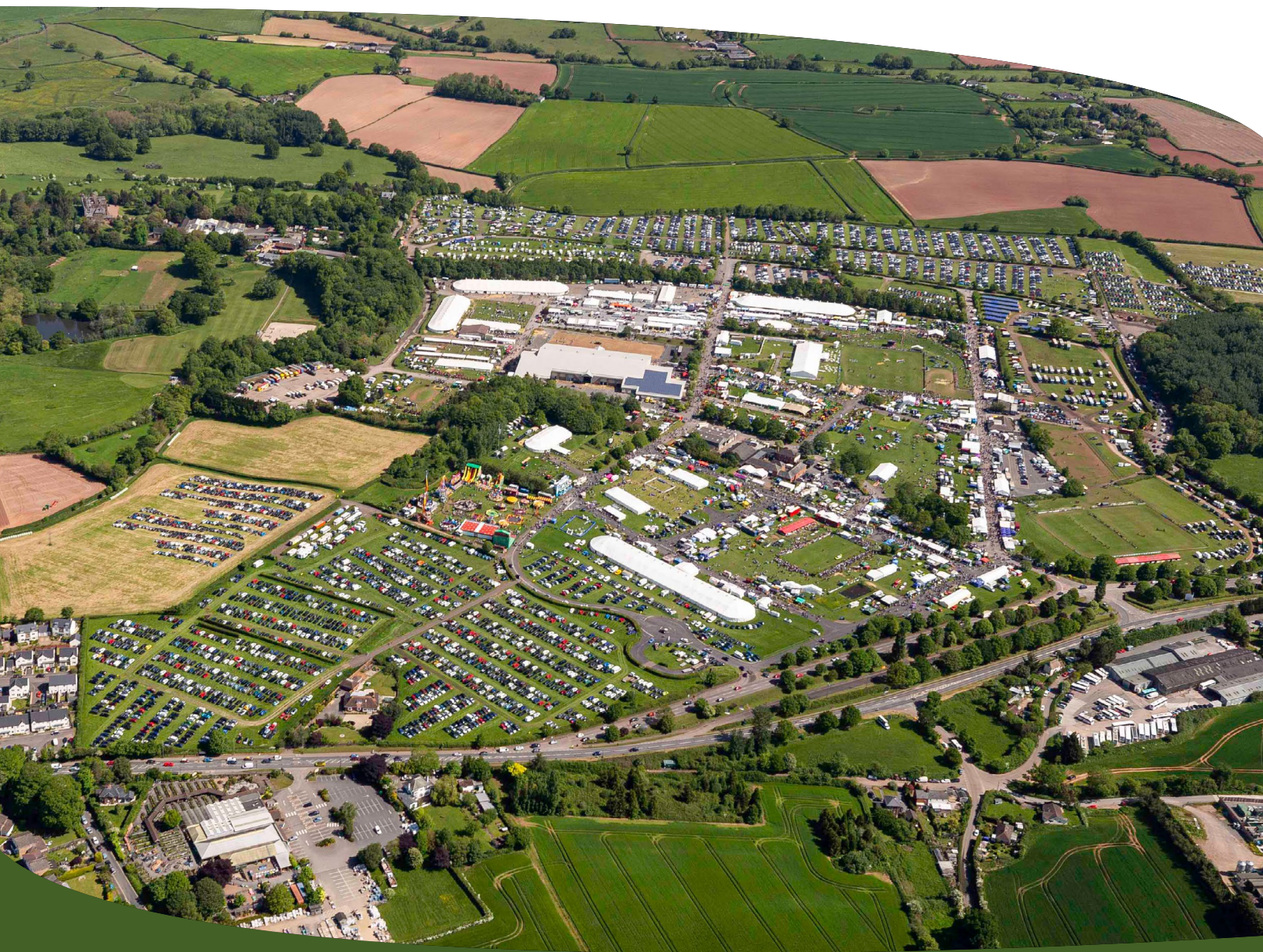




# *Strategic Vision to 2050*

JANUARY 2026



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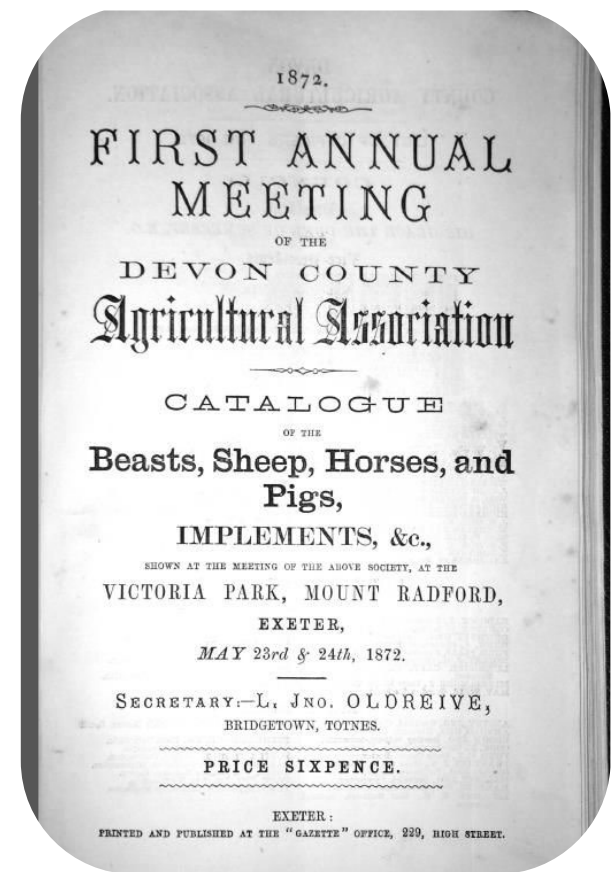
The Devon County Show is a fundraising activity of the Devon County Agricultural Association (DCAA) to help support agriculture and the countryside. Charity Number – 292897



## ABOUT THE DCAA: OUR PURPOSE AND HISTORY

The Devon County Agricultural Association (DCAA) has a proud and distinguished history as a charitable organisation at the heart of Devon life. Established in 1872, the DCAA promotes and celebrates best practice in farming, food production, and rural industry. Its principal charitable mission is to educate both the public and the agricultural community, ensuring that the farming sector remains vibrant, progressive, and connected to the broader community.

The DCAA organises and supports a range of events that showcase innovation, excellence, and sustainability in agriculture. Its flagship event, the Devon County Show, is a major annual celebration of rural life, bringing together communities, producers, and visitors from across the county and beyond. Innovative programmes such as Rootstock (focused on regenerative farming), Agrifest (a leading prime stock event), and FarmWise (which engages hundreds of Key Stage 1 and 2 schoolchildren) reflect the Association's evolution and continued relevance.



# VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES (TO 2050)

Our longterm ambition is to continue delivering a successful and forwardthinking Devon County Show that celebrates and educates around the full spectrum of agriculture in Devon, including livestock, horticulture, aquaculture, forestry, and sustainable land use.

*By 2050, we envision:*

- A resilient and modernised Devon County Show that reflects best practice in farming, climate adaptation, and biodiversity recovery.
- An outwardlooking DCAA that reaches across Devon through events, conferences, education, and school outreach.
- A financially sustainable charity supported by multiuse infrastructure and yearround event income from Westpoint.
- A civic and cultural hub that engages the local community and contributes actively to the public good.



*Our values and guiding principles include:*

- Heritage & Innovation
- Education & Engagement
- Community & Access
- Partnership
- Sustainability

**Mission:** To champion and support Devon's agricultural, rural, and wider communities by delivering inclusive, educational, and sustainable events.

**Vision:**

- Devon's leading agricultural and community institution, known for relevance, sustainability, and innovation
- A national exemplar in climateaware rural event delivery
- A key partner in the cultural and social infrastructure of Exeter and East Devon
- A lifelong learning platform for food, farming, and sustainability
- A selfsustaining charity with reinvestment in land, people, and infrastructure



# OPERATIONAL OVERVIEW

The operation of the Westpoint site is fundamental to the success of the DCAA. It not only enables the delivery of our core activities, particularly the Devon County Show, but generates income to sustain infrastructure and charitable work.

