NETWORK NEWS

The newsletter of the National Farm Attractions Network

National Farm Attractions Network

Issue 72 Winter 2018

Conference Countdown

We're heading to The International Centre, Telford for this year's key industry event. The NFAN Conference and Trade Show takes place from 30th January to 1st February and exhibition stands and delegate tickets are selling fast.

Last year's Conference and Trade Show was a sell-out with over 60 exhibitors and nearly 200 owners and senior managers from UK farm attractions attending. We have kept the same format this year but moved to an even bigger venue so 2018 is set to be the biggest yet!

The main theme of this year's conference is Adding Value with some great speakers lined up covering topics including; cost effective ideas for adding value, developing your team, the visitor experience, theatre shows, festivals and events.

Tuesday 30th January, 12pm to 4pm
Visit to The Hoo Farm
Join the Dorrell family for a tour of the farm park and wildlife centre. Arrive at a time to suit you. The 1hr tour departs at regular intervals, last tour at 3pm. Refreshments included.

Tue 30th January, 2pm to 5pm
Visit to The British Ironworks Centre
A unique visitor destination, quirky indoor showroom, animal sculpture trail, blacksmith and silversmith demonstrations and more. Arrive at a time to suit you, refreshments served at 4pm, presentation from the owners at 4.30pm.

Wed 31st January, 10.00am to 3pm
Open Day at Park Hall - The Countryside Experience
As well as the usual farm animals, indoor and outdoor play areas and rides, Park Hall is a favourite with schools and offers a Victorian School Room, unique WW1 trenches experience, Forest School and more.

Wed 31st January, 6pm
Drinks reception, trade exhibition and awards dinner
This is an ideal opportunity to visit the trade stands and meet with exhibitors in a relaxed atmosphere.

Book your place using the booking form at www.farmattractions.net
See page 3 for the conference programme

Trade exhibitors

Aardman Animations
Activity World
Agility Marketing
Amazing Interactives
Ark Toys
Autoculture
BERG
Booker Wholesale
Bridle Insurance
Colour Heroes
David Taylor Design
Davies & Co.
Deluxebase
Digitickets
Dofygate
Formula K
Fun Fear
Greenspan
HAGS
Haven Systems
Huck Nets
Innovative Leisure
Interfun Magazine
Jumping Pillows
Jupiter Play
Kamarin Computers
Kids Play Childcare
KOMPAN
Lappset Creative
Marsh & Co.
Marshfield Farm Ice Cream
Miniportworld
NFAN
NGF Play
Nicco Parks & Resorts
Outdoor Play People
Play Area Hygiene Services
Partners Leisure
Preseli Gifts and Souvenirs
Proludic
Rainbow Productions
Regency Purchasing
Robbie Toys
Rupert Oliver's Ideas Factory
Russell Leisure
S. Gregory & Co.
Script Media
Stephen Candy Photography
Teddy Mountain
Teddy Tastic
The Play Inspection Co.
Timberplay
Tornado International
Tractor Ted
Tyg Tickets
Unique Catering
Vennersys
Vimto out of Home
Vision XS
World of Rides

The award finalists

Congratulation to all the award finalists, the winners will be announced on 31st January.

Innovation Award.
Sponsor: Marsh & Co

Cannon Hall Farm; Fishers Adventure Farm Park; National Forest Adventure Farm; Park Hall - The Countryside Experience; Streamvale Open Farm.

Best Trade Supplier.
Sponsor: NFAN

David Taylor Design; Innovative Leisure; Outdoor Play People; Timberplay.

Best Food & Beverage.
Sponsor: Booker Wholesale

Barleylands; Chobham Adventure Farm; Churchfields Farm; Farmer Copleys; Tapnell Farm Park.

Best Digital Presence.
Sponsor: Vennersys

Cannon Hall Farm; Fishers Adventure Farm Park; Noah's Ark Zoo Farm; Pennywell; White Post Farm.

Best in Education

Cannon Hall Farm; Hall Hill Farm; Park Hall - The Countryside Experience; Thornton Hall Farm; White Post Farm; Whitehouse Farm Centre.

Day Maker Award.
Sponsor: Playscheme

AJ, 4 Kingdoms; Anthony Moore, White Post Farm; Arron Spicer, Finkley Down Farm; Jess King, Cattle Country Adventure Park; Joe Huntly, Puxton Park; Mark Wibberley, Pennywell; Roger Nicholson, Cannon Hall Farm

Under 75k visitors

Farm Attraction of the Year.
Sponsor: David Taylor Design.

Cantref Adventure Farm; Hall Hill Farm; Tapnell Farm Park; The Pink Pig.

