

# NETWORK NEWS

The newsletter of the National Farm Attractions Network



## Warm welcome at Cantref Open Day

THE first of three NFAN Open Days planned for 2012 took place in May, with operator and trade members enjoying a visit to Cantref Adventure Farm and Riding Centre in the Brecon Beacons hosted by Colin and Gwen Evans, on a perfect, sunny spring day.

The multi-award winning venue continues to operate as a farm along with a riding centre, which has been running for over 40 years. The decision to diversify into an educational farm attraction came in 2003, since when Cantref has developed considerably with a host of indoor and outdoor attractions and bunkhouse accommodation.

The NFAN Open Day began with a welcome by Colin Evans to approximately 50 NFAN members, following which attendees split into two groups for a tour of the venue. A number of attractions were sampled during the morning, including the tractor trailer ride, the Swamp ride and Europe's longest sledge ride, while members were also able to view the many animal exhibits, the stage area, the indoor play area and the new shop and café areas

*Continued on Page 4*

## NFAN Awards 2012 - send your entries in now!

DO you have something to shout about? Do you know a member of staff or volunteer who has gone 'above and beyond' what is expected of them and deserves recognition, or do you want to show your appreciation for a trade member?

There is a new format for the annual NFAN awards in 2012, with six brand new categories. You can enter one, two or all of them.

- 1) Unsung Hero Award
- 2) Best F&B
- 3) Winning websites
- 4) Excellent customer service
- 5) Best in education
- 6) Golden Supplier Award
- 7) Farm Attraction of the Year



Further information is available on the NFAN website [www.farmattractions.net](http://www.farmattractions.net)

## DIARY DATES

### October 3rd

Open Day, Odds Farm Park, Beaconsfield  
Great for networking and sharing ideas!  
To book, simply download a booking form from [www.farmattractions.net](http://www.farmattractions.net)

### February 5th and 6th, 2013

Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition

Watch out for more information soon on [www.farmattractions.net](http://www.farmattractions.net)

## Walby Farm Park hosts Code of Practice seminar

*By Katie Milbourn*

WE were delighted to be asked to host the free Code of Practice seminar in the north west for farmers who offer educational visits on their farms.

As Neil has said in the past, it isn't a natural move for farmers to invite the HSE and a group of competitors onto their farm but having hosted 60 environmental health officers at our farm last autumn it didn't seem quite as intimidating!

After a brief introduction from Neil, David Coackley, HM Principal Inspector of Health and Safety, took us through the Code of Practice on Preventing or Controlling Ill Health from Animal Contact at Visitor Attractions, which replaces the current HSE guidance AIS 23. The morning and afternoon sessions were followed by a farm tour which looked at examples of good practice and provided opportunity for further discussion.

To us the day represented a chance to look again at the practices we keep and to discuss/share ideas and thought processes with other open farm operators. It's easy to think you're facing these challenges alone sometimes, but great to have some practical input from the well-informed!

Many thanks to David Coackley and the HSE for their huge input to this and also to Janet Hickinbottom and FACE who orchestrated the bookings, etc.



### Your questions answered

*In this new feature we put your questions to all NFAN members.*

**Q** Please could you ask attractions what the legal licence requirement is for someone driving a tractor and trailer ride for customers at a farm park, as we are about to launch this attraction?  
**Fi Siddall, Easton Farm Park, Suffolk**

**A** We have had varying opinions on this one. We have listened to what our insurer has said in the finish - Marsh and Co. Basically, as they are not going on the road, anyone with a full driving licence can do it - but we have put them on a tractor and trailer course. It's not a LANTRA course, but one carried out by a training company for use at our farm only, i.e. if the employee leaves then the qualification wouldn't count elsewhere as the certificate is specifically for here.

We also made sure that the people we asked to do it were stable and mature - no furry dice in the tractor windscreen!! Hope this helps.

**Tom Robinson, National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffordshire**

**A** Please find below the following link which will provide some guidance. Our personal policy is that all tractor drivers should also hold a UK driving licence and receive suitable training.  
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/ais36.pdf>  
**Mike Rooney, William Scott Abbott Trust, Lincolnshire**

*Please note that any answers to questions are provided for guidance only and are not officially endorsed by the NFAN. If in doubt, members should seek professional advice on any matter they have concerns about.*

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ARE you looking for new ways to attract school visitors? Would you like to refresh the activities you offer?

Many farmers who host visits from school children are keen to learn about new ideas they could offer on their premises. As a result, FACE organises a host of seminars covering a wide range of topics such as how to make links to subjects, including Hands on History, and others which introduce practical activities like Creative Arts. For example, FACE is currently offering:

- **Maths on the Farm.** Meet Dr Maths who will take you through fun ways of discovering that maths is all around us. He will be taking a tour of the farm and along the way will demonstrate how to create a simple maths trail for use with visitors
- **Rural Crafts.** Have a go at lots of traditional crafts such as rag rugging, felt making and corn dolly making that you can easily implement on your premises. Find out how to use these activities on the farm to enhance the programme you offer.
- **Let's Cook on the Farm.** There is great potential in offering on-farm cooking as part of a visit This seminar is an opportunity to learn more from an expert chef about developing and delivering practical cookery sessions. The day will include demonstrations, practical bread making and preparing soups with children.

You can find out more about FACE seminars and how to book at <http://www.face-online.org.uk/face-seminars>

So why not get involved and extend the activities you offer?