## Licences and Regulatory

### Considerations:

- Health and safety compliance across all operations
- Alcohol and food licenses, including for the Lime Tree Café
- Permissions for traffic and crowd management
- Comprehensive insurance and regulatory coverage

### Site Management:

- Professional grounds and office staff maintain the estate and manage events
- Around 450 volunteers support major show events
- Coordination with contractors, suppliers, and emergency services ensures successful event execution

### Future Operational Development:

- Invest in permanent infrastructure to reduce Show costs and increase opportunities for Westpoint.
- Potential to widen use of the showground to support sport, culture, and civic activity: theatres, cinemas, sports fields, and pavilions
- Partnership with local government and development stakeholders for shared infrastructure



# ECONOMIC IMPACT AND EVENT PROFILE

Westpoint plays a central role in the regional economy, attracting significant numbers of visitors and enabling a diverse programme of events.

## Visitor Numbers:

- Devon County Show: approximately 97,000 over three days
- Other events (e.g. Concerts): 4,500 to 7,500 attendees
- Weekly lettings and conferences: Ranging from hundreds to several thousands
- Agricultural and educational events: Rootstock (350), Agrifest (700) FarmWise (1,500)

## Types of Events:

- Agricultural shows and knowledge exchange forums
- Concerts, expos, and nationalscale sporting and leisure events
- Political, religious, and civic conferences
- Tool fairs, horse and dog shows, and team training sessions

## Challenges:

- Traffic and car parking infrastructure under growing pressure
- Neighbouring housing developments reducing parking capacity
- Need for integrated planning with highways and local authorities

# SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE COMMITMENTS

Sustainability is at the heart of how the DCAA operates Westpoint and its events. The Association supports a just transition to greener practices in agriculture, events, and community development.

## Key Sustainability Measures:

- Over 800 solar panels generating 60%+ of the site's electricity
- 90%+ of waste recycled with Devon Contract Waste and Coastal Recycling
- Waterefficient fixtures and lowflow systems
- Transition away from singleuse plastics; polycarbonate reusable cups
- Local, organic, and sustainably sourced catering supplies
- Biodiversity preservation through hedgerows and permanent pasture

## Future Priorities:

- Greater alignment with the Devon Carbon Plan
- Expansion of solar capacity to support adjacent housing developments
- Integration of electric vehicle infrastructure and improved public transport links



# COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The DCAA believes in strong relationships with local stakeholders and the broader community. Notably our volunteer Stewards were awarded the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS) in 2017.

## Current and Future Engagement:

- Ongoing collaboration with parish councils and residents
- Active relationships with Devon County Council and East Devon District Council
- Partnerships with media (BBC, ITV, Radio Exe, Heart, Devon Radio)
- Charity initiatives including show partnerships and a charity committee

## Education & Outreach:

- FarmWise: school engagement both onsite and via mobile education units
- Opportunities for youth volunteering and learning at the County Show
- Links with universities and research institutions like the University of Exeter and University of Plymouth



## Community Role to 2050:

- Expanded cultural and sporting infrastructure to serve 8,000+ new nearby homes plus existing wider community.
- Closer partnerships with schools, charities, local clubs, and community groups
- Use of Westpoint as a yearround gathering place for public life
- Growing importance of Westpoint as green infrastructure

## CURRENT KEY COLLABORATORS





# UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DCAA AND WESTPOINT

- Largest conference and event venue southwest of Bristol
- Home of Devon's largest public event, the Devon County Show
- Strategic location near M5 with robust logistics and access
- Dual identity as both a charitable body and regional economic engine
- 50-acre site with flexible, allweather capability and extensive parking
- Trusted convener of agricultural, cultural, and business conversations

