



For immediate release
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GRAND NATIONAL, MUSIC AND DINOSAURS TO HEADLINE THE KENT COUNTY SHOW

The Kent County Show 2017, has finalised the entertainment line-up for the Show on Friday 7, Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 July. The annual event organised by the Kent County Agricultural Society are delighted that visitors will be able to experience a wide-range of diverse entertainment for the 2017 Show.

Lucy Hegarty, Show Manager, said, “Each year we try to organise a variety of displays and entertainment based on our visitors’ expectations. Our job is to balance the more traditional displays alongside some new, unique and contemporary entertainment. We continue to gain helpful feedback from our audience via social media and are open to suggestions. This year we have tried to vary the entertainment highlights and give visitors something a little bit different.”

The main Astor Ring will feature ‘The Shetland Pony Grand National’ on all three Show days. The jockeys are children aged between 8 and 13 years old who, will not only entertain the crowds, but their participation is part of a qualifier for the ultimate Shetland Pony Grand National at the Olympia Horse Show later in the year.

The spectacular sees the children take part in a high-speed dash on their pint size Shetland Ponies. This could have been how some of our racing legends have started their careers. The first Shetland Pony Grand National was over twenty years ago, when it was designed to mirror the famous Aintree race on

a miniature scale. Since then it has become a firm favourite with audiences from all over the UK and this year they will be raising funds for the Bob Champion Cancer Trust. Bob is a sporting legend, the Jockey who came back from the brink of death with testicular cancer went on to win the famous Grand National in 1981 on Aldaniti.

The young riders mirror their older counterparts with full silks and racing colours, albeit their tiny steeds have a maximum height 42 inches. Spectators will be able to cheer on their favourite horse and jockey during the two and half laps of the ring, incorporating 12 miniature Aintree fences, including the famous Becher's Brook (the notorious fence at the real Grand National which has a 6ft 9in drop).

Music will play an important part in the Show this year, with three local bands attending on different days. On Friday, the bandstand will host the Faversham Mission Brass Band. This group is based in the town and regularly play in the town centre for concerts and community events. Saturday will see the Kent Police Band take the stage. Based at Police Headquarters in Maidstone, this local band is self-funding and consists of up to 35 serving or retired officers as well as civilians from around the county. Isle of Sheppey, St John Ambulance Band will then play on Sunday. 2017 marks the 71st year for the band which has played throughout the country and abroad.

The musical theme continues with a full line-up of entertainment in the Members' Area; the all-female group 'The Damsels', whose members have experience singing in the West-End as well as international credits, will be performing on Sunday. The Members Area will also host 'The City String Trio' on Friday and on all three days the exclusive area will be able to hear Rachael Hayward a Steel Pan player with an eclectic mix of calypso, pop, reggae and jazz.

Kevin Attwood, Chairman said, "The Members Area is a wonderful place to enjoy the Show from a different perspective. As well as the live music,

members are able to take advantage of priority parking, enhanced amenities and a dedicated caterer. In the past many people have been unaware of the benefits of being a member, thinking that it requires a commitment to the Agricultural Society throughout the year. Whilst this is something we welcome, in fact many visitors take advantage of the three day ticket and are happy to support the Society for those days only”.

New for 2017 is Dexter, a 2 year old baby Tyrannosaurus, a brilliant 4m long life-like part animatronic dinosaur. He has proved that no matter how old we are, we are still fascinated by these prehistoric creatures. Dexter will also be bringing his wrangler, who will be on hand to keep the noisy dinosaur in check. Visitors will also be able to see the Dinosaur Nursery, with a new-born Tyrannosaurus, a baby Triceratops, and a baby Stegosaurus. If you are lucky you may be able to give them a hug.

Another highlight will be Mr and Mrs Flora. These stilt walkers are covered from head-to-toe in scented flowers so realistic that people often wonder if they have been freshly picked. These living, moving sculptures are mesmerizing and children are enchanted by their height, costumes and movement.

Another children’s favourite, Tractor Ted will be back for 2017, he will have his own area where youngsters will be able to play on the Tractor Ted bouncy castle, operate digger den, take part in welly wanging, complete a giant puzzle and visit their merchandise shop.

Regular Showgoers will be delighted to hear that Titan the Robot will be back. This incredible, giant robot is a real crowd pleaser and has become part of the Kent County Show over the past decade. Across the World Titan has grown a cult following and his antics still amaze the hundreds of people that surround him whenever he makes an appearance.

Another new attraction for the 2017 Show is The Old Milk Parlour, a unique display of a vintage dairy. It gives an insight into how milk was produced and

how the milk went from udder to a bottle on our breakfast tables. Visitors will get a real sense of what a working dairy used to be like, including the sounds and smells.

Lucy Hegarty, Show Manager said “It is important that all of our visitors have a wonderful day out. The best recipe for this is to have a large number of interesting, interactive displays where people can be very hands on. Whilst we know that the animals are a major part of the experience, we are also aware that education that is fun can be extremely powerful. All over the Showground there are pockets of amazing displays, demonstrations and activities where people can join in.”

The Countryside and Game area of the Kent County Show has grown in popularity over the past five years, with entertainment such as The Sheep Show and The Hawking Centre, with their awesome free-flying birds of prey. Not to be missed is the brilliant Dog and Duck display where the collie dog herds the ducks skilfully through a course around the ring. Visitors can also see The Terrier Team, Harrietsham Ferrets, Gamegoer Gundogs and enjoy free children’s pony rides.

The online ticket system is now open to purchase discounted tickets for the 2017 Show. A family ticket will cost £45.00 in advance or £50.00 when bought at the gate. The family ticket entitles 2 adults and 2 children aged between 5 and 15 years a full day entrance. Children under 5 go free and parking is free. Adult tickets are £20.70 in advance and £23.00 on the gate, a child ticket is £6.30 in advance and £7.00 on the gate.

The Kent County Show starts at 8.00am and stays open until 6.00pm although there is no rush to leave as some of the food stands stay open later. The Show has over 150 different activities, workshops, displays and competitions which run throughout the day and are often repeated daily.

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For more information and images contact Lucy Hegarty, Show Manager

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Kent County Show – 7, 8, 9 July 2017

The Kent County Show is organised by the Kent County Agricultural Society. The Society has been supporting education and improvement in agriculture, horticulture, forestry and related industries since 1923. We provide grants to Kent Young Farmers Clubs, offer scholarships to university students, provide free school visits with our initiative 'Farming in the Classroom' and host over 2,800 children at our annual education event, the Living Land.

The Kent County Show attracted 80,000 visitors last year and over 500 trade stands.

Registered charity number: 1001191.

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