## Farmer Palmers recognised for excellence

FARMER Palmer's Farm Park in Dorset "is very excited" about its TripAdvisor Certificate of Excellence for 2012, which arrived in the post on June 23rd as a total surprise.

Commenting on the award, Sandra Palmer-Snellin said: "Farmer Palmer's worked with some 3<sup>rd</sup> year students from Bournemouth University last winter to improve our knowledge on the value of the latest social media tools and of our social media responses. Our TripAdvisor reviews have been mixed, but overall in June 2012 - Excellent 32, Very Good 18, Average 4 and Terrible 2! (You can't please all of the people all of the time).

"I learnt the importance of replying to the less favourable reviews in a professional, factual manner so the public can make their own judgement and the person concerned can have a reply/feedback survey. We have also replied to some favourable reviews with a 'Thank You.' This has given us a TripAdvisor rating of 4.5 and the Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence for the Year 2012. Well done to everyone!"

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FUN E-mail: [info@worldofrides.com](mailto:info@worldofrides.com) FUN Web: [www.worldofrides.com](http://www.worldofrides.com)

Est. 1969



31-33 Victoria Street,  
Kettering, Northants.,  
NN16 0BU.

Tel. 01536 513397  
www.farmattractions.net

## NFAN committee

President  
**The Rt Rev John Oliver**

Chairman  
**Mr. Matthew Heast**  
**Mead Open Farm**  
Tel. 01525 852954

Treasurer  
**Mr. Barry Davies**  
**Davies & Co.**  
Tel. 01536 524808

**Mr. Andrew Wolfe**  
**Willows Farm Park**  
Tel. 01727 822106

**Mr. Neil Milbourn**  
**Walby Farm Park**  
01228 573056

**Mrs. Georgina Watson**  
**Farming World**  
Tel. 01227 751144

**Mr. Ray Hipkin**  
**Health & Safety**  
**Practitioner**  
Tel. 01844 353407

**Mr. Steve Vinden**  
**Odds Farm Park**  
Tel. 07841 562559

**Mr. Richard Waring**  
**Rand Farm Park**  
Tel. 01673 858904

**Mrs. Louise Possegger**  
**Springbarn Farm Park**  
Tel. 07711 069555

*All general inquiries should be directed to the NFAN office using the contact details above.*

*Continued from Page 1*

which were opened for the 2012 season. Members were particularly impressed with the new café area which offers spectacular views over the mountains and the farm park itself.

The riding centre and bunk-house were also viewed by members before lunch, after which the group gathered for a presentation by Colin and Gwen on how they took Cantref from farm to adventure farm and the challenges this move entailed, how the venue has been developed and a brief glimpse at what the future might hold. Tea and a further networking opportunity brought an enjoyable, and very sunny, day to a close.



## Cantref Open Day

## NFAN Volunteer Regional Representatives

**North East**  
Ann Darlington, Hall Hill Farm, Lanchester, County Durham, DH7 0TA  
Email: [ann@hallhillfarm.co.uk](mailto:ann@hallhillfarm.co.uk)  
Tel. 01388 731333

**North West**  
Neil Milbourn, Walby Farm Park, Walby Grange, Crosby on Eden, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA6 4QL  
Email: [neil@walbyfarmpark.co.uk](mailto:neil@walbyfarmpark.co.uk)  
Tel. 01228 573056

**West Midlands**  
Frank Cartwright, Ray's Farm Country Matters, Billingsley, Bridgnorth, Shropshire, WV16 6PF  
Email: [frank@raysfarm.com](mailto:frank@raysfarm.com)  
Tel. 01299 841255

**South East**  
Georgina Watson, Farming World, Nash Court, Boughton, Faversham, Kent, ME13 9SW  
Email: [info@farming-world.co.uk](mailto:info@farming-world.co.uk)  
Tel. 01227 751144  
Liz Strain, Hand Made Places. Email: [liz.strain@handmadeplaces.co.uk](mailto:liz.strain@handmadeplaces.co.uk)

**South West**  
Sandra Palmer-Snellin, Farmer Palmer's Farm Park, Wareham Road, Organford, Poole, BH16 6EU  
Email: [info@farmerpalmers.co.uk](mailto:info@farmerpalmers.co.uk)  
Tel: 01202 622022

**Scotland**  
Gillian Alexander, Heads of Ayr Farm Park, Alloway by Ayr, KA7 4LD, Scotland  
Email: [gillzi1@aol.com](mailto:gillzi1@aol.com) or [info@headsofayrfarmpark.co.uk](mailto:info@headsofayrfarmpark.co.uk)  
Tel. 01292 441210

### Helplines - free advice for NFAN members

PLEASE remember that our experts earn their livings through the expertise you are using. Please limit your free calls to one per annum. Thereafter, the experts can advise you further, subject to their terms of business. You will find them all prepared to offer special rates for NFAN members.

### Planning Legislation and Business Rates

Barry Davies, Davies & Co. (Chartered Surveyors)  
Tel. 01536 524808 Fax. 01536 415095  
Email: [info@daviesandco.co.uk](mailto:info@daviesandco.co.uk) Website: [www.daviesandco.co.uk](http://www.daviesandco.co.uk)  
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### Health & Safety/Environmental Health Guidance

Ray Hipkin, Health & Safety Practitioner, 3 Park Lane, Kingston Blount, Oxfordshire, OX39 4SL. Tel. (01844) 353407. Email: [randkhipkin@btinternet.com](mailto:randkhipkin@btinternet.com)  
[www.rayhipkin.co.uk](http://www.rayhipkin.co.uk)