Over 75k visitors

Farm Attraction of the Year.
Sponsor: Agility Marketing.

Farmer Ted's; Fishers Adventure Farm Park; Hobbledown; Whitehouse Farm Centre; Willows Activity Farm; York Maze

With thanks to our Conference Gold Sponsors:

s.gregory | Marsh & Co independent insurance brokers | DAVIES & CO. RICS CHARTERED SURVEYORS

Rise of the Unicorns

Mythical unicorns are becoming a reality in the world of farm attractions, according to recent posts on the NFAN Facebook page. Popular throughout the past couple of years with young children and adults alike, we've seen unicorns in a range of children's toys, emojis, bedding, and books. And in 2018 some farm parks including Marsh Farm in Essex and Avon Valley in Bristol are hosting Magical Unicorn Weekends, where visitors can meet a "unicorn", make a unicorn teddy and enjoy the latest trend.

Planning update - change of use of agricultural buildings

The introduction of a "Flexible Use" 'Class R' in the General Permitted Development Order (GDPO) 2015 gives farm attractions the opportunity to convert agricultural buildings into commercial premises such as shops, restaurants, cafes, and leisure facilities.

The agricultural building must have been in 'agricultural use' on 3rd July 2012. Prior approval procedure from the local planning authority is only required if the building area size is between 150 to 500 sqm. For those buildings less than 150 sqm no prior approval is required and you simply have to notify the local planning authority that you are carrying out the Change of Use and any works.

For more detailed information and further advice, you can contact Davies & Co on **01536 524808** or **info@daviesandco.co.uk**.

Conference Day Programme

8:30am	Registration: Tea/coffee and pastries. A chance to visit the Trade Exhibition
9:30am	Welcome, NFAN review & Code of Practice update, NFAN Chairman, **Colin Evans**
9:50am	Business Rates update, **Barry Davies**
10:00am	Nine key elements of high performing teams – lessons from elite sports, **Tim Thurston**, TeamKAI
10:25am	Theme Parks and Attractions, a wider industry perspective, **Paul Kelly**, BALPPA
10:45am	Tea/coffee break and Trade Exhibition
11:40am	Cost effective ideas to add value, **Andrew Wolfe**
12 Noon	Added Value case study presentations from two NFAN members
12.30pm	Q&A from lunchtime session
12:40pm	NFAN AGM
12:50pm	Networking lunch and chance to visit the Trade Show (closes at 2.50pm)
2:50pm	Adding value through theatre, **Toni Lilley** Farm Park/Scream Park Entertainments
3:10pm	Hosting a festival on your farm **Beth Heath**, Shropshire Festivals
3:30pm	The Experience Business, **James Sinclair**, The Entrepreneurs Network and Marsh Farm
3:50pm	Closing remarks – NFAN Chairman, **Colin Evans**
4:00pm	Close

Cannon Hall Farm open day review

Over 150 members attended the Open Day at Cannon Hall Farm on 20th September. Many members took the opportunity to call in to Swithens Farm and The Tropical Butterfly House Wildlife & Falconry Centre on their way to Cannon Hall Farm the day before. Delegates enjoyed a fabulous dinner at Cannon Hall Farm's new White Bull restaurant, a great opportunity to experience the quality of this new catering outlet which opens for Bistro nights.

The following morning, Robert Nicholson gave a welcome presentation outlining the history of Cannon Hall Farm and the journey from a struggling farm in the 1980s to the multi award winning farm diversification business it is today.

Members split into groups for an escorted tour taking in the outdoor adventure play areas, extensive animal barns, the new Hungry Llama indoor play area, and recent additions including the meerkat enclosure and reptile house. There was an opportunity to hear more about the range of catering facilities and the large farm shop.

After lunch delegates heard presentations from different department heads covering topics including; education, HR & staff communications, catering, festivals & events, online ticketing and the power of social media marketing and Facebook Live which Cannon Hall have embraced to the full! Thanks to the Nicholson family and all the team at Cannon Hall Farm for the warm welcome and fascinating presentations.

Thanks to our Open Day sponsors Rupert Oliver's Ideas Factory and Timberplay, and networking dinner wine sponsor DigiTickets & Website Vision.

New members

Farm parks

Aldenham Country Park
Stonebridge City Farm

Trade members

Aardman Animations
Cut-Price Bookstore
HAGS
IC2 CCTV & Security Specialists
Miniportworld BV
Mosaic Marketing & Promotions
Techmat 2000 Ltd
Touch Wood Enterprises Ltd.

Christmas cheer for Farm Parks

Reports are coming in of another year of growth for Christmas events at farm parks.

