

Christmas in Leicester 2021

A programme of Christmas activities was approved in the summer including the return of the Ice Rink, Santa in the Green Dragon Square, film screenings, marketing costs and an online programme.

This report is an update on the planned activities



Christmas Light Switch On

Thursday 18th November

2021 Overview:

As with Diwali, the Christmas Light Switch On reduced crowd density and increased crowd flow by removing elements that required people to gather in one place. 20,000 – 22,000 attended the event .

Programme :

- Removed stage at Humberstone Gate - replaced with funfair
- BBC Radio Leicester broadcast 5pm-7pm live show featuring countdown that was relayed via a PA system
- Choirs, bands (such as brass and steel pan performers), tableau and Nativity scene in Town Hall Square
- Movie night in Green Dragon Square with food & drink vendors
- 'Happy Wheel' operational in Jubilee Square
- Large light installation in Orton Square - funded by BID
- Increased number of street acts & installations to keep people moving including roaming bands, stilt walkers and lantern puppets
- Online digital programme with messages, performances pre and post Switch On

Ghost Caribou walkabout and shadow puppetry story telling



Penguin lantern puppets

Outdoor Cinema

Dates: 18th, 19th, 20th November
Plus continuing Saturdays: 27th November,
4th, 11th & 18th December

Location: Green Dragon Square

Starts on the eve of the Lights Switch on with a trio of festive film nights.

Assessing proposals for festive food and drink outlets to accompany the screenings



Santa in the Square

Dates: 4th – 23rd Dec

Location: Green Dragon Square

Fake snow coverage and bursts of falling snow across the square booked for duration

Copies of the Snowman and The Snowdog book will be given as a gift for visiting children

Return of 'snowflake wall' and a new interactive puppet projection on to the wall by Interact Digital Arts.



Jubilee Square Ice Rink

Dates: Thurs 2nd Dec – Mon 3rd Jan

Tickets on sale 1st November 2021

No ticket price increase from 2019

GEM Radio

Biggest reach radio station in Leicester, listenership of 440,000 across the East Mids each week. £17k worth of radio advertising secured for £5k has been agreed via a partnership with GEM

Agreement includes: 4 weeks of on-air advertisement of the rink, promotional trails and live reads, webpage feature, branded playlists for rink

- **Prestige Events - Rink side photo station**
- **Sports Team Theme Nights**
- **University Student events**
- **Disco evenings Friday & Saturday 7pm-9pm slots**

The Snowman Costume

Shared access between Festivals and Events and Arts and Museums will give us the opportunity to promote The Snowman and The Snowdog exhibition at Newarke Houses at all Christmas events.



Town Hall Square

Nativity scene

Painted illustrations created last year to be installed which features written captions of the nativity story



Tableau

Interactive AR installation based on a tableau scene created using scenery and characters from various tableaux over the years.

A local set designer has been engaged to help the lighting team create this scene.

AR experiences have been added to the tableau by AR specialist Red Frog. Users will be able to download an app and hunt for Santa's little helpers in the tableau. When found they will engage in a game of Snowball dodge, interact with the user etc.

A portal also takes the user through to a Christmas in Leicester branded Winter Wonderland where they can take selfies to post on social media.

Users can also collect Reindeer dust by scanning decals on shop windows. That will unlock other options for individual users and the total accumulated dust will gradually increase the density of lights on an AR tree in Town Hall Square.

It is hoped this will be a very engaging process for families with children.

Extension to Fairground on Humberstone Gate

In place from 18th November – 2nd January



Clock Tower Tree

New Tree is up and decorated.

Sponsored by Watches Of Switzerland the new tree is attracting plenty of positive social media and was the centrepiece of the Christmas Light Switch On



Wheel of Light

Dates: Fri 12th Nov – Sun 2nd Jan

Build 9th Nov, Derig Mon 3rd Jan 22

Location: Jubilee Square

Prices:

Standard £6

Small child (under 1.4m) £4.50

Family (2 adults + 2 Children or 1 adult + 3 children) £18

Times:

Mon – Thurs: 11am – 9pm

Fri – Sat: 11am – 11pm

Sun: 11am – 9pm



Orton Square

Rhizome

BID Leicester light installation

Dates: 18th November 2021 – 6th January 2022



Digital Programme

Ideas in development:

- Permission to use a selection of The Snowman PDF activity sheets
- Christmas Craft tutorials and activity packs
- Festive Tales from Leicester Libraries
- Repurpose some content from last year
- Pre recorded messages. Including:

City Mayor

Cllr Clair

Public Health Director

Lord Mayor

Lord Lieutenant

Chief Constable

Chief Inspector

Fire Service

Marketing & Websites

- Arch appointed to deliver the creative for Christmas In Leicester, media campaign and measurement: £20k
- The theme this year is 'Festive Adventures' to encourage visitors to seek out the activities in the city centre and public squares.
- 8 x 3-sided towers will be placed strategically around the city centre advertising the activities.
- An additional £5k has been approved for the development of the Christmas In Leicester website to integrate the ticketing system and content management.



Key BID initiatives in the lead up to Christmas that will complement the programme:

- Rhizome light installation in Orton Square from November 18th - January 5th
- Production and screening of a new TV advert on Sky running for 4 weeks from 26/11
- Funding for the creation and distribution of Christmas in Leicester printed leaflet as part of the overall campaign
- Funding for marketing campaign to promote theatres and cinemas and drive ticket sales. Managed by LCC.
- Independent Leicester campaign to promote businesses particularly via social media
- The Leicester Gift Card will be extensively promoted
- Development of Christmas Trail on LoyalFree app

Sponsorship Secured

- Light Switch On: Octopus Energy £10k
- Santa in the Square: City Fibre £5k
- Tree: Watches of Switzerland 7k
- Ice Rink (12k in kind)

