

Short Back and Sides Please!



Despite a very warm early spring, the latter part of the spring and the entire summer ended up being a rather wet, cold and miserable affair. As a consequence, we left shearing until rather late this year. It was well into May before the sheep were even dagged as we worried about them getting cold bottoms! Dagging involves shearing the fleece away from their rear end to keep them clean once the spring grass starts to grow. This is necessary because the richness of the grass can cause them to scour until their digestive system adapts to the additional nutrients in the grass.



John dagging Billy, whilst Emma holds him steady and Rosie looks on

Shearing itself was undertaken over three days. John, our shearer, started with our older and more vulnerable sheep before moving on to the rest of flock. Stevie is a particular chal-



Stevie's turn!

lenge because he is not able to see what is going on and doesn't like the sound of the shears. Thankfully, John is extremely gentle with our sheep, taking his time and making the process as stress free as possible.



George's amazing fleece

We often get asked if shearing is cruel. If it is done gently and with compassion it is comparable to have a hair cut and is essential for their welfare. The majority of sheep breeds have been domesticated and selectively bred so that they grow thick fleeces which do not self

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All done!

Short Back and Sides continued

shed. If left unshorn they will suffer from heat exhaustion which can prove fatal. At present the majority of our fleeces are taken to the wool board where they are weighed, graded, baled with other fleeces and eventually sold at auction in Bradford.

Fleecehaven receives a negligible sum for the fleeces that is often less than the cost of shearing. It would be good to think that at some point in the future we could do something with the fleeces which generated an income for Fleecehaven.



Our fleeces being weighed, graded and sorted at the local wool board collection point in South Molton

Newsbleat

Over the summer months it has been lovely to see our lambs really thrive. Despite the poor start that they all had, especially Sooty and Eboni, they have all done incredibly well. Sooty was robust enough to be able to join the rest of the lambs at the end of May. Initially he was a little shunned by the others but now the four of them are inseparable. As the summer progressed, we moved them out of the utility room into our animal ark in the garden and with Autumn now approaching we will soon be moving them into one of the stables in the yard so that they have additional warmth and protection at night.

During the day they love exploring the fields together for short periods of time but frequently return to the security of the garden and yard. Larry and Eboni have remained particularly tame and are always keen to have their ears tickled. It really is rewarding to see how fit and well they all are and hopefully they will all now live long and happy lives at Fleecehaven.

At the start of the summer, Freddie experienced yet another flare-up of his on-going joint problem. In consultation with our vet, we decided that it was probably time for him to have another x-ray to reassess the situation. The x-ray confirmed arthritis in the joint as a direct result of the joint-ill that he suffered from so badly as a lamb. He was given a steroid injection directly into the joint and prescribed another long course of antibiotics to settle



Breakfast time!



Freddie home from the vets

the joint down again, since when the joint has remained reasonably stable.

As always, a number of our sheep required veterinary treatment over the summer months. Sandy had a particularly deep-rooted abscess in his foot which Emma was reluctant to tackle herself. It took our vet a couple of attempts to expose the abscess, after which he was given pain relief and we applied a daily hot poultice and administered antibiotics for two weeks. The on-going wet weather has resulted in several of the sheep experiencing foot abscesses, including Billy, Rosetta, Jezebel, Arthur and Jessie.

identified. Our vet decided that it was time to x-ray the joint again to reassess his condition. This showed a progression in the arthritis which, unfortunately, cannot be treated with anything other than pain relief when necessary. Hugo was joined by Heather on his trip to the veterinary hospital as she required dental treatment.



John now fully recovered

John and Bryan also had a trip to our veterinary hospital. Bryan was in need of some dental treatment and



Jessie back to her old self

We were particularly concerned about Jessie's abscess as, like Sandy's, it appeared to be quite deep-rooted

John required an exploratory operation for what our vet thought might be an abscess in his testicle. It actually turned out to be a rapidly growing tumour which was successfully removed and from which he has made a full recovery, although sadly he is now losing his sight due to cataracts.

and she seemed to be a little out-of-sorts. Our vet took bloods from her and the results of the tests run showed nothing remarkable. Thankfully she responded well to treatment and is now fully recovered and back to her old self. Murphy continued to require regular treatment for his ongoing eye condition, as did Alfie with the sore on his brisket.

Throughout the summer regular crovecting of the sheep took place to ensure that the flock remained free of fly-strike. Drenching was also undertaken to protect the sheep from a variety of internal parasites with the drenches used being determined by the results of our monthly dung samples. The drenches are administered by weight and at the beginning of the summer we used our sheep scales to weigh all of the sheep to ensure

Hugo also caused us concern as his pronounced limp appeared to be worsening.



Hugo

When we first rescued him, his leg was x-rayed and arthritis caused by untreated joint-ill as a lamb was



Juliet's Weigh-In

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Here Comes Summer



Emma & Murphy

Whisper



Snowie



Larry & Sooty



Buster



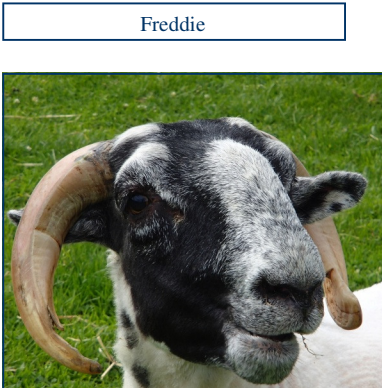
Sunny



Coco



Where shall we go today?



