ABBOTTS DIGEST

Summer 2025
Issue 3

INDUSTRY INSIGHTS, EVENT TRENDS & SUPPLIER SHOUT-OUTS FROM ACROSS THE SOUTH WEST

ABBOTTS
EVENT HIRE

Summer's here, and so is the next edition of Abbotts Digest! We're here to help you prepare for another season of amazing events, packed with fresh ideas, new finds, and stories from fellow industry pros across the South West.

DISCOVER OUR NEW GIFT VOUCHERS

DISCOUNTS ON WEDDING INSURANCE

A BUZZING SUMMER IN THE SOUTH WEST

RICH'S RUNDOWN

Thank you all for the continued support and response to our Digest series; it truly means a lot to the team. The season is already shaping up to be a lively one, with bookings coming in fast and a real buzz building right across the South West. It's been great reconnecting with so many of you and welcoming new faces into the community.

With so much happening already, 2025 is off to a flying start full of energy, and we're proud to be right at the heart of it. We have some fantastic new collaborations coming up with names like CoverMarque for event insurance and partnerships with venues like Lympstone Manor.

Always Striving for a First-Class Service

Over the past few months, I've had the pleasure of getting out and visiting both familiar faces and new ones. It's genuinely one of my favourite parts of the job. These catch-ups aren't just about checking in on how things are going; they're a chance to hear about exciting business plans and chew the fat about industry issues that affect us all.

I've really appreciated the hospitality along the way, too, and a special thanks to Keda for introducing me to whipped feta (a new favourite!). Conversations like these remind me how important it is to continue delivering the first-class service we strive to achieve.

New Stock for a New Season

Our warehouse team has been hard at work prepping for the months ahead. We've added fresh seasonal stock, including our stunning new Flamenco crystal glassware range, and fully topped up our most popular lines. With extra delivery vehicles now on the road, we're ready to keep things moving smoothly all season.

An Optimistic Start to the Season

Despite the usual political noise, things feel positive out in the real world. The events scene is buzzing, and it's been brilliant to hear from so many of you about what's ahead. One thing to bear in mind: last-minute bookings seem to be on the rise again this year. And with 2026 shaping up to be a busy one already, it's worth thinking ahead.

New Gift Vouchers Available Now

Last month, we also launched our new Abbotts gift vouchers. These are ideal for spreading the cost of an event and make a thoughtful present, particularly as traditional wedding gifts become less common. They are a simple but practical way to support someone planning a celebration.

Stronger Working Together

It's been wonderful to see so many events already in full swing. That sense of celebration and togetherness is what we love most about this industry. We're also enjoying working more closely with some brilliant local suppliers this season, and we're always looking for new ways to bring even more value to our customers, so if you'd like to collaborate, we'd love to hear about you and your business. There's more on that inside, have a flick through!

A heartfelt thank you for continuing to trust Abbotts with your events. Whether it's something small and intimate or a big headline moment, our team is here to make the journey smoother, easier, and just that bit more enjoyable. Let's make this season one to remember, together.

Best wishes,

Rich Abbott

Rich Abbott
Visit: abbottseventhire.co.uk
Call: 01209 212 794

Are you a caterer or supplier who'd like to be featured in this newspaper? Email: beckystewart@abbotts.info for your chance to feature in our next edition.

FESTIVAL SEASON 2025

The UK's festival season is now in full swing, with brighter days and busier calendars ahead. From music festivals to food shows, these events are not only cultural highlights but also play an important role in supporting the local economy. For organisers, suppliers, and venues alike, festivals offer more than just feel-good moments, they're a key part of the events landscape and a valuable source of regional growth.

We're really proud to play our part, helping ensure festivals of all kinds run smoothly and leave lasting impressions on everyone who attends.

A Booming Industry

The UK's festival industry has seen remarkable growth. In 2024, live music events contributed a record £6.1 billion to the economy while supporting more than 45,000 jobs. With 19.2 million attendees, marking a 33% increase from the previous year. This surge reflects a strong public appetite for live experiences, with festivals like Glastonbury and Victorious Festival drawing massive crowds and generating substantial local economic benefits.

