

John Lycett's blog – February 2026

Hold my beer!

We've had two dry days and some sun!

Things are bad when you have to get the winch out!



Today, I'm standing in the churchyard in Ruyton XI Towns by its ancient castle.

It's no wonder our village is so busy. At the top we have the Church, then Gregory's Haulage, the Village Hall, Ruth's café (café eleven), Mick Lewis's garage, Ruyton XI Towns Store, the primary school, The Talbot pub (The Dog), finishing with the Cross all within a distance of less than 500 yards.

Unfortunately, the Cross suffered some damage a few years ago.



Our friend from Norfolk, Charles 'Turnip' Townshend (1674 – 1738) sent me an email saying it was great to be at the Norfolk Farming Conference but there was a brutal start to the proceedings, as he had heard that the Environment Secretary had described agriculture as a 'backwater'. To this government, it seems that agriculture could not matter less. So, if she likes to get in touch with me, I'll willingly give her a tour of the talented farmers we have in Shropshire.

On 23rd February, it was Shropshire Day, an annual celebration of our great county. This day was chosen in honour St Milburga, Benedictine abbess of Wenlock. If you're looking for thriving towns and exciting events along with scenic landscapes, pay Shropshire a visit.

Back on the farm, woodchip is still being handled on the drying floors. Energy beet is still being harvested, washed and sold. Machinery has been checked over. I've seen the sprayer on the yard but I don't think it has been in the field yet.

I have been mentioning the selling price of wheat lately. So, around the country, not surprisingly, one of the topics in farm meetings, farm offices and probably board rooms is how cheaply cereals can be grown to leave a margin with current prices. Control of costs have never been more important.

Hanley Hall, a farm which we have been renting from the late David Morris, had a very successful machinery sale recently. I do find it a bit sad when you stand in the buildings now and it's eerily quiet but is now ready for its next challenge.

As I am writing this, there is a warm glow of morning sunshine through the office window, maybe a promise of drier weather to come. Sowing, drilling and planting soon?