opportunity to get hands on when I do go home. I studied science at Aberdeen University before finishing my student phase with a Postgrad in Organic Farming at SAC Craibstone. After several years working for Scottish Organic Producers Association as their producer services advisor and with Soil Association in Bristol, I started my first role in food and farming education for the National Trust in the Lake District in 2005.



Working with the tenant fell farmers and seeing their interactions with the general public fueled my passion for creating opportunities for people of all ages and backgrounds to understand their rural community better. Improving food and farming knowledge and transparency led me back to Scotland where I took up a role with RHET as the project coordinator for Lothian.

Since 2013 I have been assisting the board, to lead and develop RHET to achieve the charitable goals but also ensuring the organisation responds to the changes in food education. Working on behalf of RHASS since 2012 has allowed me to not only travel the world to represent RHASS/RHET but to forge relationships, to share good practices and to learn from trends and approaches in the agri and food industries.

Shirley Clarke I am from Williamwood, Kirtlebridge near Lockerbie, I'm a 58 Mum of two grown up children, both of whom I have helped into farming and a proud grannie of a sheep and pony mad 2 1/2 year old girl who is basically a mini me. I married into farming at the age of 21 to a hill farmer who sadly died at a very young age leaving me with a farm and two very young children to deal with. The mid-eighties was a real time of male domination if you like, women were on a farm to feed "the men", raise the children and basically be the "gofor" and let's not forget feeding the pathetic sickly lambs and calves that the men didn't have the patience to look after. Let's just say as a widow I served my apprenticeship.



I moved to the lowlands in Dumfriesshire with my now husband farming a mixed beef, sheep and diversified farm, using the farm to educate, entertain and sell our holiday cottages. I am not a flash committee lady who sits on a committee because it's the "thing to do", I am very much a grass roots farmer, I have success and failures too, I am honest about how I farm and am proud to have achieved what I have. In my time in

agriculture I have learnt many, many, skills and realized listening to the high profile successful ladies in agriculture I have done what they have done, but because of that dreaded feeling of intimidation, have shrank to the far fields, full of frustration that I could not share my experiences and shared my knowledge to empower other women. It is worth remembering that you never know what another person is dealing with in their life, what makes them do what they do and that we all have skill sets to offer. Having the next generation coming on in our family, and a girl into the bargain, I would like to help empower other women, like me, swap their Jimmy Wellies for their Jimmy Choos to have the confidence to infiltrate **the** many committees in our agricultural sector, and make a real difference to the future of agriculture. Help to make a real difference for the future generations of women in farming. My passion is breeding Highland Ponies, and as an old friend once said, "there is a red rosette for every pony sometime", just as there is a seat on a committee for all sorts of women with all sorts of backgrounds in agriculture.

Julie Comins Who am I? I usually say “Accountant by career, farmer by choice” but I stole this from John Travolta – not that he was either! I’m a child of the 60’s and a huge fan of 80’s music so can often be heard blasting out epic tracks. At school I played lots of instruments and, as an adult, I still play flute with aspirations to be a competent accordionist!



My grandparents & their siblings were involved in hunting or smallholders running the village shop so my childhood allowed me a fabulous freedom around animals and the countryside. I am passionate about our young people being able to experience the countryside & being around animals even when they come from an urban or non-farming background.

A single parent, I moved to Scotland in 2005 with a young child, a dog and a cat to start a new life. Now, with husband number 2, I have a small farm in Speyside where we rear meat goats using Boer goat sires. Running around 300 goats keeps me pretty busy but we have still found time to run adult training courses with the SCF for the last 5 years and with schools for 2 years. I trained as an accountant and set up my own practice in 1992 which I still run albeit on a smaller scale. Plus, along with my husband and another business partner, run a motorsport training company working worldwide with race and rally teams and individuals. And when I’m not doing any of the above we open our farm to the public for Open Farm Sunday and as part of our charity fundraising. Going forward, we are just building a new farm shop which will be 24/7 purchasing from ambient, chilled and frozen vending machines. Exciting times. But there is always time for sneaking off to listen to an audiobook in a polytunnel out of CCTV sight! Planning a filing cabinet down there too – red wine secret store – all friends welcome!

Carolyn Currie Carolyn has enjoyed an extensive career from banking to the not for profit sector. She is a huge supporter of women-owned businesses and has founded a couple of businesses herself. Carolyn was the first woman to hold the post of Head of Business Lending at a major bank and in 2007 she went on to found a programme to help more women start up and grow their own business. She developed the Women in Business initiative from an initial team of 12 staff, to a team of over 200 across the UK.



