

NETWORK NEWS

The newsletter of the National Farm Attractions Network

Issue 61
Spring 2014



National
Farm
Attractions
Network



NFAN hails 'best conference and trade show ever'

THE National Farm Attractions Network (NFAN) held its annual conference and trade show at The Majestic Hotel in Harrogate, North Yorkshire, on February 11th and 12th, bringing together operator and trade members from around the UK.

The successful two day format of the event was continued in 2014, the first day seeing members enjoy an open day at the award-winning Cannon Hall Farm in South Yorkshire. This family run farm attracts over 250,000 visitors annually and as part of the visit, delegates were able to see the venue's new animal contact barns and viewing platforms and enjoyed a tour of the farm's individual business units.

In a change of format for the 2014 event, the evening of February 11th. saw an Awards Dinner held at the conference venue. Sponsored by The Partners Group, a wide range of awards were presented during the evening, culminating in the presentation of the NFAN Farm Attraction of the Year Award 2014 to Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park.

The main Conference and Trade Exhibition was held the following day, with the programme covering a variety of subjects and key issues relevant to the rural and countryside attractions sector.

NFAN Chairman, Matt Heast began proceedings with a welcome to attendees before introducing fellow committee Member, Andrew Wolfe who provided an insight into the activities of the NFAN committee and how it views the future of the organisation.

The day continued on a high with nine excellent presentations including a very

informative and entertaining talk from Tom Percy of York Maze, who shared the lessons he learnt at Disney for recruiting staff.

The trade exhibition this year hosted 50 companies across a wide selection of products and services, from ticketing, marketing and insurance services through soft play and children's battery operated vehicles.

"Our sixth year of sponsoring the NFAN conference was our most



successful yet," commented Rob Marsh, Group Managing Director of Gold Sponsor Marsh and Company Insurance Brokers, which operates the NFAN Insurance Scheme. The event was also supported by fellow Gold Sponsors, Davies & Co. Chartered Surveyors and toys and gift supplier S. Gregory, while other supporters included Timberplay and Agility Marketing.

Conference presentations can be downloaded from www.farmattractions.net

2014 EVENTS DIARY

NFAN events are great for sharing, learning and networking with fellow farm park operators and other members. Book online today!

8th May
Open Day
Godstone Farm, Surrey

17th and 18th June
South West Roadshow (2-day tour)
Puxton Park, Pennywell Farm,
Crealy Great Adventure Park, Darts Farm

September
Workshop - Tough at the Top
Venue TBC

6th November
Open Day
Marsh Farm, Essex

For more details and to book visit
www.farmattractions.net

Events for your diary

Hobbledown tour - 7th May

FOR NFAN members arriving the day before the Godstone Open Day, NFAN have arranged an informal tour of Hobbledown on 7th May at 2pm. Pre-booking is essential. Hobbledown opened in 2013 and brings mystery and legend to a farm park, located in Epsom (KT19 8PT).

Informal networking dinner - 7th May

In the evening of 7th May we invite you to an informal networking dinner at Lingfield Park Marriott Hotel, South Godstone, RH7 6PQ. Please book directly with the hotel. Visit www.farmattractions.net for more details.

Godstone Farm Open Day - 8th May

THE next NFAN Open Day will take place at Godstone Farm in Surrey on Thursday, 8th May.

Set just off the M25, this farm park has undergone recent development. Attendees will be able to visit the re-vamped animal barns, the new 'creature courtyard' which opened in 2013 and the latest new attraction, the brand new Dino Trail.

The full programme for the day is available on www.farmattractions.net. The visit includes a guided tour, a

Godstone Farm

Q&A session with the owners and a number of short talks, as well as welcome refreshments and lunch.

To book your place either book online or call 01536 513397.



2 day roadshow - 17th and 18th June

THE NFAN Roadshow concept will be repeated again in 2014 and this year we are visiting the attractions in the South West of England on the 17th and 18th June.

