

Big weekend of festive fun

Thatcham kicks off Christmas with lights switch-on, Santa run and seasonal market

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IT'S nearly time to deck the halls in Thatcham with a festive line-up of events this weekend.

The town is gearing up for a weekend packed with seasonal activities, including the annual Christmas Lights Switch-On, a special Christmas Market and the Santa Fun Run.

Tomorrow (Friday), starting at 5pm, the festive fun begins with the Christmas Lights Switch-On.

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

Both Thatcham High Street and the Broadway will be closed to traffic, allowing even more space for attractions.

Visitors can enjoy live stage entertainment, carol singers, dancers, roaming performers – including stilt walkers and a bubble fairy – and a special visit from Father Christmas courtesy of Newbury Lions.

From 10am on Saturday, the Broadway hosts a Christmas Market, perfect for discovering unique, locally-sourced gifts and supporting local businesses.

Entertainment will run throughout the day beside the giant Christmas tree.

Many festive figures will also be taking to the streets for Thatcham's Santa Run.

Thatcham Rotary Club's Santa Fun Run will be taking place on



Thatcham Santa Run

Sunday, starting 11am on Thatcham Broadway.

The route will be 5km around Thatcham, with shorter routes available for those unable to run the full 5km – meaning fun for all the family.

Tickets are £15 for adults, £10 for under 18s and £7 for eight years and under.

The run will be raising funds for Time 2 Talk and other local charities, and is kindly sponsored by

UHY Ross Brooke in Newbury.

Santa suits will be given out at the Kennet Leisure Centre on Stoney Lane from 9am until noon on Saturday, and also at the race start on Sunday from 9.30am.

If you will have difficulty collecting suits, email santafun-run@thatchamrotary.org.uk

Every runner receives a Santa outfit and a running number, and on completing the course is presented a medal by the mayor of



Thatcham Christmas Lights Switch-On Thatcham.

On Sunday, December 14, at 3pm, St Mary's Church will host the Thatcham Town Council Civic Carol Concert, a traditional and beautiful celebration.

THATCHAM

Keeping in touch

Have you got a story?

Contact our Thatcham reporter on (01635) 886637

or email: newsdesk@newburynews.co.uk

News updates from Thatcham are now available online throughout the week. Go to newburytoday.co.uk and select the district pages

newburytoday.co.uk

Send a letter to Santa!

SANTA'S postbox is arriving in Thatcham tomorrow (Friday).

As part of this year's 'Warming Up for Christmas' event children will be able to send their letters to Father Christmas.

To post your letter, visit the Thatcham Town Council information tent at the lights switch-on.

If you can't make it, fear not as you will also be able to send your letters at Thatcham Christmas Market on Saturday.

Don't forget to include an email address with your letter so Santa can send a reply!

Switch-on road closure

VARIOUS roads in Thatcham will be subject to a temporary road closure between 1pm until 10pm tomorrow (Friday) for the Christmas Lights Switch-on.

The Broadway and High Street will both be closed during this time.

The diverted route will be along Chapel Street, The Moors and Station Road.



Poet AF Harrold with Year 4 pupils at Thatcham Park School

Ref: 47-0125F

Very useful advice from poet

PRIMARY school pupils recently welcomed a visit from an author to discuss all things literary.

Year 4 pupils at Thatcham Park Primary School enjoyed talks from author, poet and performer AF Harrold.

He is the author of a number of award-winning books including *The Imaginary*, which was featured on Netflix, *The Afterwards* and *The Song from Somewhere Else*, as well as his *Fizzlebert Stump and Greta* series.

Mr Harrold spent the day running engaging Key Stage 2 workshops after doing a wel-

come assembly in which he spoke about his books and talked to the pupils about what rules they would put in place if they ran the school – which got many hands up.

The school said the children all had a great time, and came away more enthusiastic than ever about their creative writing and reading.

The visit was part of a literacy project funded by the Bookmark Charity, working with Authors Aloud UK, which takes authors into schools across the UK.

A selection of his books have also been gifted to the school by

Bookmark.

The aim is that by meeting the authors, children will be encouraged to increase their reading for pleasure and develop their creative writing skills.

Mr Harrold has also written a range of poetry collections including *Midnight Feasts*, *The Book of Not Entirely Useful Advice*, *Things you find in a poet's beard* and his latest collection published in March 2025 – *The Pocket Book of Pocket Poems*.

Thatcham Park thanked Bookmark Reading Charity for its support in the event.

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