

Tractor reliability: match the system to the job

What 116 farming contributions reveal about
brakes, duty cycles and support

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A practical conversation, not a brand survey

4,231

TFF views

116

visible contributions

231

total reactions

1.99

reactions per contribution

What it tells us

- Which operational concerns drew the most attention
- How farmers linked machinery, trailers, operators and service support
- Where safety and maintenance guidance sharpen the discussion

What it does not tell us

- No representative reliability rate for UK tractor fleets
- No manufacturer ranking or proof of sector-wide defects
- No substitute for competent servicing or legal roadworthiness checks

The trigger was repeated downtime

“Are we just unlucky or are modern tractors not designed for working on livestock farms?”

Opening contribution · Frank-the-Wool

System	Experience described
Brakes	Wear and repair concerns
Electrics	Repeated warning or fault issues
Hydraulics	Leaks and operational downtime
Emissions	AdBlue and aftertreatment faults
Engine	A serious concern under investigation

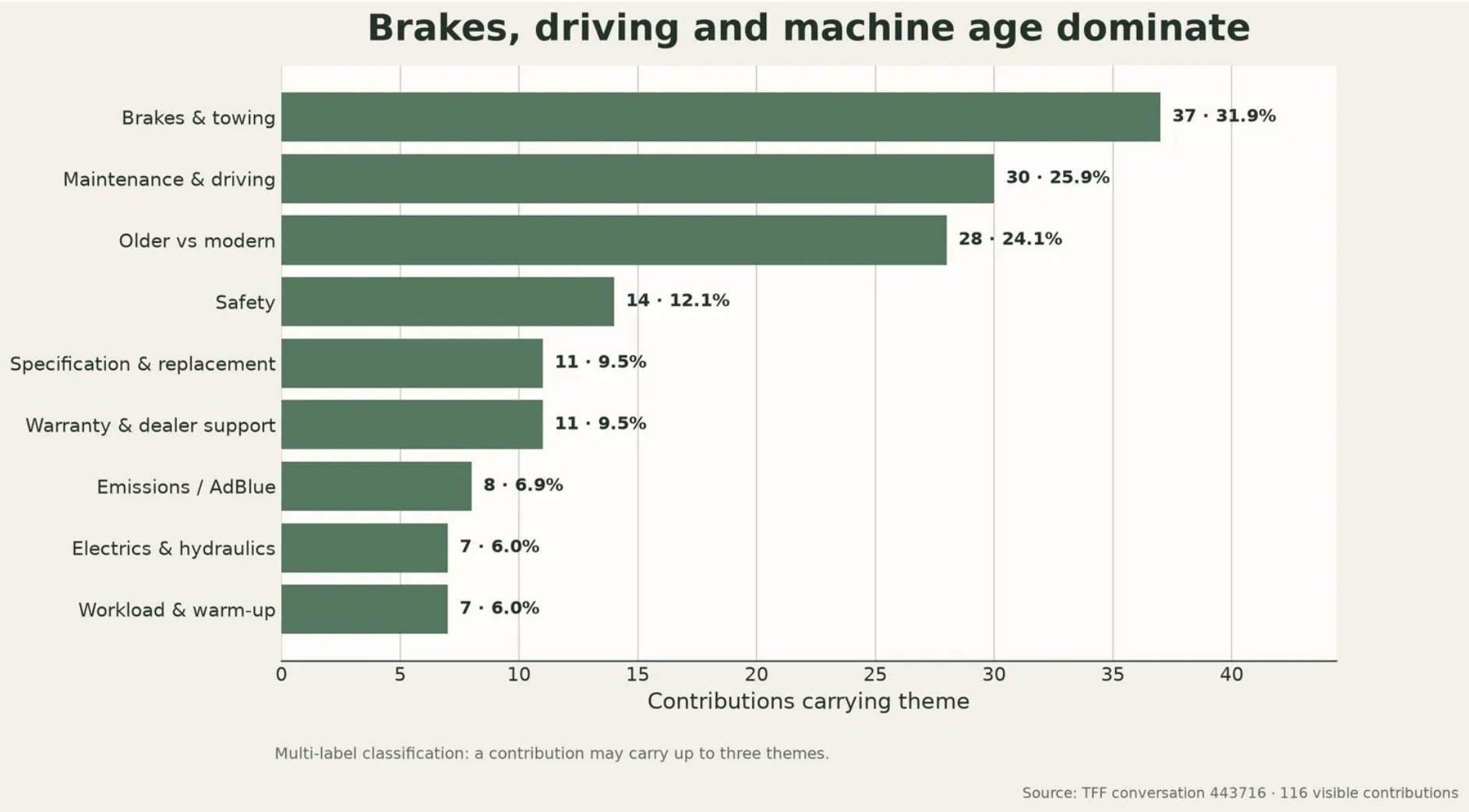
The contrast

An elderly Landini was still available while newer machines were out of action—an image that gave the conversation its force.

The boundary

These are attributed experiences. They identify operational questions; they do not establish manufacturer-wide failure rates or technical causation.

Brakes and towing dominate



What farmers connected

- Trailer compatibility and tractor brake life
- Operating speed and downhill technique
- Maintenance condition and driver practice

HSE

Safety-critical brakes and steering must be efficient and maintained.

NFU / BAGMA

Trailer brakes must suit the intended weight and speed.

IMPLICATION

Assess the tractor and trailer as one braking system.

