

Hillfields Farm is a small privately owned estate in Lower Basildon. With a livery yard and superb equestrian facilities it's not where you would expect nearly 50 wedding suppliers to meet for the second Networking Event organised by **Berkshire Wedding Fairs**. Part of the large 400 acre estate is occupied by the 'Kings Barn'; it was here the businesses met last Thursday evening. The first part of the evening was where the majority of the Networking was done. As an ice breaker they had a little fun by mixing up everyone's name badges with the idea that it made the attendees talk to people in the room to find out whose badge they were wearing. It caused a few giggles as some of the male guests ended up wearing female name badges until they located the correct owner which certainly made for a relaxed atmosphere.

The second part of the evening was run by **Rachel Tombs** of **Links2Leads** who did an informal presentation on social media advertising covering LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram.

Joanne Kent from Berkshire Wedding Fairs said 'The unusual thing about this type of Networking Event is that most of us already know of each other within the industry, but that doesn't mean this style of Networking is any less beneficial to that of one where you meet new contacts. We asked Rachel to attend as most of the companies are small local businesses and with the rapid rise in social media as a form of advertising we felt we could all do with a bit of a masterclass!'

The ladies from Berkshire Wedding Fairs initially organised their first Networking Event as a thank you to those companies that had been part of their success in the 11 years that they had been in business. The feedback after was so positive that it encouraged them to organise another. Jackie Ivermee said after Thursday's event that the chances were they would go on to organise a 3rd event in 2018 as everyone's comments both during and after the event were so positive.



L-R Rachel Tombs Links2Leads, Joanne Kent Berkshire Wedding Fairs, Becky Steljes Hillfield Farm, Jackie Ivermee Berkshire Wedding Fairs