Departing by coach our first stop is in Somerset to visit Puxton Park, followed by visits to Devon's Pennywell Farm, Crealy Great Adventure Park and Darts Farm.

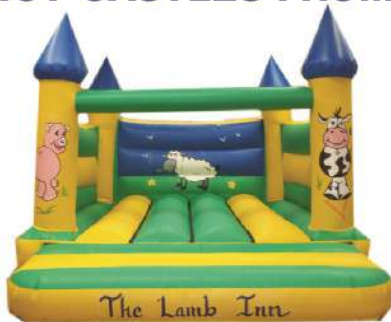
The package is currently being finalised and will include coach travel, accommodation, an evening meal and refreshments at the attractions. One huge benefit of attending is being able to network informally with other operators over 2 days.

Visit www.farmattractions.net for more details.

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Vice-Chair appointed

COMMITTEE member Colin Evans, from Cantref Adventure Farm in the Brecon Beacons, has been appointed vice-chairman of NFAN. Colin has been on the committee for several years and in his role as vice-chairman will provide support to the Chairman, Matt Heast, and will also act as Chair in circumstances where Matt is unable to attend committee meetings or other events.



NEW MEMBERSHIP STICKERS

Your sticker is on its way! If you're a NFAN member, keep a look out in the post for your new membership sticker to display at your attraction's entrance.



National
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2014 MEMBER

NFAN Farm Attraction of the Year 2014 award winners

THE 2014 winners are hugely deserving and NFAN congratulates them all on their success.

We'd also like to thank the NFAN award judges, who critically review all entries and give a considerable amount of their time free of charge to carry out this task. The majority of the awards are judged independently.

Farm Attraction of the Year

Winner – Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park, Gloucestershire

Highly Commended – Walby Farm Park, Cumbria

Commended – Fishers Adventure Farm Park, West Sussex



The NFAN Farm Attraction of the Year Award 2014 was won by Adam Henson's Cotswold Farm Park. Pictured receiving the award on behalf of the venue is farm park manager Kate Lord, with awards dinner sponsor David Leon of The Partners Group (left) and NFAN Chairman Matt Heast.

Best Digital Presence

Winner – Wroxham Barns, Norfolk.

Highly Commended – Odds Farm Park, Buckinghamshire and Noah's Ark Zoo Farm, Bristol.

Best Trade Supplier

Winner – Innovative Leisure Limited

Unsung Hero

Winner – Richard Maule-Oatway, Godstone Farm, Surrey
Joint runners-up – Jenny Sparkes, Barleylands Farm Park, Essex; Vicky Thorogood, Remus Memorial Horse Sanctuary, Essex; and Neil Hoffmann, Sacrewell Farm and Country Centre, Cambridgeshire

Customer Service Excellence

Winner – Wroxham Barns, Norfolk

Highly Commended – Pennywell Farm, Devon, and Farmer Palmers Farm Park, Dorset

Best Food and Beverage

Winner – Fishers Adventure Farm Park, West Sussex

Runner-up – Wroxham Barns, Norfolk

Best in Education

Winner – Hall Hill Farm, Durham

Highly Commended – Thornton Hall Country Park, Yorkshire

Industry Code of Practice video launched



TO help members implement the Industry Code of Practice, NFAN has created an informative five minute video. Launched at the 2014 Annual Conference, the video can be viewed on our website. We hope it will be a useful training video, as well as being informative for owners. If anyone has any questions about the Code of Practice, they should contact the NFAN office on 01536 513397.

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NFAN committee

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

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Helpline - 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 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
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Email: chris.brown@turpinsmale.co.uk
Advice on all matters catering including help on increasing sales, improving standards and making margins. Turpin Smale helps farm attractions get serious about their cafés, kiosks and kids parties with solid, practical advice. For more details visit www.turpinsmale.co.uk

Accountancy, taxation and financial services

Haines Watts
Contact Ben Young
Tel. 01536 483513 Email: nfan@hwca.com www.hwca.com
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