

Ash interview

Right, we're just going to walk up to the tack shed and I'm going to show you what we throw it in.

Do you know how big these bales are? Because they look quite big, they look quite heavy.

No I don't know how heavy they are, we just come down for them. I'll take you to show you the type of bag we use. So when we feed Pearl and Paddy and the goats, we take a hay bag

Do you use a wheelbarrow?

Sometimes a wheelbarrow and sometimes we use a bag and I think there might be a bag in there. This is the guinea pigs. We sometimes use a bin bag and... petting area... and we'll be using a bin bag. And this is Flower, that's Ginger and she's a guinea pig and we've got other guinea pigs in there and we got Cookie –Cookie's over there. The rats, Coco bean and this is Cookie.

And Cookie is?

The rabbit.

The rabbit. How many rabbit have you got?

We've got five. We've got Woody, we've got Cookie, we've got Poppy, Muffin and Olive. Yeah, so... and they're little – they are, they're little angels. Out here we've got Woody.

And Woody is what? What's Woody?

Woody is a rabbit. So, so this is Woody and that's Pearl and Paddy.

Pearl and Paddy- and they are goats aren't they?

Yeah.

And they're having a bit of a fight at the moment aren't they?

Yeah.

Butting heads.

They always, they always do it because you know when you give one attention, you've got to... right I'll show you the...

You've got to share the attention, is that what it is?

Yeah.

Pet one and pet the other?

Yeah they've got to share our attention. That's Deano.

Deano is...

The goat.

The goat.

So you've got Deano the goat and I'll show you the other four rabbits.

Amazing.

Five rabbits, sorry.

Five rabbits. There is a lot to remember isn't there? You've got a really good memory.

Now, that's what you call a bag we carry the hay in.

Right so they're kind of like building bags, aren't they?

Yeah and that's where we get the stuff to clean the rabbits out.

That sawdust?

Yeah and there's more for you to see. So Deano is going to be fourteen in February. We've got goats in here. Right, so you've got Olive, sorry that's Poppy and next door is Olive.

So how come some are in the petting place and some are out here?

Because I think that's the way we've put them and that's Olive.... But, we did have two but one of them... I'm not going to say in front of the young one but ... you can –

I get it. I get you.

And you've got Muffin there.

Muffin?

Yeah.

And who's this?

I don't know. The sheep, that's where we clean them out. So you've got Deano there who's going to be fourteen in February and you've got the two girls.

How long have you been working here?

11 years.

Wow, so where we going now?

We're going to see the baby calves and then we going to the dolly sheep. This is Roddy's cage.

This is Roddy's cage?

Yeah.

When we say cage, it's like a lovely field, isn't it? But it is fenced off and in the middle there is a punch bag. Why does Roddy have a punch bag?

Right, I'll tell you, I'll tell you a funny story as we're walking up. Because he butts.

What does he butt?

He sometimes butts, that's why he's got the punch bag.

So does he like to butt the punch bag?

Yeah.

Does he run at it?

Yeah, so he doesn't butt the gate.

Ah I see, he's got something to take his anger out on?

Yeah. This is the dolly sheep. You come to say hello?

The dolly sheep look quite different, don't they?

Yeah.

I mean generally they look the same, but their faces look quite different, don't they? They look quite human, but with hair all over their face.

Yeah and there are our two new additions.

And who are these? Have they got names yet?

We let the visitors, we let the kids pick. Yeah.

They haven't picked them yet then no?

I'll find out the names for you for next week.

Okay and what are these? Are they calves?

Yeah and there's Roddy.

Oh, is this Roddy? This is the infamous Roddy. So, do you go near Roddy?

No.

No?

None of us.

Oh so he's got a punch bag there as well?

Yeah.

He's got a punch bag everywhere. Everywhere he lives he's got a punch bag to throw a little punch.

Only the staff.

The staff go in with him and clean him out and give him his food?

We're all right with the staff but not....

Not on your own?

No, not on our own.

He looks really nice though. He looks like he wouldn't do that to you. In fact, I think you were telling me a funny story, can you recall the story you were telling me about Ange? What happened with Ange because Ange is quite small isn't she? She's not really tall, so what happened to her?

He ran into her leg.

And did she fall over?

No.

No? Oh right, I thought she might have been butted over.

No, but he is a little terror. So, what did you think of your tour Kris?

I absolutely loved it and it's really nice to hear your thoughts about it, it really is, because you've got a lot of experience on the farm as you were saying - 11 years on the farm so you know all about the actual animals but the individual animals as well which I find interesting. You know that some of the goats need to be petted together otherwise they'll get jealous. You know that Roddy - don't go with Roddy because he'll butt you. You know... what are your other goats called?

