



Dear Resident or Business Owner

March 2016

### Bath Christmas Market 2016 – consultation with local businesses and residents

As you will be aware the Bath Christmas Market is managed and operated by Bath Tourism Plus, the Destination Marketing Organisation for the city of Bath and the surrounding area. Founded in 2001 Bath Christmas Market has established itself as one of the most popular Christmas Markets in the United Kingdom.

Bath Tourism Plus is the Destination Marketing Organisation for the city of Bath and is a not for profit organisation. Any monies generated as income from Bath Christmas Market is reinvested, through multiple marketing initiatives, back into the local economy driving footfall and encouraging visitors to the city throughout the year.

Each year, the Bath Christmas Market Team, hugely value and appreciate the support and co-operation we receive from local residents and businesses located within the city centre. Bath Tourism Plus are committed to working with their neighbours, especially residents and businesses located within the heart of the event.

It is of the utmost importance to the organisers of the Christmas Market that these working relationships are maintained and that you are communicated openly with throughout the planning phases of this annual event, address any concerns you may have and that we liaise with you in advance of any enhancements we hope to introduce.

### 2015 Bath Christmas Market Key Economic Benefits

To enhance and improve standards each year Bath Tourism Plus commission a full independent visitor survey which captures and records feedback from visitors, both face to face during the event and online for those that have visited the market. The survey is carried out by the South West Research Agency and is designed to establish the profile of visitors to the event, their spending habits (both within and outside of the Christmas Market) and other activities that visitors take part in during their visit.

Bath Christmas Market 2015 Visitor Survey results are very positive and encouraging and show that year on year there is an increase in spend not only within the Bath Christmas Market but throughout the City in key areas such as accommodation, restaurants & bars, attractions etc. The sample below illustrates some key statistics for 2015:

- Associated additional spend £24.4m (£20.2m 2014). *This is all spend connected to those attending the market for whom Bath Christmas Market was the main reason for their visit to the city.*
- Spend within the Christmas Market was around £6.5m (£5.2m 2014) and within the **rest of the City** the spend £17.9m (an increase from £15m 2014)
- 74% of visitors indicated that the Market was their main reason for visiting the city
- 85% of stallholders in 2015 were from Bath and the South West.

As well as specifically targeted questions relating to the Christmas Market, Bath Tourism Plus ensure that the additional economic benefits citywide are also measured thus indicating that many other local businesses benefit and receive an additional boost as a result of the market taking place:

- 85% of visitors had/or were intending to do some 'other shopping' in the city as well as visiting the Market
- 77% were also planning to have a meal out in Bath

- 26% of visitors were planning to visit a tourist attraction in the city, 54% of whom were planning to visit Bath Abbey
- Overnight stays increased by a further 4%
- Local Charities - Bath Tourism Plus continue offer opportunities to support local charities by offering a free chalet rental each day for different charities which in 2015 generated around £7000 of charitable donations from the charity chalets.

*\*results above as per 2015 South West Research Agency questionnaires and feedback*

Throughout 2014 and 2015, we have conducted extensive research and one area highlighted by many as an area for improvement was the current duration of the market to bring it in-line with the other large Christmas Markets in the UK. 62% of visitors said they would like to see the Christmas Market extended up to 25 days to finish closer to Christmas.

As part of the strategy for the on-going improvement of the event and helping with the subsequent increase in spend within the City, we are applying to extend the duration of this years Bath Christmas Market by one week. We have submitted a planning application for this extended duration for the temporary change of the site for the Christmas Market. You should receive formal consultation notices from Bath and North East Somerset Council Planning Department but we too wanted to openly inform you in writing of our intentions and to communicate these proposed changes that we are planning for this year throughout this initial consultation period. Whilst there are the obvious economic benefits to the City, we are aware that the presence of the Christmas Market has an impact on local residents and businesses and we will continue to address these throughout the planning and execution stages of the event by working together.

