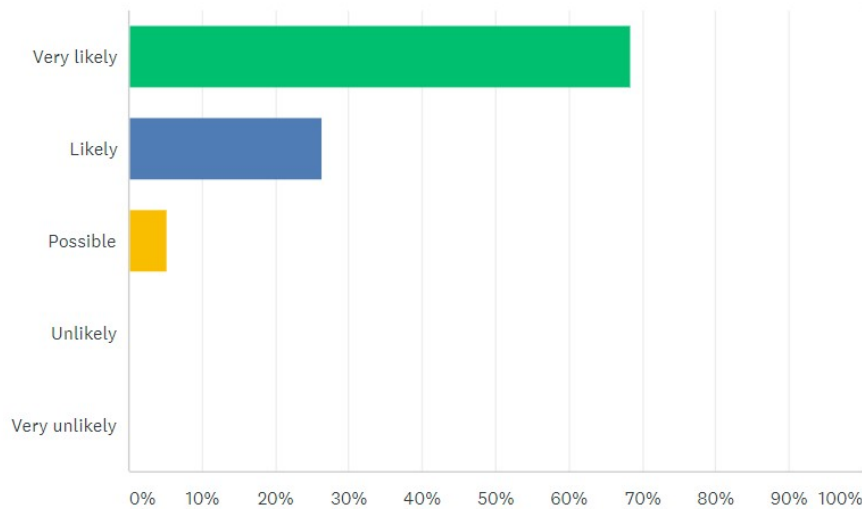


# Farmer Group Forum on the Marlborough Downs

## Delegate feedback (79% response rate)

How likely is it that you would attend another forum next year?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



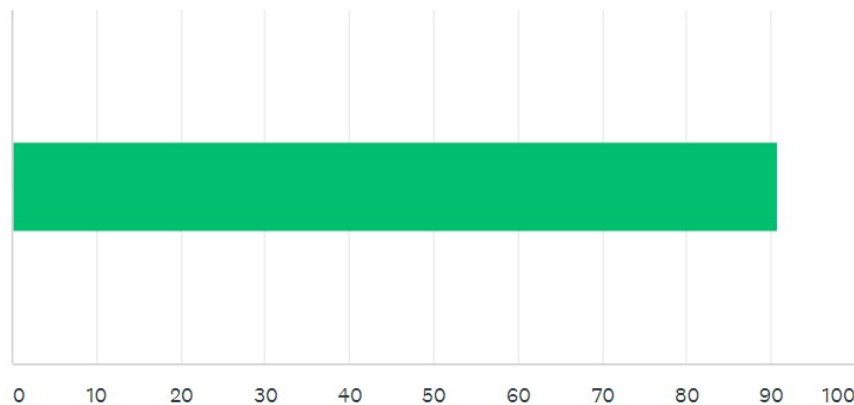
Please explain why you answered as you did:

- Fantastic interest and evidence of the improvements you have created to our environment
- Well organised and highly educational
- Inspiring event
- It was a very valuable and enjoyable day and good to learn more about what is going on. I'd like to go again.
- It was a great day, lots of interesting people to meet and fab to have a opportunity to learn from each other
- Interesting, inspirational and enjoyable
- I found the forum incredibly useful to meet with other groups and share ideas. Particularly found the afternoon session useful and practical. I would very much like to attend another forum next year if I am able.
- Good to meet other groups and exchange ideas
- Very useful for we who are MDNEP members and interesting to meet others from different groups. Sharing experiences always important and helps to bind communities
- Letting other group members benefit by attending is as important as myself being able to do so.
- The professional presentation by the speakers instructed and enthused the assembled company. This can only be a good thing for everybody's interest.
- I have read about the Marlborough Down Cluster Group on several occasions over the years and have always wanted to see the achievements that have been made. But, most of all the story of the Tree Sparrow numbers increasing has captured my imagination, what can be done if you have a mind to do it!
- I learned a lot - not just from the speakers & Chris Musgrave's excellent tour but other cluster participants
- There were interesting talks and I learnt useful information general information. As a celebration of the groups achievements it was a success. To come again I would want very specific useful information that I could take back to my group to implement so to return I would want practical, useful, transferable information.
- Nice useful important
- Because it was good!
- It's essential we keep learning and taking inspiration.

