

Farmyard projects benefit youngsters

By Tom Johannsen

Children from deprived areas have been connecting with the countryside by visiting a north Shropshire farm as part of a national project.

Park Hill Farm, near Hales, Market Drayton, is one of the 12 host sites in the West Midlands for the Let Nature Feed Your Senses project. Patsy Pimlott, who runs the farm with husband John, has recently hosted two groups from deprived areas, and swapped ideas with other farmers planning visits for the disabled and elderly.

She said: "The health benefits of being out in the fresh air are well documented, and yet many people find it difficult to gain access to the countryside because of age, disability or social circumstances.

"Let Nature Feed Your Senses visits set out to change that.

"We hosted the regional event for other farmers to share our ideas, and to hear of other ways of improving."

SHROPSHIRE STAR THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2011

Experiences

The visits are designed to give people who would otherwise have difficulty visiting the countryside a chance to enjoy feeding animals, spreading hay, exploring woodlands and hedgerows.

Visitors have also had the chance to watch some of the day-to-day tasks behind producing the food they eat.

Mrs Pimlott added: "The first two groups who came to the farm were great fun.

"About 40 children from the West Midlands, who had never seen a cow or a green field before, enjoyed feeding the lambs, stroking the piglets and jumping in muddy puddles, all of which were new experiences, and their excitement was infectious.

"Our visit for Asian and Afro Caribbean families who care for dependent relatives, in particular the ladies and siblings of those families, was fantastic, and a two-way learning curve.

"Many had farms back in Pakistan and had a great interest in the countryside."

To find out how to arrange a farm or nature reserve near you, visit www.letnaturefeedyour senses.org or contact Patsy Pimlott by logging on to www.parkhillfarm.co.uk