

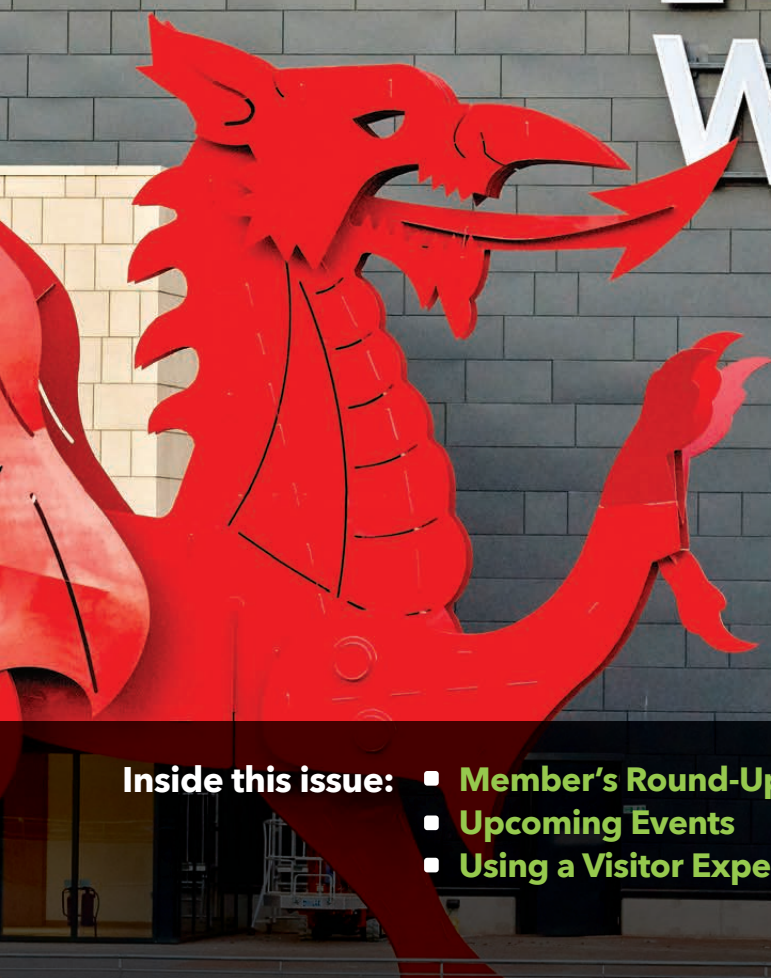


Network News

Autumn 2021 Issue No82

We're off to Wales

...for NFAN's
3-Day Conference
& Trade Exhibition
18th - 20th Jan



Inside this issue:

- **Member's Round-Up**
- **Upcoming Events**
- **Using a Visitor Experience App**



National
Farm
Attractions
Network

Book now for NFAN's Annual Conference: 18th-20th Jan 2022

After 2 years, we're finally back reconnecting NFAN Members from far and wide at the 2022 Conference and Trade Exhibition. With an exciting programme, fantastic entertainment and a huge trade exhibition, make sure you secure your place!

DAY 1

**Tuesday
18th
January**

- Optional afternoon visits to Cefn Mably Farm Park, Noah's Ark Zoo Farm and Little Owl Farm Park
- Informal networking dinner & evening entertainment



DAY 2

**Wednesday
19th
January**

- Open Day at Cattle Country Farm Park
- Trade Exhibition and Drinks Reception
- Annual Awards Dinner



DAY 3

**Thursday
20th
January**

- Conference & Trade Exhibition
- Tickets are now live! Visit the NFAN Membership Hub and book online at www.farmattractions.net



Discounted Rates for Accommodation

Limited rooms. Prices expire 7 Dec.



Conference Rates are below at the Celtic Manor Resort (a 2 min walk from ICC Wales) and Coldra Court (15 mins walk)

Please note below room rates are non-refundable and non-transferable.