Stevie



Gracie





Follow the Leader!



Cynthia & Raggy Socks

Rosetta

Mitzy



Ellie

Alfie and Percy grazing in the garden



Eboni

Lamborghini

Henry & Blackie



Peggy

Sandy

Slick Summer Shed Clean!

As the summer drew to a close it was time, yet again, to embark on our annual 'big clean'. It was a particularly slick operation this year with the entire process taking just six days. A trailer load of straw straight from the field and four pallets of wood-shavings were delivered just a few days before our agricultural contractor moved in to empty the sheds.



The contractors emptied a years worth of bedding and dung from the sheds using a skid steer loader. The contents was then taken away by the trailer load to a nearby farm where it was spread directly onto the fields to act as a natural fertilizer.



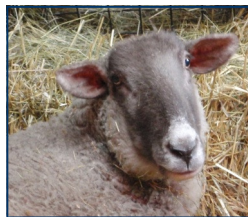
This process took a couple of days, after which Emma and Anne spent two further days pressure washing the sheds and laying out the bales of sawdust.

At this point we were joined by two of our wonderful supporters, Erica and Paul. They single-handedly took on the painstaking task of spreading out the shavings to create a thick, absorbent base before covering with a deep and cosy layer of straw. Thanks to their amazing hard work, this took just two days! We were so grateful for their help and really couldn't have done it without them. The sheep were certainly pleased to be back into barn so quickly and it was lovely to watch the flock coming in for the first time and nestling down into their super clean, cosy bedding. I think that everyone felt a great sense of satisfaction for a good job done, especially with the Autumnal chill beginning to nip the air.



Dearly Missed

The summer months sadly saw us have to say goodbye to one of our dearest boys, Snowflake. Snowflake arrived at Fleecehaven as a lamb in 2004, together with his sister Snowdrop, following the sudden death of their mother. He was such a dear, gentle boy and is missed greatly by us all.



Newsbleat Continued

the correct dose is given to each and every one of them. Weighing the sheep also enabled us to ensure that they were maintaining a good weight and identify any who were losing a little condition as, when they still have their thick fleeces on, this can be difficult to identify.

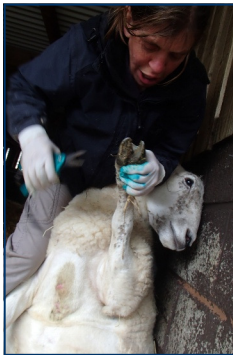


The flock patiently waiting to be drenched



Emma drenching Joan

Each time the flock was rounded up for drenching or crovecting, Emma used it as a good opportunity to give all of the sheep a quick MOT, trimming feet where necessary and dealing with any other minor ailments. As those of you with sheep know, look-



Rustle having a pedicure

ing after them properly is very labour intensive and time consuming and it makes you wonder how on earth commercial sheep, all too often left to their own devices, manage to survive.

With the summer drawing to a close we took in two trailer loads of hay delivered straight from the field. Nearly 400 bales were delivered with each and every one of them being unloaded by Emma! The poor summer that we have experienced has resulted in the hay being a little coarse but hopefully the sheep will find it acceptable once it has



‘rested’ and we are able to start feeding it to them.

Emma unloading hay

Fund Raising

The summer has been a relatively quiet time for us in terms of fund raising, especially as we were unable to attend the Yealmpton Show this year as Jayne had not yet finished work for the summer and the show is held mid-week. However, we enjoyed a successful weekend at VegFest in Bristol and also attended two new events. One in Braunton organised by Anni at North Devon Hedgehog Rescue; the other in Exeter to mark the end of the Vegan Festival of Britain, Compassion @ The Castle, organised by Animal Aid and EFFA. Thank you so much to everyone who supported us at these events - it’s always lovely to meet up with so many Fleecehaven friends, old and new, and we are



incredibly appreciative of the interest shown in our work.



Summer Visitors

'Promoting humane behaviour towards animals by providing care, protection, treatment and security'

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1111004

Over the summer it has been lovely to welcome so many visitors to Fleecehaven; Rosanna, Charlene, Helen & Julian, Alanda, Susie & Sally, Rob & Toni, Angelika & Jorg, Liz & Clare, Phil, Val & Veronica, Jon, Lucy, Kate, Monica & David, Tony & Jane, Kerry, Roger, Val & Rosemary, Becky & Ralph and Caitlin to name but a few. It is always such a pleasure to share the flock with our supporters. Many of our sheep absolutely adore having visitors - especially when their are biscuits involved!! Thank you so much to everyone who has taken the time and trouble to visit us; your support really is very much appreciated by everyone at Fleecehaven.



Apologies from Jayne

Finally, I would like to apologise for just how late this newsletter is in finding its way to you. As you know, Fleecehaven is a very small, family run charity. All of the hard day-to-day work is carried out by my Mum and sister, Anne and Emma; both of whom work tirelessly each and every day, all year round to care for the Fleecehaven flock. I carry out all of the Fleecehaven administration, which includes the writing of this newsletter. With a responsible and demanding full time job, a young family and the ever growing requirements of Fleecehaven administration and fund raising, I do increasingly find it difficult to keep up-to-date with all that needs to be done. I have already started working on the next newsletter and will endeavour to send it out in a more timely fashion.