

Support Group AGM and Flock Visit

Saturday 14th July – remember those hot days when we all dreamed of rain and green was a colour we couldn't quite remember? A small group of Support Group members met at Bicton College, Cannington, Somerset, for our AGM and flock visit. After we concluded our business we were given a tour of the college's farm by the farm manager, George Jones and his shepherd. We've visited the farm before and it was good to see that the Llanwenogs are still a part of the flock at the college.

The farm extends to 440 acres, mostly below sea level and on clay based soil, the main enterprise is a herd of 300 pedigree Holsteins, recently increased from 240, and mostly housed year round. The sheep flock comprises 230 ewes entirely grass based, lambing February/March including 20 pure bred Texels, 25 Beulah Speckled Face, 17 pure bred Llanwenogs and various cross-bred ewes. The flock is now MV accredited and Llanwenog numbers are



down from our last visit as some tested positive though the hope is to breed replacements – 15 pure bred ewe lambs from this year will be retained. The farm has a number of rams, including a Llanwenog, but they are considering putting some Llanwenog ewes to a Blue-Faced Leicester ram, we encouraged them to do this having seen the excellent results at Charles Horton's flock at last year's AGM and visit.



Perhaps the biggest surprise for some of us was to see green grass again – some of the farm is prone to flooding so still had good grass for the sheep.

After an excellent lunch we had a tour of the Holsteins where again there have been a few changes since our last visit particularly in the increased numbers. The farm has to pay its way as well as provide teaching opportunities and George Jones has managed to successfully do both since his appointment 3 years ago.

This was also an opportunity for the Support Group to see the new show stand – the last one was literally falling to bits – so we now have some very eye-catching banners and flags.

The Support Group again sponsored the Llanwenog classes at the Melton Mowbray Show and Sale earlier this month with Philip Hodges winning the breed championship. Top price was 150gns. Our thanks to all those who entered sheep as this is one of the largest sales of rare breeds and an excellent opportunity to promote the breed.



The new banners and flags at their first outing at the Three Counties Show in June