

The Midsomer Norton, Radstock and District Journal Thursday, 23rd September 2010

Local farm promotes sensory links with the natural world



A resident from Fosse House Nursing Home bottle feeds one of Church Farm's Shetland sheep.

Seven residents from Fosse House Nursing Home, Stratton-on-the-Fosse, visited their local farm on Wednesday, 15th September, courtesy of farmers, Jeremy and Sue Padfield.

Church Farm has linked up with the Sensory Trust and LEAF (Linking Environment And Farming) as part of their 'Let Nature Feed Your Senses' project which aims to connect disengaged groups and individuals with the natural world through sensory learning activities based around food production and farming.

In this case, it helped elderly residents to reconnect with the natural world and for some, to reminisce about their farming memories and backgrounds, as well as being an afternoon out for all to enjoy.

This is not the first group that have visited the farm. The couple hold Open Farm Sundays once a year, where people can visit and find out more.

They also host visits for people eligible through the project – anyone over sixty-five, anyone with a physical or mental disability, or for people living in deprived areas.

The visits change with the farming seasons – in June, the farm tour involved a visit to the allotments, smelling sweet peas and looking at the vegetables.

The September trip involved seeing the grain that had been harvested, watching a wool-spinning demonstration and bottle feeding the Shetland sheep.

The residents were then able to have a go at making a corn dolly, with the afternoon rounded off with a cup of tea and a scone.

The project is funded by Access to Nature, an open grants programme run by Natural England with funding from Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme.

For more information on the project and to find a farm participating near you, log on to: www.letnaturefeedyoursenses.org