

DESTINATION HARROGATE

NEWS RELEASE: Harrogate district, the UK's prettiest place for a winter staycation, is officially Destination Christmas - as Destination Harrogate launches Christmas festivities for 2022

Destination Harrogate is delighted to have officially launched Christmas festivities in Harrogate, with Harrogate Christmas Fayre open for business and Destination Christmas in full swing.

VIP guests and Christmassy characters gathered together in the heart of the spa town for Friday's launch, on the opening day of Harrogate Christmas Fayre.

The Christmas market is at full capacity for traders, offering a bigger and better festive experience for residents and visitors, and runs until Sunday 11th December. Attractions to enjoy at Harrogate Christmas Fayre include a giant selfie wreath, made from real foliage and using low energy bulbs, and a giant Ferris Wheel offering amazing views of the surrounding area.

Mayor of Harrogate, Cllr Victoria Oldham enjoyed the inaugural ride on the Giant Ferris Wheel and an angelic community choir organised by Enchantica's sang festive carols outside the chalet of local business, The Harrogate Hamper. The business is trading at Harrogate Christmas Fayre this year for free, after winning the Jolly Big Business Boost competition run by Market Place Europe, organisers of Harrogate Christmas Fayre.

Father Christmas, Tinsel the elf and pantomime characters Wishee Washee and Widow Twankey from Harrogate Theatre's 'Aladdin' greeted passengers on the Candy Cane Express and took a ride with them down to Crescent Gardens, the home of Harrogate Ice Rink and winter wonderland village complete with Christmas attractions, festive food and drink, family-friendly fairground rides and games.

Guests were then able to take to the ice at the outdoor rink, which, together with the other Christmas attractions at Crescent Gardens, will be in place until 3rd January 2023.

John McGivern, Destination Events Manager for Destination Harrogate, said: "It's been an awesome launch day and it was good to see our partners and stakeholders, with who we've been working on the Destination Christmas campaign, come along today to celebrate the fruits of all our labour.

"Through fantastic collaboration with them for this campaign, we can all look forward to a great festive season across the Harrogate district, offering a great boost to our visitor economy, as residents as well as those who've travelled to be here make Harrogate their Christmas destination.

"Harrogate is officially Destination Christmas!"

It comes after the exciting news that Harrogate has been named the UK's [prettiest winter staycation destination](#), in an article in national newspaper the Daily Express.

Hashtags were used to find the best-rated destinations in the UK for the winter festive season, to decide on the winning place.

Leader of Harrogate Borough Council, Councillor Richard Cooper, said: "I'm absolutely delighted that the opening weekend of the second Destination Christmas event in Harrogate town centre has once again been a roaring success.

DESTINATION HARROGATE

“Residents and visitors have flocked to the town to enjoy the market and entertainment, as well as our existing high-street businesses, and you can see from people’s faces that Christmas is well and truly here.

“This wouldn’t have been possible if it wasn’t for the hard work and determination of Destination Harrogate and our partners, such as Harrogate BID and the market providers, to bring people to the town.

“Events like these, and some of the marvellous attractions we have on offer, show why Harrogate is such a great destination, and this is no doubt why Harrogate has been voted the prettiest place for a winter staycation.”

Find out more about making Harrogate your Christmas destination from the Visit Harrogate website: www.visitharrogate.co.uk/christmas

-ENDS-

NOTES TO EDITORS:

“Destination Christmas” is a campaign run by [Destination Harrogate](#), the Destination Management Organisation for the Harrogate district, under the Visit Harrogate brand.

Entertainment and attractions in Harrogate including the ice skating rink, giant Ferris wheel, carousel and children’s rides are provided by Events by Cynosure and supported by Harrogate Borough Council’s Parks and Environmental Services department and will be in situ from 2nd December 2022 to 3rd January 2023.

Harrogate Christmas Fayre, organised by Market Place Europe, will run in Harrogate town centre from 2nd – 11th December 2022.

Little Bird Made artisan market will take place on 10th-11th December in Harrogate’s Valley Gardens.

The Candy Cane Express road train will run throughout the days that the market takes place.