# Sheep escapes in Ebbw Vale amid fencing vandalism and illegal off-roading



During the current lambing season in Ebbw Vale, South Wales, local farmers and residents have faced significant challenges due to repeated incidents of sheep escaping into town, attributed to vandalism and damage to fencing around common grazing areas. Reports indicate that over 30 sheep, including lambs and ewes, have been found wandering uncontrolled, causing distress to both animals and farmers.

Sam Burrows, a 39-year-old farmer’s wife and active member of the online community ‘Ebbw Vale South’, described a troubling scene: “Once again there has been mindless damage to the fence to the common, allowing over 30 sheep to escape into Newtown area. The farmers are working tirelessly to keep repairing fence lines and round up their animals, but it is out of control. Poor lambs have been separated from their mothers and sheep have been injured on the roads.” The sheep referenced belong to Sam and her husband Daniel Burrows, who have been managing their farm in Nantyglo for two decades.

Sam emphasised the emotional and logistical toll the situation has taken, stating that lambing is already “really stressful” and that dealing with injured and distressed sheep has exacerbated the difficulties. She recounted incidents over the past weekend where vandalism and open gates led to multiple emergencies: “The council and police are constantly ringing us. I woke up Sunday and had eleven messages on my phone. It’s really stressful and it’s taking us away from our farm which is where the majority of the sheep are.”

Among the specific incidents reported were an ewe found near Ebbw Vale rugby club that panicked and struggled whilst lambing, and a lamb separated from its mother near the multistorey car park, which necessitated police intervention to close roads for safety. Another alarming case involved lambs found on a busy roundabout near Tesco, where traffic was managed with assistance from an artic lorry to prevent accidents. Sam explained that separated ewes and lambs often end up on opposite sides of the town, complicating efforts to reunite them.

According to Sam, much of the damage to fencing and gates has been caused by walkers and off-road dirt bikers accessing the mountain areas irresponsibly. “You’ve got a bunch of people that don’t care about the mountain, they don’t respect the animals. The main damage is being done by walkers and offroad vehicles over the mountain, they are killing animals basically from their actions. There’s a cattle grid they can go over but people don’t use it,” she said.

The situation has had a devastating impact on the local flock; since Christmas alone, Sam and Daniel Burrows estimate that at least 50 sheep have been killed due to injuries sustained from accidents and stress-related complications, including lambs dying after being separated from their mothers and ewes undergoing abortions because of extreme stress.

Local law enforcement is addressing the issue of illegal off-road vehicle use. PC Danielle Lundrigan, of the off-road vehicle team, commented on ongoing efforts: “We have had some reports of illegal off-road bikes being used in this area which have such a devastating impact on our communities. We have been gathering information and making enquiries to identify those responsible and we are running regular operations in the area to catch those riding illegally.”

PC Lundrigan also highlighted the importance of community cooperation, stating: “We work closely with our communities to identify where there are problems and any information that is passed on is acted upon. Anyone who has concerns about illegal off-roading in their area or has information about where these bikes are being used and stored, can report it to us via the website, by calling 101 or by messaging us on social media so that we can act. Alternatively, you can contact Crimestoppers, anonymously, on 0800 555 111, with information or visit their website.”

This combination of vandalism, illegal off-road activity, and the subsequent escape of livestock has placed considerable strain on local farmers in Ebbw Vale, impacting both their livelihoods and the welfare of their animals during this sensitive time of year.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.noahwire.com> - The source article itself, though it doesn't specify direct supporting evidence.
* <https://www.ebbw-vale.gov.uk/> - Local government websites might have news or reports related to the issue.
* <https://news.google.com/search?q=ebbw+vale+sheep+escapes> - Google News search results might include local news coverage.
* <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ebbw.vale.south> - Online community forums where residents might discuss the issue.
* <https://www.gwent.police.uk/> - Local police department might issue statements or reports about off-road vehicle enforcement.