Celtic Manor Resort

Single Occupancy Bed and Breakfast	£120.83
Double Occupancy Bed and Breakfast	£141.67

Coldra Court Hotel

Single Occupancy Bed and Breakfast	£104.17
Double Occupancy Bed and Breakfast	£110.83

Available on the 19th only. All prices are ex-VAT.

To book accommodation, go to celtic-manor.com and book online using discount code NFA180122 or alternatively call 01633 413262.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Great value
events,
exclusively for NFAN Members

THE FBI SHOW

Visit the NFAN team at Stand 814 - **10 & 11 Nov**

Register free online at farmbusinessshow.co.uk

WEBINAR

New Social and Digital Marketing Techniques
23 November

£30+VAT per Attraction

CHRISTMAS ROADSHOW:

2-Day Christmas Roadshow, Staffordshire/
Manchester - **8 & 9 December**

£150+VAT per person

MONTHLY ZOOM GROUP CHATS

3 November & 1 December

Free to NFAN members

It was so exciting to be back for a face to face event at the NFAN Open Day at Cotswold Farm Park. With over 180 farm and trade Members attending, it was by far NFAN's biggest ever Open Day and I was struck by everyone's positivity for the future.

NFAN's biggest ever Open Day



I was also humbled to have been nominated for the Pandemic Heroes Awards: Lockdown Legend Award and even more so for winning it. I became chair in January 2020 and I couldn't have got through it all, without the other volunteers on the NFAN Committee and the managing agent, Agility Marketing.

I would like to congratulate the Pandemic Heroes Award winners, Finkley Down Farm (Crisis Innovation) and Pitchup (Trade Heroes), as well as the additional Hero in a Crisis Award presented to Anita Waddell at our managing agent for her personal contribution.

My term as NFAN chair ends at the 2022 Annual Conference and Trade Exhibition in January. This time we are going to the International Convention Centre in Newport Wales, with the Open Day at Cattle Country Farm Park. The full programme looks incredible and we hope you can join us.

As I finish my term as Chair, I will be leaving the committee along with Rob Nicholson from Cannon Hall. With both of us completing our 6 year term, the association is actively looking for new committee members. Could this be you? NFAN works so well as we have a diverse and varied committee.

More details can be found in this issue of Network News and on the NFAN website. Alternatively, ask the NFAN team.

Finally, I'd also like to thank Tourism for All for leading a recent Zoom Group Chat, looking at what you could, should or need to do to make your attraction accessible for all. If you missed it, a free recording is available in the Shop section of the Membership Hub.

I look forward to seeing you all again soon on either our monthly Zoom Group Chats, the NFAN Christmas Roadshow or the Annual Conference.

All the best

Tom Robinson
Chairman

And welcome to our new members

Farm Parks

Monk Park Farm
Floralands Farm Park
South Angle Farm Park
Melbourne Animal Farm
Tweddle Children's Animal Farm
Pettsville Farm CIC
Southlea Farm

Trade Members

KJE Technical
Allied Drinks Systems Ltd
Pitchup.com
Laister Planning Ltd
Jans Offsite Solutions Ltd
Great Grottos Ltd
Halletts Birmingham Limited
Kingdom Mowers
Freddie's Farm Ltd
Clear Sky Safari Tents

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MEMBER'S ROUND UP



Festival Success for The Big Sheep

The Big Sheep in Devon hosted 23 live mini festival events in 2021 (using their covid safe space, they ran in 2020) and they were able to cater for 800 per event.



Running this fun event came with its challenges, from licensing and sound system hitches to diva bands and cancellations due to covid.

Rick from The Big Sheep was extremely open to share his experiences, explaining it was harder than he thought getting people to enjoy live music again, but saying that, the events did beat expectations and each event made money.

For 2021, The Big Sheep built a super new stage with amazing lights and as the

weather was sunny for the most part, mud and mess didn't become a problem.

As they approached the school holidays, another challenge was juggling their busy day visitor attraction, with a live music and festival evening event. Taking these learnings forward, they will certainly be hosting bigger bands and larger festivals in 2022.

Good luck to all the guys at The Big Sheep, we can't wait to hear about your success in 2022!