There's Pearl, Paddy, Deano who's going to be fourteen in February.

Yeah you know all these. So when you first came here, Deano would have been...

He wasn't born then.

He wasn't born then? But if he's fourteen and you've been coming here since 11... so he would have been born but he would have been small, wouldn't he?

Yeah. His dad was a little menace.

Was he? What was his dad's name?

Chino.

Chino? Where do these names come from? They're brilliant.

Chino... he was good.

Acorn Farm Animals

Ash – Kathy

Hi, my name is Kathy and I'm a Saddleback sow here at Acorn Farm. I was born in July 2016. My favourite food is anything that I can find, but please don't feed me. I've had three lots of piglets since I have been at Acorn Farm. I love talking to visitors, but please don't stroke me. I really enjoy lying in mud and puddles.

Ash – Ron

Hi, my name is Ron and I am a Tamworth pig. I was born in April 2016. I love to eat fruit, eggs, veg and anything I can find. Please don't feed me but I am very big although I can look scary I can be friendly, however please don't stroke me. I love rolling in mud and getting dirty to cool myself down. I really enjoy being sprayed with the hose when it's hot.

Ash – William

Hi, my name is William. I am the male horse here at Acorn Farm. I have a very very deep neigh. I will call across the farm every morning. I am friendly, however I don't like my head being touched. I love Rosie and we always do everything together. I love to fall asleep stood up and I am very good at locking my legs so I don't fall over. Me and Rosie both know voice commands and are well behaved. We both love carrots, however please don't feed us these as they could upset our stomachs.

Becks – Rosie

Hi, my name is Rosie and I am female horse here at Acorn Farm. I am very friendly, however sometimes I can be bossy. My friend William lives here with me and we don't like to be separated. I like to use my front hoof to bang on the gate or the shed door to get attention and food. Me and William do our own hay nets, however we do like to share each other's. I love to sneak into arena if the doors open to roll around on the sand. I do prefer to stay outside when it's cold and wet and I tend to hide in the stables when it gets too hot. The farrier comes to trim my feet every six weeks.

Becks – Teddy

Hi, my name is Teddy. I am Pygmy goat kid here at Acorn Farm and I was born early 2019. My favourite food is grass and I will sometimes take the alfalfa pellets from you. I am the son of Gerty and I don't like to go or do anything outside. We love having visitors and talking to them. We don't like being separated from each other. I love all my toys in the pen with me and you will see climbing a lot.

Clare – Roddy

My name is Roddy and I am Acorn Farm's handsome ram. I was born January 2016. My favourite food is alfalfa pellets and I love wandering on my field.

Becky and Tufty interview

You were telling me all about this handsome guy who's on this, on this collage and his name is...

B: Ronny.

And could you describe Ronny?

B: Ronny, sometimes he can be grumpy but he can be... he rolls up in the mud here, butts the gates sometimes and he bites sometimes.

And who is this monster that you are describing, what kind of animal is this?

B: Ronny.

And what is Ronny?

B: A pig.

And Tufty, when did you first meet Ronny?

T: I see the pig when he was that high and now he's bigger now.

And now he's huge?

T: Yeah he's huge.

And is he a bit of a bully?

T: Sometimes he does.

Yeah?

T: Yeah.

B: He bullies ...

T: He bullies Cathy.

B: He bullies Cathy, doesn't he sometimes?

T: Yeah. Sometimes, yeah.

B: And the babies.

T: And their babies as well.

And who's Cathy?

B: His girlfriend.

T: Girlfriend.

And now Ronnie is a dad?

T/B: Yeah.

B: Happy with the babies.

T: Yeah.

How many babies?

B: Seven.

Whoa! And you were telling me that they squeal?

B: Yeah.

T: Yeah.

And you were telling me that not only is he a bit of a grump, but he also gets a bit dirty sometimes?

T: Yeah

B: He gets a bit dirty rolling in the-

T: -the mud. Yeah.

B: Like playing in the mud bath

T: Yeah

And how do you look after him when that happens?

B: He stinks.

You can't wash him because-

Hose pipe.

Hose him with the water.

You were giving me some advice because I was saying – oh I'd just flick him on the nose and you said "I wouldn't, he'd bite you."

(laughter)

I wouldn't, I wouldn't put your finger near him.

There's a sign saying pigs can bite you.

That's good advice, that's good advice.

B: Emily's drawn a pig.

I've drawn a very nice picture of a pig and it's here.

Can we see it Emily?

It's here, its minimal portrait though, it's based on the description and –

B: We've got birds as well.

So you also have birds and I had two stories, so one story is about a robin and that's your story. Tell me about your story?

T: I'm working all day right and – He bobs along and all day. If I'm having a hard day, he follows me around... yeah. Yeah.