Now CEO at Women’s Enterprise Scotland (WES), Carolyn has guided the development of more support to enable women to start and grow their own businesses, including the launch of the digital Women’s Business Centre. She has worked with many rural based businesses, helped to convene discussions on women’s rural businesses in parliament and established an award for women-owned rural businesses.

Carolyn is an advocate of the Sustainable Development Goals, has given evidence on various topics to the Economy Committee in Parliament, spoken at parliamentary events and hosted the inaugural international conference on Women’s Economic Empowerment with WES in 2019. She is a member of the Think-20, the think-tank body aligned to the G20 group of governments and central banks and board positions include the Strategic Advisory Board of the University of Glasgow Adam Smith Business School.

John Dickson I believe that my experience would have something to offer to the group.



- 1) I am male 63 years old and have spent all my life as a working farmer.
- 2) I have always taken a keen interest in Agricultural policy through being active in the NFUS both regionally and nationally.
- 3) I was NFUS regional chairman for 4 years and was also on the national board as a director. During this time I became acutely aware of the lack of diversity of the industries main representative body. I tried to promote a change of involvement in Argyll region by encouraging women and the younger generation to get involved but found it was difficult to get support from those already actively taking these representative roles.

Looking forward I believe that our representatives of our industry must reflect the industry and for too long it has been left in the hands of 'farmers (male) of a certain age'.

With my experience and my motivation for change I think would have something to contribute to the Women in Agriculture group.

Anna Duncan I am a recent BsC (Hons) Agricultural graduate of SRUC.



I previously worked in the oil industry and realised that I was passionate about agriculture after growing up on the family farm.

I like hill walking, working on the farm, taking photos during my spare time. I am also a big rugby fan after starting up the Banff Ladies rugby team and being a dedicated committee member for three years. I would like to become a committee member of Women in Agriculture because I want to help inspire other women/girls that are thinking about perusing a career in agriculture to take the chance. If I didn't take the chance to change my career path, I wouldn't be where I am today, and I am very thankful for the upbringing I had to help me realise that my heart and passion is in Agriculture. Our industry has opportunity and potential to help young girls and women start their career in Agriculture. I know first-hand with both industries that I have worked in, it can be tough for anyone, especially a woman. To move forward, barriers need to be broken, we need to welcome people into the industry, educate and re-establish our farming community. Within the industry I would like to see;

1) Increased knowledge transfer, helping and teaching children and the public how Scottish Agriculture is a better-quality product. 2) The agricultural community coming together to help their neighbours when times are hard. For example, at harvest, calving, lambing, COVID, Brexit etc... both physically and mentally. 3) A better opportunity for those who do not have an agricultural background to transition into the industry and feel welcomed.

This could be achieved by; 1) Social media 2) Taking videos on farm to show children at school what goes on in the farm each day. 3) Hosting local get togethers (when COVID allows) like a discussion group but with a welcoming feel for anyone to attend. 4) Encouraging people to phone neighbours and offer help or someone to talk to, so people do not struggle. We need to break barriers and inspire girls and women into our wonderful industry, that we have been so lucky to experience

Jennifer Duncan I believe it is vital that women's efforts in Agriculture are recognised as much as men's are. From the kitchen table to running a fully-fledged agricultural



business. Women have a vital role, adding variety and support to their male counterparts. Many women are highly driven and motivated, which in turn can provide a different approach to business or new innovative ideas. Many women feel secluded, with a lack of socialising. It is important also that the Woman in Agriculture can act as a go to for these women, bringing likeminded individuals together, which essentially can help with other issues on a personal level, to motivate and inspire women. Having been brought up and working in a very male orientated environment I feel I have been able to accomplish and overcome many issues successfully, from handling livestock to introducing a new product to Scotland, and building a very successful business at the same time as running a livestock and contracting business alongside my partner. I believe it is important that women recognise their efforts can be just as successful, and it is important to push this and drive confidence that women can bring just as much to agriculture and the rural community that men can. From a relatively older generation still very much at the forefront of a typical agricultural business there are still so many areas women can get involved in. From providing training days to enable women to get involved in for example livestock record keeping or to starting up a rural business, the drive and determination women hold can be taken and used to their full advantage from the encouragement of Women in Agriculture.

