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Digester Performance

Average performance for the last quarter from January 21 to April 21 is running at

95%

The average amount of green electricity produced per quarter is

513,207 kWh

The average value of green electricity produced in the last quarter is **approximately**

£77,000 (NB This is the approximate gross income before running costs)

Chairman's Report

Just as we see Covid lockdown restrictions begin to ease, the Delta variant raises its ugly head, eclipsing the light at the end of the tunnel for potentially another summer! The Co-op board have continued to hold regular monthly meetings remotely via Zoom, with the digester's operations and performance obviously at the top of the agenda in the chairman's report.

The AD plant has been running very well, albeit stopping a couple of times for routine maintenance and the occasional power cut from the national grid.

Power cuts are very frustrating because they trip the breakers off in our mains substation, requiring a Scottish Power engineer who is trained to deal with HV (High Voltage) installations, to come out and re-set the trips. This usually results in the AD plant and the farm being without power for substantially longer than everyone else in the affected area. We are now in our fourth year of operation and as you would expect, routine maintenance and repairs are beginning to feature more strongly.

The board have prudently decided to hold this year's AGM, once again remotely via Zoom, we could not take the risk of hosting it on the farm and having to cancel due to covid restrictions. However, it worked very well last year and we look forward to your continued attendance and support this year.

Directors' report

The usual pattern of Board meetings continues through the Summer months via Zoom, with just one rescheduling as we all practiced 'make hay while the sun shines' in early June to get the first cut safely gathered in!

On the financial side, a further capital repayment instalment was paid at the end of May, via electronic transfer, to the majority of members. This process change is far more efficient and sustainable, so aligns closely with the values of LPFC.

We have received the draft accounts for the last financial year and a first reading indicates that LPFC activities are generally progressing at the same levels as last year, which is pleasing as the project moves into the middle phase. The plan is to utilise technology to greater effect on the accounting front which will provide real time details of transactions. Full details will be provided in the financial report at the **AGM on September 1st at 6.30pm**.

The Board have also been looking at procedures and governance. Progress is being made with a central repository for all LPFC documents, which will be stored securely in electronic format. Curtis is managing this project in his usual efficient manner and the Board thank him for his efforts. We have also provided Board members with a health and safety training resource. As many of you will know this is an aspect of running a business that needs to be updated periodically.



Isn't our ecosystem amazing how it recovers? Only five weeks ago our meadow land was all under three feet of water, due to the River Dee flooding. Last week we managed to silage the recovered grass. Unfortunately, it wasn't the bumper crop we expected, but at least it wasn't totally lost.

The cows are looking healthy and happy. George is waiting for the last five cows to calve. All the other 'summer block' cows have calved and the calves are growing like mushrooms.

The new second hand plough worked really well, and all the Spring corn was in the ground by the end of April, just before the rain started (and didn't stop) in May. It was so wet that we had to bring the cows back into the sheds and feed them winter rations for a week.

The wet May did however benefit the corn, it all germinated and grew really well, but with the ground being so wet we were not able to travel with the tractor to harrow out the weeds. We now, therefore, have a wonderful show of Charlock (a yellow flowering weed).

Although, this pretty weed does not benefit the corn yield, it does benefit the crop indirectly by feeding the bees and pollinators.

The farm has reluctantly decided to invest in a large concrete pad in front of the digester, on which to tip and stack the chicken muck. The hard-core base which had sufficed for the last four years had become very loose and uneven, resulting in half bricks and stones being loaded into the mixing pit and being sucked up and blocking the loading pumps. Although, this investment is for the AD plant and does not benefit the farm, it is the farm staff that are constantly losing time having to unblock and repair the pumps, so the farm decided to bite the bullet and make the investment.

Both George and Wills have taken responsibility regarding the field records, including the soil testing, rotation of crops and digestate application. It will be interesting to see how the corn yields this year, we will hopefully report this in the next edition of the Digest.



Save the Date - AGM - Wednesday 1st September 2021

The board have taken the decision, following the on-going situation with the pandemic, to hold the AGM on-line, via a Zoom meeting at 6.30pm on Wednesday 1st September.

This ensures the safety of you our members and also the safety of the farm staff that keep the digester operational 365 days a year.

Details about how to register and join the meeting will be sent out to you at the beginning of August.

Meet your Board - Dr Jan Green

Jan is interested in the range of factors which contribute to business success, and she spent many years working in the food industry and waste management before moving into academia. Her proactive approach and independent views have enhanced the lively discussions at LPFC Board meetings on several occasions!

Racehorses are a life-long passion of Jan's and she can be spotted by the paddock rails at our local tracks assessing the runners as part of the onerous task of writing the Racing Diary in the Chester Chronicle. Many years ago, when the future of Aintree Racecourse, which Jan refers to as iconic, was in doubt, Jan contributed

to the rescue fund – a long-term successful investment. Also a keen runner and cyclist, Jan clocks up the miles around the lanes of Cheshire, fiercely competitive she always sets out to win her age category. "I was brought up in a male-dominated household in the North East. We competed for everything – that was survival!" explained Jan.

Here is Jan – when she was ready to depart **recently** on her cousin's hen party – which consisted of a 10k race in Malton, North Yorkshire. *Part of the route involved a couple of furlongs uphill on the all-weather gallop used by trainer Richard Fahey when Jan changed her gait to an extended canter.*



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**

Digestate is available for the Members but strictly by Appointment.

Please call Sadie Tomlinson on 07811 960254 to arrange collection

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

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