So he just follows you around and makes sure you're okay?

T: Yeah.

And that sounds like a very nice relationship with a bird whereas you would describe it as something very different?

B: Yeah, I was in Southport one day and a seagull robbed my chip from me. I was there on the bench and the next minute, next minute, *shwoo* chips flying.

This is the thing with birds, they're either your friend and they're following you around or they're coming in to steal your stuff. You have to be careful with them all swooping around in the sky. Well you heard it here first from Acorn Farm.

Carla and Ange Interview.

A: So you know you talk about, you do the pigs? What do you do for them? Do you clean their sheds?

C: Yeah I clean the sheds.

A: What else do you have to do for them? Make sure that they've got...

C: Clean water

A: Yeah and now that Cathy's got a little piglet...

C: Yes.

A: ...what do we have to make sure she's got all the time? ...And we have to make sure she's got a bag of food.

C: Bag of food yeah.

A: Not just a portion once a day. Because she's got to produce milk, she's got to have access to food all the time.

C: Yes.

A: But you're good at that, aren't you?

C: Yes.

A: And what would you say were your favourites? Your favourite animals?

C: Rabbits.

A: Now you could tell Gemma exactly what you do with the rabbits, couldn't you?

C: We clean it out, the rabbit out, put straw in, put.. clean in... clear it out...

A: Put clean stuff in.

C: Yeah.

A: What do we put in it? We put hay in, don't we?

C: Hay in, yeah.

A: And what do we do with that other part on the bottom?

C: Clean it out

A: Is that sawdust?

C: Sawdust, yeah.

A: But what's the big thing that we can't do? Let the boy rabbits in with the girl-

C: Girl rabbits because sometimes he get the gate open.

A: And we all say "it wasn't me." What do we say? It was her it wasn't me. Well we've had that happen a few times, haven't we?

C: Yeah.

A: And we end up with little baby rabbits.

C: Yeah we do.

A: Do you like any of the other fun things that we do, Carla?

C: I like doing the pigs.

A: What about when we're in the petting area?

C: Petting area.

A: And we let the guinea pigs out and the rats.

C: Yes.

A: Because it's nice for us to handle them, isn't it, for the kiddies?

C: Yes.

A: Because they're used to being handled.

C: I like Smokey Joe.

A: Yeah.

Who's Smokey Joe?

C: We called after him. Someone named him...

A: Smokey Joe.

C: Smokey Joe.

A: And we've got woody, didn't we, that someone abandoned in our Woodland walk and we caught him.

C: Yes

A: So he's friendly. Woody is a rabbit, a white rabbit that we found in the Woodland walk.

C: We found him, we found him.

A: Was it in the carpark?

C: Carpark so I grabbed him.

A: So we caught him didn't we, made sure he was – we couldn't let him go near anybody else.

C: No.

A: None of the other rabbits until we found out that he didn't have any germs or anything.

C: Otherwise they'll get sick, they get really sick - poorly.

A: I think it called myxomatosis .

C: Yeah.

Clare Interview.

What are those?

Babies ones, the goats are from there and then they grow bigger.

And what are these Clare, sorry?

Chickens.

They're the chickens, the baby chicks?

Yeah the baby chicks, those ones.

Well, these look like they're a little bit bigger than babies, aren't they? So, they're kind of in between?

In between and the baby ones are next door.

Are these ones all hens or are they cockerels?

Erm, I'm not... some are cockerels I think.

I wonder if that one's a cockerel. He looks like it, doesn't he? He looks plumed up. What do you like about them Clare?

They've got fur on them.

Yeah.

And chickens change different colours .

And do you like feeding them?

Yeah I like feeding them.

And what do they do when you throw the – what do you throw actually? I assume it would be kind of like seed or pellets?

Yeah seeds or pellets, we give them to them.

And what do you do, do you throw it down and they all kind of come rushing over to you, is that what happens?

Yeah.

And do you have some of the eggs?

Yeah, they're nice eggs as well.

Are they? Are they yummy? Can you buy some from here?

Yeah there's a shop.

I'm going to buy some ... I love my eggs, I do. I like my eggs better from the farm.

Goats and Meerkats.

So, how long have you guys been coming to Acorn Farm?

T: I remember.

So, how many years?

T: A year ago.

A year? How long have you been coming, Becks?

B: Two years.

Two years. Clare?

Cl: Two years.

Two years. Carla, How long have you been coming to Acorn Farm?

Ca: I came...

T: You see all this?

Yeah.

T: All our allotment.

On the allotment?

T: All there.

Right, I see. So, why do you guys come to Acorn farm?

Cl: Because we love it.

What do you love about it though?

All: The animals.

Is it just the animals or do you like being with the other people as well?

