



Press Release

25 March 2024

Entries now open for the Royal Bath & West Show's catalogue of competition

The Royal Bath & West Show will be welcoming competitors and visitors in 66 days; and entries are now open for a full three days of competition.

Livestock

At the heart of the show are the livestock classes, says competitions executive Naomi Guiver. "Dairy, beef, sheep, and pigs are all on the agenda, which has been expanded to include new classes and championships that reflect the quality and purpose of the livestock sector today."

New to 2024 are two new cattle championships; the Exhibitor Bred Dairy Championship and the Exhibitor Bred Beef Championship – recognising the diligence and care taken to produce top-class homebred stock. A dual-purpose category will also be added to the dairy schedule, welcoming entries for Dexter cattle and any other dual-purpose breeds. The beef schedule will add classes under a new Any Other Variety Minority Breeds category.

In the sheep ring, the equally valuable but differing qualities of male and female breeding stock will be highlighted, with the introduction of Male and Female Breed Championships. And this year will not go without a national show, hosting the Southdown Sheep Society with an additional 'group of four' class.

Onto the shearing platform, the show will be holding the Six Nations Blade Shearing Team Championships, which will see two-person teams from England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, and France go head-to-head.

Pig producers will also be representing the best of the best with many native, continental, and rare breeds. British Saddleback, Gloucester Old Spot, Oxford Sandy and Black, Welsh, and Tamworth breeds will be competing to qualify for respective 'Champion of Champions'. And the popular KuneKune breed will be eligible under its own set of classes, as well new breed classes for the Mangalitza.

Equine

The show has always been a mecca for equitation and horsemanship – and this year will be no different with three full days of classes, qualifiers, and national shows.

New to 2024 are the rescue horse and pony classes. "These classes are a real demonstration of determination and compassion," says Ms Guiver. "Clearly there is a place for rehabilitated and retrained horses and ponies, and we are delighted to recognise that at the show."

Competitors from up and down the country will go head-to-head in 22 ridden and in-hand qualifiers, chasing golden tickets to the prestigious Horse of the Year Show (HOYS). Qualifiers include Ridden Cobs & Working Show Horse, Coloured Horse & Pony of the Year (ridden), Miniature Horses, Mountain & Moorland Ridden Pony of the Year, and Ridden Hunter, including the Ladies Side Saddle Horse of the Year Championship.

HOYS qualifiers also include the fast-paced Double Scurry Harness – small and large – as well as the Shire Horse of the Year Championship and the coveted Price Family Supreme In-hand Championship. “Year-on-year, the show’s equine schedule evolves to best represent modern breeding and horsemanship – while preserving important traditions and purpose, as seen with the heavy horses in harness,” adds Ms Guiver.

Visitors will not want to miss the fearless scurry driving, Pony Club games, and showjumping thrills and spills, as well as the popular inter-hunt relay.

What showmanship is to the arena, craftsmanship is to the forge, says Ms Guiver. Highlights include Champion Farrier across shoemaking and pony, cob, and hunter shoeing classes, with up-and-coming talent recognised in the apprentice shoemaking class with the Worshipful Company of Farriers’ bronze medal.

Food and drink

Every year the show draws thousands of people with its feast of local produce - and visitors will welcome the news that this year’s regional food and drink marquee has been further expanded.

The show will once again host the British Cider Championships, which will include a fruit cider class this year. And visitors will not want to miss their chance to get involved with the People’s Choice Award – awarded to the best cider as voted by the public. As always, visitors will be able to explore the South West Bees and Honey Show, where beekeepers compete for the best honey and bee products.

“The show is a real celebration of the exceptional quality and taste of South West produce – as well as further afield,” says head of shows, Jess Chiplen. There will be plenty of street food and drink vendors dotted around the showground, so you’ll never be far from something delicious.”

Arts and horticulture

Creativity is in abundance at the show, which has led to an expansion of art and horticulture space.

The Artists in Action tent will see more artists demonstrate their craft, and visitors will be able to purchase pieces that catch their eye. Keep a look out for the 2023-24 Art Scholarship winner, Holly Bendall, who will be around the showground taking sketches.

The floral art competition, themed Splendid Somerset, will take place in the show’s horticultural village and has a plethora of sub-themed classes like Festival, Picnic on the Tor, and A Good Vintage. New to 2024 will be the introduction of a People’s Choice Award, which will see visitors cast their vote on their favourite display.

The horticulture village will also host the spectacular pop-up gardens competition, with exhibitors creating the most stunning 4x4m displays. “This year the competition will embody the theme Sensory Stages,” says Ms Chiplen “The design should inspire and educate visitors about the importance of sensory awareness and sustainable living.”

- Competition entries can be made by visiting www.bathandwest.com/royal-bath-and-west-show/competitions
- Book show tickets at <https://www.bathandwest.com/royal-bath-and-west-show/visitors/tickets>
- The Royal Bath & West Show takes place on 30 May – 1 June 2024 at The Showground, Shepton Mallet, Somerset BA4 6QN.

Box: Competition closing dates for entries

Section Name	Entries Close Date
Art	18/04/2024
Bees and Honey	01/05/2024
Floral Art	01/05/2024
Eggs	13/05/2024
Scurry	24/04/2024
Light Horse	24/04/2024
Heavy Horse	24/04/2024
Cider	09/05/2024
Sheep	15/04/2024
Beef Cattle	15/04/2024
Pigs	15/04/2024
Dairy Cattle	06/05/2024
Shoeing & Shoemaking	01/05/2024
Show Jumping	17/05/2024
Sheep Shearing	17/05/2024

Editors' notes.

About the Royal Bath & West of England Society

The Society was founded in 1777 in Bath by a group of philanthropists led by Edmund Rack. We are a registered charity organisation (Registered Charity Number 1039397). The Society was formed with the aims of encouraging agriculture, arts, manufacture, and commerce.

Our charitable activities provide:

- Agriculture, veterinary, educational and art scholarships

- Technical events and seminars
- Practical farming advice and conferences
- Countryside education
- Diversification advice for farmers
- Education for children
- A marketplace for countryside products

The Society continues to deliver a wonderful mix of established traditional exhibits through to the latest energy technology and contemporary entertainment.

The entertainment and features around the 240-acre site ensure enjoyment for every member of the family and include attractions that are spectacular to watch, educational, inspirational, “hands on” or just plain fun.