***Proposed Operational dates Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> November to Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2016\****

***(\*dates subject to planning and licensing permissions being granted)***

- *Monday to Wednesdays: 10am to 7pm*
- *Thursday to Saturdays: 10am to 8.30pm*
- *Sundays: 10am to 6pm.*

**Please note that the general layout and configuration of the event footprint will largely remain the same as in previous years.**

#### **Residents and Local Businesses**

It is vitally important to us that Bath residents are able to access and enjoy the market. In 2015 we made it compulsory for Bath Christmas Market stallholders to offer an incentive scheme offering discounts or incentives exclusively to Bath residents. In 2016 this scheme will be available once more but enhanced by extending the timings that these offers are available.

In 2016 we have plans to further enhance the entertainment offer at Bath Christmas Market, adding a variety of performances which residents, families, businesses and visitors can enjoy which will enrich the festive atmosphere and vibrancy of the market.

Engagement of local stallholders and makers remains the key criteria when assessing applications for the event. Bath Tourism Plus remain committed to offering opportunities for local businesses to be part of the Christmas Market.

#### **Parking and Congestion**

We understand that parking and congestion is a major concern for many who live and work in the city. Please be assured in 2016 we will continue to evaluate and assess all possible improvements to the current scheme and as part of the on-going improvements to the traffic management operation, Bath Tourism Plus will be examining the feasibility of alternative parking locations for the public and will continue to encourage visitors to use other modes of transport to travel to the City during the period of the operational Christmas Market.

Every year, Bath Park and Ride operates extended hours including Sundays over the Christmas period. This allows visitors to the Bath Christmas Market to access the market until the market closes each evening and helps ease congestion in the city centre car parks.

We will develop further, the incentive schemes to encourage Coach Operators to take advantage of mid-week bookings for coach visits to the City and to the event easing congestion at weekends. Enhanced signage and road communications will be an area where we will also seek to make improvements.

### **Road Closures**

**We will not be applying for any additional road closures** simply an extension to the usual road closures enforced each year. Full details will be published once the Temporary Traffic Restriction Orders have been applied for. Bath Tourism Plus will be applying for the temporary closures of Stall Street (in-line with existing traffic arrangements), Bath Street, York Street, Terrace Walk, Abbey Gate Street, Church Street and Abbey Street.

### **Access**

Access arrangements and other operational management will also remain the same as in previous years and a further mail out will be sent as usual within 4 weeks of the event which will contain vehicle permits and details for contacting us during the event should you have any concerns or additional access requirements.

An access management system will be in operation for the duration of the build, event and breakdown periods of the Bath Christmas Market. Access to businesses and residential properties will be overseen by our dedicated security and stewarding team. They will facilitate access for you during the allotted hours (up until 0930 hours during the event operational phase) and after the event has closed each night. You will be issued with a vehicle permit to allow you access through the road closure points.

Access to Abbey Gate Street, Stall Street and Bath Street will be as per the existing BANES traffic restrictions (no vehicle access after 10am or before 6pm) each day.

We will endeavour to manage deliveries and access so far as is reasonably practicable and will continue to work with residents and businesses to facilitate requests.

Whilst the event is running we will always do our best to accommodate businesses and residents who live and operate in the footprint of the Market as much as possible. We have a central control, with a direct phone number, so if you have any issues the event team or security stewards will always be on hand to help.

### **Feedback**

As ever, the Events Team at Bath Tourism Plus are here to work with you and your feedback is always welcome at any time so please don't hesitate to contact us via the details below. We have also produced a short survey so if you wish to complete this please use the following link. This can be done anonymously if you would prefer.

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6B7D9CY>

We will also be hosting a series of bi-monthly "drop in" evenings at the Visitor Information Centre. The first session will be held on **Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> March from 6.15pm – 8.15pm** where we will be available to answer any questions and discuss any concerns that you may have.

If you will be attending on 29<sup>th</sup> March we would be grateful if you could please send an email to [christmas\\_market@bathtourism.co.uk](mailto:christmas_market@bathtourism.co.uk)

Many thanks and Kind Regards

*Hannah Charlton, Mick Heath and Lynsay Redwood*

*Bath Christmas Market Events Team*

Bath Tourism Plus

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