

Farm visit wins cautious welcome

What 162 Farming Forum contributions reveal about trust, delivery and the £65 million drought package

TFF News

26 August 2026

Engagement was noticed, not banked

CONTRIBUTIONS

162

15–19 August

TFF VIEWS

4,568

Authoritative API count

REACTIONS

276

Across all contributions

AVERAGE ENGAGEMENT

1.70

Reactions per contribution

Conversation window: Friday 15 August → Tuesday 19 August 2026

THE CENTRAL SHIFT

The question moved from *who visited?* to **what will be delivered?**

The package combined cash and flexibility

Measure	Scale / timing	Practical change	Delivery test
SFI26 Window 2	+£50m £290m total	More budget for new agreements; window due to open in September.	Application access and payment timing for farms under current pressure.
Water storage	Up to £15m Autumn launch	Grant support for on-farm reservoirs serving crop irrigation.	Eligible items, grant rates and planning alignment.
ELM flexibility	Available during drought status	Cutting, grazing, firebreaks and delayed establishment without losing payments.	Clear county status, usable guidance and timely approvals.
Water access	Immediate and from September	Faster temporary abstraction changes and simpler long-duration reservoir licensing.	Whether permissions arrive when water is actually needed.

The argument was not whether help was welcome. It was whether budgets, rules and dates would convert into usable support.

