

Meeting with Airedale Agricultural Society about Bingley Show

Wednesday 20th November 2019, 10 am

Present: Claire Platts, Kelly Jowett, Martin Preston, Julia (incoming Chair),

Councillors Howard Clough, Edwina Simpson and Geoff Winnard

Martin explained some of the background to the show, which started in 1867. It originally took place on a Wednesday, moved to a Sunday (best option, but no longer possible due to parks legislation) and now takes place on a Saturday.

It was recognised that the show needed to change. Agriculture activity in the valley has declined, expectations of a good day out have changed, Bingley is no longer a rural or semi-rural community, more a commuter belt.

The event costs £60-70k to run, has consistently made a loss in last few years. It is no longer getting substantial income from car traders or B&B building society sponsorship. There is a problem with stallholders not turning up. Show-jumping entries are considerably down, in part due to the difficulties presented by competing on grass (in dry weather, the ground is too hard).

The Society is a registered company and charity, with 4 directors/Trustees. There is a management committee, largely consisting of the directors/Trustees, and a wider Show Council, which includes exhibitor groups.

Next year's event is on 25th July 2020. It will have a smaller events ring – no motorcycles or show-jumping but country fair-type activity, such as terrier racing, sheepdogs, bird of prey, that will provide a more continuous programme.

The society currently has about 400 members, largely through word-of-mouth. Members can reserve tables for the buffet tent, which can be attractive to families. There is a mailing list on the Bingley Show website – www.bingleyshow.co.uk

The Society recognises it needs to be more engaged and visible in the community and would like help from the Town Council in achieving this. A further meeting is planned in January.

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