

Shire Horse Society Regional Open Meetings 2026

Following the recent member survey, respondents indicated that they would welcome the return of regional open meetings. It is therefore the intention to have these in 2026 and potentially annually or bi-annually thereafter.

The Society has the following vision and goals: -

Our vision is: - *“To be the leading global authority in the preservation, promotion and protection of Shire horses, fostering a vibrant community of enthusiasts dedicated to safeguarding the iconic breed for future generations”.*

Our strategic goals are: - *Breed preservation, breed improvement and engagement; Membership engagement, growth and retention; Education and outreach; Welfare and well-being; and financial sustainability.*

The Shire Horse Society is a membership-based charity. It is therefore our members who are essential for the delivery of the vision for the Society.

Two initiatives are planned for 2026: one with the target of ensuring greater member engagement, and the other, gaining a greater understanding of our membership base.

Greater member engagement

We have an extensive range of points of contact with Members: our three committees and their work; e-newsletter, updates, Annual Report, Shows, Youth camp and our council members (although integral to the future of SHS, their views do not necessarily represent those of Members or Trustees).

However, despite efforts to date, we have not been successful in gaining Members' views systematically:

- Attendance at last year's AGM by Members was low, i.e. 10% of Members
- The response level to the survey of Members in was low, i.e. 10% of Members.

The Open meetings will all run to the same format and will hopefully encourage a greater turnout of the membership (comparatively to the AGM), by taking the meetings around the country.

The AGM from 2026 onwards will be for the presentation of the accounts and the election of Trustees and Council members.

The format for the open meetings will be:

- A presentation by the CEO on SHS's activities and plans.
- An open forum Q & A; both a minimum of one Trustee and one Council member for the relevant area will be present to answer questions alongside the CEO.
- A survey of members in attendance will take place.
- The session would also facilitate networking opportunities among Members.

The results of the survey will be aggregated at National level, with any significant difference by region also being reported. The ensuing report will be distributed to all Members. This will form the basis for formulating a greater understanding of our membership base and to help prioritise next steps.

To confirm a place at the meetings, please contact the office and indicate which venue you will be attending, this will help us gauge the refreshments needed at the relevant venues.

We look forward to seeing you at the meetings!

The venues for the open meetings are as follows: -

- Gloucestershire** Tuesday 13th January 2026. Arrive from 1.45pm. Meeting 2.00pm-4.00pm
Belfry Hotel, Broad St, Littledean, Cinderford GL14 3JS
- Cheshire** Wednesday 14th January 2026. Arrive from 3.45pm. Meeting 4.00pm-6.00pm
Cotebrook Shire Horse Centre, Cotebrook, Tarpoley
- Suffolk/East Anglia** Tuesday 27th January 2026. Arrive from 5.30pm. Seminar 6.00pm-8.00pm
Rossdales Equine Hospital & Diagnostic Centre (Simon Gibson Room), Cotton
End Road, Exning, near Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 7NN
Please park in the Medical Intensive Care Unit carpark. This is the tarmac carpark on your right after you
enter through the main gates.
- Lincolnshire** Wednesday 28th January 2026. Arrive from 3.45pm. Meeting 4.00-6.00pm
Minting Village Hall, Bricken Field Lane, Minting, nr Horncastle, Lincs, LN9 5RX
- Yorkshire** Thursday 5th February 2026. Arrive from 3.30pm. Meeting 4.00pm-6.00pm
Cannon Hall Farm, Cawthorne, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S75 4AT- please meet
in The Dog Café.
- Devon** Tuesday 10th February 2026. Arrive from 4.00pm. Meeting 4.30-6.30pm
The Devon Hotel (Edwardian Suite), Matford, near Exeter, Devon EX2 8XU
- Oxfordshire** Wednesday 11th February 2026. Arrive from 11:30am. Meeting 12 noon – 2.00pm
Hook Norton Brewery, Brewery Lane, Hook Norton, near Banbury, Oxfordshire
OX15 5NY
- Wales, southern area** Monday 23rd February 2026. Arrive from 5.30pm. Meeting 6.00pm-8.00pm
The Barn at Brynich, Brynich, near Brecon, Powys LD3 7SH
Note, this is The Barn at Brynich, not to be confused with other barns in the area!
- Wales, northern area** Tuesday 24th February 2026. Arrive from 5.30pm. Meeting 6.00pm-8.00pm
The Wild Pheasant Hotel and Spa, Berwyn Road, Llangollen, Denbighshire LL20
8AD
- Lancashire** Monday 9th March 2026. Arrive from 4.00pm. Meeting 4.30pm-6.30pm
Clitheroe Auction Mart, Ribblesdale Centre, Lincoln Way, Clitheroe, BB7 1QD.
- Staffordshire** Wednesday 11th March 2026. Arrive from 4.00pm. Meeting 4.30pm-6.30pm
Ash End Children's Farm, Middleton Lane, Middleton, near Tamworth,
Staffordshire B78 2BL
- South East / Kent** Thursday 12th March 2026. Arrive from 1.00pm. Meeting 1.30pm-3.30pm
Goldsmid Hall, Tudeley Road, Tudeley, near Tonbridge, Kent TN11 0NW