Automotive Enthusiasm

Car shows have also rebounded strongly post-pandemic. Car show attendance figures have returned to pre-COVID levels, with organisers reporting record numbers of cars and visitors in 2024 and even more expected for this year. Events like the Goodwood Festival and Lympstone's Celebration of Speed continue to captivate audiences, blending automotive history with modern innovation.

Food Festivals and Culinary Events

Food festivals are also booming across the UK. Research from CGA by NIQ shows that a third of festival-goers plan to attend more festivals in 2025, with operators anticipating a 10% rise in ticket sales. Closer to home, food festivals like Rock Oyster continue to showcase the South West's incredible food culture and sense of community.

These food festivals are a great way to highlight and celebrate local producers, support independent businesses, and bring people together in beautiful, fun surroundings.

Supporting Festival Success

With festivals back in full swing, the energy across the South West is hard to miss. From food fairs to music events and car shows, we're proud to support organisers with everything they need, including furniture, catering equipment, and a reliable team behind it all. Our flexible delivery, collection, and return-dirty service takes the pressure off, so you can focus on creating unforgettable experiences.

And with public enthusiasm soaring, the 2025 season is shaping up to be one of the best yet.

CATERER'S CORNER

FOUR ELEMENTS

This edition of Caterer's Corner features an interview with Ben Davies and Andy Richardson of Four Elements Catering. They offer versatile catering services for private and corporate events, crafting custom menus for weddings and other occasions with a focus on local and sustainable ingredients.

Tell us about your business.
We are an outdoor events catering business and offer a wide range of services across the south west, from private chefs to large-scale corporate catering. We love to cater for everyone – part of the fun is getting to do something different every day.

How did you get started?
We started when the street food trailer scene was kicking off. The plan was to buy a trailer and sell mussels and fries, and we have only done that two times over the last nine years as we were taken in different directions.

What makes you stand out in the South West?
We both have very different backgrounds, both personally and professionally, so we can appeal to a wide range of clients. We have lots of different menus to suit everyone's needs and budgets.

Share a memorable event.
We were doing some catering for the MOD, and the security sent us to the wrong location with the horsebox, and we managed to get stuck on the beach. We ended up roping in 15 Royal Marines in full rig to spin the trailer around so they could eat lunch.

What are your biggest challenges?
Good staff have always been one of those things that we have struggled to find. We make sure we have a nice, positive working environment, and we work with a lovely local agency who provide us with top-up staff when needed.

How important is local sourcing?
Having both worked in Devon & Cornwall for over 20 years now, we have made some good relationships with suppliers, and we have open and transparent communications with them. We don't pick our suppliers by price but by the quality of local produce.

What catering trends have you noticed?
More couples and clients are booking closer to their event dates than in the past. We've also seen a big shift towards sharing-style dining at weddings over traditional plated meals.

How has working with Abbotts helped?
We have always used Abbotts for many years and have built a loyal and trustworthy relationship, knowing that when you turn up, everything you have ordered is there correctly and in good working order makes the day run a lot more smoothly.

What's coming up next?
Our new project, 'Wild Chefs Devon,' will see us taking our cooking off-grid to explore and enjoy Devon's stunning coves and tors in our limited free time. We'd appreciate a follow and your opinions!

Need professional catering in Plymouth? Call Four Elements. They go above and beyond to bring professional cooking with creative flair to every client. Whether it's catering for your wedding or any other event, discover more here: www.fourelementscatering.com.

FERN GODFREY

Welcome to our latest Supplier Shout-Out, where we highlight those who bring something special to the events industry. In this edition, we spotlight Fern Godfrey Weddings, a luxury wedding planner, known for creating stylish and atmospheric weddings for couples.

Tell us about your business.
I'm a wedding planner based in Cornwall, but I work all over the Southwest at beautiful venues, private homes and marquee locations.

How did your business start?
I have a degree in Law with French, but my heart was always set on working in the wedding industry. After university, I worked for Rock My Wedding, which was an excellent opportunity to network with suppliers. When we moved down to Cornwall, the time was right for me to start my own business, and I'm really fortunate that, because of my great connections, I hit the ground running.

