



PRESS RELEASE

Cirencester Fleece Fayre 2017 The town comes together to celebrate May Day

Cirencester Town Council in partnership with Abbey 900 hosted Cirencester's first modern day Fleece Fayre on May Bank Holiday, celebrating the history of the wool trade in the newly regenerated Market Place. As part of the Abbey 900 celebrations, the event encompassed a traditional May Day celebration with a modern twist and wool theme running throughout the event.

A full day's programme of entertainment, dancing and activities was kick started with the official opening of the Fayre by the Earl and Countess Bathurst who pulled part either end of a roll of fleece to symbolise the opening of the event. The fun packed day included a vast array of community dance groups including Cirencester Creative Dance Academy, Stroud & Gloucestershire Morris Dancers and May Pole dancing with participation from the crowd and the Mayor.

The day featured a special wool themed Fleece market attended by local spinners, weavers, knitters and crafts people, a felt making workshop hosted by New Brewery Arts, garland making by the Churn Project using locally foraged materials and other community groups having fun with interactive sheep themed games and creative crafts.

The Royal Agricultural University's Student Union rolled up their sleeves and had great fun hosting the town's stocks where the students happily obliged as members of the public hurled wet sponges at them and also took families on a Hare spotting tractor tour of the Abbey Grounds.

Other highlights included Punch and Judy, juggling workshops, a colouring competition and medieval storytelling in the parish church utilising a historical piece of art reflecting a medieval Fleece Fayre in Cirencester.

Mark Harris, Mayor of Cirencester said "we will now do this every year. It was a huge community event with thousands of people from all sections of our community and visitors from afar coming to the new Market Place to celebrate a traditional country holiday."

The event was broadcast on local radio and TV and much enjoyed by all involved.

Corinne Lamus who is Chair of the Abbey 900 Steering Group said, "What a great day for Cirencester, our fantastic town, I think we did our heritage proud today. Corinium was the second town of Roman Britain and then the Abbey being founded in 1117 brought back and accelerated economy which we enjoy today. The day was a strong community event which is our whole ethos for the year. Thank you to Cirencester Town Council, the parish church and all our volunteers, performers and entertainers who willingly obliged today"

The Cirencester Fleece Fayre will become an annual event in Cirencester. Next year's date will be Monday 7 May 2018. If you would like to get involved please contact Cirencester Town Council. For more information please contact Suzie Lew, Market and Events Officer at Cirencester Town Council.