

Cynlas Newsletter no. 2

Hope you have all had a great summer, despite the variable weather, and are hunkering down for a cosy autumn.



We've had a wonderful summer, and are now surrounded by beautiful colours.

After a few attempts cramming pigs, straw and hardware into the back of the Zafira we realised we needed a 4x4. Noone here would accuse us here of having a Chelsea tractor! We got the indestructible Hilux and also got a trailer from eBay and built it a roof. Only downside is when we brought



our recent batch of weaners home, they were too far back to hear me reading Pigling Bland

We had exciting news at the end of August, there had been a rescue of ex-batts up north, and we had been able to secure a dozen of them. We set out in the Hilux, with the Woolworths crates having yet another reincarnation as hen transporters. We made our rendez-vous at the service station near Chester, and collected the saddest, most listless chickens you've ever seen. We gently put them in their new house when we got home



and I was pessimistic any would still be alive the next morning. 12 hours later we opened the door gingerly and they were all standing up, pecking at the food – a real joy to see. Within a few days they started following us about, and properly free-ranging. They are now so much better, almost fully feathered, like one of our early hens on the right of the picture. They are very friendly, and laying the most delicious eggs.



We collected our second batch of pigs in late July, Maple and Oak, two lovely bacon pigs, from the other side of Caernarfon. We tried to introduce them to the saddlebacks, but they disliked each other so much the girls kept escaping, despite the electric fence. We settled them into the old vegetable garden, gave them a temporary home using the Victorian water tank, and next day built them a lovely new ark of their own. They are adorable, affectionate, but with a strong sense of adventure, and a few weeks ago got out again, and set off down the road. When we



finally Found them, they had spent the afternoon with a friendly neighbour, enjoying Custard Creams.

We ordered guinea fowl and turkey hatching eggs from eBay, and they arrived, beautifully wrapped. The incubator was set up on the kitchen table, and we watched it every day as it gently rotated the eggs. Much excitement at the end of August, when the first one pipped – a little crack in the egg, as the chick got ready to emerge. After 2 days we had 2 turkeys and 3 guinea

fowl – a low hatching rate, we need to learn more about incubation. The



chicks were little bundles of fluff, and very alert. However, despite being handled every day, they are still untamed, and don't like human contact. They are now outside, and growing every day.



The day came round in October when we said goodbye to our first pig. It wasn't easy, but I think we know we are

smallholders now, as we've overcome one of our biggest challenges. The next weekend we had our first meal entirely produced ourselves from the land.

The Cynlas pork pie is being perfected— one thing we soon learnt is we will need to grow sage as a crop, it really is a vital ingredient. We were very pleased with our first efforts, and really hope we can



develop this side of the business

We will have our free range pork for sale very shortly – please look on www.cynlas.com for details to order.

And on a personal note, the boys have both settled in very well to their new schools, Harry is currently at Canolfan Iaith (Language Centre) learning Welsh and will go back to Sŷr Hugh Owen in a few weeks. We have enjoyed having visitors this summer, which has given us a bit of a break from farm work while we've had wonderful days out



Warm greetings from Cynlas/
Cyfarchion cynnes O Cynlas

Mary, Paul, Alfie and Harry, x x x