

# Society Matters Newsletter



Newark  
& Notts  
Agri Society

Spring Edition : April 2026



📷 Sheep competitors at the Nottinghamshire County Show 2025



## Show prep in full swing!

A message from Elizabeth Halsall,  
Show Manager

As we count down to the County Show, the office is buzzing with calls and last-minute competition entries. I'm delighted by the fantastic response to our Schools Resource Pack competitions—what began as a pilot in 2025 has truly taken off, and this year we're hoping to welcome more than 250 entries. You'll find them all on display in the Community Zone, with prize giving at 2:30pm. Please do stop by and support the children who've shown such enthusiasm for the Show and for farming in Nottinghamshire.

We're also excited to introduce "Ask a Farmer," a new feature in the Countryside Area inspired by visitor feedback and a growing appetite to meet farmers and learn about farming in a hands-on way.

As always, we simply couldn't deliver the Show without our incredible stewards and volunteers. Thank you—your time, energy and dedication genuinely make the Show happen. I look forward to seeing you all on 9th May.

Can you spot all 10  
hidden easter eggs?



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## Breakfast event set to help unlock farming profits at the Nottinghamshire County Show

**A breakfast event exploring the latest ways in which farmers can unlock new value from their land and assets is set to take place on the morning of this year's Nottinghamshire County Show.**

The event – titled Every Acre, Every Asset: The Mindset for Modern Farming – promises to showcase fresh thinking on strategic planning, diversification and positive change, helping farmers make their operations work smarter and more profitably.

Featuring a host of experts from across the agricultural sector, it will act as the curtain-raiser to the show, which takes place at Newark Showground on May 9 and will be chaired by this year's show president, Sir Mark Spencer.

Among the issues being discussed during the morning will be how great farming businesses are built by making every part of the operation work harder, smarter and more profitably.



This session brings together fresh thinking on strategic planning, diversification, finance and positive change—focusing on how entrepreneurial farmers can unlock new value from land, people and assets.

Sir Mark, who runs the third-generation, family-owned Spring Lane Farm in Mapperley Plains, hosted a similar breakfast event last year, which focused on inheritance tax and attracted a sell-out audience.



This year, he is looking forward to discussing new ways to unlock productivity, alongside a panel including three representatives from property and business consultants Brown & Co, namely Chris Sheldon, partner in agricultural business consultancy, Henry Haworth, energy manager, and senior associate Alistair Anderson.

They will be joined by David Hanson, relationship director for agriculture at NatWest, for the event, which is being supported by the Farming Community Network, a charity which promotes health and well-being amongst the farming community.

The Nottinghamshire County Show is the first major agricultural show in the UK calendar and, as a result, will give livestock breeders their first opportunity in 2026 to taste glory in the judging ring.

Sir Mark said: "Last year's breakfast event was a real success and this year's will be more forward-looking with a positive message looking at the opportunities within the sector.

"I'm looking forward to it and to attending the show itself, which I've always regarded as a great chance for the farming community to come together and to engage with the public to talk about the excellent work that's taking place across the industry."

**Book your place:**

To register your place at the 9am breakfast event please email [admin@newarkshowground.com](mailto:admin@newarkshowground.com) by May 1 or phone 01636 705796.

# Jousting Knights set to star as The Show returns in May

## History headlines the main ring this year

Now in its 141st year, the Nottinghamshire County Show will return to Newark Showground on 9 May 2026 with a packed programme of family friendly activities, alongside a showcase of food production, farming and rural life.

New for 2026, and headlining the main ring, will be the re-enactment group Knights of Nottingham, bringing a spectacular display of horsemanship and medieval-style action to the heart of the showground.

The main ring programme will run throughout the day, alongside parades, competitions and live demonstrations.

Also new this year is an interactive 'Ask the Farmer' feature, created in response to visitor feedback calling for more opportunities to engage with the farming community.

'Ask the Farmer' will allow visitors to meet farmers and those working within agricultural industries through a series of timed talks and Q&A sessions covering areas ranging from arable and livestock farming to machinery and contracting.

Alongside the exciting new additions, visitors can look forward to the return of firm favourites including the sheep show, Festival of Food which showcases local and regional produce; the Make, Bake & Grow competitions; the Community Zone; live music; trade stands; livestock and equestrian competitions; and a full programme of activities designed especially for children.