The National Forest Adventure Farm launched their new North Pole Adventure; Ivor Robinson said,

"Despite a few teething problems over the first two weekends, it has been a huge success with 70% of all available slots being filled by early December."

Cannon Hall Farm has seen a 20% increase, says Robert Nicholson,

"There were less school holidays pre-Christmas this year but revenue was still up which was a great achievement. Weekend slots to see Father Christmas sold out earlier than ever."

However, 2017 hasn't been without its headaches. Heavy snow in early December across the Midlands and Wales meant some attractions were not able to open for a few days. NFAN chairman Colin Evans' Cantref Adventure Farm was one such attraction, says Colin Evans, "We lost 5 days of trading, but thankfully only one weekend day and we were able to rebook 95% of affected families.

"We were still pleased with trading overall, we were 10-15% up, but it could have been more."

NFAN Committee

Chairman Colin Evans, Cantref Adventure Farm	Tel: 07977 120533	Katie Milbourn, Walby Farm Park	Tel: 01228 573056
Vice-Chair & Treasurer Richard Powell, Park Hall	Tel: 01691 671123	Robert Nicholson, Cannon Hall Farm	Tel: 01226 790427
Barry Davies, Davies & Co	Tel: 01536 524808	Phil Pickersgill, Innovative Leisure	Tel: 07860 868104
Matthew Heast, Mead Open Farm	Tel: 01525 852954	Louise Possegger, Spring Barn Farm	Tel: 01273 488450
Sally Jackson, The Pink Pig	Tel: 01724 854082	Tom Robinson, National Forest Adventure Farm	Tel: 01283 533933
Lesley Knight, Rupert Oliver's Ideas Factory	Tel: 07762 124325	Steve Vinden, Odds Farm Park	Tel: 07841 562559

All general enquiries should be directed to the NFAN office - tel: 01904 615059, email info@farmattractions.net.

Helpline – free advice for NFAN members

As a NFAN member you are entitled to free advice from the following experts. Please limit your free calls to one per annum. 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
Email: info@daviesandco.co.uk
www.daviesandco.co.uk

Specialising in planning legislation including change of use, enforcement notices, advertising boards and business rates appeals.

Health & Safety/Environmental Health Guidance
Ray Hipkin, Health & Safety Practitioner
Tel: 01844 353407
Email: randkhipkin@btinternet.com
www.rayhipkin.co.uk

Exclusive insurance scheme for NFAN members
Steve Taylor, Marsh and Company Insurance Brokers
Tel: 0116 204 3400
Email: staylor@marshcompany.co.uk
www.marshcompany.co.uk

Providers of competitive, specialist insurance including unique cover extensions for E.coli outbreaks. We offer a site survey and full insurance needs assessment.

Catering
Chris Brown, Turpin Smale Catering Consultants
Tel: 020 7620 0011
Email: chris.brown@turpinsmale.co.uk
www.turpinsmale.co.uk

Advice on all matters catering including help with increasing sales, improving standards and making margins.

Employment and Human Resources advice and support
Judi Badenoch & Ros Hammond, Cranbrook Consulting
Tel: 01628 857771
Email: judi@cranbrookconsulting.co.uk, ros@cranbrookconsulting.co.uk
www.cranbrookconsulting.co.uk

Small Business HR Consultancy

vision
the experience specialists

Vision XS run 2 events rooted on their innovative 5 Model approach to planning visitor attractions. The events, one intermediate and one advanced course both run over 2 days. This is a unique learning experience which allows management staff to make use of Vision XS' business modelling toolbox when planning for any future visitor attractions or enhancing existing visitor operations. Both courses are aimed at those who work in a senior management team for a visitor attraction. The courses are led by visitor experience experts and architects. The courses are as follows:

25th & 26th April 2018 - Intermediate 5 model 'Walk-shop'
Each workshop session will focus on one of the 5 models and delegates will work through an exercise in small teams with 3 exciting walks through the countryside for creative thinking time. Members of the Vision XS team are on hand both days to offer their expert support and advice.

4th & 5th July 2018 - Advanced 5 Model Business Planning Workshop
Similar to the intermediate 'Walk-shop' in terms of its theme but this time with far greater depth and analysis and planning. The aim is to understand how to put each of the 5 models into practise when working on your own attraction. Important note: must have done the intermediate course.

To find out more information please contact Diana on diana@visionxs.co.uk or visit our website www.visionxs.co.uk

Independent planning consultancy providing advice for visitor attractions, ranging from new children's farm projects through to replacement facilities and expansion proposals at existing sites.

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