All: People as well.

Which animals should we go to and see?

B: Erm... that one down there, that way.

Okay we'll go down that way. What is it about the animals that you like, coming to Acorn farm?

Cl: We just love holding them.

You love holding them?

T: Yeah.

And what else?

Cl: And we like cleaning them out.

You like cleaning them out? So, where we going now Becks? Who are we going to go see? Which animals? Who's this?

Cl: Teddy.

Teddy? Oh, we can hear Teddy already. So, what do you guys do with Teddy then? Do you come and muck him out?

T: Yeah, we muck him out ...

B: Fresh stuff down.

T:... and give him food.

And give him food. So, what kind of stuff does he eat?

T: Carrots.

Carrots? Veg and stuff?

B: Usually straw, in there.

Straw? Ah, okay.

B: And that's...

Who's that then?

T: Pale.

Pale?

T: Yeah.

So we've got Pale and Teddy?

All: Yeah.

Are these some of your favourite ones?

All: Yeah.

Yeah. They're pretty cute, aren't they?

T: Yeah.

What's your favourite... okay, so if I go round, Tufty, what's your favourite thing to do on Acorn Farm?

T: Pigs.

The pigs?

T: Yeah.

And what do you like doing with the pigs?

T: I love mucking out.

You love mucking them out?

T: Yeah.

So Clare, what's your favourite thing on Acorn Farm?

Cl: I love the rabbits.

You love the rabbits? And what do you like doing?

Cl: Cleaning them out.

Cleaning them out, making it nice and clean for them.

Cl: Nice and Teddy... (laugh) I mean nice and tidy!

Nice and teddy! Becks, what do you like doing on the farm?

B: Cleaning the rats.

Cleaning the rats? What about the rats do you like?

B: Like holding them.

Do you?

B: Yeah.

And what do they do? Do they go on your shoulders and stuff like that?

B: Yeah, even in my hood.

Even in your hood! Aw, do they?

B: Yeah.

They kind of burrow in there?

T: One died.

One died? Aww.

B: We've got Coco Bean and...I don't know the other one!

T: Oh, Derek.

B: Derek yeah.

Derek? Carla, what's your favourite thing to do on Acorn Farm?

Ca: I like the rabbits.

You like the rabbits, do you? And what do you like doing with the rabbits?

Ca: The rabbits, with the rabbits, we clear out.

Clear out?

Ca: Yes.

B: You hold them as well, don't you?

Ca: Yes.

What do you clear out? What are you clearing out?

Cl: The beds.

Ca: The beds, yes.

The beds?

Ca: They get a bit smelly.

So, it starts to smell of wee and poo and stuff like that and they need it clearing out, don't they?

T: Yeah.

B: Right...

Ah, these are the meerkats?

T: Originally, we had two. There were three but one died.

Aw okay.

Cl: You mean three Tufty.

T: No, one died.

Who's this one then?

All: Alexandra.

Alexandra?

Cl: Yeah... Alexandra, what you looking for?

B: She's looking for food.

So, I'm looking in this pen or whatever... what do you actually call this? Is this a pen or?

T: Er... yeah.

All: Yeah.

Yeah? So, in the pen they've got wires around the side, what's that?

T: Wires for electricity.

Electricity, and is that to sort of stop them from jumping over?

All: Yeah.

Can they jump high?

T: No, not high. One died by the way.

One died?

T: Yeah.

B: Did you get it working?

I thought you meant the meerkat! (Laughter) We tried! (Laughter)

Cl: He's gone over there. He probably heard us.

Hello... is there just one meerkat?

Cl: Yeah we had three but two died.

Aww.

T: No, one died.

B: Alexandra... hello... hello... Don't be stupid.

Cl: Don't be stupid.

Is that his bed?

All: Yeah.

And what kind of bedding does he have?

Cl: Straw.

Sawdust did you say, Clare?

Cl: No straw.

Slaw? What's slaw? I've never heard of that. What's slaw?

Cl: Straw.

Oh, straw! Sorry.

(laughter)

Sorry, ah I see, sorry Clare sorry. So, do most of the animals have straw?

All: Yeah.

T: And some of them...

B: Some of them...

T: Worms.

B: Eat worms, don't they?

Oh, do they?

B: And little crickets.

Where do you get the crickets from?

B: From the...

Cl: They buy them in.

Do they buy them in do they?

All: Yeah.

And are they dead or are they alive?

T: They're alive.

Cl: And he eats it and chicken. Dead chickens.

And dead chickens? Oh, my word. What's this? This red light here?

All: That's to keep them warm.

So that's keeping him warm?

All: Yeah.

Amazing.

B: Right, chickens.

Chicken? We're on the chicken run.