- Met some interesting like minded people and .. learnt something
- It was good to share ideas with other groups
- Very enjoyable & inspiring
- Thoroughly enjoyable and informative day. Fabulous location. Great lunch. Amazing weather
- I could stay only for the morning sadly, but the speakers were very clear, gave encouragement and hopefully spurred attendees on to keep achieving. It was good to look back to see what has been achieved as we tend to have short memories!
- Great day, interesting people, and a real opportunity to learn from each other.
- An inspiring day with a real buzz - made me feel part of a bigger movement and that I want to find out more about what other groups are doing

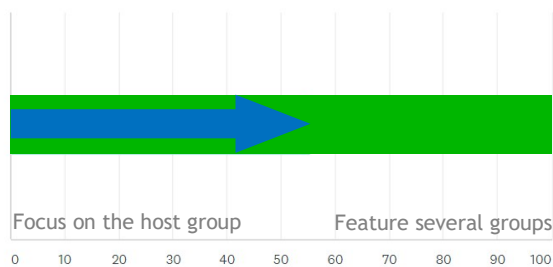
How likely is it that you would recommend this event to other members of your group?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



Do you think the talks should ....

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0



#### Conclusion:

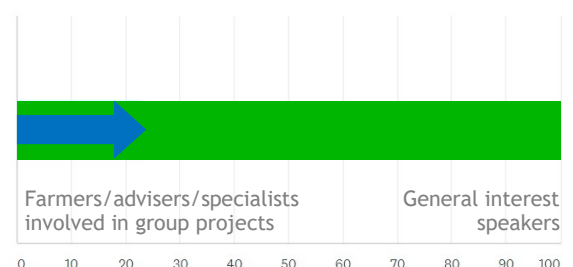
45% host group: 55% other groups

77% group member speakers:

23% general interest speakers

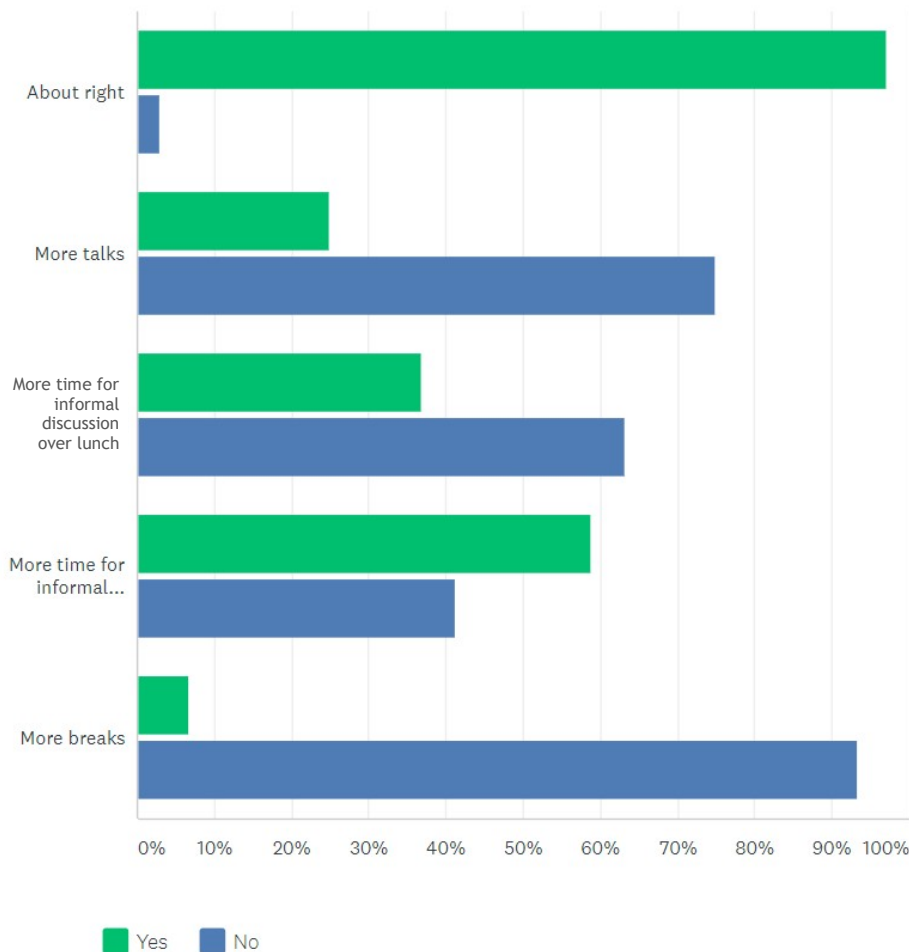
And the speakers ....