## MasterChef finalist Claire Syrenne will be exploring how to enjoy cooking

**A finalist from the BBC One's hit show MasterChef will talk about her passion for local produce at this year's Nottinghamshire County Show.**

Mum-of-two Claire, 48, was pipped to the trophy in the Masterchef final last year and is now using her new-found celebrity to encourage people to find confidence in everyday cooking and helping them to better understand where their food comes from.

She will be judging elements of the county show's Make, Bake & Grow competition, awarding prizes and hosting an interactive audience session celebrating the versatility of Nottinghamshire's produce and the journey from field to kitchen.

Visitors will be able to learn about how to use Nottinghamshire produce such as Bramley apples in their cooking, alongside practical tips, flavour inspiration and plenty of ideas they can try straight away at home.

Claire said: "I'm passionate about helping people feel confident and understand where their food comes from. County shows are such an important bridge between the farmers who grow food and the people who enjoy it.

"When we understand how the food we eat is produced and the work that goes into it, we make better choices and feel more confident cooking it.

"My aim is to help people build confidence and enjoy food without feeling intimidated. You don't need complicated recipes to cook well; sometimes it starts with something as simple as an apple."

Come and see Claire during her talk on the bandstand at 11:15am.

# Make, Bake and Grow

Don't miss out! Get your entries in by Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> April!



Can you make? Can you bake? Can you grow?

If that's a resounding YES to any or all three, then you should enter our fabulous Make, Bake & Grow competitions – we're taking entries now!

By entering at the Nottinghamshire County Show on 9 May, not only do you get to showcase your super skills, but there are prizes just waiting to be won. Could it be you?

We have classes for budding bakers who want to decorate or bake a cake, or gardeners who want to bring along their home-grown produce, plus much more, including age-specific children's classes.

Fact: Did you know, we have NEVER had a winner in our 'Pickled Onion' competition. This could be your time to shine!

To enter our Make, Bake & Grow competitions before the 15 April closing date, just visit our website.



## School Resource Pack

**Nottinghamshire County Show launched county-wide competitions with climbing walls, farm trips and family tickets up for grabs**

In partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council, the resource pack was filled with imaginative classroom activities, resources for teachers, and nine hands-on competitions for budding storytellers and young artists aged 4-14, plus one for adults.

As well as individual prizes, there were three major prizes available for the schools, including a trip to Bestwood Environmental Education Centre or Perlethorpe, a visit from a climbing wall and school trips to White Post Farm.



Nottinghamshire County Show's show manager Elizabeth Halsall said: "Education has always been at the heart of the show and our new resource pack gives schools a fun and engaging way to bring farming and the countryside into the classroom.

"There are plenty of ideas to encourage pupils and families to get creative and learn more about rural life and where our food comes from, with some exciting hands-on prizes for the schools who have the biggest number of pupils involved."

To kick off the launch, NNAS and Notts County Council facilitated Sutton-On-Trent Primary School to host the White Post Farm Animal Roadshow at their school for the day – enabling the children to get hands on with the animals, and engage them with countryside education, whilst also learning about the Nottinghamshire County Show.



**There is still time to sponsor and offer a donation to the Nottinghamshire County Show!**

Available sponsorship opportunities include:

- Breed Champions to sponsor: Shire Horse, Clydesdale Horse, British Blue (cattle), British Limousin (cattle), Dutch Spotted Sheep, Lincoln Longwool Sheep, Kerry Hill Sheep.
- This year, the Notts YFC are celebrating 80 years and we are looking for 2 companies to sponsor the spectacle that is the YFC Lawn Mowers Race that takes place twice in the Main Ring.

Over 16,000 people were at the 2025 show. Would you like to gain brand exposure for your company to this many people in just one day?

**To discuss options further**

Please contact:  
 Francesca Hayes  
 07305 997574  
[francesca.hayes@newarkshowground.com](mailto:francesca.hayes@newarkshowground.com)



**A unique donation**

**We are delighted to announce a generous and rather unique donation to the Society from Mr Fred Forshaw, following his relocation to Perth, Australia.**

In recognition of his family's long-standing connection with the Showground, Mr Forshaw has kindly presented us with a pair of vintage Winchester saluting cannons, together with a quantity of ammunition.

These impressive pieces are a highlight of the Newark Vintage Tractor & Heritage Show, and we have no doubt that George will enthusiastically take on the responsibility of managing the salutes and timing during the minutes silence at the show!

We extend our sincere thanks to Fred for this thoughtful and historic contribution to the Society.

**Ask a Farmer**

**Got a burning question about farming? Ask anything big or small & our farming experts will be happy to help!**

Discover more about our local farmers and the different ways they grow and produce food across the county. Find 'Ask a Farmer' in the Countryside Area on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> May.





