

OLIVERS Winchester

Adrian Dixon
near Micheldever

ARION/AXION/TUCANO

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something on which
I think you can’t put
a value.”**

Return to Independence

For one OLIVERS Winchester customer, a move back to taking key farming operations in-hand meant a need for a new combine. Dealer and manufacturer experience helped make the choice a simple one.

The past 20 years or so have seen more than a few changes on Adrian Dixon’s 400ha farm near Micheldever.

First came a decision in 2001 to cease dairying, since when his business has been an all-arable concern.

The move coincided with a shift away from ploughing to minimal cultivations, to reduce expenditure on crop establishment while enhancing soil structure and health. Meanwhile, he also joined a group of neighbours looking to share key machinery to spread costs.



Adrian Dixon



But with circumstances always evolving on both a personal business level and more widely across agriculture, policies can change as different approaches become more or less cost-effective, and in 2017 Adrian decided to leave the group and take some of his key farming operations back in-house.

“I run the farm without any full-time labour, and at first it made sense to take just the key field operations back on board,” he explains.

“I’ve used the services of OLIVERS Winchester, which is very close by, for many years, and run an AXION 830 and an ARION 650, so have sufficient tractor power for most jobs, with the former looking after the heavier tasks and the latter the spraying and most of the fertilising, as well as hedgecutting.

“Our soils don’t need a huge amount of work, being fairly free-draining and with good yield

potential. My aim is to spend as little time as possible out on each field task – I view a big workload for a tractor as a matter of cost and inefficiency, and my priority is plenty of capacity to get jobs done fast.

“Hours spent in a CLAAS tractor, though, are a pleasure – they have always been comfortable, quiet and nice to drive, with a spacious cab, making longer work hours during peak season periods more enjoyable.”

Anything spring-drilled has a cover crop before it, which is grazed off by sheep, and the story but relatively light land generally receives a light cultivation pass with a Horsch Cruiser, or is direct drilled with a contractor’s Horsch Sprinter, rated by Adrian as ‘as reliable for all situations as drills get’ after a running a number of machines of his own of different types.



“I especially like its versatility, with the ability to change points according to the work in hand,” he says.

Following his departure from the machinery-sharing co-operative, Adrian initially continued to farm out his harvesting workload, using the services of a nearby contractor.

“That worked well at first, but as the contractor’s workload grew there were greater demands on him. To protect the quality of my crops and cut when it suited me, I weighed

up the idea of running my own combine again, and after discussions with Philip Cole at OLIVERS decided to invest in a CLAAS TUCANO 570 APS Hybrid single-rotor machine for harvest 2023. The available combining days seem to get fewer and fewer each year, and as with my tractors and equipment I wanted plenty of capacity to enable me to get the job done as quickly as possible.

“We do have other dealers close by, and I did look around at most makes on the market to give me some comparisons – it’s sensible



farm policy to benchmark prices for machines, parts and service. But actually there really isn't much in it, and what matters most is reliability and service.

Historically we always ran CLAAS combines, and I was happy to stay with them, added to which I like to work with one dealer as much as possible.

"Having OLIVERS Winchester on my doorstep and knowing the service support they provide probably influenced me, though. I know if I have an issue I just need to pick up the phone, and between the team there they will soon get it sorted.

"Through running the AXION 830 and ARION 650, and our SCORPION 6030 telehandler, which I purchased in 2007, I also know the service and spares back-up provided by OLIVERS is excellent.

I want a long lifetime from our main machines before replacing them, so good service support is important. Most machines made today do the job well – it's how they are supported, how customers are treated equally and how the dealer helps keep the wheels turning that are the deciding factors.

"Having run CLAAS equipment for many years, I know the team at OLIVERS Winchester and they know me. The machinery is reliable and the staff are really good, which has earned my loyalty to both CLAAS and OLIVERS. I understand machines do sometimes go wrong, and a dealer that gets things up and running again as quickly as possible is invaluable.

I've always had that support where needed – with a larger dealer group like OLIVERS and a manufacturer like CLAAS, that has even extended to back-up combines and demonstrators. These are big names producing and supporting some great machines, and both clearly investing and growing all the time – that's reassuring. It's a trust thing, something on which I think you can't out a value."



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