Answered: 37 Skipped: 1



## Do you think the format - morning talks, lunch, afternoon field trips - was about right?

Answered: 37 Skipped: 1



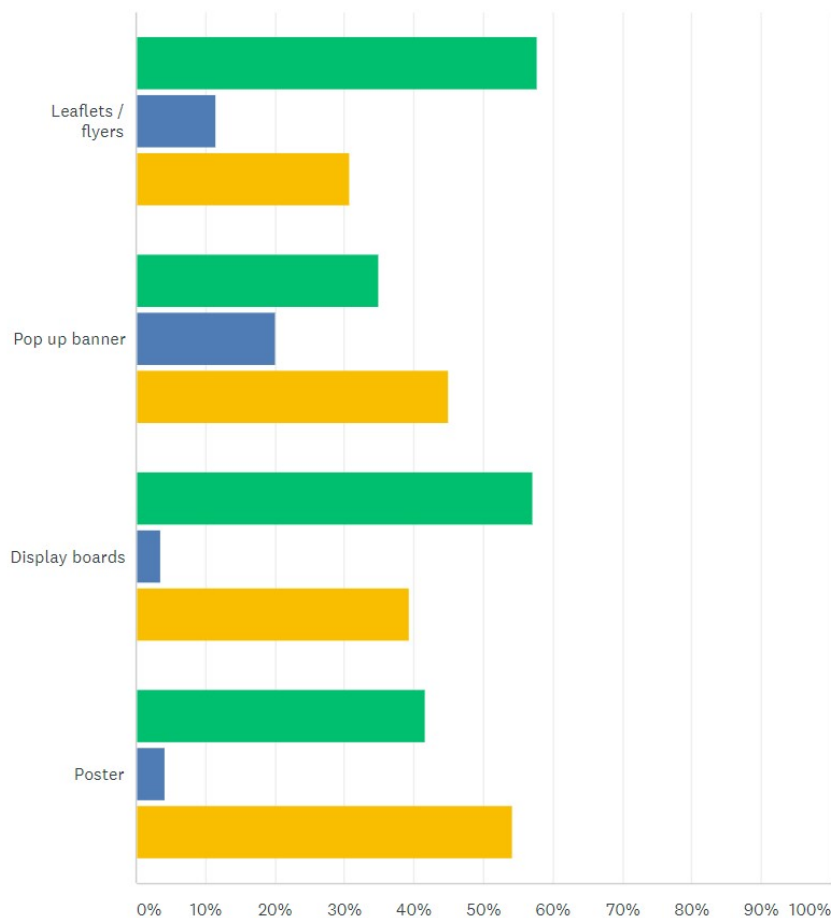
### Comments on format:

- I enjoyed the session and it was good to see how well the Marlborough Downs group is doing but I think I would have benefited from more discussion about how cluster groups are working generally and sharing ideas about how we can improve and take our clusters forward.
- Great venue a little early for plant identification
- Talks were a bit long but very good speakers!
- Perhaps have a presentation from a member of another group
- It was fine given that the weather was excellent. A fall-back position in case of heavy rain/storms might be a reasonable plan - depending on space available/where it might be held.
- Advise forum members to record their questions for the question session. I thought of some and then couldn't remember them for the panel.
- No - it was a great mix.
- Instead of Q & A, have another perspective from another Farmer Group re their experience.
- The field trip (grassland and dew pond) was interesting and great to see what had been achieved but to my mind light on information I could take home and use.
- Could have done with another drink!
- I was unable to stay for the whole day because I stood in for someone at the last minute and had a previous commitment, so I can't comment.

