

Harrogate Christmas Market

PRESS RELEASE:

SIXTH HARROGATE CHRISTMAS MARKET **MOST SUCCESSFUL YET!**

The sixth Harrogate Christmas Market was undoubtedly the most successful since it started in 2012. The very attractive location on St Mary's Walk at the bottom of Montpelier Hill, was filled with 200 varied stalls offering a wide range of Christmas gifts for house and home, friends and family, together with a variety of food and drink from all over Yorkshire.

The main organiser, Brian Dunsby, said that the estimated attendance over the four days was 75,000 visitors, including passengers on 145 coaches from all over the UK from Paisley in Scotland to Colwyn Bay in Wales, St Helens to King's Lynn and even the South West. This was 25% up on the 60,000 visitors in 2016.

Traders and visitors alike were full of praise for the improved market layout and mix of high quality stalls with wider access aisles, that made it possible to move around the market more easily, in spite of the higher attendance.

Feedback from traders has been excellent, with the overwhelming majority wishing to come back again next year when the market will be on **Thursday 15th to Sunday 18th November 2018**

Brian added that, "The Harrogate Christmas Market has a high retention of quality traders with two-thirds of this year's traders having had stalls here before and one-third being new traders, which helps to refresh the range of goods, food and drink on sale."

Vice Chairman, Steve Scarre, praised the "excellent efforts of the team of voluntary 'Market Makers' who helped the traders to set up their stalls and take breaks during the four long days of the market." Steve mentioned the high level of interest on the social media channels of Facebook and Twitter, together with the new blogs compiled by his wife Sue, which featured different aspects of the market and of the shopping and catering facilities in the nearby town centre.

Brian highlighted the excellent services provided by the main contractors to the market, namely Chalets & Events, James Fletcher Marquees, Andy Wardman Electrical Services, A64 Loo Hire, Constant Security and YGL Events.

The market had its first ever marriage proposal by a couple from Newcastle for whom Harrogate is a very special place. The help of singer/songwriter busker, Den Miller and St Aidan's violinist, Sophie Hawke were drafted in to perform the couple's favourite song with suitably amended lyrics. The prospective groom, Paul Finch, went down on one knee to propose and, after wiping away tears of happiness, his future wife, Helen, happily accepted. Market visitors and traders gave the couple a resounding round of applause and offered their congratulations.

For the first time, the organisers decided to highlight those traders whose stalls met the criteria below. The leaders of Market Makers with retail trade experience undertook the judging. Traders were awarded either a gold or silver certificate. As there were so many high-quality stalls this year, it was decided to also award 'Highly Commended' during the judging.

Organised by Yorkshire Business Market Ltd

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The Trader Display Criteria were:

- Branding – was there clear and attractive signage, so customers knew whom they were buying from?
- Display – was it visually appealing, and could customers see everything on offer?
- Service – did servers welcome customers with a willing attitude?
- Appeal – were the products of good quality and value, and were they viable for HCM?

Gold certificates were awarded to:

- Beautifully Turned – hand-turned wooden gifts
- Brown & Blond Events – brownies & blondies
- Country Fare – handmade Xmas cakes & mince pies
- Felt Hoppy – needle felt kits & decorations
- iBeani – tablet beanbags
- Massagical – luxurious handmade skincare
- Red Paper House – jewellery
- Roanne Nurseries – bulb bowls, dried fruit, garlands
- Wooden Model Company Ltd – wooden models and T-shirts

Silver certificates went to:

- Archipelago – Christmas decorations
- Carthy & Black – cream liqueurs
- Claire Waters – fused and leaded glass
- Crafty Bubble – hand-made decorations
- Elves in the Wood – home and giftware
- Fassi Mare – luxury homewares and gifts
- Fragrance Express UK – catalytic lamps
- Karen Fawcett Studios – ceramic sculptures of wildlife
- Irvin Confectionary – confectionary
- Lilly's Do-Nuts – donuts and waffles
- Orchards of Hushwaite- cider, liqueurs, beer, juice
- Proof of the Pudding – homemade traditional puddings
- Raydale Preserves – preserves

Highly commended:

- Alfresco Design – rustic giftware
- Artisan Fudge – artisan fudge & chocolate gifts
- Coffee Time Limited – coffee & cakes
- Crusty Pie Company – pork pies, pasties, gourmet rolls
- Home Foods Homemade – Xmas cake & mince-pies
- Little Soap Kitchen – handmade soap, hand creams
- Pots about Candles – scented soya wax candles
- Really Indian Limited – fresh cooking sauces
- Rewind Glass – glassware from recycled bottles
- Rose Cottage Foods – pork & savoury pies
- Wilde Flapjacks Artisan Flapjack

For more information, visit www.harrogatechristmasmarket.org
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