Neutral analysis sat beside strong scepticism

42.6%

Negative — 69 contributions

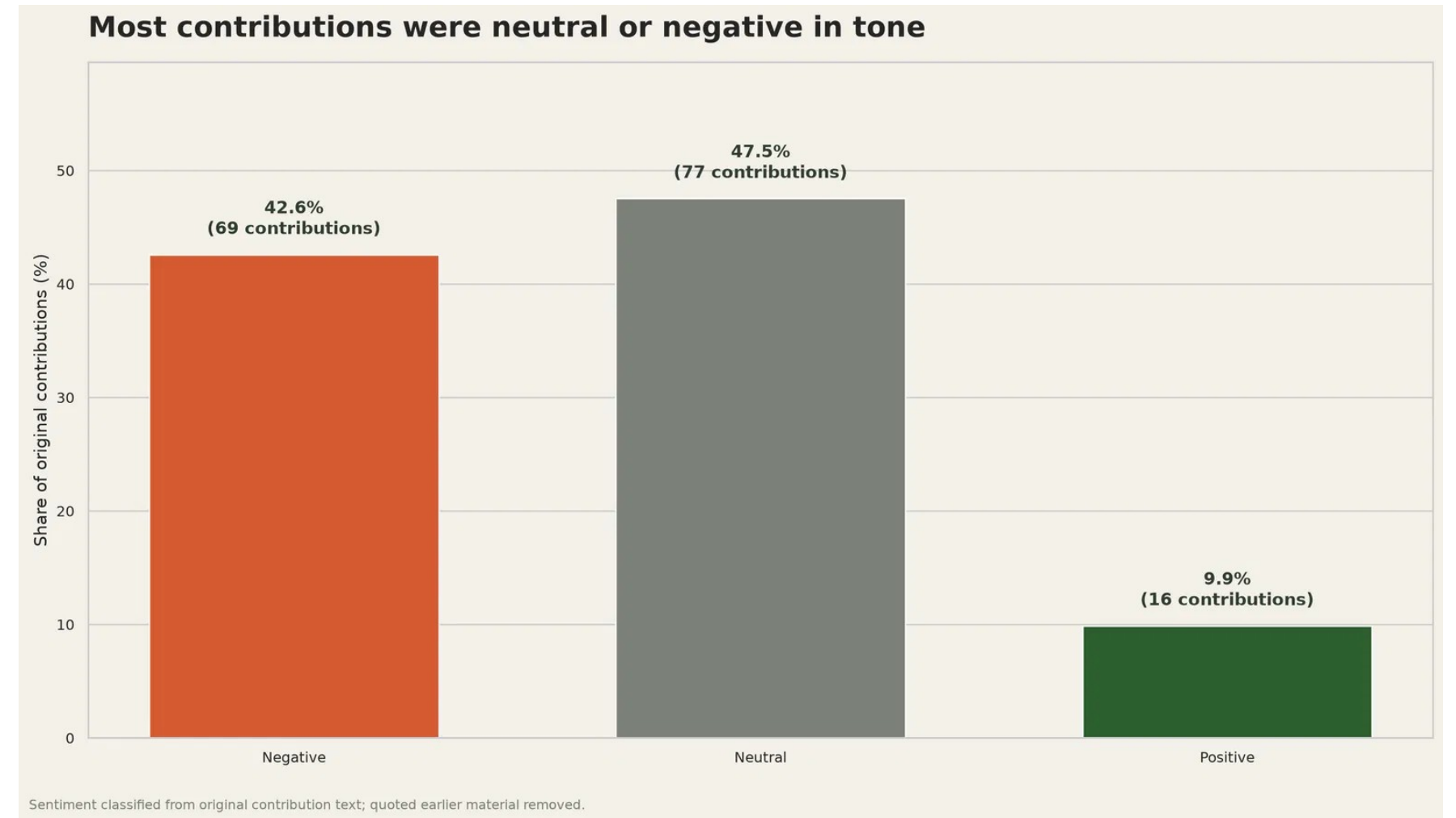
47.5%

Neutral — 77 contributions

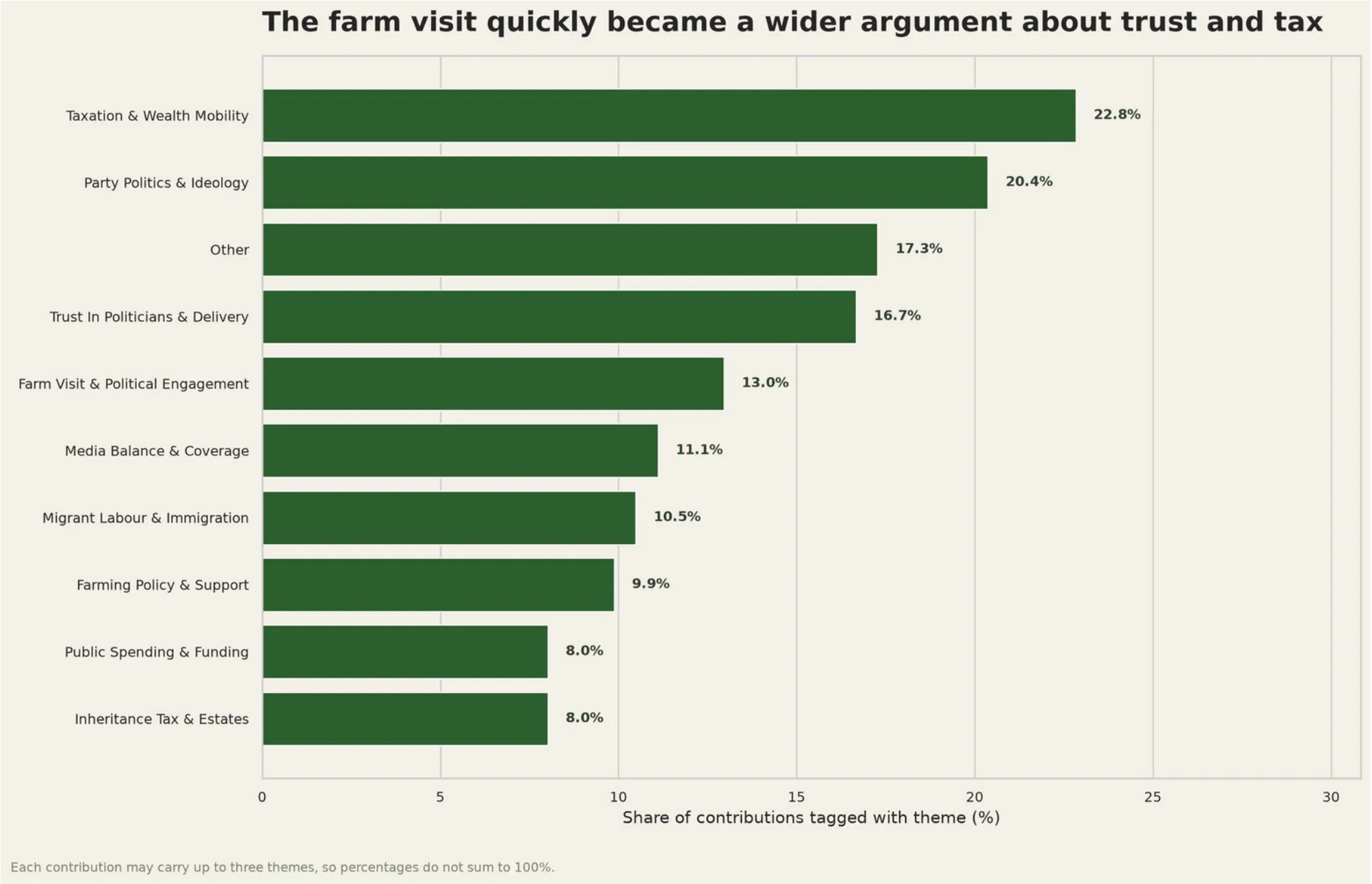
9.9%

Positive — 16 contributions

Positive contributions drew the highest average reactions, but remained a small minority. The overall tone was **cautious rather than celebratory**.



The debate moved rapidly beyond drought



THE EDITORIAL SHIFT

The visit became a proxy for a much wider trust argument.