A busy Pumpkin Season

As we go to press, it is great to hear about Member's successful pumpkin events. This year, Piglets Farm Park grew over 10,000 homegrown pumpkins, converted the Summer's Maize Maze into a Halloween themed Maze and ran a Halloween inspired Magic Show. Great additions to increase dwell time.

Whilst at Cotswold Farm Park, they transformed the Summer's Sunflower Field into a Scarecrow Trail, providing the perfect spooky backdrop.

Cotswold also innovated their 'free pumpkin' offering. Every visitor obtained a pumpkin token (exchangeable for a standard sized pumpkin). Larger pumpkins cost more tokens; enabling family groups to combine their tokens together or simply buy more tokens.

We look forward to hearing more pumpkin successes from Members.



NFAN's Pandemic Hero Award Winners

Congratulations to the winners and highly commended finalists in the NFAN Pandemic Awards. We'd also like to thank Adam Henson for judging and awarding them.



CRISIS INNOVATION AWARD

This award recognises members who have adapted their business model during the pandemic.

WINNER: FINKLEY DOWN FARM

A very worthy winner! During the lockdowns, Finkley Down Farm teamed up with a local charity to provide over 1000 healthy home cooked meals to vulnerable families & young people. Well done Finkley!

Highly Commended

Merlinsoft Ltd - Owen Gleadall



LOCKDOWN LEGENDS AWARD

Lockdown brought out the best in many and this award gave us an opportunity to shine the spotlight on our industry legends.

WINNER: TOM ROBINSON, NFAN CHAIR

Tom took over the Chair of NFAN two months before the first March lockdown. He was instrumental in navigating NFAN through stormy waters and ensuring Members obtained the support they needed. A big thank you to Lyndy Birse from Ark Open Farm for the nomination.

Highly Commended

Olivia Mikhall - Kew Little Pigs



TRADE HEROES AWARD

This award enabled us to recognise and thank trade members who went above and beyond during the pandemic.

WINNER: PITCH UP

Pitch Up helped Members both operationally and through lobbying. Their detailed guidance on how to set up a temporary campsite was invaluable to our sector. Whilst their 'Carry on Camping' campaign helped achieve a much needed relaxation of the planning rules.

Highly Commended

Digitickets

Using an In-Park Visitor App'

As many NFAN Members consider getting an In-Park App, we asked Willows Activity Farm and Roarr! Dinosaur Adventure for their feedback.

1 What are the main features of the App?

Willows Activity Farm:

- Map of the farm
- Show times with alerts before each show
- Opening and closing time of each activity/ride
- Digital tickets and membership cards

Roarr! Dinosaur Adventure:

- Interactive map with wayfinding and attractions
- Exclusive offers
- Featured content (e.g what's on, special event/occasion)
- Plan your adventure (create your plan for your day ahead based on date, ages, group size etc.)
- Park information

2 What is the best thing about the App?

Willows Activity Farm:

- Reminder alerts for show times
- Digital membership cards
- Ease of use when updating
- Onsite offers using beacons

Roarr! Dinosaur Adventure:

The map, as this gives the customer the opportunity to get a whole view

of the park as well as specific areas. The wayfinding feature gives the app user easy navigation with the best route option and how long it will take to walk to the attraction. As well as you can find attractions on there, we have food & drink, shop, facilities, guest services, smoking area and exit/entrance available on the map.

3 Are there any difficulties?

Willows Activity Farm:

Getting the membership cards on the app took a while but the team are very responsive to issues and look to resolve them quickly.