I am keen and interested in joining the committee as I have a very wide range of experiences from practical knowledge, to running an agriculture business and vast knowledge of regulations and legislation, but also from starting and running a rural innovative business from scratch. I get great joy in passing on my experiences and getting the best from people and opportunities. I am a strong believer that woman are very capable in the agricultural community, it is vital this is recognised and that a clear 'go to' organisation and community is available for these likeminded women.

Chrissie Finnigan Since 2011, I have worked in Higher Education in Scotland. Prior to that, I worked in the Scottish Parliament, starting off in the UK and International Relations Office and then moving onto work for an MSP. Before that, I worked in the Scottish Government. Outside of work I live in the Clyde Family with my partner and two children where we keep a small flock of sheep on 2.5 acres of land.



My interest in agriculture partly comes from keeping sheep (albeit a small number) which gives us lamb for our freezer, where we know the lifecycle from birth to butcher and also from the evolving policy landscape as a result of Brexit and the Scottish Government's net-zero ambitions.

There is huge potential for agriculture to contribute to Scotland's future sustainable economic growth and now more than ever, it's critical that women are represented in the decision making. Research shows that society becomes more secure and economically prosperous as gender equality improves. As we navigate through the Covid-19 Pandemic, which we know is having an unequal impact on women, it is more important than ever to make sure women's voices are heard recognising the different qualities, priorities and values that they can bring to policy decisions.

June Geyer I have the privilege of being chairman of the Women in Agriculture Scotland group and one of its founder members having attended the lunch where the idea was born in April 2015. I have been in the farming industry all my working life, commencing with the Scottish Milk Marketing Board, Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs, RHET staff member, Golden Shears Co-ordinator at RHASS and now I'm actively involved with my husband and two sons in the family's 220acre mixed farm of suckler cattle, cereals and grass and our third generation engineering business at Shiresmill, Dunfermline.



In my spare time I have been Secretary and Chairman of our local agricultural society, Secretary of the Scottish Horse Show, Chairman and Trustee of the Willie Davidson Trust, committee member of the Perth Agricultural Discussion Society and announce at various shows throughout the year. I never fail to be surprised at the information gained at Women in Agriculture Scotland events – the tremendous support and knowledge shared and where corporate meet grass roots to learn and share experiences. It's an honour to be part of such a great network; there is always

something new to learn. Some of the important things I've brought home from meetings and actioned with the family are succession planning, land registration, powers of attorney, wills and I've also learned it's good to shop around when it comes to professional advice – don't stick with the "aye been" mentality!

Annabel Hamilton I like to see myself as a role model for females who are entering or already in the agricultural sector. Having spent eight years away from the family farm I have now returned to begin the succession process. Over the eight years away I have spent six of those years in two farm management roles where I was the only female. Having experience in these male dominant environments has giving me skills and knowledge to support and inspire the younger generation into agriculture. I feel there is a generation gap beginning to form and without suitable role models and mentors to help push forward the younger generation, British Agriculture as a whole may begin to struggle.



Women have skills that men don't have (and vice versa) and the ability to look at situations in a different way creating a good balance in the workplace. Therefore it is important that people don't feel afraid to stand up and have an opinion, they ask questions and most importantly feel involved. It is not your gender that makes you good at your job. It's your enthusiasm, commitment and passion which drives you. In my experience this has been the case. I am involved in the LEAF project called Facetime A Farmer. Every two weeks I have a ten minute facetime with my primary school in Bolton. I show the kids what I am up to on that particular day and they fire questions at me. For this initiative to keep running we need more people to be involved. I enjoying using Twitter to engage and be sociable with the farming community and it is a fantastic way of finding out new ideas and keeping up to date on topical issues. At home we are beginning the succession process. Our current business name has 'Son' in the title; this term worked back in the day but is now

becoming old fashioned and in my case now irrelevant. To encourage and support women in the industry we must make them feel welcome, offer guidance and support but most importantly we must continue to change the traditional view that agriculture is male orientated.

