



## Valentine Love

Valentine joined the Fleecehaven flock on 14<sup>th</sup> February - hence his name. He had been found earlier that morning by a lady walking her dog. He was with his twin sister and there was no sign of a ewe with them or of any other sheep within the field. The lambs were just a few hours old and the lady was quite concerned about them. She watched them for some time to make sure that their mother hadn't just left them for a while, but sadly it soon became apparent that they had been abandoned and the pair of them were close to perishing.

Desperate to help the lambs, the lady started asking people in the area if they knew who farmed the land and eventually she managed to trace the farmer. Instead of being grateful for her concern he told her they were "the last of the lot to lamb" and that he wasn't interested in them. Their mother had abandoned them and he didn't have the

inclination to look after them as it wouldn't be economically viable. He told her to take them if she wanted to and said that he doubted that they would survive.

The lady took the lambs home and at this point managed to make contact with Fleecehaven. She arranged to bring the lambs to us, but sadly the little girl was too weak and passed away before she got to us.

Our vet came out to see the little boy as soon as he arrived at Fleecehaven. He was immediately given colostrum via a stomach tube as we had no way of knowing if he had received any from his mother. Colostrum is the first feed for a newborn lamb and the key to survival. It's a highly nutritious energy source that helps the lamb to maintain body temperature

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Valentine on the day that he arrived

and survive. It also contains antibodies that are vital to help protect the new-



Emma encouraging Valentine to take some ewe replacement milk



Safe, warm and cosy alongside the radiator



Bath time

born lamb against disease. After our vet had left, we kept Valentine warm throughout the night and tried to get him to feed. Initially it was a real struggle but eventually he got the hang of sucking from a bottle and, little-by-little, he began to take milk and started to gain some strength and despite his incredibly poor start, he quickly responded to warmth, nourishment and love. Once Valentine had settled a little into his new life at Fleecehaven, we gave him a bath to remove all of the mud that he was caked in when he'd first arrived. He must have felt so much better and we were

amazed at how snow-white he was - such a pretty lamb who could so easily



have perished like his twin sister.

Thankfully since arriving at Fleecehaven, Valentine hasn't looked back. He has grown into a beautiful lamb who really enjoys life to the full. He is extremely tame and just loves human and dog company, so much so that he has somewhat shunned the two further lambs that have joined us since his arrival! Hopefully as the year progresses he will become a little less dependent upon our company and a little more willing to accept that he is a lamb!

He was so lucky to have been rescued and we are incredibly grateful to the lady who found him. All we can do now is keep our fingers crossed that



he will lead a long and happy life at Fleecehaven.

## Frosty and our Fluffy Puzzle

On 17<sup>th</sup> March two dear little souls joined Fleecehaven. We had been looking for a companion to join Valentine and had become aware of two lambs that had been taken away from their mother. The ewe was a first time Mum who had given birth to triplets but, despite support, was unable to look after all three. The farmer had taken the two weaker lambs from her and was hand



Brother Love



Frosty and Fluffy Puzzle on the day that they arrived

rearing them. With his main round of lambing about to begin he was happy to release them into our care.

We were instantly concerned about the smaller of the two lambs as he had a little bit of scour and seemed reluctant to feed; his breathing was also quite laboured and at times he appeared to be gasping. He also behaved in a slightly odd way, not wanting to skip, run and play in the way that lambs naturally do. When the lambs were checked over by our vet the little one was sadly diagnosed with a heart condi-

tion and we are not yet sure what the long-term prognosis for him will be.

Once checked over by our vet and treated for mites and parasites the lambs joined Valentine in our utility room where we were able to keep them warm and keep a close eye on them. Valentine was not terribly impressed by his new companions though as he really didn't think that he was a lamb! However, they settled quickly and looked so cosy – a life time away from the open shed that they had come from where they were exposed to the biting wind and incredibly cold weather conditions that we were experiencing at the time. With persistent persuasion we managed to get to the little lamb to feed and with four bottle feeds of milk a day both of the lambs soon started to gain condition. We decided to call the pink nosed lamb Frosty because of the inclement weather that we were experiencing at the time and we named the little lamb Fluffy, because of his incredibly thick and fluffy fleece. However, he has recently become known as Fluffy Puzzle because he is a bit of a puzzle. Despite





## Frosty and our Fluffy Puzzle Continued



Exploring the Big Outdoors

his diagnosis of a heart condition, his breathing has become considerably calmer, he has stopped gasping and he is now behaving like a normal lamb. When our vet last examined Fluffy Puzzle he said that his heart sounded no worse and was, possibly, even slightly better. We certainly have our fingers crossed that the condition may continue to right itself as he grows older, but we really can't take anything for granted.