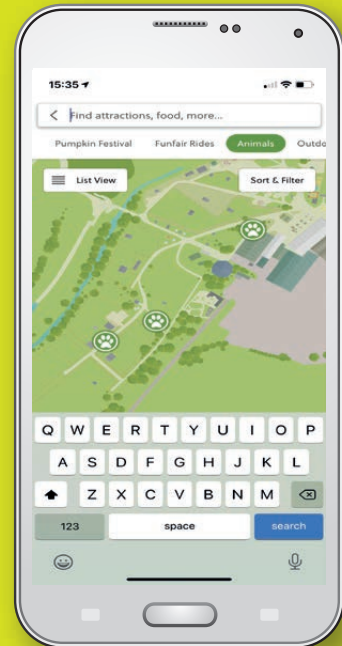
Roarr! Dinosaur Adventure:

Although the map is the app's best feature, this has also been difficult to get as correct and detailed as possible. There's been put a lot of hours into getting this map to the standard needed for the best user experience.

4 What is the uptake on the App?

Willows Activity Farm:

Since launch we have had 7,288 installs of the app. We hope this will increase when existing members also download the app



and move on to digital instead of physical membership cards.

Roarr! Dinosaur Adventure:

- 5,972 total downloads (60% iOs, 40% android)
- Guest satisfaction: 95% (based on 330 feedbacks)
- Average time on app: 3m 30s

New Code of Practice Training Video

With the launch of the updated Code of Practice this year, NFAN have produced a new staff training video. This five minute video can be used as part of your team inductions or as part of regular training sessions. Visit the NFAN website to watch the video or download the revised Code of Practice.

NFAN are also currently creating a consumer version of the video which you could use to remind visitors of the Code of Practice. We are also creating a third version for Members who are independently Code of Practice certified and are part of the Animal Attraction Assurance Scheme.

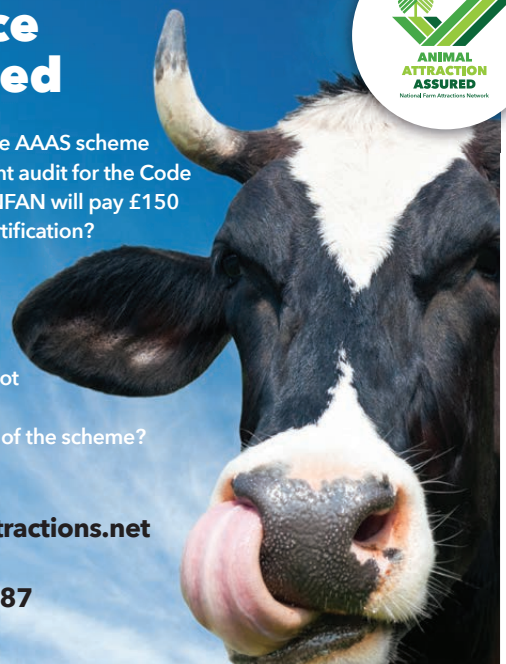


Become Code of Practice Certified

Did you know the AAAS scheme is an independent audit for the Code of Practice and NFAN will pay £150 towards your certification?

With benefits including huge savings on insurance, why not ask to speak to a current member of the scheme?

Email us at:
info@farmattractions.net
or call:
03333 448987



Online ticketing has changed

The COVID pandemic has moved us mainly to online advanced booking. But what's next?

We have asked three NFAN Members what they have done and what they see for the future. With thanks to PlayWorks The Meadows, Farmer Palmers and Cockfields for contributing.

Have you or will you be allowing the return of walk up business?

Playworks: Yes subject to availability. If we are busy then guests need to book in advance.

Farmer Palmers: We have allowed walk ups at an additional £1 and in 2022 this will be an additional £3. We are currently fixing our 7 year old website which is not 4G responsive.

Cockfields: We will not actively encourage it but if we have capacity we won't turn anyone away.

Do you have time slots, sessions or no timed tickets?

Playworks: Time slots every 10 minutes.

Farmer Palmers: For two years, we have had a morning and afternoon session lasting 4 hours each.

Cockfields: We have a timed slot every half an hour.

What changes will you be making now life is getting back to normal?

Playworks: We are a new business so we have no comparison really. Online bookings will still be

encouraged for everyone visiting.

Farmer Palmers: Safety measures are still in place and we are moving to one longer session in 2022, with arrival time slots every half an hour. Opening hours will move to 9.30am to 5pm in school holidays but we will close at 4pm during weekends and at 2.30pm for termtime weekdays.