What makes you stand out?
Clients tell me I'm incredibly calm. I blend into the background and orchestrate the event seamlessly. I'm not the typical 'events' person – weddings mustn't ever feel corporate. I also have a good eye for design and colour.

Favourite event and why?
My favourite weddings are where the people are lovely. I cry happy tears on my clients' wedding days and miss chatting with them after the weekend.

Biggest business challenge?
COVID was really tough. Other than that, it's the usual things – tricky clients and managing expectations/budgets can be challenging. Every wedding brings a new unexpected challenge – it's what keeps it fun!

How do you stay inspired?
I try to avoid social media and focus on ensuring my clients' weddings are personal and meaningful. I look to the US and Australian markets, as well as theatre and set design from fashion week runways, for inspiration.

Exciting industry trends?
One of the silver linings of COVID was that people felt much more able to have smaller weddings and break from tradition, which is lovely to see. Big changes are coming as Gen Z gets married, which will keep us all on our toes!

How has Abbotts helped?
The Southwest's network of wedding and event suppliers is strong, and Abbotts are great at keeping everyone connected. Abbotts have always been supportive and are a constant reassurance in an ever-changing industry.

What's coming up next?
Just lots more lovely weddings – I'm working all over the Southwest again this summer and also have a gorgeous wedding at the OXO Tower in London, which I'm really excited about!

Dream event to work at?
It would just be more of the same, right here at home. I have such wonderful clients, and if they could just get married repeatedly year after year, that would be the dream scenario!

For those stylish, refined, and atmospheric weddings, Fern Godfrey Weddings delivers calm expertise and vision across the Southwest. Learn more: www.ferngodfreyweddings.com.

ARE YOU COVERED?

EVENT & MARQUEE INSURANCE

We're pleased to announce our new partnership with CoverMarque, one of the UK's leading marquee and event insurance providers. As part of this collaboration, our customers can now claim £10 off their insurance when booking with CoverMarque.

Whether you're organising a private celebration, wedding, or large-scale public event, CoverMarque offers specialist cover designed for the events industry, giving you peace of mind should the unexpected happen.

Use code: ABBOTTSHIRE at checkout to receive your exclusive £10 discount. Visit covermarque.com to learn more and get your quote today or scan the QR code here.

GIFT VOUCHERS NOW AVAILABLE

Looking for the perfect, easy gift for someone special? Our new gift vouchers are ideal for spreading the cost of an event and make a thoughtful present, particularly as traditional wedding gifts become less common.

A simple but practical way to support someone planning a celebration, available in convenient multiples of £50.

For more details on our gift vouchers, visit our website www.bit.ly/abgiftvouchers or scan this QR code:

LYMPSTONE MANOR

CLIENT FEEDBACK

"We are proud to partner with Abbotts Event Hire for our larger-scale premium events. Their high-quality catering equipment and reliable service help us deliver exceptional experiences for our guests every time. We enjoy working with the Abbotts team - they are always professional, accommodating, and a pleasure to collaborate with."

Lympstone Manor is one of the South West's most celebrated luxury destinations, an award-winning country house hotel and Michelin-starred restaurant overlooking the Exe Estuary. It is the personal creation and vision of Michael Caines, one of Britain's most celebrated and influential chefs. Within the splendour of its three dining rooms, Michael expresses his vision of modern British cuisine at the very highest level. Lympstone Manor sets the standard for luxury hospitality in the region.

WIN TICKETS TO THE CELEBRATION OF SPEED

Win A Pair of General Admission Tickets to The Celebration of Speed

The Celebration of Speed will be back at Lympstone Manor on Wednesday, 9th July 2025, with more of the best motors, food, drink, and music. This year's headliners are the iconic Brand New Heavies, with a DJ set from Judge Jules and more music acts to be confirmed very soon.

We'd love to see your setup! Share a photo with your Abbotts Digest on Instagram @abbotts_event_hire or Facebook @Abbotts-Event-Hire, tag us, and use #AbbottsDigest for a chance to win.

Winners *will be announced 18th June 2025. For full Terms and Conditions, see lympstonemanor.co.uk/competition-terms-and-conditions*

Snap a photo of yourself or your setup and post on our socials tagging #AbbottsDigest to be in with a chance to win!

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