## Showground update

### A Vibrant Start to the Year

As we move into spring, it's the perfect time to reflect on what has already been an incredibly busy and exciting start to the year here at the Showground.

The first quarter has seen a fantastic variety of events bringing together enthusiasts, families, and communities from across the region and beyond. From the ever-popular Auto Jumble and the much-loved Newark International Antiques Fair to the roar of engines at the Classic Bike Show, the grounds have been full of energy and activity.

We've proudly hosted a diverse calendar including the Young Farmers Ball, Newark Farmers Ball, and Blankney Hunt Ball, alongside creative and specialist events such as the Quilting & Sewing Show, Midlands Woodworking Show, and Bonsai Fest.



Fans of all interests have found something to enjoy, from Festival of the Force to Hammerhead Wargames, while important training has continued with John Deere Training Sessions and visits from the Sea Cadets.

It's been a brilliant showcase of everything the Showground stands for: community, variety, and shared experiences.

Behind the scenes, we've also been investing in the future of the Showground. We're pleased to share that a new irrigation system has recently been installed in our show rings, helping us maintain high-quality grounds for events throughout the year. Alongside this, we are currently refreshing our suite of marketing materials.

### Looking Ahead to Spring

The momentum continues as we head into a packed and exciting spring season. We're looking forward to welcoming back favourites such as All About Dogs Show, The Newark Garden Show, Rock & Gem, and the National Motorhome & Campervan Show.

There's plenty more on the horizon too, including Festival of the Timelords, Railwayana, the AEC Rally, and the ever-popular Young Driver experience.

We're also proud to host a wide range of community and organisation events, from Nottinghamshire Scouts and Blood Donation sessions to Nottinghamshire Young Farmers gatherings.

A true highlight of the season will be our very own Nottinghamshire County Show; our flagship charity event which promises a fantastic day out for all while supporting an important cause.

With so much still to come, spring is shaping up to be another unforgettable season at the Showground.

We're also delighted to welcome Debra Haynes to the team as our new Sales Executive, and we look forward to the experience and enthusiasm she brings to supporting our clients and events.



### Stay Connected with us

We're excited to be launching our very own quarterly newsletter soon! To make sure you don't miss out on event announcements, updates, and behind-the-scenes news, be sure to join our mailing list and stay connected with everything happening at the Showground.

We look forward to welcoming you soon!

**Newark Showground**

## JOIN OUR MAILING LIST

STAY CONNECTED WITH ALL OUR LATEST INFORMATION AND EVENTS

Don't miss out on the latest events, special offers, and showground news!

**SCAN THE QR CODE ABOVE**



## 2026 RASE Awards

**If you're making a difference in agriculture, the 2026 RASE Awards are your opportunity to be recognised.**

Farmers, farm managers, researchers, landowners and professionals across the industry are invited to enter. The RASE Awards celebrate those advancing food production, environmental stewardship and industry leadership – and are among the most respected honours in British agriculture.

**You can nominate yourself or a peer. Entries close 1 May 2026.**

### Why enter a RASE Award

The RASE Awards recognise people and organisations shaping the future of agriculture – from practical farming to scientific innovation and leadership. Entering is your chance to gain recognition, build your profile and share your impact with the wider industry.

### Award categories

The 2026 RASE Award categories include:

- The [RASE Farm of the Future Award](#) – Celebrating pioneers developing forward-looking, circular farming systems. Sponsored by [The Crown Estate](#).
- The [RASE Science & Technology Award](#) – Recognising individuals delivering impactful research and innovation. Sponsored by [Future Biogas](#).
- The [RASE Natural Capital Award](#) – For farm businesses successfully integrating environmental management into commercial operations.. Sponsored by [Trinity Ag-Tech](#).
- The [RASE National Agricultural Award](#) – Honouring leadership, advocacy and innovation shaping British agriculture. Part sponsored by [Savills](#).
- The [RASE Excellence in Practical Farming Award](#) – Celebrating farmers applying science and management to build resilient, productive businesses.

- The [RASE Bledisloe Gold Medal for Landowners](#) – Recognising outstanding estate management and land stewardship.

### Key dates

Entries close: 1 May 2026

Finalists announced: July 2026

Awards ceremony: 23 September 2026, at Cowdray Estate, West Sussex



## LEAF announces three new initiatives to accelerate global uptake of sustainable farming

**Three major new initiatives announced at the LEAF annual conference to accelerate the transition to more sustainable farming**

Announced at our annual conference on 29 January, Leaf are proud to share three major initiatives for 2026 and beyond, each designed to accelerate the transition to more sustainable farming through education, skills and data-driven innovation.

