

Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee

Title:	Christmas in Thame
Date:	31 October 2023
Contact Officer:	Clare Peacock, Communications and Events Officer

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on our plans to celebrate Christmas in Thame for 2023.

Background

2. Following the success of the Christmas schedule in 2022, it is intended to adopt a similar model this year and revolve it around a main event. The popular Christmas Light Switch On would once again lead the itinerary as a celebration for all, attended by our local community and visitors.
3. The main learning taken from last year was that planned events held in December on a Saturday were popular, and footfall was good. Apart from the AgriSocial charity road run, feedback from events held on a Sunday was that they did not attract many visitors or residents.

Proposal

4. To hold a main event, the 'Christmas Light Switch On', supported by a small programme of supporting events hosted by, and for, our local communities (Santa's Grotto, Christmas tea party, and gift fairs). The overall intention is to have a consistent theme running through December, to help draw people to the Town Centre, supporting our local economy.
5. The light switch on is on Friday 1st December. This will include a musical performance from Thame Concert Band, various people on stage wishing the town a merry Christmas, a children's ride, a selfie station, street food stands, 3 Children nominated by local primary schools to switch on the lights, a visit from Santa and late-night shopping.
6. We will be using the mobile stage from last year. Part of the cost of the stage is paid for by sponsorship.
7. As in previous years we will be working closely with various groups in the community to put on events. The rest of the main activities in December are planned as follows:

Date	Event / Activity
Saturday 2nd	Santa's grotto (Thame Round Table) plus Sally Evan's craft fair
Sunday 4th	Santa's Fun Run (Thame Youth Projects with Rotary Phoenix and Invictus Gym) *waiting for confirmation on date*
Wednesday 6th	Senior Citizen's Christmas Tea Party
Saturday 9th	Mynt Image Gift Fair
Saturday 16th	Sally Evans Gift Fair
Throughout December	Window trail with ThameCOP to promote environmental activities

Throughout December	Window display competition (residents to vote via QR code)
Throughout December	A decoration activity (formally the march of the penguins) hosted by the Library and ThameCOP
Throughout December	Letters to Father Christmas for Red Kite Family Centre (a collaboration between the Red Kite Family Centre, The Book House and Wally's Toy Shop)
Throughout December	Selfie Station with competition

Promotion

8. A leaflet containing details of the events will be printed and able to collect from the Information Centre, the Christmas tree stand, and various shops. It will also be online via the website, social media, and our newsletter. It will also be printed and displayed in the notice board.

Risk Assessment

9. Each activity/event will have risk assessments in place and be carefully managed. Core risk assessments attached are listed as Appendix A – Corporate and Appendix B – Event.

Resource Appraisal

10. Expenditure will be confined within the Christmas event budget with sponsorship and donation opportunities offered to businesses to offset any additional costs.
11. Several of the events and activities are being sponsored by local businesses.

Action:

- i) To note the report.*
- ii) To provide any feedback on the event offer.*
- iii) To volunteer to support the switch on event (if required).*