Sophie Henderson Within Greenburn I work heavily in the Agri-sector and have faced a number of challenges as a younger female Director. Challenges I am aware that a number of women across the sector have and do face on a daily basis. These challenges are not all unique to the Agri-industry, what compounds the matter within the Agri-sector is that a majority of the land and businesses are male-dominated which can lead to the "boys club" mentality. This is not a blanket statement and I am keenly aware of some incredible male leaders in the industry, just as I am aware of fantastic female leaders. My belief and mission, is to support clients through Greenburn to become fairer and more transparent in their practices, encourage reasoned yet bold strategic decision-making, and to support individuals who are struggling in their working environments. Gender is irrelevant in regard to being an exceptional leader, the Agri-sector has the opportunity to take a bold stand (as some individuals already have) in challenging the status quo - not in a bra-burning way - but enough that it causes individuals to pause, reflect and open themselves up to new conversations and perspectives. Not a small task, I am aware, but every step is one more than before.



I am truly delighted to be able to put forth an application for a position on the Committee. I am aware that my background and experience are different, I have a far more commercial background with 1) Extensive legal expertise, specifically in Employment Law. 2) A working knowledge of Board & Committee governance and OSCR regulations. 3) Comprehensive HR experience, with a background of operational people management. 4) Experience in coaching and development, including providing in-person and online training. 5) And, knowledge of practical operations, including health & safety and compliance requirements for different business sectors. I believe I offer a unique, reasoned and well-rounded perspective which could be of benefit to the Committee and the wider impact WiAS has on the Agri-industry and the individuals working within and adjacent to it.

Claire Hodge I grew up on a dairy farm in the Scottish Borders, where my parents encouraged my two sisters and myself to follow our interests with no expectations of where our careers would take us.



My older sister is now an architect in London and was able to design my parents house on their new farm, my younger sister is a clinical phycologist working in Stirlingshire. I work with potato farmers and still share my parent's passion for cows as they are building up their pedigree Hereford herd. After studying for a degree in Agriculture at Newcastle University I took a year out in New Zealand to work on dairy farms before returning to Berwickshire. I had never imagined that potatoes would be what found me next as I started out in 2006 with Greenvale AP, the local potato packing and growing business. After a stint at Branston I joined the Potato Council in 2012. Since then I've worked with many potato growers across the UK in my role with AHDB. This really is a job I love and has given me so much opportunity to develop my career in agriculture. The door to my parent's farm is always open to my sisters and myself. I feel that the role of the Women in Agriculture Association is to help all women feel welcomed into agricultural communities and careers. From my own experiences I have learnt skills should be developed to our strengths not our stereotypes.

Katharine Jewitt I would like to apply for this role because I am passionate about supporting women in leadership and I have a wide range of experience and skills that would be of benefit to WiA. I work in higher education as an academic and researcher and write and build online degree courses (online training may be a development for WiA). I have a PhD in virtual reality and I have eight degrees. I have been involved in setting up and leading several communities of practice within the field of education. I also work as a management and leadership mentor, coach and consultant in both business and education. I have worked with food and farming operations supporting them in the development of their strategy. I was previously a Director of an FE college and have held Director and senior positions in industry, including DHL and Fujitsu. I used to run my own publishing house and marketing business; designing, writing and editing craft magazines and building websites, writing blogs, managing social media and search engine optimisation. I recently moved into a one-acre smallholding in south west Scotland. The acre was completely grass and we are slowly creating zones for growing, animals, leisure, flowers and such like. We recently purchased ten chickens and have been growing vegetables. We are going to be keeping more animals and getting some bee hives. We have a variety of projects planned for the smallholding from traditional crafts to food preservation; keeping animals, vegetable, fruit and flower growing to attracting wildlife, keeping bees, food preservation and making food and drink, such as, elderflower wine, bacon, honey and cheese, as well as, other items like soap, candles and beeswax furniture etc. I could share my journey along the way, which may be of interest to smallholders within WiA.



Eilish Johnston Having worked on multiple farms over the years, I have developed a strong passion for Scottish agriculture and making Scotland as a brand more renowned. Having experienced a few enterprises within the agricultural sector, I have developed a desire to work within the dairy industry and I am currently employed on a dairy farm in the Scottish borders of which I am loving. Once my degree is over I am interested in taking up a role as a consultant specialising in dairy due to the opportunity to connect with people from all walks of life and the potential to empower them to make decisions that will better their future. Having not come from a farming background I have a unique view point and therefore I have found it much more easier to connect with the general public on farming related concerns as I know first hand what it's like to have limited farming knowledge. I'm currently a member of Edinburgh young farmers and have found it very encouraging to be surrounded by so many likeminded women who are also passionate about farming. I have always perceived young farmers to be male dominated so was pleasantly surprised by the number of women involved not only as a member but also within the committee and regional levels. I would love to explore the possibility of empowering women to take on more prominent roles within the agriculture sector through involvement with the young farmers community. Finally, I would like to reinforce my interest in joining the women in agriculture Scotland committee.



