



Thatcham Churches together

Ref: 50-07250



3-2-1 switch on

Ref: 50-0725K



Kennet School Choir

Ref: NWN 50-0725AF

Cheer on a rain-soaked night

High winds don't deter festive crowds for Thatcham lights big switch-on

THATCHAM'S Christmas lights switch-on was met with many cheers and happy faces, despite the rain on Friday.

Although the event was scaled down due to the high-gust winds, the community still came out in force to celebrate the festivities.

Families enjoyed stage performances from Kennet School choir, Nick Newman, Kennet Amateur Theatrical Society and Christmas carols by Thatcham churches.

There were still many food and drink options on offer, despite the cancellation of gazebo stallholders, from brownies to Greek food, and roaming stilt-walkers entertained the crowd.

The atmosphere was definitely festive and wintery with the steam engine, as well as a camp fire to roast marshmallows on, which was provided by the Scouts.

Visitors even got a special visit from the Lions' Santa, who stopped by to say hello.

Children were seen chasing bubbles and splashing in

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puddles, proving that a little rain didn't dampen the Christmas spirit.

Mayor Petra Pemberton marked the official switching-on of the lights through a speech in which she thanked the town for its sense of community.

"Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers that make this possible," she said onstage.

"Family and community are the bonds of Christmas, and throughout the year I have seen so many acts of kindness and families helping those in need.

"Things like this remind us that community is the greatest gift of all."

She also announced the winner of her poetry competition 'What Thatcham means to me'.

First prize was awarded to Constance Deegan, aged nine, who wrote a piece about all she enjoyed about Thatcham – the park and spending time with



Father Christmas at the Thatcham lights switch-on

Ref: 50-0725M



KATS do jazz hands

Ref: 50-0725Y



Teddy, age seven, with Father Christmas

Ref: 50-0725AP



2nd Thatcham Scouts around the camp fire

Ref: 50-0725AI



Thatcham's switch-on

Ref: 50-0725G

family and friends, all of which was a beautiful tribute to the town.

The mayor also thanked local charities for their work, and was joined by staff from Swings & Smiles and Home-Start West Berkshire to officially turn on the lights.

Swings & Smiles chief executive Rhonda Nicklin and Home-Start director Grace Green both spoke about how vital their work had been and thanked the mayor.

"We're really proud to be the mayor's chosen charity this year, thank you for your support through fundraising and voting for us to receive grants," said Mrs Nicklin.

Mrs Pemberton also announced her personal choice for the Best Dressed Window display as Charles' Hairdressers.

The deadline for our poll on Newburytoday is 5pm tomorrow (Friday) and the NWN will announce the winner on Monday, December 15.

To vote, go to <https://www.newburytoday.co.uk/news/vote-for-your-favourite-thatcham-best-dressed-christmas-window-display-as-charles-hairdressers>

Due to the weather forecast, the Christmas market for Saturday was cancelled by the council.

Thatcham Town Council has thanked Thatcham Rotary Club, Newbury Lions, Kennet School Choir, KATS, Churches Together Choir, Enchanted Players, the vendors that were able to attend, the many dedicated volunteers and generous sponsors Graeme Electrical Services and Xtrac.

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Celebrating

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