

John Lycett's blog – May/June 2024

I am up on the Benwyns Lane leaning on the gate looking down towards Wykey Farm. The lucerne field in front of me has had two cuts this year and in the distance is the farm itself with Dilys, the digester, with her gas domes looking full.

Panning on round towards Boreatton, I can see the Calendar House, Boreatton Park, built in 1857 with, I'm told, 365 windows, 12 chimneys, and 4 main doors. Further on around, I can see Grug Hill, Shelvock, a little bit of Pradoc, Tedsmore and on around to Rednal, Hordley, Baggymoor and three windmills in the distance. Sometimes it's good to stand and take in one's surroundings.

The crops look so much better now that they have had some sunshine. The maize has gone from blue to a succulent green and grown several inches. The energy beet has met in the rows and the wheat has totally altered.



We have had a lot of inclement weather this year but 75% of the crops are looking really well.

After a wet and windy winter and spring, the men on the farm finally caught up with a work schedule in the middle of May, so Steve Smith gathered his team together and went to the Dog in Ruyton XI Towns and, according to Mark and Sam, it was a very good evening with good food and was very convivial.

Trips and visits:

Sam and Steven made the journey to Cereals which they found most interesting. I think they've got one or two things on their list that they would like to have.

I, myself, have been on two trips. One to Cambridge, where I got caught in a bus lane (Oops! £70). The meeting I attended was well worth it though.

I also went on a trip to Northumberland where we visited some farms, a grain compounder, DroneAg (Skippy Scout) and a large estate with storage, wood chipping and house building. A beautiful part of the country almost undiscovered.



In June the farm had a visit from the Worshipful Company of Farmers. They toured the digester and drying floors and looked at some crops.

Back on the farm now, Gypsy & Minty are rogueing the wheat, looking out for wild oats, blackgrass and rye grass. We have a zero tolerance on these weeds.

Liquid digestate has been applied after the second cuts of grass and now they're into harvesting whole crop hybrid rye.

Nesscliffe YFC 80th Anniversary Celebrations were held on 29th June at Montford Farm. 450 ex members and people associated with the club over the years attended. A large number of the Gittins family and their workforce were there. I had my photo taken with some of the girls who worked on the farm at peak harvest and planting times in the 1980s and 1990s, tractor driving, fork lift driving, quality controlling etc.



By the time I write again, hopefully we'll be into the grain harvest. Stay safe!