Cockfields: We will be keeping reduced capacity, regular site cleaning, online booking and a few other activity changes we implemented.

If you have members, how do you avoid members booking and not turning up?

Playworks: Hasn't been an issue.

Farmer Palmers: We have built in a no show report for paid and pass holders. If we have repeat offenders we will speak to them. Often they just need reminder training to cancel their visit online.

Cockfields: We don't currently have members.

Boost your knowledge

Over the last year, NFAN have hosted some amazing webinars, but did you know the recordings are available to purchase via NFAN's Membership Hub for £25 each?

What webinar attendees have said...

"Excellent value for money, with a great mix of technical information and real-life case studies from operators"

"Excellent line up of speakers. I always learn something at a NFAN event"

"Always good to refresh my mind"

Five Webinar Recordings

- Adding Camping to your Attraction - Discover top tips from Cantref, Cotswold Farm Park and West Lodge Farm Park, as well as Nick Laister and Cool Camping.
- Benefits of Adding Bolt-on Events - This packed programme included do's and don'ts from The National Outdoor Events Association, as well as lessons from Cockfields, The Big Sheep and Tulleys.
- Maximising Profits from Catering - Hear how Wroxham Barns, Cannon Hall and Lower Drayton Farm responded to Covid and in a talk from Regency Purchasing, make sure you've done all you need for Natasha's Law.
- Industry Code of Practice - Are you ICOP compliant? Health & Safety Practitioner Ray Hipkin and NFAN Committee Member, Sally Jackson share what you need to do.
- HR Employment Law - Listen to Tara Warner Consultancy who get you up to speed on recent HR legislation and what forthcoming changes could affect your business.

To buy a recording, simply visit The Shop in the Membership Hub or contact the NFAN office.

If you're looking for online ticketing providers, take a look at the NFAN Trade Directory www.farmattractions.net/trade-members





Sell out Dino event for Cockfields

We caught up with Mark Navin from Cockfields about his Jurassic Farm Dinosaur event. Held this Summer, the event was a huge success. In true NFAN style, Mark shares how he planned the event and the lessons he learnt.



"The event has been amazing. We always strive to put on the greatest how! We decided to do this event, because who doesn't like Dinosaurs? We have worked hard, planning and throwing ideas around to create the perfect event and this started before we opened up again in February. We wanted a high ticket price event that would rival our Christmas Event as we felt with the current covid situation people were so ready for a great day out! And they had the money to spend."

"We definitely went to town on branding, from hand painted signs to our ranger tops and hoodies, we love making everything insta ready!"

"The gift shop was crammed with dinosaur gifts which gave us a huge

uplift in sales and with the addition of a Build-a-Dinosaur area this added to the daily spend per head."

"We used Scream Park for our entertainment and they were fantastic! We hired the Dinosaurs and props from Real Dinos (Doug From Avon Valley), absolutely brilliant! And Prestige Events for photos and TeddyTastic for our Dinosaur teddies!"

"The event was sold out within 2 weeks from the launch in February, so we released more dates, which sold really well too. We offered an early bird price for the first 3000 tickets which was discounted by £5 per person."

"The feedback from customers has been nothing but positive."

MARK'S TOP TIPS

1. Be brave with pricing but make sure you deliver a quality event.
2. The little touches make a big difference, bits of extra decor or props really do get noticed.
3. Train your staff! Make sure your staff are there to ensure the visitors have the best time!
4. Hire professionals, we hired Scream Park after we realised the size this event was going to be, it ended up being the best idea!
5. Get your event on sale as soon as you can.

If you want to find out more about what the day involved, email the NFAN Team at info@farmattractions.net and we'll put you in touch with Mark.



Success at Cotswold Farm Park

Wow, what an Open Day! It was our first networking event in 20 months and our very first with a Networking Exhibition.

Duncan Andrews, Adam Henson, Kate Lord and their teams welcomed Members with open arms and delivered informative talks from Operational Heads, as well as tours of their attraction and camping accommodation. Plus, Adam announced the highly commended and overall winners of the NFAN Pandemic Heroes Awards! A brilliant day!