22.8% — taxation and wealth mobility

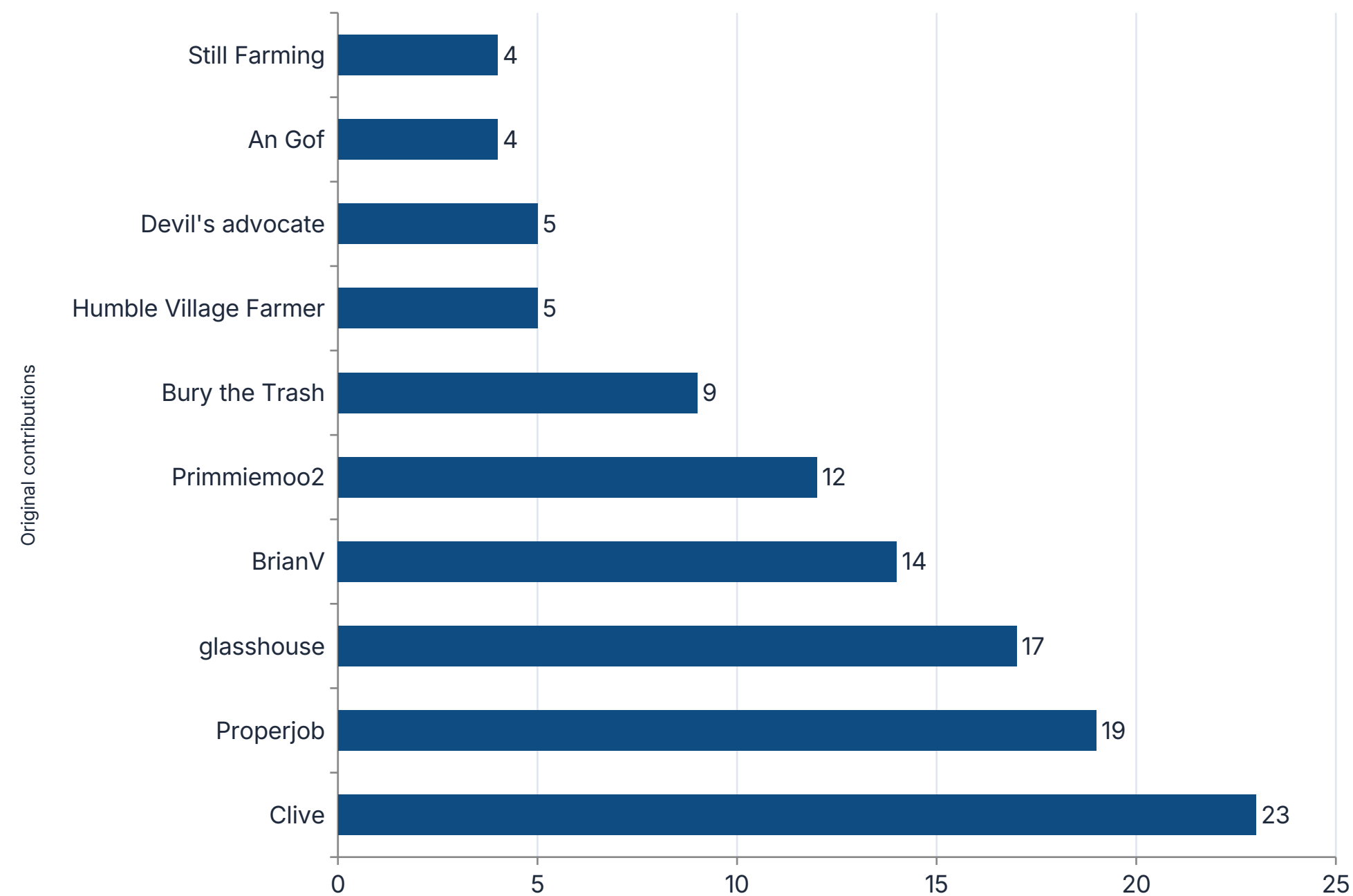
20.4% — party politics and ideology

16.7% — trust and delivery

13.0% — the farm visit itself

Multi-label themes: one contribution may carry up to three tags, so shares do not total 100%.

