



15<sup>th</sup> October 2020

Dear Members and friends,

Here is a further update that we trust will be of interest to you all.

### **2020 Annual General Meeting**

As you know, we had to postpone the 2020 AGM, which would normally have taken place in March, due to the COVID lockdown. The latest restrictions, recently confirmed, prevent anyone from arranging gatherings of more than six people. This means that this year we will be obliged to have a 'virtual' AGM to comply with Charity Commission rules. **This will be held on 25<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm via Zoom.**

**Registration** - Members wishing to 'attend' the AGM are asked to register their request by sending an email to [news@newburyshowground.co.uk](mailto:news@newburyshowground.co.uk) including their full name and, if possible, their membership number. They will then be sent a Zoom link closer to the date of the AGM. As 'places' on Zoom are limited, registration will be on a first come, first served basis.

**Accounts** - An important part of the AGM is presenting the Accounts for 2019. The full accounts will be presented by our auditors. These will be posted on the existing website not later than 11<sup>th</sup> November.

**Board of Management** - Two existing members of the Board of Management (BoM), Jon Drew and Adrian Scrope, will be standing for re-election as they have completed their first three-year terms. Nomination forms for any additional new trustees are attached to this letter and should be completed by a proposer and a seconder (both must be Members) and returned via email to [news@newburyshowground.co.uk](mailto:news@newburyshowground.co.uk) as soon as possible. If there are more than two eligible nominations to join the Board, voting papers will be emailed to Members and they must be completed and returned to the Showground Office BY POST no later than 18<sup>th</sup> November.

**The Newbury & District Agricultural Society**

Newbury Showground Priors Court Hermitage Thatcham Berkshire RG18 9QZ

tel 01635 247111 fax 01635847227 e-mail [office@newburyshowground.co.uk](mailto:office@newburyshowground.co.uk) [www.newburyshowground.co.uk](http://www.newburyshowground.co.uk)

Sarah Herriman will be standing down as a trustee at the AGM for personal reasons. We thank her for her efforts whilst on the Board of Management.

It is hoped that our next AGM will take place in March 2021. Its timing and format will depend upon government regulations in force at the time. However, the BoM will be using the next few months to focus on a strategic review of how we manage ourselves and operate in this undoubtedly changed environment, and what our primary objectives should be.

### **Fixed Assets Review Group**

As advised in previous communications to Members, the BoM established this sub-committee earlier in the year to look at all the options for the best and most economic use of the Newbury Showground, particularly bearing in mind our status as a registered charity. Based on the very thorough responses from the four national firms that we approached, and subsequent interviews of the two leading candidates, we are very pleased to confirm that the BoM has recently invited Savills to act as our consultants, and they have accepted the appointment. They are now just starting their research and will be making their recommendations in coming months. We will then advise everyone of future plans in due course. In the meantime, we are endeavouring to conserve our limited cash reserves as much as possible and ensure that the Showground can earn substantial revenues from third party lettings in 2021, albeit that will be dependent on the future direction of the pandemic.

### **Feedback**

2020 is obviously a very difficult year for all sorts of organisations, families, and individuals. Some organisations are facing extinction, some other businesses and families are undoubtedly suffering great hardship, whereas others can continue their lives more or less as normal, albeit with less socialising and personal contact. As trustees of the charity, we have had to make exceedingly difficult decisions with regards to staff and our normal activities. Not all those decisions will have met with universal approval and we hear of discontent from some quarters, although the feedback from our last letter in September has been almost all pleasingly positive.

As advised in our last letter, we set up a new email address which is [feedback@newburyshowground.co.uk](mailto:feedback@newburyshowground.co.uk) so that we can better understand the views of our stakeholders. We would urge Members and friends who want to communicate with the BoM to do so by sending an email to that address. We can assure you that all the emails received will be seen by all the trustees.

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Finally, we must all once again express our sincere thanks to Jan Murray, Susan Layton and Pam Rodrigues (formerly Merry-West) for all their enthusiasm, commitment and hard work in the Showground Office. Without them, the Society would not be able to flourish.

We wish everyone all the best in the weeks and months to come.

Yours sincerely

Ali Brown

Chairman, for and on behalf of the Trustees of the Newbury & District Agricultural Society

Attachments:

- Notice of AGM
- Board nomination form

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