

Harrogate Christmas Market

PRESS RELEASE:

Fifth year of record bookings

More than half of the available stalls have been sold in the first three weeks of booking as organisers prepare for the fifth annual Harrogate Christmas Market.

With 200 spaces available, traders have already been snapping them up promptly in order to take part in the four-day event, which runs from Thursday, November 17 to Sunday, November 20 in central Harrogate.

Organiser Brian Dunsby, who leads the team of volunteers, said: "The positive response from last year's traders made us think we would have high demand again this year, but it has once again exceeded all expectations.

"The level of interest is enabling us once again to be selective about our traders, so we choose those who are offering Yorkshire produce and products which can't be found on the high street. As well as giving them an opportunity to reach a new audience, it makes the Harrogate Christmas Market a unique experience for our visitors.

"We have a lot of traders returning, and asking for the usual stall locations as many customers come back to see them every year. The Food and Drink Marquee is now offering a choice of alternative stall sizes to suit both large and small Yorkshire businesses, and we are particularly keen to hear from local independent food and drink businesses.

"Traders who have never joined us before might be interested in being part of the great community of independents in this very popular marquee."

As well as being a great event for Harrogate's residents and visitors, Harrogate Christmas Market has altruistic purposes. It aims to bring visitors into the town to support local businesses at a vital time of year, and it is run on a not-for-profit basis.

In its first three years, the Christmas Market contributed more than £50,000 towards similar organisations and events in the community, including £17,000 to the annual Christmas lights fund.

Christmas Market chairman John Fox said: "People often forget that this isn't a commercial operation – it is run by a team of volunteers who give up a lot of time to make the Christmas Market a success.

"It has always been important to us to use the event to boost tourism throughout the year, to benefit local shops, hotels, restaurants and other businesses. However, it is still a very professional event – our traders often comment that it's the best-organised market they take part in every year and we're proud to say that is all down to the hard work of our team."

Anyone who is hoping to take a stall at Harrogate Christmas Market should act quickly to avoid disappointment. For more information, visit www.harrogatechristmasmarket.org or, to find out about booking a place, email info@harrogatechristmasmarket.org as soon as possible.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

Harrogate Christmas Market first took place in 2012, run on a not-for-profit basis with any surplus being contributed towards similar organisations and events supporting the local economy and tourism industry.

The Market will be held around St Mary's Walk North at the bottom of Montpellier Hill, HG1 2RZ from Thursday, November 17 to Sunday, November 20, opening daily at 10am and closing at 8pm (5pm on Sunday).