A few voices sustained much of the exchange



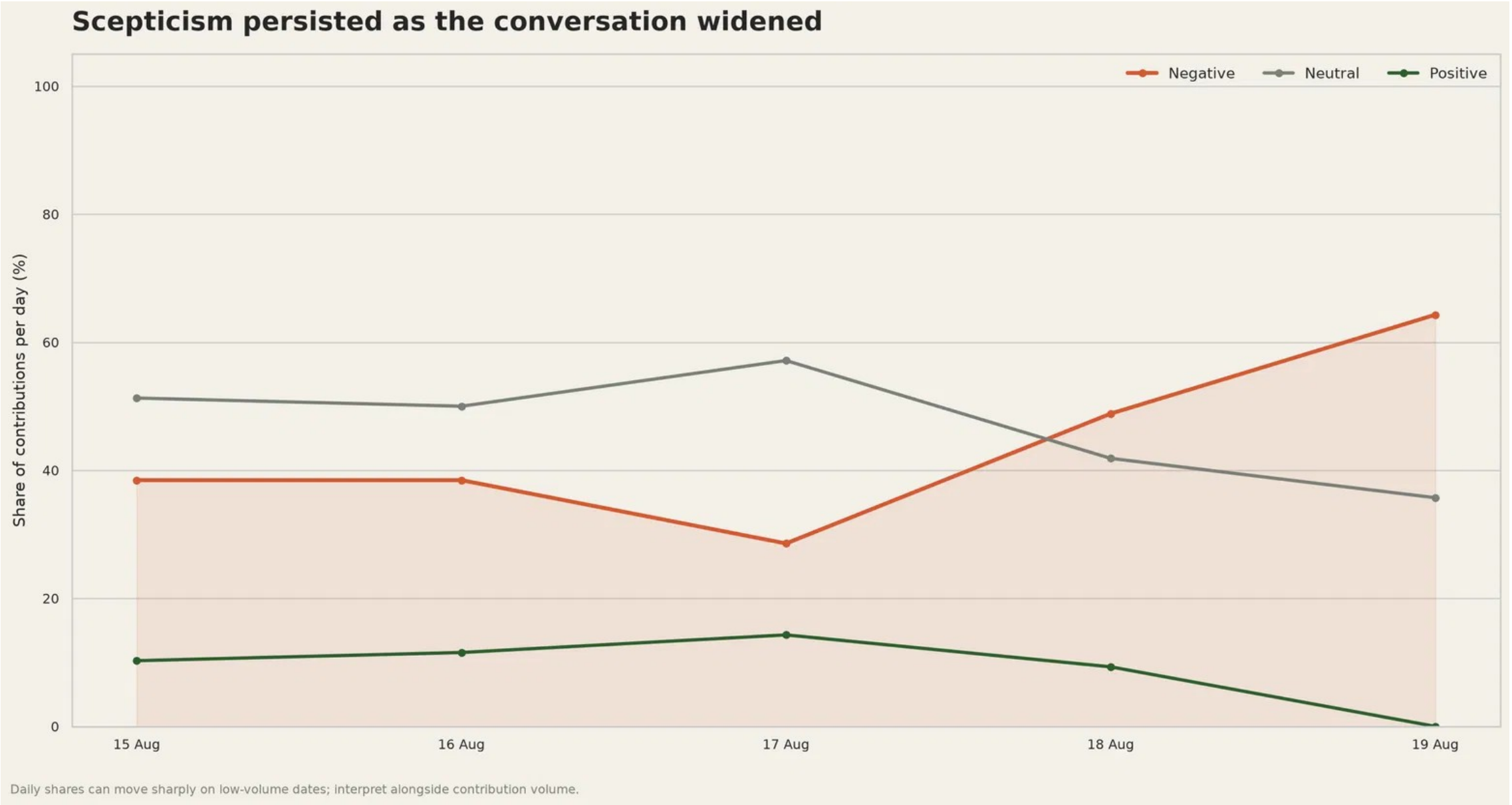
REACTIONS AMONG LEADING VOICES

Contributor	Reactions
Properjob	45
Clive	32
BrianV	21
Bury the Trash	15

Volume and approval were not the same thing.

Properjob contributed fewer entries than Clive but received the highest reaction total.

Tone hardened as the conversation widened



THE INFLECTION

Neutral discussion gave way to sharper political argument.

15–17 Aug
Neutral tone remained above negative tone.

18 Aug
Negative contributions became the largest share.

19 Aug
Negative tone reached 64%; positive tone fell to zero.

The spectrum ran from encouragement to proof

CAUTIOUS ENCOURAGEMENT

“Any signs of understanding are to be encouraged.”

Properjob · TFF contribution

EARLY OPTIMISM

Burnham appeared “more sympathetic and receptive to farmers”.

Andy26 · TFF contribution

THE DELIVERY TEST

Politicians can “talk the talk” but few “can walk the walk”.

Still Farming · TFF contribution

THE INDUSTRY RESPONSE

“A really welcome start” — but not a solution to the immediate crisis.

Tom Bradshaw · NFU president, quoted by BBC News

Trust now depends on administration

SEPTEMBER 2026

SFI Window 2

Opening date, application access and payment timing will show whether the extra £50m reaches farms under pressure.

AUTUMN 2026

Water Management Grant

Eligible investments, grant rates and the application process will determine the practical value of up to £15m.

ONGOING DELIVERY

Planning and abstraction

Clear rules and timely permissions must arrive when farms need to secure and store water.

Turning up was noticed. Trust will be measured in functioning schemes and farms still trading next summer.

[Read the full conversation on The Farming Forum](#)