

Shallowford Farm Manager's Report

The Farm at East Shallowford has been a busy and productive place over the last 12 months, with a huge amount of time and effort being put in by all to move the farm on.

The 50 Shallowford sheep completed their first lambing as 2-tooths this spring. Although the weather made lambing a very challenging time this year, we are hopeful for a successful percentage for weaning.

The Heifers are growing on nicely and are starting to develop into Cows. Some were served last autumn to be calving at the end of August/September 2018, so we hope calving will be successful later this year.

The Pigs have been farrowing well this year with a good number of piglets being produced. Hopefully in 2018 we look to expand the pig enterprise to having a 6th Sow, in order to start Shallowford's own herd of Pedigree Gloucester Old Spots.

The educational experience for young people has definitely stepped up a gear this year. It has been brilliant to see so many bright and enthusiastic individuals stepping onto the farm, from many different sized and diverse groups. It has been great to work with them all, and know that they have learnt something from the farm, as well as having fun interacting with the animals. The stand out experience is always to see how returning individuals develop, both in their character, farming aptitude and independence.

2017/18 has been an exceptionally busy time moving the farm along its planned path. It started off in Summer 2017 with the design and installation of the new water system after the failure of the existing water system. To renew the system turned into quite a large project with the installation of a new pipeline throughout the whole farm. It is now up and running seamlessly. Having water in every field makes a huge difference.

The next stage of the development was the demolition of the old farm buildings, swiftly followed by all the groundworks to prep the site for the shed and new drive. This led to the exciting discovery of the hut circle in the middle of the front field. Shortly after the site work was complete, the shed was erected and the drive was re-laid. The stock moved in in late January, a very exciting day for us all. Managing the build was a very busy time, but new shed has been a huge success, making it easier to care for the animals and provide a safer and more usable space for groups.

The farms walls and boundaries are looking in far better shape. Most of the walling project has now been complete, with just the drive to be re walled on both sides and for the last of the stone to be tidied up. "Moor than Meets the Eye" Project are currently restoring the pound at the end of the drive, so hopefully by this time next year the arrival to the farm should look very smart.

I feel that the link between Broadaford and East Shallowford is working very well and is going from strength to strength, allowing many more young individuals to gain an insight into farming and helping to provide valuable life lessons. Going forward, we are looking forward to inviting more groups to the farm at Shallowford and at Broadaford and look forward to hopefully giving them a broad range of activities for them to do.

As a team together we look forward to seeing and being involved with the continual development going into the future.

Will Dracup
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