Livestock work creates an awkward duty cycle



- 01 **Short jobs** may limit sustained warm-up and engine load.
- 02 **Mud and moisture** raise contamination and connection risks.
- 03 **Frequent attachment changes** increase hydraulic and handling demands.
- 04 **Several operators** can produce different driving and checking routines.

ANALYTICAL BOUNDARY

These are operational hypotheses raised by participants—not proven causes of sector-wide tractor faults.

Reliability includes the response

“They all break, it is how you are looked after when they do that matters.”

T C · contribution 10246696

11

contributions addressed warranty or dealer support

9.5% of the conversation; multi-label classification

Dealer response capacity

- Capable technician availability
- Parts and diagnostic access
- Replacement tractor while repairs continue

Farm contingency capacity

- Backup machine or hire arrangement
- Clear service and warranty terms
- Downtime plan for daily feeding and handling

Older versus modern is not binary

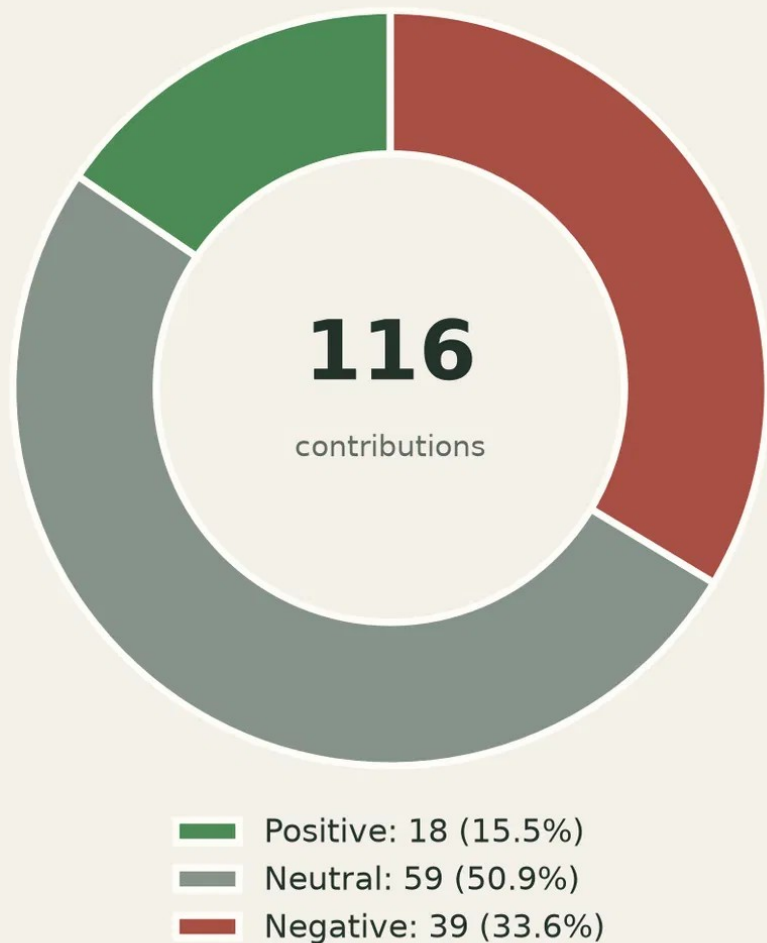
Decision factor	Older / simpler machine	Newer / more complex machine
Repairability	Independent support and simpler diagnosis may appeal	Specialist diagnostics and dealer access may be important
Availability	Clean examples can be scarce and expensive	New supply and warranty routes are clearer
Operating risk	Age-related wear and parts scarcity remain	Electronic and aftertreatment downtime may concern users
Working environment	Useful as a backup or for limited tasks	Comfort safety and productivity can be stronger
Best question	Can the farm maintain it safely and economically?	Can the support system keep it productive?

KEY TAKEAWAY

Age is a proxy; duty-cycle fit, maintenance and support determine the operating result.

Concern was mixed with diagnosis

Neutral analysis, with a clear negative edge



Source: TFF conversation 443716 · 116 visible contributions

50.9%

neutral wording

33.6%

negative wording

15.5%

positive wording

2.18

average reactions on negatively worded contributions

This is a language classification of one conversation—not a satisfaction score or manufacturer ranking.

Operator voice sharpened the safety message

“Go down the hill the same speed you can go up it.”

marco · the conversation’s most-reacted contribution

HSE

Brakes and steering are safety-critical. Preventative maintenance and competent repair are essential.

GOV.UK

Owners remain responsible for roadworthiness even where an agricultural tractor is exempt from periodic testing.

NFU / BAGMA

Trailer brakes must be compatible with intended weight and travel speed to avoid overworking the tractor system.

EMISSIONS SYSTEMS

Unverified removal or disabling advice is not endorsed; follow legal and manufacturer requirements.

The design brief is a complete system

01

Specify for the duty cycle

Match tractor size, controls, hydraulics and emissions package to short livestock jobs and sustained road work.

02

Couple tractor and trailer

Match brakes, weight, operating speed and compatibility rather than assessing either machine alone.

03

Standardise operator practice

Use consistent daily checks, driving expectations, maintenance intervals and defect reporting across every operator.

04

Buy support capacity

Secure capable technicians, parts routes, warranty clarity and a realistic backup plan for daily livestock work.

Design it for the job. Maintain it as one system.