Ellis Kerr I've always had a keen interest in all things agriculture, growing up I was always out at my god parents' farm. When I was 12 I got my own horse and when I was 16 I joined a local young farmers club. I have held various roles within the club and at district level (club secretary, club treasurer, committee member, assistant secretary and committee member). I worked for our local machinery ring for 2.5 years where my agricultural knowledge grew and in 2018 my partner and I moved into the farmhouse on the farm he manages. I have had a very hands on approach to helping on the farm, both physical farm work and the farm paperwork side. In December 2019 my partner broke his ankle and my role on the farm grew as I undertook all the farm work including lambing and calving myself with some help from friends and neighbours. Unfortunately I haven't been able to attend any women in Agriculture events here in Orkney as of yet but I'm keen to be a part of future events and take on a committee role as I love farming and would love for women to be seen as 'farm-hers' and not just 'farmers wives'. My time at the local machinery ring I organised and help training days, more for the construction workers side of Orkney but would love to push more Health and safety side of farming especially after my partner breaking his ankle it has really hit home about being safe on the farm. I am well versed in computing such as Microsoft and such like and ran the Facebook and Twitter for our machinery ring and have a personal Instagram page which I love posting on - social media is a great platform to reach many people. As I'm still new to the 'farm-her' role and always learning I don't think there could be a better time to get involved with Women in Agriculture for myself and the people of Orkney.



Nicole Learmonth



I am very interested in the opportunity to join the Women in Agriculture committee as seen advertised on the Women in Agriculture facebook page. I have never done anything like this before, probably a confidence issue as well as my age, feeling less experienced than others, but feel this may be the chance to get 'out there', improve my overall confidence and meet like-minded people involving ourselves in something we are passionate about. I grew up on a small family farm in the Scottish Borders where my interest in working in the agricultural industry probably started, I couldn't see myself doing anything else really, hoping to follow the generations before me. I have studied both Poultry production and Agriculture at SAC, graduating 2012 with the aim to possibly become a new entrant into farming. However, I took a job on another local farm after completing college. I am now in my 9th year of successfully managing a multiple award winning 32000 laying hen site. At 27 years of age with 2 children I am very proud of everything I have achieved in my career but it has always come with its hurdles. Having endured sexism, probably from the day my younger brother was born, throughout college being the only female in the class and in the workplace, I have found the Women in Agriculture movement relatable and support many of the points raised in the final report and have passion to make agricultural a more inclusive industry by implementing the recommendations set out. My employers are very supportive of Women in Agriculture and agree they would be lost without me! As a farm manager I have many transferrable skills including computer, secretarial, communication skills and I have a great memory! And I would be more than happy to volunteer.

Lizzie McLaughlin



I'm Lizzie and I currently work as a Graphic Designer and Marketing Exec at Vencomatic UK. I'm a true optimist, with real ambition, driven work ethic and have the 'always smiling' kind of attitude. My background in Design and English Language alongside my strong interest in feminism and more recently working in the agriculture, bird welfare and the environment, has meant that joining the industry has given me the opportunity to make a difference. Over the past 6 months, I have worked closely with women across different sectors, from farmers to project managers, and shared their story through editorials, videos and social media. Not only has it been inspiring to speak to empowering females but to encourage those outside of the industry to consider a career in agriculture.

I would love to bring my enthusiasm and passion to the Women in Agriculture Scotland committee, be a voice for the younger generation and continue to highlight the fantastic work women in the industry do. I feel I would be able to make a visible contribution with my creative skillset, event management experience and bubbly personality - all with a good cup of tea of course!

"Behind every great farm, there is a great farmHer" and I really want to be a part of making a difference.

Lucy Mitchell



After achieving my First-Class Business Management degree, I developed my marketing and project management skills at a senior level as a Marketing Executive at Havelock Europa and through delivering successful marketing campaigns and events as an Events Manager for the Scottish Association of Young Farmers Clubs (SAYFC). I am now working as a Logistics Manager for the grain merchants WN Lindays. On a volunteering level, my passion for agriculture and the young farmer association has resulted in me being voted on as the East Regional Vice Chairman.