## Would you consider providing information about your group's work in one or more of the following formats?

Answered: 33 Skipped: 5

Yes No Maybe

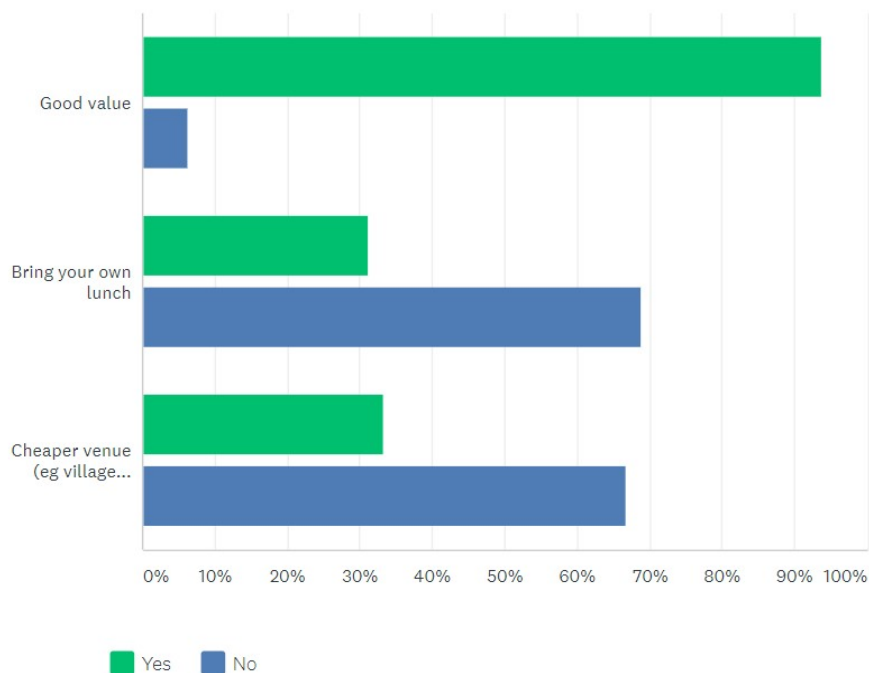


### Other suggestions about how we might share information on the day:

- Before the meeting ask for suggested topics for discussion. At the meeting have a period of time for smaller groups to discuss those topics and then feed back conclusions to the whole group. Sharing ideas of what works and what doesn't would be useful
- Social media
- Would be good to hear more from individual farmers
- Short presentations from different groups
- My handout I asked to be shared was good but printed out very small, I don't think people could read it which was a shame
- Would be prepared to contribute to assisting with information helpful to MDNEP
- Video show
- Don't know as I am only a member, not on the committee
- Website, social media
- Short presentations introducing the groups with the main highlights followed by information display board or poster
- Presentation
- E-methods best. What's App?
- If every group are invited to prepare and print these, it could be made clear on event info not post-ticket purchase, in case people leave bookings until last minute...
- Needs more discussion on the problems - 1 on 1 advice, funding etc

## Was the event good value for money or should we try to cut costs?

Answered: 34 Skipped: 4



### Comments on value for money:

- Great location
- The venue was amazing, loved the fire!
- Depends on what costs have to be covered, e.g. speakers, food provision, venue
- It would be inappropriate to comment. If your speakers needed remuneration, and tweet fundraising, then I'm sure you would have met a good value criteria. I would expect to eat food produced by the member group though.
- A quality venue sets good standards
- I am not sure where the £30 was spent but it seemed a lot for a simple lunch.
- Cost plus travel might have put people off. Important to have the hall/room on site so field trip follows smoothly
- probably about right for the cost, although I couldn't stay for lunch. It would save on organisational input if people brought own lunch, but then it's nicer for people to communicate in the lunch queue maybe?
- Lunch was great!

### Breakdown of income/expenditure

<b>Income</b>	
Ticket sales	1,173.08
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,173.08</b>
<b>Expense</b>	
Credit card / Paypal charges	29.89
<b>Event costs</b>	
Catering @ £11.85	597.50
Additional refreshment costs	7.50
Chair hire	231.00
PA equipment + engineer	280.00
Loo hire	114.00
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,259.89</b>

