

PRESS RELEASE

23rd November 2021

Immediate use

Retford Christmas Market & Christmas Lights Switch-On

Sunday 21st November 2021

Retford Christmas Market and Lights Switch-On on Sunday 21st November 2021 was certainly one of the best ever!

The day was really exciting with a range of Christmas stalls, crafts, on-stage entertainment, and fireworks, plus the spectacular Retford Christmas Lights and Christmas Tree.

Santa arrived at 12noon – thanks to the Retford Lions - and he was in his grotto in the Town Hall during the afternoon, stepping out at 5pm to switch on the lights. He needed an assistant, and a lucky child – Willow - was chosen at random from entries completed at the grotto in a draw at 3pm.

On stage, following a parade down Grove St led by the Blue Ice Cheerleaders, there was the opening service at 11.15am with Revds Julie Coates and David Bean. This was followed by entertainment from the Elizabethan Academy, Majestic Theatre School, Blue Ice Cheerleaders, The Performance Hub, The LCS D Dance Academy, Jo Jingles, Jessica Mary Brett, and following the civic ceremonies, there was an appearance by the panto dame from the Majestic Theatre and music from great new local band, The Sods.

Speeches from Cllr Jack Bowker, Chairman of Bassetlaw District Council, and Cllr Carolyn Troop, Mayor of Retford, preceded a prayer and blessing by Revd David Bean. Then Santa took over the stage with his little helper who received a storybook advent calendar courtesy of Ryman on Carolgate. At 5.00pm, the lights were switched on and the fireworks heralded the start of Christmas in Retford.

In Retford Town Hall, the Craft Fair amazed visitors with a range of wonderfully crafted gifts spread over two rooms... and the Mayflower WI provided a fantastic range of refreshments

Grove Street provided some great attractions beyond the fairground - Bassetlaw Museum, and the Pilgrims Gallery were open, and The Grove Methodist Church had an even bigger Star Festival and featured music from the excellent Salvation Army Band during the afternoon.

St Swithun's Parish Church held its famous Christmas Tree Festival which continues all week.

A Fairground organ provided the atmosphere, and the usual range of excellent food stalls, cafes and restaurants provided the sustenance.

Out and about will be Rattlejag Morris and the Stormtroopers – and new for this year, the Snow Globe on Carolgate and the stilt-walking elves and flying Santa toured the streets posing for photographs.

Many of Retford's excellent independent shops were open on the day including Retford Arts Hub in Cannon Square and Wonderland Bookshop on Carolgate, whose book signing with Rob Biddulph proved to be very popular.

Retford Business Forum was delighted to have been working in partnership again with North Notts BID, which not only provided vital financial support, but also helped with the organisation and delivery of the event.

Sally Gillborn, Chief Executive of North Notts BID, said "We are delighted to have supported Retford Business Forum with this year's Retford Christmas Market and Lights Switch-on – it's great to have been able to stage this event again - it really did launch Christmas in the town centre"

The Forum also welcomes the continuing support of Bassetlaw District Council, Retford Lions and other local businesses and societies. It is a community event run for the people of Retford and the surrounding villages, and visitors have been welcomed from all over Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire... and beyond!

The team which planned and delivered the Retford Christmas Market 2021 are mainly volunteers who freely give up their time and energy to provide this event.

The support of local individuals and businesses is vital to the success of the event and the team is always looking for supporters - please get in touch – we would be delighted to hear from you - please contact chair@retfordbusinessforum.org.uk. To become a member of Retford Business Forum please contact membership@retfordbusinessforum.org.uk or see www.retfordbusinessfoum.org.uk

Notes for Editors

Retford Business Forum is run by volunteers from Retford's businesses, community-interest enterprises and local individuals. The Forum is not regularly funded by any organisation and relies on its members and sponsors for support. It is passionate and committed to ensuring that Retford and its surrounding villages prosper economically and through improved social wellbeing.

Attached are some images from this year's event

For further information please contact Rick Brand at rickbrand@hotmail.com or 01427 891376.