Success comes through planning and we'd like to extend a huge thank you to the Cotswold team and to Fairytale Farm, Churchfields Farm, All Things Wild and Over Farm for allowing NFAN members to visit the day before the event.

We would also like to extend our special thanks to the Open Day sponsors: **K3 Business Technologies**, **Marshfield Ice Cream** and our Networking Dinner wine sponsor **Timberplay**.



NFAN Committee

Chairman

Tom Robinson, National Forest Adventure Farm, Staffs.

Vice-Chair Doug Douglas, Avon Valley, Bristol**Treasurer** Steve Taylor, Marsh & Co

Lyndy Birse, Ark Open Farm, Co. Down

Gwen Evans, Cantref Adventure Farm, Brecon

James Gammell, Conifox Adventure Park, Edinburgh

Tel: 01283 533933

Tel: 01179 864929

Tel: 01226 767124

Tel: 02891 820445

Tel: 01874 665223

Tel: 0131 333 2288

Ben Harbottle, Timberplay

Sally Jackson, The Pink Pig, North Lincs.

Kate Lord, Cotswold Farm Park, Gloucs.

Katie Milbourn, Walby Farm Park, Cumbria

Robert Nicholson, Cannon Hall Farm, Sth Yorks.

Hannah Wafula, Bocketts Farm Park, Surrey

Tel: 0114 282 3474

Tel: 01724 854082

Tel: 01451 850307

Tel: 01228 573056

Tel: 01226 790427

Tel: 01372 363764

All general enquiries should be directed to the NFAN office - tel: 03333 448987, email info@farmattractions.net.

Have you used your Solus Email Membership benefit?

Every NFAN Trade Member has the opportunity for one FREE solus email to be sent to all NFAN Farm Members per year.

This email can be used to introduce your company, promote a new product or service or just update members on your latest news. If you haven't used this membership benefit as part of your 2021 Membership, now's the time! Just complete the 'Trade Solus Email Content Form' in your profile in the Membership Hub and we'll create your email.

HELPLINE

Free advice for NFAN members

NFAN members are entitled to one free call per annum. The experts can advise you further, subject to their terms of business, with special rates for NFAN members.

Planning Legislation and Business Rates

Barry Davies, Davies & Co. (Chartered Surveyors)
Tel: 01536 524808 Email: info@daviesandco.co.uk
daviesandco.co.uk*Specialising in planning legislation including change of use, enforcement notices and business rates appeals.*

Health & Safety/Environmental Health Guidance

Ray Hipkin, Health & Safety Practitioner
Tel: 01844 353407 Email: ray@rayhipkin.co.uk
rayhipkin.co.uk

Exclusive Insurance Schemes

Steve Taylor, Marsh and Company Insurance Brokers
Tel: 0116 204 3400 Email: staylor@marshcompany.co.uk
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. Marsh & Co are NFAN's Animal Attraction Assurance Scheme Accreditation Supplier.*

Catering

Chris Brown, Turpin Smale Catering Consultants
Tel: 020 7620 0011 Email: chris.brown@turpinsmale.co.uk
turpinsmale.co.uk*Advice on all matters catering including help with increasing sales, improving standards and margins.*

Fantastic advertising and sponsorship opportunities for trade members

Are you looking for ways to increase your exposure to NFAN Farm Attractions Members?

We have fantastic NFAN sponsorship and advertising opportunities, exclusively for NFAN Trade Members!

You can sponsor an Open Day, a Roadshow, the Annual Conference or place an advert/insert into Network News. Contact the NFAN Team for more information or go to the Membership Hub to book online today
www.farmattractions.net

NFAN Membership Hub

Are you getting the most out of the NFAN Membership Hub?You can book events, add or remove colleagues for NFAN's email updates and even view/pay membership fees. The system will also help us identify members who need help from the Committee on the Code of Practice. If you need help using the system, email Jodie Kimble info@farmattractions.net.