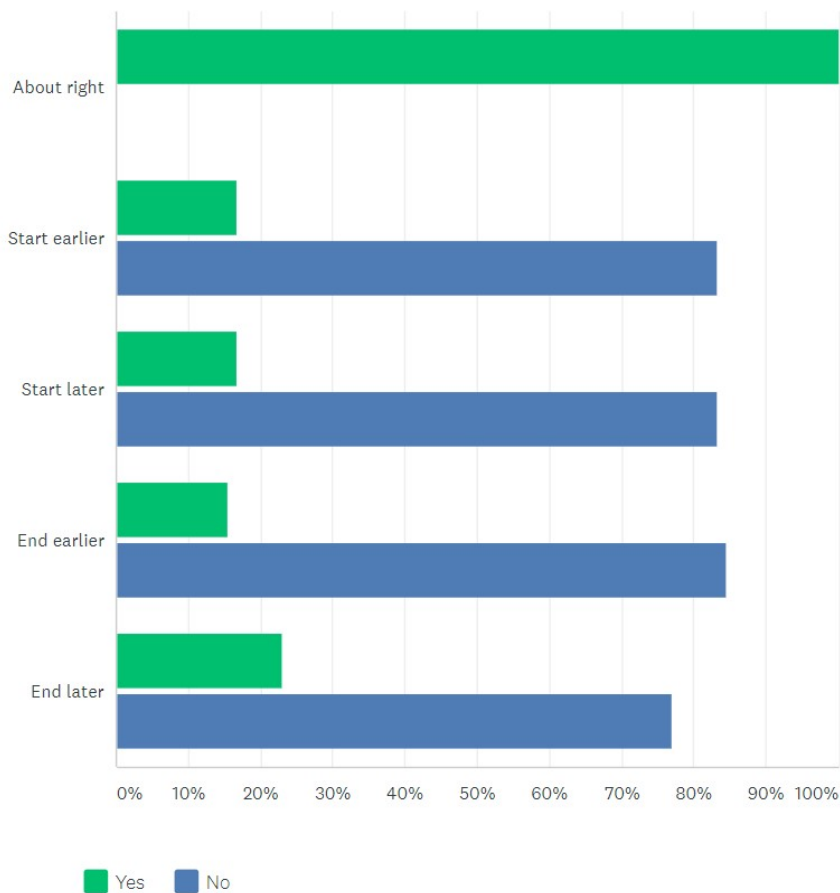
### Donations in kind / pro bono

- Event management and attendance - all planning, promotion, quotes from suppliers, booking, co-ordinating roles on the day, etc.
- Printing direction signs and Upper Wensum flyers
- Speakers - time and expenses
- Venue, including fuel for fire
- Tractors, including fuel and drivers
- Trailers and bales
- Venue preparation, clearing up and cleaning
- Feedback survey and analysis

## How do you feel about the timing?

Answered: 38 Skipped: 0

Average travel time = 1 hour  
(minimum - 5 minutes; maximum 5 hours)



### Additional comments:

- Inspirational day in a stunning setting
- Great day highly informative and a pleasant change to hear good news about farming
- Would have been useful to hear more input from the other groups attending, what they were up to, what's working, what isn't working
- My fault entirely as i could find the venue, but i didn't remember seeing travel directions
- I would like to have heard more from other farmers in the group. What was their experience of it all? What works and what doesn't. What were they doing differently as a result? Had their farming practices changed as a result?
- None
- Would be good to hear a bit more about how people are managing to offset loss of income from reduced cash crop output
- One of the reasons I attended is that it was a local event - not only close to travel but also more relevant than a national event and good to make local contacts in neighbouring counties
- I do feel we need to reach out to children who are trouble makers at school. Nature and nurture can turn them around before the rot sets in.
- I enjoyed it. Met interesting people and brought home a few interesting facts for the groups I am involved in. I am glad I went and will promote it positively. It was spoilt by small but important things. Introduce the speakers! I don't know who Richard is or how he is involved. Who is Chris! At least Jemma was introduced and told us who she was. A hot drink on arrival would have been easy to provide (I have travelled for over 2 hrs). Nothing to drink (no I don't mean alcohol) during lunch not even water on offer! Every conference I have been to offers a hot drink during the breaks keeping the urn on and topped up should be standard.

Continued over

- I think once every 2 years would be right, every year would probably come round too often.
- Very good organisation, good equipment and setup
- Much more about the farming and how small changes in practice while not affecting profits can help. A look into the future direction - to help land managers plan
- Could have done with a drink in the mid morning interval even if just jugs of water/squash. Appreciated the reduction in throwaway cups etc
- Keen to have more days hosted by other groups. Would consider hosting an event in Wylde Valley in future once the group is more established
- If we had videoed the event then it could have been sent out to those who were unable to attend, or we could have had parts of it up on our own web site.
- It would be really good if we could get a different group to host each year.

### Response from MDNEP

Thank you to all who contributed on the day, and for such comprehensive feedback which will be very useful for whichever group takes up the challenge to host the next forum. I have provided a breakdown of costs on page 5 and have the following additional responses to some of the comments:

- First, a very big apology that the urn somehow got switched off and so hot drinks weren't available during the mid-morning break or at lunchtime - but maybe someone could have found me and let me know? However, tea/coffee was available on arrival and after the field trips, and water was on tap.
- A map and postcode were included on the booking page online and it was stressed in the confirmation email to work out your route beforehand as there's no phone reception on the Downs.
- As far as I'm aware, all the speakers were introduced but apologies if not enough information was given about their involvement in the Space for Nature project.
- We were very lucky with the sunshine, but of course there was a wet weather option.
- I will post some additional information about grassland restoration on the grassland page of our website - <https://www.spacefornature.net/grassland> - for those who wanted more details. There's lots of info about tree sparrows and ponds on the website, but please do get in touch if there's anything else about which you'd be interested in finding out more.
- A reminder that presentations and photos are available to download - <https://www.spacefornature.net/news-may-2019>
- I totally agree with the suggestion that it would be good to have at least one presentation from another group, but as this was the first event of this kind that we've hosted or attended we didn't even know if anyone would come, let alone be prepared to speak!

Thanks again for coming and hope to see you again next year.

Jemma Batten  
MDNEP Project Director  
[MarlboroughDowns@gmail.com](mailto:MarlboroughDowns@gmail.com)  
01380 871012 / 07855 506112