

Dear Members

As ever I am indebted to **Michael Pollitt** for his summary of a fine afternoon spent in Heacham Bottom. There was a lot to absorb and much to admire in what Nick Padwick is promoting in improving the soil on the light land by now minimising the use of artificial fertilisers and fungicides in addition to no insecticides. One glaring feature was how the pigs that were rooting over the former arable fields would only work the headlands being the only parts where the soil had any biological richness. There was a culture clash with some of our Barley Barons pointing out the low yields and how this could only continue while the current government support is in place. However they couldn't deny the diligence and enthusiasm Nick Padwick showed in concentrating on margins rather than yields.

Talking of regenerative farming there was an interesting article in The Times this week which mentioned a new book by George Monbiot called *Regenesi*s. You probably know that he he is an arch advocate of re-wilding (including wolves) and an opponent of farting cows and over-grazing sheep. He almost wants to do away with farmers to save the planet but Alice Thomson, the author, says the answer is to work with farmers and not rely on civil servants to police our countryside. She cites my heroes James Rebanks and John Lewis-Stempel as well as James Dyson who "has shown how to update modern farming without destroying the soil". Incidentally our 'local lad done good' is now the second richest man in the country.

Meanwhile **Martin Jensen** is driving out to the Ukraine this evening and will assess where the funds that his family raised can do the most good. He promises to update us on things and we wish him a safe journey.

Numbers for our *trip to Shropshire's on Thursday 23rd June* are growing but there are still plenty of seats. I'm sorry that this might clash with the Banham dinner that evening but we may be able to plan things so you can attend both. More of that anon.

Regards

Tim

T. P. S. Nicholson

Hon. Sec.

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