- LEAF Regen Academy – Launching in 2026, a global knowledge-exchange platform focused on the practical application of regenerative principles across diverse farming systems.
- In partnership with Lantra, new land-based Integrated Farm Management courses to equip the next generation with the skills for resilient, sustainable farming.
- A three-year, industry-led research project with the University of Cambridge and Hutchinsons, exploring AI-driven advice to enhance profitability, productivity and environmental outcomes.



**NSA** next generation

# Saturday 9th May

## NSA Central Region Next Generation Shepherd Competition

Electric fencing | Vaccination and dosing | Sheep general knowledge | Lamb classification | Ram MOT | Shearing

**Top 2 will qualify for the 2026 national finals at NSA Sheep Event in July**  
**£450 worth of prize money to be awarded**

Showcase your shepherding skills to the public - don't worry if you're not confident in all elements, your lowest scoring element won't count towards final scores

Each competitor will receive 2 entry tickets to the Nottinghamshire County Show and a refreshment voucher

Nottinghamshire County Show, Newark Showground, NG24 2NY

**Apply online by 4th May**

Find out more and enter here



## New Irrigation System Phase one has now been completed!

After many years of planning, we are delighted to share that phase one of the new irrigation system at the Showground has now been successfully completed. This marks a significant milestone in our ongoing commitment to enhancing the facilities available to members, exhibitors, and event organisers alike.

The irrigation system installed by Javelin Irrigation systems, draws water from our on-site borehole and 98,000-litre storage tank.

From there, it is distributed across the Newark, Horse, and Sherwood Rings via a comprehensive network of underground pipes and strategically positioned hydrants. Water is then applied efficiently using an RM Speedy Rain sprinkler, ensuring consistent and controlled coverage of key equestrian areas. Enabling the Newark Showground to further support our equestrian events.

Phase one represents just the beginning of a broader programme of improvements across the Showground.



## Shape Your Future with a 2027 Nuffield Farming Scholarship

A Nuffield Farming Scholarship offers a unique opportunity for people aged 25–45 working in farming, food, horticulture and rural industries that can shape your future, your business and the wider industry.

The Scholarship enables individuals to study a topic you are passionate about and that matters to the future of our sector. Through international travel, meeting global experts and challenging your own thinking, you will gain fresh perspectives, significant personal development and the confidence to make a real difference.

For further information, please contact [Charlotte@nuffieldscholar.org](mailto:Charlotte@nuffieldscholar.org) or go to <https://www.nuffieldscholar.org/>

## YOUR FUTURE STARTS HERE

Nuffield Scholarships 2027 – Apply now!  
 Deadline: Midday 30<sup>th</sup> July 2026



Are you ready to challenge your thinking, explore new ideas and lead positive change in agriculture?



NUFFIELD Farming Scholarships

Nuffield Scholarships offer life-changing opportunities for people in farming, horticulture and the rural sector. Scholars travel the world, investigate topics they're passionate about and bring back fresh insights to share with the industry.

Potential Scholar Drop-in sessions each month until July. These are informal, via Teams and conclude with a Q&A.

Start your journey at [NuffieldScholar.org](https://NuffieldScholar.org)



For more information contact [Charlotte@nuffieldscholar.org](mailto:Charlotte@nuffieldscholar.org)



Last Postage day is 24<sup>th</sup> April for your pack  
Ensure to renew/gift your membership before then

# Renew your membership

Renew your NNAS membership for a wide range of Society benefits including free VIP admission to our Society events! Together, we are helping shape a vibrant future for our local rural community.

Our society events:



Young Persons  
Membership  
Under 30 Years

**Annual Fee**

**£30.00**

Single  
Membership  
One person

**Annual Fee**

**£50.00**

Joint  
Membership  
Two people

**Annual Fee**

**£75.00**

Friends & Family  
Membership  
Up to 4 people

**Annual Fee**

**£135.00**

Life  
Membership  
One person

**One Time Fee**

**£750.00**

**Call**  
01636 705796

**Email**  
info@newarkandnotts.com

**newarkandnotts.com**





# Happy Easter



## One-pan Easter lamb

A miracle one-pan lamb recipe that's as easy as popping a pan in the oven. Rosemary, garlic, white wine and seasonal veg make this a show stopping family meal