## SWOT ANALYSIS

### Strengths

- Extensive **facilities** and large event space
- Dedicated **staff** and strong **volunteer base**
- Rich **tradition and history** since 1872
- Strategic **location** with strong **community connections**
- Ongoing **charitable support** and **financial stability**
- **Charitable status** with no shareholders and low cost of capital
- Strong relationship with **local councils**
- Diverse and skilled **Board of Trustees** embracing innovation and opportunities
- Board collaborative and listening to and drawing from **Council**
- **Modern governance structure**
- **Highly qualified and engaged finance committee**
- Significant **green space** acting as a "green lung" for the area
- Closely located to large city
- Positive cashflow and readiness to maintain and invest

### Threats

- Regional **development pressures** and road/transport challenges
- Uncertainty from **government financial policies**
- Rising **cost of living** and operational costs
- **Weather dependency** for outdoor events
- Increasing **competition** from other venues and events
- Risk of **temporary closure** of Westpoint impacting revenue

### Weaknesses

- Aging local **infrastructure** at capacity and requiring improvement
- **Traffic congestion** caused by neighbouring development and limited on site parking capacity
- Overdependence on the **County Show** for agricultural engagement
- Heavy reliance on **Westpoint income** for working capital
- Risk averse approach due to **charitable objectives**

### Opportunities

- Improved **public transport links**
- Investment in **permanent infrastructure** (e.g., sports facilities, mezzanine development)
- Expansion of **partnerships** and cultural offerings
- **Cost reduction** through operational efficiencies
- Development of **solar parking**, grid connections, and EV charging
- Growth in **marketing and proactive business development**
- New revenue streams: **camping facilities**, permanent toilets, caravan rallies
- Enhanced **community engagement** and cultural events
- Reducing show and Westpoint costs through **investment and engagement**; as an example, improved road links, permanent traffic control.
- Continuing recruitment of council and board members bringing connections, innovations and opportunities with them.
- Opportunities yet to be discovered through **consulting our stakeholders**



# ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

As we look ahead, we also recognise that the external environment in which we operate will change significantly. What we believe will change over the period of this strategy includes:

## **Increasing Traffic Along the A3052**

While traffic movements from the County Show have not risen for decades continued development along the A3052 is placing growing pressure on local roads. This creates heightened risk for the Devon County Show and for our wider event programme. We will work proactively with transport consultants, the Highways Authority, and local government to plan and mitigate impacts. This includes exploring enhanced bus partnerships, active travel options, and alternative access routes to support sustainable travel to and from the Show and Westpoint.

## **The Marlcombe New Town**

The Marlcombe development presents both risks and opportunities. In particular, its potential impact on traffic flows and the significant reduction or reconfiguration of traditional Show parking must be carefully addressed. The DCAA will engage with developers, planners, and local authorities to secure suitable long term parking solutions, protect Show operations, and explore shared infrastructure options that could benefit both the local community and Westpoint.

## **Westpoint**

Westpoint is nearing capacity, we are actively monitoring traffic during major events to understand our impact and provide data driven evidence for future planning. The future use of Westpoint we may involve host more year round events and more smaller events. This may affect local traffic patterns although the scale of individual events will not increase. We are employing transport consultants and engaging with transport partners to ensure responsible growth aligned with community expectations.

## **Growth of the Conference and Business Events Sector**

The continued development of our conference and business events programme may further alter site usage, access requirements, and local travel patterns. We will incorporate traffic and sustainability considerations into our long term planning for Westpoint's multi use facilities, ensuring that growth in this area supports both economic resilience and the needs of neighbouring communities.

# CONCLUSION

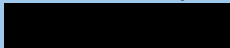
The DCAA and the Westpoint site form a vital cultural, economic, and educational resource for Devon and the South West. With a legacy dating back to 1872 and a vision reaching to 2050, the DCAA is uniquely positioned to champion sustainability, celebrate rural life, and serve as a catalyst for connection, growth, and innovation.



*We invite our stakeholders, neighbours, and supporters to join us in shaping this shared future.*

### *Get In Touch*

If you have any questions or feedback arising from this document please contact the DCAA team:



info@dcshow.org

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