

## COUNCIL – 24 JANUARY 2022

### CHRISTMAS FESTIVAL AND LIGHTS

#### Christmas Festival

Following last year's Christmas Festival where a large festive market managed by a professional events company replaced the customary parade and lights switch on, officers visited all traders in the town inviting them to complete a feedback form. Verbal feedback received by officers as they went around the town was mainly positive with most traders very happy with the event, and Facebook posts were also encouraging.

A total of four forms were completed and returned, all confirming the event was well attended and that the road closure worked well. Negatives were that Glanvilles Mill was congested and there were not enough traders in Fore Street.

The date for this year's Christmas Festival has been provisionally set for Friday 25 November in line with the usual date of the last Friday in November, and following the positive feedback received it is proposed that the Council continues with the festive market theme.

The traders' comments were provided to Miss Ivy Events who advised that lack of electricity supplies precluded more stalls in Fore Street as they require festoon lighting. The Town Clerk and Assistant Town Clerk have since met with the DCC street lighting engineer who has confirmed that it would be possible to take a power supply from the recently upgraded lighting columns throughout Fore Street thus enabling lighting for the market. This is a major step forward as this would facilitate more stalls in the upper part of the street. Historically shop units have been a fantastic support to the event by allowing extension leads to be plugged in to their shops, so this change would mean that we don't have to impose on the businesses to provide electricity supplies in future, and avoid any electrical problems for them and reduce trailing cables and trip hazards.

Miss Ivy Events has a strong following of market traders, and has confirmed that those attended were very pleased with their trading on the night, and if she was hired to manage the Christmas Festival 2022 they have all confirmed that they would re-book to return to Ivybridge. She also advised that the market was quiet to begin with and could run a couple of hours later with the same end time of 8pm, therefore requiring a shorter road closure time. Congestion in Glanvilles Mill could be reduced by only having stalls on one side of the precinct and removing stalls where it bottlenecked, and with the ability to introduce more lighting in Fore Street more traders could be relocated there.

Officers found that Miss Ivy Events helped to coordinate the event in an extremely professional and friendly manner. She brought in the higher end of the expected revenue and secured some excellent entertainment, including the extremely popular Paw Patrol. She knows Ivybridge well having run events on behalf of the Chamber

of Commerce in the past, and has set out the format for last year's event which can now be built upon. Miss Ivy Events' has provided a proposal for 2022 which would build on the success, and the 2021 event report also attached.

However, in line with the Council's procurement process the Assistant Town Clerk has been making enquiries with other Councils regarding alternative event management companies who may be able to deliver the Christmas Festival, and has invited some of these companies to provide quotations. Redhawk Events managed Totnes Christmas Festival in 2021 and have provided their proposal. Plymouth City Centre Company were contacted to see if they provide event management outside of the city or could recommend any companies. They confirmed they do not provide events other than for Plymouth City Council however they had previously worked with Miss Ivy Events and spoke highly of her for running professional events. No other suitable supplier of services were found.

### Christmas Lights

The previous lighting scheme by City Illuminations expired a couple of years ago and has been extended each year. A new scheme is being considered for 2022 and the Assistant Town Clerk is liaising with Christmas lighting companies.

The question of whether to continue with the lights being switched on at installation or reinstate a lights switch on is also to be considered. For the last two years the Christmas lights have been switched on at installation due to the coronavirus, once when there was no event in 2020 and again in 2021 prior to the Christmas Festival. This was intended to reduce crowd congestion in one area, as in previous years of lights switch on countdowns there would be large concentration of people gathering at a set time followed by a mass departure after the lights had been switched on.

By offering an event with a market, music and entertainment spread throughout the town from late afternoon into the evening as was introduced last year, it was felt that the ambience of the lights already switched on and festivities for the duration of the event kept a steady balance of people distributed around the town from start to finish. Another advantage is that the considerable fee to send an electrical team to switch the lights on can be reallocated into more entertainment.

Councillors are therefore invited to resolve to:

- (i) continue with a festive market theme and entertainment;
- (ii) the two event management companies that produced proposals have a net difference of less than £200 and both within the budget set, so accept the recommendation of officers to engage Miss Ivy Events to run this year's festival again;
- (iii) the lights being switched on at installation.

Mrs Julie Gilbert  
Assistant Town Clerk

# Event Report

December 2021



**Ivybridge Christmas Festival**

Fore Street, Glanvilles Mill  
and Erme Court Car Park

Friday 26th November • 15:00 – 20:00

Over 30 artisan food & gift stalls,  
Festive music,  
Children's entertainment  
including juggling,  
Paw Patrol & rides,  
Mulled wine & mince pies,  
Street food and lots more!

#MyIvybridgeAtChristmas  
#MyPlace

Sponsored by  
GLANVILLES MILL  
AND  
PALLADIUM BUILDING SUPPLIES

Free Entry

Miss Ivy Events  
www.missivyevents.co.uk

Ivybridge Town Council

prepared by

Miss Ivy Events

# Overview

The Ivybridge Christmas Festival took place in Ivybridge town on Friday 26th November from 15:00 until 20:00. It was hosted in Fore Street, Glanvilles Mill and Erme Court car park.

It's difficult to measure footfall with any degree of accuracy as there was no mechanism in place to count. However, based on experience, Miss Ivy Events expects that several thousand people attended, and feedback on the day was good.

Miss Ivy Events booked 34 traders, including giftware and crafter goods, and food and drink stalls. In addition, the event featured carousels and rides, workshops, face painting, music and other entertainment, all with a festive theme.

## Digital marketing

The event was created on Facebook, co-hosted by Miss Ivy Events and Ivybridge Town Council, and published on September 6th 2021.

### Facebook Event stats

- Reach: 28,763 people
- Event responses: 1.383
- the audience was predominantly located in the Ivybridge area through targeted advertising.
- We posted 35 times into the event in the lead-up to the event.

### Paid advertising

We ran a paid ad on Facebook and Instagram

#### 29th September to 18th October

Objective: Reach

Spend: £30.48

Reach: 16,511

Cost per 1000 reached: £1.85

We ran a second paid ad on Facebook

## **19th October to 25th November**

Objective: Event responses

Reach: 21,005

Spend: £60.00

Responses: 504

Cost per event responses: £10.12

Engagement ads Oct & Nov £110.00

## **General awareness**

### **Miss Ivy Events Facebook page**

The Miss Ivy Events page benefits from more than 10,700 followers.

During the campaign period (including the event itself), we saw an average daily reach of 4,990 users, and an average daily engagement rate of 151 users across all posts not just those relating to the Christmas Festival.

On Facebook, the event was shared to:

- Devon & Cornwall Festival Cuisine Exhibitors
- Shop Local Devon
- Green Caerleon
- Whats on in Paignton, Torbay
- south West Community Noticeboard
- Ready for a sold out event?
- What's on North Devon
- Devon & Cornwall Events & Fairs
- Miss Ivy Presents - Shop Local this Christmas
- Sugar Mumma
- Local Stallholders and Events Requiring them in PLYMOUTH ONLY
- What's on in Devon? Events & Shows in Devon
- Tavistock Parish
- Tavistock
- Craft Fairs in Devon and Cornwall
- Reuse not Refuse

The event was also shared to the Visit Devon, Visit South Devon, and Visit Plymouth websites.

# Traditional marketing

We published a press release on Friday 19th November that was distributed to some 39 local press contacts.

We designed and produced copy and graphics for inclusion in the Council's Christmas season booklet, and produced an event schedule in the form of A3 posters for display onsite.