With the spring upon us, all three lambs have started to spend their days

### Newsbleat

The late winter and early spring months proved to be extremely harsh at Fleecehaven. Initially it was exceptionally wet and then, just as we thought the worst of the weather was behind us, we experienced two weeks of unprecedented snow coupled with high winds, which resulted in significant drifting. For nearly a week Fleecehaven was cut off with the roads in and out blocked by drifts which, in places, needed to be cleared by tractors

in the garden with access to our animal ark for shelter. However, they all continue to come into the house at night and still enjoy having three bottle feeds of milk a day. We



Milk Time!

are hoping that within the next few weeks they will start to venture out into the fields and that they might choose to stay in our animal ark over night. Recently we have left the door to the utility room open at night to try and prepare them for moving outside but, as of yet, they are not showing any great enthusiasm for this! Valentine though is beginning to realise that having lamby friends is not such a bad thing and is slowly bonding with Frosty and Fluffy Puzzle.

All we now hope is that Fluffy Puzzle continues to cope well with his heart

and snow ploughs. Although pretty, the snow was really quite unpleasant and the sheep rather sensibly decided not to go out in it! By the time they did venture out, it had all but disap-



condition and that all three lambs lead a happy, care-free life at Fleecehaven where they will know nothing but love, cuddles and treats!

Inevitably the cold weather resulted in the sheep munching their way through even more hay than usual and, in a four month period, we took delivery of over 500 bales of hay! Our use of straw was also greater than usual, with nearly 200 bales being brought in to supplement those that we had already bought straight off the field in the autumn. It certainly made for a hard few months and Emma seemed to be constantly ferrying bales of hay up from the red barn on her quad bike. The

by the gate to return with her bike piled high.

They also relished the hay and straw deliveries, seeing this as an even larger munching opportunity!!

Early in the spring, the flock needed drenching with Flukiver. This protects them against liver fluke, a potentially fatal parasitic disease. Periodically, alongside drenching, we weigh the sheep to ensure that the dosage we administer to them is correct. This is always quite a slow process, especially as some of the sheep are a little shy when it comes to stepping onto the



Meals on Wheels



The great sheep weigh in

sheep seemed to particularly enjoy having their very own ‘meals on wheels’ service and would wait for her

scales. However, it is an important part of our sheep husbandry and, with a little coaxing (or bribery with a biscuit or two), and some additional assistance from Henry, the job was successfully finished.

As always, a number of the Fleecehaven flock required veterinary treatment over the spring months. Percy received treatment for a sore on his brisket which is not dissimilar to that of Alfie’s. After a month of antibiotics and daily dressing of the wound it is, thankfully, much improved. However as with Alfie, it is now likely to be an on-going problem.



The sheep assisting as Emma unloads one of numerous hay and straw deliveries



## Forthcoming Fundraising Events

27th & 28th October, **VegfestUK London**, Olympia London, 10am - 6pm (Sat) & 10am - 5pm (Sun)

24th November, **Animal Aid's Christmas Without Cruelty Festival**, Exeter Corn Exchange, 10am - 4.30pm

9th December, **Animal Aid's Christmas Fayre**, Kensington Town Hall, 10am - 4.30pm

23rd & 24th March 2019, **VegfestUK Brighton**, The Brighton Centre, further details to follow

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

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## Dearly Missed

Goodbyes are always heart-breaking and none more so than the incredibly sad loss, following short illnesses, of two of our most treasured sheep; Murphy and Sandy. Both Murphy and Sandy had been at Fleecehaven since they were just a few days old and were very much part of our family. Murphy was our gentle giant who had a larger than life personality and made himself known to all of our visitors, ever hopeful of a biscuit or two, or ten! Sandy was equally tame and also loved meeting visitors, especially if they tickled him behind the ears or scratched his back. We know that they both enjoyed a wonderful life at Fleecehaven and experienced the love and care that all animals should receive, but this provides little solace at the moment for the emptiness that we feel following their passing. Fleecehaven just doesn't feel the same without them and we know that they will both be greatly missed by our visitors too.

*"Like a bird singing in the rain, let grateful memories survive in time of sorrow."*

*- Robert Louis Stevenson*



Murphy, Aged 15



Sandy, Aged 12