

Thatcham warms up for Christmas

Getting set for a weekend of festive fun and Santa Run

By MADISON ROLFE
madison.rolfe@newburynews.co.uk

THATCHAM is warming up for a weekend of festive fun, with activities including the Christmas lights switch-on, a special Christmas market, the Santa fun run and a carol concert.

Mark your calendars, the festivities start on Friday, December 5, at 5pm with the Christmas lights switch-on.

Stalls will be offering seasonal gifts, food and refreshments up until the official switch-on at 7.15pm.

Mayor Petra Pemberton will be switching on the lights, joined by Father Christmas.

The High Street and the Broadway will both be closed to road users to allow for more space for attractions.

Visitors can enjoy live stage entertainment, carol singers, dancers and performers – including stilt walkers, a bubble fairy... and those on the nice list will receive a visit from Father Christmas, courtesy of Newbury Lions.

And once again, there will be



Santas grace the stage at last year's lights switch on

a guaranteed weather forecast of snow in Thatcham for the evening!

The main stage will feature performances from Kennet School, Whitelands Primary School, Churches Together Choirs, dance groups including Sonia Brown and Dance Fusion, as well as a theatre preview from KATS.

DJ Stop Start will continue the celebrations after the switch-on.

The fun doesn't end there,

with a Christmas Market on Saturday, December 6, at 10am.

The Broadway market will be perfect for discovering unique, locally-sourced gifts and a great chance to support local businesses.

There will be entertainment all day long right next to the Christmas tree.

On Sunday, December 8, the Rotary Club of Thatcham and District presents the Santa Fun Run, which will be guaranteed entertainment for



Last year's Christmas tree

all.

For the more musically inclined, there will be a carol concert at St Mary's Church on Sunday, December 14, at 3pm.

Visitors can also vote for the town's Best Christmas Window Display, supported by the NWN, as local retailers join in the festive fun.

For full event details, visit the Thatcham Town Council website www.thatchamtown-council.gov.uk/

500 jobs at AWE could be at risk

AWE at Aldermaston and Burghfield could see as many as 500 roles made redundant.

But the headcount, according to the Ministry of Defence, will remain the same under new proposals for the factories that make the UK's Trident nuclear warheads.

It said that its workforce needed to be "reshaped" to ensure it was "fit for the future".

Prospect trade union is opposing the redundancy plans, stating the Government's handling of the process is unacceptable and has been an incorrect way to proceed.

The union intends to use every available lever to oppose the plans if they continue in their current form saying it was "no way to treat the people who maintain our nuclear deterrent".

"We still don't have all the details of what is proposed, but if things continue as they are we will use every lever at our disposal to oppose this," said Prospect general secretary Mike Clancy.

He added: "There are correct ways to go about a redundancy process and there are incorrect ways – AWE's approach so far has been a masterclass in the latter."

In a statement to the BBC,



The Aldermaston site where there are proposals to reshape the workforce

the Ministry of Defence said: "The overall headcount will not reduce as we continue to hire into different roles as we adapt for the future, with the significant investment this Parliament securing a 9,500-strong workforce at AWE."

"We appreciate this proposal will worry staff and AWE is committed to working closely with trade unions and is keeping its staff fully informed while working through this process."

It added that its commitment to the nuclear deterrent was "absolute" and a "landmark" £15bn was being invested into its nuclear warhead programme.

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LITTLE TRAINS OF NORFOLK & THE MISSISSIPPI PADDLE STEAMER

Departing Mon 27 Apr '26

The beautiful county of Norfolk is characterised by charming seaside towns, and unspoilt coastline.

SO MUCH INCLUDED...

- ✓ Return coach travel from Newbury
- ✓ 4 nights at the Prince Guest House, Great Yarmouth (JG2+ rating) with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ 99p bar on selected drinks for 3 hours every evening (April only)
- ✓ Entertainment some evenings (at the Nelson & Waverley Hotels only)
- ✓ Heritage train journeys on the North Norfolk Railway & Bure Valley Railway
- ✓ Mississippi Paddle Steamer cruise on the Norfolk Broads
- ✓ Excursion to Cromer & Sheringham

Optional excursion to Norwich (£15pp)

5 Days by Coach **only £379**

Single Supplement £80



GREAT LITTLE TRAINS OF NORTH WALES & PORTMEIRION

Departing Mon 13 Apr '26

Enjoy a visit to the unique, Italianate village of Portmeirion and discover the historic railways and meandering tramways of North Wales on this fantastic five-day break, based in Llandudno, the 'Queen of the Welsh Resorts'.

SO MUCH INCLUDED...

- ✓ Return coach travel from Newbury
- ✓ 4 nights at the White Heather Hotel, Llandudno (JG3 rating) with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ Entertainment some evenings
- ✓ Heritage journeys on the Welsh Highland Railway, Great Orme Tramway & Ffestiniog Railway
- ✓ Free time in Llandudno
- ✓ Excursions to Caernarfon & Portmeirion

5 Days by Coach **only £489**

Single Supplement £80



TORQUAY, SOUTH DEVON & DARTMOOR NATIONAL PARK

Departing Mon 27 Apr '26

Torquay is the perfect location to enjoy a seaside getaway in the heart of the English Riviera! We explore this lovely landscape with a cruise on the River Dart, a scenic drive through the Dartmoor National Park and spend time in beautiful Dartmouth.

SO MUCH INCLUDED...

- ✓ Return coach travel from Newbury
- ✓ 4 nights at the Riviera Hotel, Torquay (JG3 rating) with dinner & breakfast
- ✓ 2 for 1 bar (6pm-9pm) on selected drinks (April & October departures only)
- ✓ Entertainment some evenings
- ✓ Scenic drive through Dartmoor National Park
- ✓ Cruise on the River Dart
- ✓ Excursions to Buckfast Abbey, Princetown, Tavistock, Dartmouth & Totnes

Optional excursion to Dawlish & Teignmouth (£15pp)

5 Days by Coach **only £349**

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