

## Report Purpose:

To update committee on progress and work associated with local service delivery.

## Author:

Town Clerk, Assistant Town Clerk, Town Centre Manager and Events Officer.

### 6.1 Events update

Event	Spooky Saturday	Remembrance Sunday	Armistice
Footfall Week before event	8772	4612	6074
Event figures	<b>11464</b>	<b>6482</b>	<b>6527</b>
Previous year	7632	6373	6568

### Nature Needs You

The first named storm of the season (Storm Amy) decided to make their debut on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> October, just in time for our Nature Needs You event. With strong winds and rain forecast and a generous offer from the Silk Museum and some last minute help from the United Reformed Church the decision was made to move the event indoors. At the museum we welcomed families in from the storm to meet the owls with Cheshire Falconry and the giant creepy crawlies with Rent a Beast. The Face Painting Queen was set up in the Machine Gallery and a few Christmas trees were brought in early so people could hang their Wellie Pledges. At the URC our community groups worked together to offer a range of natural crafting and activities and we created a cosy space for the Storyteller. Local media helped us spread the word about the change of location including Silk FM and Macc Nub News. We received lots of messages of appreciation for going ahead with the event and the Silk Museum enjoyed an excellent day for their shop, café and donation box.

### Spooky Saturday

We had a record-breaking 54 businesses taking part in the Pumpkin Trail this year including some new-to-town businesses and some who are well established but new to the trail. ArtSpace were busy in the Grosvenor Centre again with their Crafty Crypt, offering activities for all from 11am – 3pm and a special pre-bookable SEN session at 10am. Local small business BubbleBeez were offering free spooky bath-bombs where children could fill a cauldron to take home – despite having more than 400 cauldrons to give away they were “sold out” within just 2 hours! The Face Painting Queen was back again but only the bravest children queued while the Humber Monster was on the loose! We also engaged the Macc-abre Walking Tours to put on free walks on Spooky Saturday and Halloween and White Blossom Interiors put together another beautiful display in front of the Town Hall for photo opportunities.

## Remembrance Sunday & Armistice Day

The town came together again for Remembrance Sunday – this year with additional screens to enable the larger crowd to view the service inside the Garden of Remembrance which were very well received. Wreath-layers included soldiers from the Brigade of Gurkhas and a wreath was laid in memory of Pat Powell from the Salvation Army who had joined us many times in previous years.

For our Armistice Day service on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> we were joined by Jim Collorick. Currently 103 years old, Jim is WWII Navy Veteran who served as a radio operator on a destroyer, leading the Atlantic Convoys in 1942. Jim now resides at Prestbury House Nursing Home, who got in touch to help us facilitate his visit and laying of a wreath in the Town Hall war memorial.

## Upcoming

Heading into the new year we'll see the return of the Lantern Festival on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> January and we'll be celebrating the year of the Horse for Lunar New Year on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February.

The 1261 Festival will be back on Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> June.

## 6.2 Floral Displays

There was fabulous success at the Britain in Bloom awards one again this year. Nicola Mellor, the Rangers and various members of local groups attended the award ceremony in Bolton. Macclesfield won the following!

- Ivy Bank received a **2025 Award** in the **Schools category**
- Victoria Park won **Silver Gilt** in the **Large Park category**
- Ian Curtis Pocket Park won **GOLD** in the **Pocket Park category**
- Macclesfield Town Council won **GOLD** in the **Town/ City Centre category**
- Upper Market Place won **Silver Gilt** in the **Small Retail/ Commercial/ Industrial Park category**
- Macclesfield Hospital Dementia Garden won **Silver** in the **Hospital category**
- Silk Museum- Tunnicliffe Garden won **GOLD** in the **Small Tourist Attraction/ Visitor Centre category** AND **Best Overall** so won a trophy
- Macclesfield and the Community won **GOLD** in the **Small City category**
- Macclesfield Community Tree Nursery (who are on our allotment) won a thriving Its Your Neighbour award.

Thank you to everyone involved.

The floral display tender has been out for tender, and the panel are currently scoring the tenders received. A report will be on full council 15<sup>th</sup> December 2025.

### **6.3 Festoons**

The festoon lights, funded through the Shared Prosperity Fund, were installed in April by CEC. As of the time of writing, they have not yet been formally handed over to us by CEC and remains the case, as will all of the Macc on Foot equipment.

### **6.4 Christmas lights**

The challenges have continued with the Christmas lights. They were installed at the end of October and unfortunately during testing, some of the anchor bolts failed under the weight of the new lighting design. This meant that we had to re-visit the design and go with something much more lightweight. It has become clear that the infrastructure is no longer adequate to host elaborate lighting designs. For this reason, in January, we will start to look at lighter weight options for the future.

We have also experienced the added challenge of the Mill St festive lighting failing to operate following installation. Investigations revealed that three of the key electricity supplies had been disconnected. Further inquiry established that this work had been undertaken by the Street Lighting team at Cheshire East Council as part of the lighting upgrade within the “Macc on Foot” project. They did not inform us and this has had a significant impact on our festive lighting provision.

After chasing they have informed us the repair works have now been rescheduled three times, with the most recent date provided as 21 November. However, there remains no guarantee that our supply will be reinstated or retained.

It is extremely disappointing that, despite working on this project since April, these issues continue to persist. At the time of writing, our lighting provider has tentatively identified an alternative supply that should enable us to reinstate the majority of the Mill Street lights. Nevertheless, we must be prepared for the possibility that the Mill Street lights may remain non-operational and may need to be removed.

The difficulties encountered this year have highlighted that we can no longer rely on street lighting infrastructure to support our festive lighting scheme. We therefore need to review what is realistically achievable for future years. One promising option would be to install dedicated feeder pillars; however, this would require a quotation and installation by Highways. We have already requested this quote in order to begin assessing what may be feasible for next year.

**END OF REPORT**