

PRESS RELEASE (amended)

Tuesday 28th November 2023

For immediate use

The organisers said it would be “bigger, better – brilliant”and it was!

Retford Christmas Market & Lights Switch-On 2023 was a great success.

The Retford Christmas Market opened at 10am on Sunday 26th November and, after a fantastic programme of entertainment on stage and around the town, switched the lights on at 5pm. Then Eltonesque launched into “Step into Christmas” before continuing to wow the crowds until 5.45pm. The event closed at 6pm with thousands of happy people having had a great day out in Retford.

After an open-air service by Churches Together in Retford, the performers on stage were The Elizabethan Academy, Sam Adams, Majestic Theatre School, Blue Ice Cheerleaders, Hannah Harris, LCSD Dance Academy, The Performance Hub, and Jessica Mary Brett, hosted by Steve Walker in the morning and Joe Sentance in the afternoon. Around the town entertainment was provided by Rattlejag Morris, two stilt-walking ice queens, Evie the Elf, the Stormtroopers, and Martin Pease’s Christmas organ. The Hathersage Brass Band played beautifully in the open air and Martin, from the Joker, ran Christmas cracker and decoration making workshops. Retford Ukulele Band and Worksop Salvation Army Band also played at the Grove Church.

Cllr Debbie Merryweather, Chairman of Bassetlaw District Council (BDC), and Cllr Dan Henderson, Mayor of Retford, gave speeches of welcome, praise and thanks to the organisers, stallholders, performers, and everyone who had attended the event. Cllr Gillian Freeman, Deputy Chair of BDC, was in attendance and Revd Ben Clayton, Rector of St Saviours Church, gave a Christmas blessing, then Santa, assisted by his little helper, operated the plunger and switched-on the lights, which lit up the town brilliantly.

The next event in Retford Town Centre will be on Thursday 14th December between 4.30 and 8.00pm with the Retford Winter Festival of Light Late-Night Shopping. A parade of children from schools in Retford will gather outside Wonderland bookshop and then, led by a bagpiper, carry lanterns along Carolgate to the Market Square where they will sing carols before Santa arrives to say hello. There will be free entertainment from DJ Russ Brett, Hannah Harris, a children’s fairground ride, a facepainter, Evie the Elf’s Santa Express Post, and the return of the two stilt-walking ice queens. There will be a limited evening market with street food available. All shops and cafes in the town are invited to take part until 8.00pm – anyone wanting to be included in the publicity should notify chair@retfordbusinessforum.org.uk

Retford Business Forum (RBF) supports Retford Christmas Market, and Retford Big Market Days in partnership with North Notts BID and Bassetlaw District Council, and RBF is very grateful for the help provided by its partners and supporting organisations, stallholders, performers, and everyone who comes to support the events.

Notes for editors – overleaf



Retford Business Forum relies entirely on its members, donations, and grants, and is not regularly funded by anyone. Members include individuals, businesses, and organisations, from around Bassetlaw, and information about Retford Business Forum can be found at www.retfordbusinessforum.org.uk

Photographs are from the Retford Christmas Market & Lights-Switch-On on 26th November 2023