I appreciate the attention to detail and creativity required when producing marketing strategies, event plans and budgets. I am an organised and driven person and I enjoy meeting new people. Having grown up on the family farm I have a passionate interest in agriculture and therefore Women in Agriculture Scotland. I have attended many of the organisations events and I would relish the opportunity to utilise my knowledge, skills and experience to promote and drive the organisation forward. If I were voted onto the committee I would like to push for training and more career development opportunities for its members.

Ann Packard Experienced Administrator/PRO plus Public Appointments experience, in rural, legal and agricultural sectors.



This brief outline demonstrates experience and expertise gained over a thirty-year career across the public, private and voluntary sectors including the House of Commons. I have had family links in farming and rural issues and through relevant memberships including RSA, NT, NTS, SLE and SRA (the latter individually and formally representing the RSA which recently ran the two-year Food, Farming and Countryside Commission). I was involved in privatising Taste of Scotland from STB; was one-time Development Officer APRS, and am a WIAS member and mentor (with other mentoring experience). With diverse governance and committee experience including from Public Appointments, people recognise me as a purposeful networker with useful contacts within and beyond Scotland. Experienced in the design and delivery conferences, events and of CPD and training (holding a relevant SVQ) plus active involvement in various CPD Committees, I received an award for CPD and other input to BAIE. I am an ACOSVO Associate with a range of relevant past offices (all by election): Trustee of RSA, Council Member of each of NTS and ECT. I am experienced in event design and delivery in UK and beyond including a conference for the RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission and others with, for example, the SLC and the James Hutton Institute, with Professor Lorna Dawson a willing additional secondary academic liaison.

Emma Patterson Taylor I am a co-founder of Women in Agriculture Scotland (WiAS) and together with a group of women who attended a Royal Bank of Scotland lunch we established WiAS in 2015. Throughout the last five years I have worked hard to help build the association to where it is today. In my role as interim Secretary I have led on the process of formalising the group, drafting our constitution and managing our first AGM. I feel strongly about the importance of increasing representation of women in agriculture and am excited about what this next stage of the association may bring.



From a background working in the food and drink industry in central Scotland, I joined my current employer (www.saos.coop) in 2013 having previously worked for Scottish Government devising and implementing a national programme for the eradication of the cattle disease, BVD. I draw on my background in agricultural policy making and academic foundation in environmental sustainability to bring insight to challenges in the farming sector. I head up our sustainability workstream at SAOS and have provided thought leadership and developed new work areas particularly in relation to Women in Agriculture, Board Diversity and Climate Change. I am also a Nuffield Scholar 2020, qualified coach and aspiring cheesemaker.

Hollie Riddell My name is Hollie Riddell and I am a 2nd year PhD candidate based at Bangor University in Wales. I was born and grew up in East Ayrshire and completed my undergraduate degree in BSc (Hons) Environmental Resource Management at SRUC/University of Edinburgh in 2018. My PhD project is in agriculture and I am looking at lamb production environmental impacts in different pasture types (e.g intensive lowland, extensive upland/hill pastures) and how they differ. I will also look at future farm options for farm management in terms of carbon mitigation as well as possible environmental benefits that we could get from the system e.g. carbon sequestration. I have also previously completed a carbon footprint for venison production in Scotland.



I haven't grown up on a farm but nonetheless I am very passionate about agriculture and helping to pave the way forward for farmers in a sustainable way. I have been involved in agricultural shows through horses for many years and developed more of an interest in the industry through my degree. I feel a lot of general rhetoric towards farmers, particularly recently against livestock, has been undeservedly negative. There is also a lack of a bridge between academic research and what is actually helpful for farmers working hard on the ground. Being involved in Women in Agriculture Scotland would be a great step for me to help bridge this gap and spread the word on how great our Scottish agriculture really is!

Aylett Roan I run the family doorstep milk delivery business Roan's Dairy. Roan's Dairy was set up in 2015 to enable the family to add value to their milk, allowing a sustainable future on the farm for the generations to come. I have worked in Agriculture all my life after having been given the initial opportunity on a farm near Selkirk. I went on to study and work on farms up and down the country, giving me an in-depth knowledge of the industry. I also worked at Lloyd's Register (formally SFQC) for several years, before starting a family with my husband Stuart.



