

# Epsom Downs

## RACECOURSE

### The Betfred Derby Festival 2025 – Update for Conservators

The 2024 Betfred Derby Festival was an extremely successful event, with world-class racing across both days. Racegoers enjoyed a safe Derby Festival Experience on the ground and millions more at home around the world saw 'City of Troy' become the 245<sup>th</sup> winner of The Derby.

Despite the adverse weather on the day, the safety and security operation was highly complex, and the cross-organisational response to the reduced threat of Animal Rising was world-class in ensuring that the event ran without significant issues. The highlight of the Derby Festival was the attendance of the King & Queen on Oaks Day.

Betfred Derby 2025 planning has been underway since June 2024, and since then there have been a couple of key personnel changes in the Epsom team. Jim Allen started as the new General Manager in November 2024 and Michael Blake will begin as Operations Manager in February 2025. Both will bring in a wealth of diverse experience to complement the existing expertise and experience within the team.

The focus for the 2025 Derby festival will be to again deliver a world-class event that meets the expectations of today's stakeholder, from owner to jockey to paying customer to fans on the Hill, whilst resetting the operation of the event to match the expected volume of visitors.

The Betfred Derby start time will revert to its usual position at 4.30pm, and whilst we are monitoring the ongoing threat of protestors there is no specific intelligence indicating a threat similar to 2023 at this stage.

There were three main changes for 2024 to improve the experience across the event which we would like to reproduce in 2025 again:

1. Change of facility at The Winning Post (in Lonsdale Enclosure) from a seated hospitality structure to a more relaxed, 'Ticket+' experience, named 'Cedrics'. This will appeal to a younger customer looking to upgrade their experience from the typical grandstand ticket. The design of the facility will be more colourful than the previous white marquee to better showcase Racing's Greatest Carnival to fans on and off site.
2. Change of post-event music location, from Hyperion Lawn to the front of the Grandstand beside the Administration Building. This move is to improve the safety and experience of the fans who want to stay and watch the after-racing music as well as those fans wanting to leave site through the main gate.
3. Closure of Footpath 51, the Tunnel under the track that runs from Tattenham Corner Road to The Hill. This is again a safety move to reduce the number of pedestrians crossing the roads near to the roundabout. Pedestrians wanting to access the Hill will be directed to the Rubbing House crossing and London Road crossing, reducing the congestion and potential risk of pedestrian and vehicle movement close to the racecourse entrance. This application will be submitted to the Council in Q1 2025. The Racecourse received no negative feedback from this action last year and would like to do the same for 2025.

The focus of the event build will again be to minimise inconvenience to other users of the Downs whilst, at the same time, enabling the team to operate efficiently. This was broadly

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managed very well in 2023 and 2024, however some issues were highlighted between the travelling community and local residents which are being discussed and action plans developed for 2025.

We are hugely excited about what's in store for the whole 2025 racing season, and in particular The Betfred Derby Festival, and look forward to welcoming everyone in June this year.