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## Digester Performance

Average performance for the last quarter from September 20 to December 20 is running at

**85%**

The average amount of green electricity produced per quarter is

**460,258 kWh**

The average value per quarter of green electricity produced allowing for an electricity price decrease is **approximately**

**£69,000** (NB This is the approximate gross income before running costs)



## Chairman's Report

We are now into our fourth year of operation and as you can expect some of the mechanical elements of our AD plant are now getting a bit worn and although regularly maintained, breakdowns are inevitable. You will recall that we fitted a second loading pump in September 2019. This has greatly improved our loading time and given us the security of having a second pump to continue loading if one should fail.

We are now addressing the vulnerability of our unloading system as this again relies on a single pump that is a critical component. I have just come up with a clever solution to this problem and will report on its success or otherwise in our next edition of the Digest. The secret to good operation is pre-empting failure!

On the whole the plant has run very well since our scheduled CHP engine rebuild last November. This obviously had a negative impact on our income for the last quarter. The good news is however, we have just signed up to a new electricity sale contract for the next twelve months; the sale price is nearly 30% higher than last year. This increase is apparently due to the high demand for electricity over the winter, as more people are working from home, home schooling and the cold spell through January and February.

## Directors' report

At the start of the new year 2021 business plans will consider both our final exit from the European Union, and also a long-awaited break out from 12 months of Covid 19 related restrictions. A common theme in both the related reworked farm payment scheme and the government "build back better" campaigns, is the emphasis on sustainable agriculture and renewable green energy. On both counts your investment in the Lower Park Farm Digester is well ahead of the curve as it converts manure from organic pastures into over 2,000,000 kWh of exported electricity annually.

Over the past year we have quite correctly praised the efforts of essential workers. The Directors extend the thanks to the Tomlinson family and farm staff who have kept the plant operational throughout this difficult period. For this reason, we can keep to the Company's budgeted interest and Capital payments at a time when many other industries are suffering losses.

Please remember to post in your bank mandate forms to ensure secure electronic transfer of the capital repayment due in May 2021.

Our Finance Director and Secretary are currently engaged in the final document preparation for the February year end which will conclude with the presentation of audited accounts at the AGM later in the year. Other essential "housekeeping" scheduled for the Spring is a routine examination of the Cooperative rules and our Health and Safety/Environmental protection procedures.



February has been Rain, Rain and more Rain! My final comments regarding the weather.

We have had the shortest day and spring is now on its way. Lighter mornings with gorgeous sunrises and longer days. Noisy dawn chorus can be heard if I silence the JCB reversing beepers. Especially, the tap tap of the lesser spotted woodpecker on the nearby trees. Blackbirds and the mistle thrush seem to be particularly abundant this year. Maybe the reduction in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is benefiting our wildlife. The reduction in road traffic and air pollution from aeroplanes must be having a positive effect. However, the cows are still belching and farting and are still the government's preferred culprits to blame for global warming!

On the farm, sixty heifers and hundred and eighty cows have calved during January and February. George has been extremely busy checking the calving cows and feeding new born calves. Fortunately, the calves are predominately heifers, which will be reared to join the dairy herd in two years' time.

Recently, we have purchased a 2004 second hand plough, which Wills will be learning to operate as soon as the ground conditions allow.

We are actively moving towards 100% self-sufficiency, by growing all the forage and corn for our cows and young stock. The downside of this is it makes the business much more diverse, requiring more management, machinery and labour input. In the next Digest we will update you all how the spring ploughing and sowing has gone.



## Financial update - BACS Payment Mandate Form

Following the September 2020 AGM, the members passed a resolution approving interest and capital payments to be made electronically to members instead of receiving payment by cheque.

In order to progress this resolution, please complete, sign and return the BACS form.

You can download the Payment Mandate Form from the resources page on our website

[www.lowerparkfarmcoop.co.uk](http://www.lowerparkfarmcoop.co.uk)

**If you have moved house** since purchasing your shares, please ensure that we have your new

## Additional Member Benefits

As members of the co-operative you are also entitled to the following extra benefits

**Free Digestate\***  
**10% off Calon-Wen produce\*\***

**Unfortunately the digestate is not available at the moment as the contact on the farm needs to be kept to an absolute minimum during the coronavirus pandemic.**

\*\* for the 10% off Calon-Wen claim a refund or order on-line @ <https://calonwen-cymru.com>

## Meet your Board - Stephen Fisher

During a career in Agricultural Manufacturing and Merchanting, I have been closely associated with systems of farming that over 40 years produced enviable record levels of arable and livestock production. In recent years I have become increasingly aware of the notable shift as the farming industry evolves towards a more soil friendly and sustainable future.

I was introduced to industrial scale commercial AD plants when suppliers at food processing factories became early adopters of these technologies to solve the issue of large volume disposal of co products from their industry. I had the opportunity to investigate the topic further when I took a year out able to study for a Masters Degree in Business Administration in 2002. Richard Tomlinson was at the time somewhat of a pioneer in this world, and it is very interesting to now have the opportunity to get involved with his on-farm project.

A move to Shropshire in 1990 anchored this Yorkshireman to the "wrong" side of the Pennines. Now retired and one of the senior age members of the Board, the current pastime is to switch from a lifetime on the tennis courts to taming the fairways (and bunkers!) of Shrewsbury Golf Club.



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