I now farm in the South West of Scotland alongside my husband and his family on their dairy, beef, and sheep farm. The family starred in the hit show This Farming Life season 2, first broadcast by the BBC in 2017/2018. I am a member of the current Women in Agriculture Scotland Committee. I hold the position of treasurer and I look after the social media for the group. It is an exciting time for the group and as a Woman in Agriculture I look forward to what the new committee brings to the industry. In July 2020 I became a director of The Royal Highland Agricultural Society. I believe that Agriculture should be inclusive, and that if you can do the job, you should, regardless of gender. I am a charismatic leader who does not see difficulties as problems, but as opportunities to be grasped, for which: "You just need to change your mindset". I also believe that if

farmers want our products to be chosen in favour of imports and for a sustainable price, we need to include the consumer on the food journey. In my businesses I have done just this, and continue to do so, through Social Media and TV. "You can't affect change from the side-lines, stand up and be counted"

Eilidh Robertson I live on a farm near Pitlochry with my husband Craig, who is farming in partnership with his Father and Aunt. We have 170 cows and 700 ewes across three



farms (one owned, two tenanted). Craig and I have two farm obsessed sons, Jack (3) and Andrew (1 ½) and I run my own photography business alongside my sister. We specialise in photographing rural weddings, families and businesses across Scotland. I've been following the Women in Agriculture group since attending Lindy Nelson's really inspirational presentation in Perth in 2018. So much of what she said resonated with me on a personal level, many women are underestimated and undervalued in the agricultural world but it is definitely time for this to change. Our skillset is often different to that of men and I feel our skills could be harnessed to really help to improve the agricultural industry as a whole, but we need to share success stories and inspire not just the next generation, but also the current generation of women who may currently be on the side lines. My main skills and experience lie within professional photography, building a following and engagement on social media specifically for rural businesses, organising events and traditional marketing, all skills and

experience which would benefit the committee to help spread the word and the aims of Women in Agriculture as well as build membership. I love generating ideas and pushing them through to fruition, I am driven and motivated to achieve common goals, but I am also flexible, patient and thrive on working as part of a team. It would be a privilege to be involved with the Women in Agriculture association and help to raise the profile and encourage more people to become involved in such an exciting modern organisation.

Harriet Ross I am a young tenant farmer in Aberdeenshire. I grew up in Aberdeenshire on the family farm. My partner and I were successful last year in securing a tenancy on a 380ac farm, allowing us to start farming in our own right. It is predominantly an arable farm but we also have B&B pigs to complement the arable enterprise. We were selected at the beginning of this year as one of the four LEAF Resilient & Ready farmers in the UK. Hopefully by the end of the 3 year programme we will become a LEAF demonstration farm. Helping us to adopt and promote sustainable farming techniques and build the resilience of our own business.



I am also a farming consultant, currently working for Strutt & Parker. I have over 5 years experience in all aspects of farm advisory work and just recently have become fully BASIS qualified. I specialise in whole farm business reviews, carbon audits and low- carbon farming methods. I am heavily involved in the agricultural industry in Scotland and feel very passionately about all aspects of farming/rural life. I would love the opportunity to help promote it and the sustainability it provides.

Catherine Sloan I am an agricultural and rural property solicitor at Turcan Connell. I grew up and live on an arable farm in Perthshire and continue to be actively involved in the family business at home. I have a strong interest in agricultural policy and sit on the SAYFC Agri and Rural Affairs Committee and the NFUS Legal and Technical Committee. I am a keen member of SAYFC and currently Chairman of the SAYFC Agri and Rural Affairs Committee.



I have been a member of the WiAS committee since September 2018. I am the youngest member of the current committee and represent the voice of young people in agriculture. During my time as a committee member, I have helped to organise many WiAS events and have been involved in kickstarting the formalisation of WiAS's constitution and affairs.

I am passionate about the promotion of Scottish agriculture and enjoy networking with others in the agricultural industry. In my view, this is one of the most valuable opportunities WiAS has to offer. I would like to continue working as part of the committee to deliver such opportunities to members of WiAS. The skills I can offer WiAS include knowledge of the agricultural sector and the issues facing it, event management and experience of governance and financial affairs through SAYFC and my career to date.

Dr. Mary Thomson I am keen to bring my broad experience of animal health, farming, education and the wider rural sector to the Women in Agriculture Scotland committee.



