

## Lambing Diary : November 2016

### Day One

Excitedly I jumped out of bed raring to see the animals. After getting dressed I raced out of the door and sped to Pet's Corner. The animals all seemed to be hungry, so me and Kevin fed the pigs, then the goats, followed by the guinea pigs and pheasants, and finally the sheep. Then I meandered to the lambing shed.

After entering the lambing barn, a sense of cosiness flooded through me, seeing the lambs nestled in their fluffy mother's coats. The action was just about to kick off!

Five minutes past and all the ewes seemed calm, however it wasn't long before I was needed to help a struggling ewe. I helped lamb the ewe and the twin lambs seemed healthy. After the ewe had bonded with the lambs I carried them to a pen. By carrying the lambs slowly the ewe followed along willingly.



After refreshing my memory of how to lamb I was put to work. I lambed about seven ewes in three hours. Not counting the ones that lambed naturally.

When all seemed to have gone quiet we moved some older lambs, those that were 24 hours old, dry, strong and healthy, into the trailer to go into a bigger pen with other sheep. The lambs were heavy and it was made more difficult because they wriggled.

After moving the sheep, four more lambs were born. One ewe was easy to lamb but the other ewe was more difficult. The lamb only had one foot and a head forward, they should come with two feet and a head. So I had to carefully find the other leg and pull it forward so the lamb is in a natural position and can be born.

All this was a morning's work! We went out for Sunday lunch and then we went to Tintagel and I caught up with my friend, Mia.



I arrived back in the lambing shed, my new home it seemed, at 3pm. When I arrived Rob put me to work feeding the orphan lambs. I fed the sheep and gave them fresh water and I also check the lambs - an excuse for a cuddle.

I was just checking the single lambs when my mum spotted something strange. One of the ewes was lambing but there was only a head showing but no legs. We had the hard task of finding and bringing both legs forward. After this the lamb was delivered without harm.

I did one last check of the single lambs before going home for tea.

Although I'd had a busy and tiring day I decided that I definitely wanted to be a shepherd.





## Day Two



I arrived at the lambing barn at 8am. Waiting to be lambd were two double ewes (ewes that are expected twins) which I lambd. Then I moved them into a cubicle. The lambs are sticky and wriggly but in the cubicle the mother cleans them and they dry out. The lambs are put in a cubicle with their mother so that they have a chance to bond. This is so when they go out in the fields they know which ewe is their mother.

Once they nicely settled I helped Rob to move 30 ewes into the top shed. They had to go into another barn because the weather was too wet and cold for them to go into the field.

I helped Oliver lamb a single ewe but first we had to catch it, which wasn't easy. The lamb came out normally without problem.

After a short lunch break I filled up the water buckets and fed all the sheep. The feed trolley was extremely heavy so my arms ached after pushing it up and down. After doing these jobs I lambd two more ewes before tea.

I was so tired I collapsed in bed straight after tea.

## Day Three

Although I was tired I still wanted to be at the lambing barn as early as possible so I dragged myself out of bed. When I arrived two twin ewes were ready to be taken into cubicles with their lambs. Once they were in the cubicles my job was to give the lambs medicine and put iodine on their belly buttons. The iodine helps to make sure the lambs don't get an infection - lambs can get something called joint ill that is when an infection gets into their bodies through the umbilical cord and it settles on a joint causing the joint to swell up and be painful.

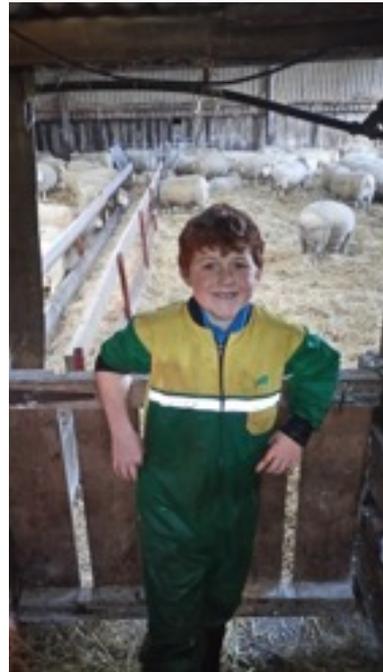


Today was the day that a student called Ria arrived. Ria wants to be a vet and was doing work experience. Within ten seconds of being in the lambing shed she was able to lamb a ewe! This was a new experience for her as she had never done it before.

Together, me and Ria, spent the afternoon doing all the usual jobs including; moving lambs, filling water buckets, feeding the sheep and checking the ewes. Just before the day was over there were two ewes lambing at the same time so I did one and Ria did the other.

That evening Ria came for tea with us and we played Uno and chatted until late.

## Day Four



Today was a quieter day, the ewes weren't lambing as fast. This gave us chance to turn some of the lambs and ewes out into fields because the weather was better.

We filled the trailer with sheep then set off in the tractor to the fields. Being in the tractor was fun as we were so high up and we could see for miles. The tractor ride was bumpy, especially in the fields. We went to different and different farms to drop off the ewes and lambs, it was nice to see them being able to enjoy themselves on the grass.

When we returned we did all the usual jobs and then it was time for tea and bed.

## Day Five

Today a photographer came to take pictures of the lambs for the national and local papers. It was a fun morning as I got to cuddle the orphan lambs and they kept running off and trying to escape. It was chaos!





In the afternoon there was lots of excitement too because the rams had escaped and were in the children's play area! We had the job of shepherding them back into the right field. Luckily this didn't take long as Dan, the sheepdog, did most of the work.

After the rams were sorted out we then had to ring the tails of the lambs. I was allowed to ring their tails with Rob's help. This involves putting a rubber band over their tail so that it makes it fall off. This is done to prevent flies laying eggs on their tails which happens when they are left long.

After feeding the orphan lambs and having a quick check I went home for tea. In the evening I went swimming with my dad.

## Day Six



In the morning I did all the usual jobs and made sure all the lambs were ok. Lambing seemed to have slowed down now and I was only needed to help with two lambings.

Overnight quads had been born - it's unusual for a ewe to have four lambs. Seeing as they were so small they were moved under a heat lamp to keep them warm. One of the lambs had to be taken away from its mother and given to another ewe which only had one lamb. Ewe's only have two teats so struggle to feed four lambs, some ewes have enough milk to feed three lambs but most can only take two lambs.

In the afternoon I went horse riding over Bodmin Moor for two hours on a horse named Freckles. Freckles was found as a foal that had been abandoned on the moors. I love riding over Bodmin Moor because it is off road, I can ride through streams and I can see the herds of wild ponies as well as all the sheep and cows.

When I got back to the farm I went with Rob and Ria to check the sheep out in the fields. We went on the golf buggy.

I was upset that it was my last afternoon in the lambing barn. I really didn't want to have to go home.

