

PRESS RELEASE

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Shire Horse Show returns to Staffordshire Showground for 2024

The world's largest gathering of Shire horses will be returning to Staffordshire for 2024, it has been announced.

The National Shire Horse Show - believed to be one of the oldest, almost continuous horse shows in the world – will take place next year from 8th to 10th March at Staffordshire Showground.

Victoria Clayton, CEO of the Shire Horse Society, which runs the annual event, said: "We are delighted to announce that we will be returning to Staffordshire for our 2024 National Show. We plan to come back with a bang, with new and additional classes for Shire enthusiasts to compete in and more for the public to see.

"We hope lots of visitors from Staffordshire and the West Midlands will trot along to join us, see the wonderful Shire horses which take part in our show, and enjoy the spectacle of the world's largest gathering of Shires."

Since first being held at the Royal Agricultural Hall in Islington, London, in 1878, when the charity was named the English Cart Horse Society, the national show has been held at only a handful of venues in the UK.

It was first held at Staffordshire Showground in 2016, and then again for a further three years. Sadly the event was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid pandemic, before moving to an outdoor venue at Newark Showground in Nottinghamshire for 2022 and 2023 to give the show the best chance of taking place.

Now the decision has been made to return to Staffordshire, and to once again hold the show over three days in an indoor venue.

The National Shire Horse Show is the flagship event of the Shire Horse Society, the only charity dedicated to the protection, promotion and improvement of the Shire horse. Only a few decades ago, the breed was in danger of dying out. It has experienced a resurgence in recent years, but it is still on the Rare Breed Survival Trust's endangered breed list, with fewer than 300 pedigree Shire horse foals born in the UK every year.

The show generally attracts competitors from across the UK and Europe, and visitors from around the world. Visitors came from far and wide, including Canada, the USA, Sweden, Austria, Germany, Denmark and Holland, to enjoy the show in March 2023.

Competitors take part in a range of classes, showing their horses in-hand, in-harness and ridden. There are also trade and other stalls, activities and different entertainments to help make the event a fascinating day out for the family.

Victoria Clayton added: "Our shows at Staffordshire Showground were incredibly successful and we are looking forward to planning our return show for 2024, giving Shire horse fans the opportunity to compete and spectate as the gentle giants of the horse world are put through their paces."

Tickets will go on sale later this year from the Shire Horse Society website.

For more information about the Shire Horse Society and the show, visit www.shire-horse.org.uk

Ends

Notes to editors:

Additional photos are available on request. For more information or to arrange interviews with a representative of the Shire Horse Society, please contact Louise Duffield at Perfect 10 PR.

The Shire Horse Society runs the Save Our Shires appeal. Although experiencing a resurgence in popularity, the breed is still at risk with fewer than 300 new foals registered in the UK each year.

Visit www.shire-horse.org.uk to find out how to support the appeal or contact the charity on 01536 771611.

The charity is based at The Old Dairy, Rockingham Castle and Park, Rockingham, Market Harborough LE16 8TH.

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