My passion for education and rural community sustainability inspired my recent return to the Scottish Borders to lead the Rural Skills department at Borders College. I want to inspire learners of all ages and backgrounds to work in agriculture and play their part in making the rural sector sustainable in the future. I bring to the committee my knowledge of education systems and digital delivery of education. I believe that in the future blending digital technologies with traditional teaching methods creates an opportunity to expand our educational reach into urban communities and stimulate wider engagement with topics such as food production, animal health and welfare, land management, conservation and biodiversity. I understand the challenges faced by rural businesses, having been a senior veterinary surgeon in a mixed practice for many years. I worked through the 2001 Foot and Mouth disease outbreak and supported farm businesses as they rebuilt and diversified during the recovery period. I bring my networks and experience of working in a senior co-ordinating role for the UK Chief Veterinary Officer (UK CVO), supporting all her work areas during preparation for EU Exit. I understand how the government policy process works, specifically in relation to disease control, antimicrobial resistance, international trade, veterinary

professional services and animal health and welfare. I excel in stakeholder engagement and enjoy public speaking. I have a professional delivery style even in high-pressure situations and respond confidently to robust challenge from a range of audiences including bovine TB control groups, ruminant health groups, poultry and pig sector representatives, conservation and wildlife groups and international veterinary sector representatives.

Mairi White I am a Relationship Manager with the Royal Bank of Scotland with over 30yrs of banking experience. I have specialised in funding solutions for Agricultural and Rural businesses for half that time. My passion is to see these businesses flourish and grow. I enjoy being involved as a trusted adviser with customers who achieve their ambitions. I have mainly been involved in expansions and diversifications in Ayrshire and Argyll.



I'm also a member of the Royal Bank of Scotland's Agricultural Steering group for the UK. I represent Business Banking Scotland. This group is involved in strategy, proposing changes to credit policy and event/marketing planning.

The reasons I'm on the committee for Women In Agriculture Scotland is to offer support and identify areas for development. I have been able to widen my network and be part of driving progression forward within the sector.

I love living and working in the countryside. Out with work I value spending time with my family and friends. I enjoy walking and keeping fit through yoga.

I'm a Chartered Banker and completed Scottish Enterprise's Rural Leadership Programme in 2013.

You can find me on LinkedIn and twitter @mairi_white

My skill set is varied from working for several charitable organisations, supporting committees of volunteers and feeding my interest in how we best tell the story of modern agriculture to the wider public. I'm driven, honest and thrive in a group of equally passionate people.

Heather Wildman I am a Cumbrian farming woman who has worked in Scottish Agriculture for 20 years enjoying a mixed working career from being a nanny, to a farm liaison officer for The Royal Highland Education Trust in 2000, Area Manager for First Milk covering Ayrshire and Kintyre, a Knowledge Transfer manager for DairyCo (now AHDB Dairy) covering all of Scotland to then starting up my own business Saviour Associates Ltd in 2014 after completing a Nuffield Farming Scholarship on "Communication how to influence change" , through this I have had the privilege of working with many businesses and organisations, SAYFC, SAC, FAS, Princes Countryside Fund, AHDB, Galbraiths, Davidson Robinson, NHS Dumfries, and many others. My career and experience has given me the incredible opportunity to meet and work with some fantastic characters, organisations and businesses, some of these experiences have been hugely fulfilling and rewarding and others have been memorable from slightly different experiences! But I must say all have added to my personality, determination and pride and passion for farming and agriculture and the important role that women play in this. My skills set and what I would hope to bring to the team is a broad experience and perspective of challenges facing



farming families, having worked with many farming families throughout Scotland on a 1:1 basis through discussion groups and personal coaching sessions, leadership and resilience workshops. I love to help people to embrace change, where are they, where do they want to be, how will they get there? To be able to work out their goals, aims, dreams and help them to steer their way to achieve this through encouragement, tips, contacts and networking. I am a straight talking, lady and it has been said that I practice soft skills with a sledge hammer but I hope that I measure this with a sense of warmth, empathy and fun that helps to engage, encourage and draw out even the shyest and most reserved of individuals.

Jonny Willett I represent Savills on the Women in Agriculture board and have so for the past two years, prior to this Savills were represented by Romy Jackson.



Savills are a multidisciplinary land agency firm who cover all aspects of rural affairs and all areas of Scotland. Savills have been long-standing supporters of Women in Agriculture and are keen to continue their involvement. We are able to support with branding, marketing, legislative updates, and we provide a professional outlook on rural Scotland. We are also willing to support financially where appropriate.

More specifically, in the past Savills have provided their design team free of charge and shared their experience of organising large professional events. This has included providing speakers and collating feedback from attendees. Savills appreciate the need for WiAS to carefully consider their corporate partners and would welcome guidance on whether there is more we can do to support the aims and objective of the organisation.