Prep 20 mins Cook 2 hrs 15 mins

Serves 6

### Ingredients

- 1.6kg bone-in leg of lamb
- 50ml olive oil plus a splash
- 3 oregano sprigs, leaves picked and roughly chopped
- 4 rosemary sprigs, leaves of 2 picked and roughly chopped
- 1 lemon zested (save the juice for the spring greens)
- 1 garlic bulb cloves lightly smashed
- 1 red chilli pierced
- 1kg potatoes skins on, cut into thick wedges
- 3 fennel bulbs cut into quarters lengthways, tops removed, green fronds reserved
- 250ml white wine
- 250ml good-quality chicken stock

### Method

- 1 Take the lamb out of the fridge 1 hr before cooking it and use a sharp knife to make small incisions all over the meat. Mix the oil with the oregano, chopped rosemary and lemon zest. Rub the marinade all over the lamb, massaging it well into the cuts.
- 2 Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put the garlic, chilli, potatoes, fennel and remaining rosemary into a large roasting tin, pour over some olive oil and toss together. Season the lamb generously, then lay it on top of the veg. Roast for 45 mins until the lamb is starting to brown, then pour in the wine and stock. Continue cooking for 30 mins for rare (55C on a cooking thermometer), 35-40 mins for medium rare (60C) or 45 mins for cooked through (70C).
- 3 Remove the lamb and rest for up to 30 mins. Turn oven down to 160C/140C fan/gas 3, cover the veg with foil and, while the lamb rests, put back in the oven until braised in the roasting juices. Scatter the fennel fronds over the veg, place the lamb back on top and bring the whole tin to the table to serve.

<https://www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes/one-pan-easter-lamb>



# Diary Dates

19 Apr	Midlands Fitness Games
24 Apr-26 Apr	Newark Garden Show
24 Apr	The Newark Emmaus Trust and Children's Bereavement Centre Spring Ball 2026 'Moulin Rouge'
25 Apr-26 Apr	All About Dogs Show
9 May	Nottinghamshire County Show 
30 May	Festival of the Timelords
12 Jun-14 Jun	The National Motorhome & Campervan Show
12 Jun-14 Jun	British Cactus & Succulent National Show

For more event information in August and September, go to: [newarkandnotts.co.uk](http://newarkandnotts.co.uk)



## Become a member of the NNAS

Our members are vital to the life blood of our society and by becoming a member you'll be supporting our charitable objectives - to promote, celebrate and champion agriculture across the midlands.

Check out the benefits of becoming a member by visiting: [newarkandnotts.co.uk](http://newarkandnotts.co.uk)

### Address

Newark & Notts Agricultural Society, Newark Showground, Lincoln Road, Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 2NY

**Call** 01636 705796 **Email** [info@newarkandnotts.co.uk](mailto:info@newarkandnotts.co.uk)

[newarkandnotts.com](http://newarkandnotts.com)

Registered charity number 514080  
Company registered number 01716766



## Staff News



Debra Keeling Haynes  
Sales Executive

Debra joined the team at Newark Showground in February as a Sales Executive. With a strong background in hospitality and events, she previously worked as a Wedding and Events Coordinator as well as a Meetings & Events Coordinator. Debra's passion for event coordination began in her first role as a Food and Beverage Assistant, where she developed a love for helping create memorable experiences for guests. She now brings that enthusiasm and industry knowledge to supporting clients in delivering successful events at the venue.



Jessica Chapman  
Events Administrator

Jessica recently joined the Show Team as a Temporary Events Administrator. Her background is varied: she has over 20 years experience as a senior personal assistant and office manager working for companies such as BMW Park Lane, the ICAEW, EY and the British Land Company. She is also a part time professional photographer, loves upcycling and selling furniture, runs an Airbnb and enjoys teaching French once per week to children aged 4 to 11.

## Farms Without Fences

Opening gates to inclusive and accessible agriculture - with hands-on activities, inspiring talks and pathways into education and careers in agriculture. Getting children involved in farming!

- Tractor Trailer rides, Farming activities, Foraging and more!
- Inspiring talks from farming leaders championing inclusivity
- Interactive discussions on practical steps to build a more inclusive farming industry
- Hands-on farming workshops for all ages and experience levels
- Connect with local organisations sharing community projects, education opportunities, and career pathways



25<sup>th</sup> April 2026

12:00-16:00

FarmEco Community Care Farm,  
off Lodge Lane, Screveton, Nottingham NG13 8JL



FREE



Charitable Trust



FarmEco  
Community Farm



BRITISH SOCIETY  
FOR ANIMAL PRODUCTION

