

Community Services Committee

Title:	Thame Fairs 2024
Date:	4 February 2025
Contact Officer:	Cassie Pinnells, Community Services Manager

Purpose of the Report

1. To receive an update on the 2024 September and October Fairs.

Summary

2. Following the Fair Working Group and Showmen's Guild negotiation, the three-year Agreement with an option to extend for a further two-years was approved by this committee on 16 July 2024.
3. The September and October Fairs took place effectively, the partnership with the fire service, employed security firm and the diligence of some councillors', officers and volunteers ensured the event was monitored efficiently.
4. The Community Services Manager will take account of all that follows in detailed planning for the 2024 fairs.

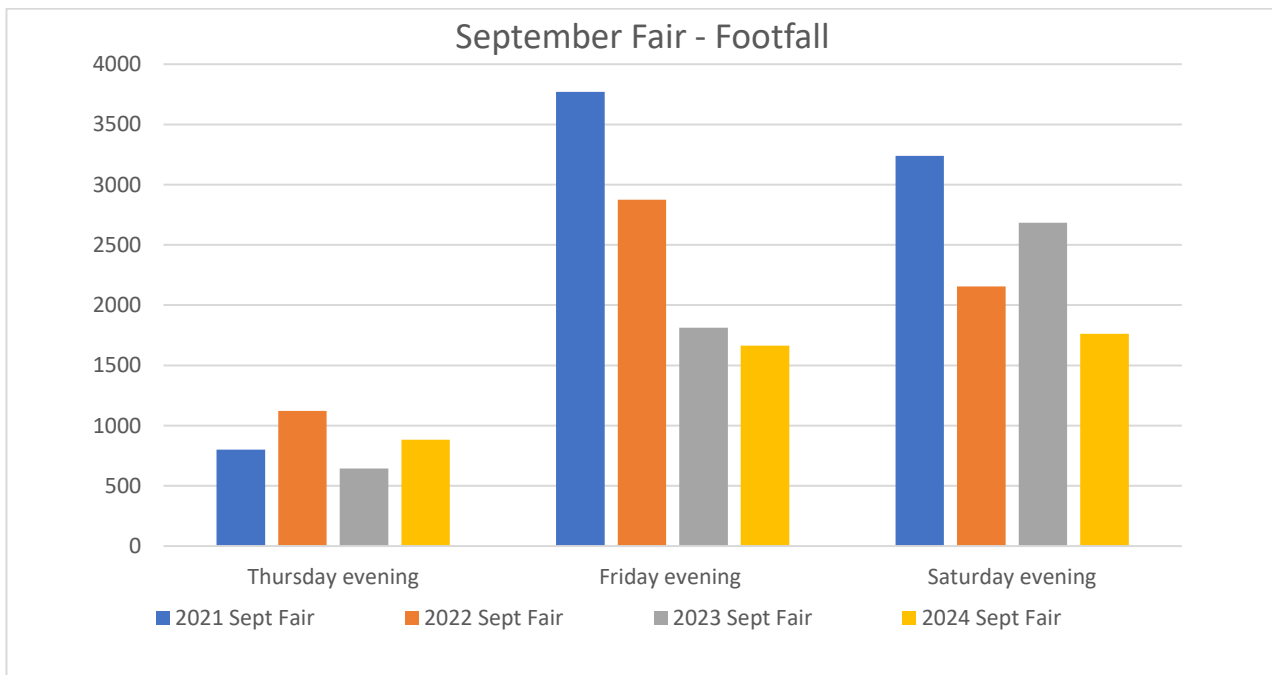
Road Closure Operations / Setup

5. The marking out of the emergency lane on the Monday afternoon in preparation for the September Fair was effective for attraction placement and in most cases for emergency access.
6. This year the Showmens Guild undertook a regiment sequenced pull on, which enabled a swift process and prevented the previous year's traffic issues. The security team worked expertly to get some of the fair vehicles in place at the Upper High Street car park and High Street car park. There were however, four parked cars in the Cornmarket area which caused minor operational delays to the Showmen.
7. During the event the professionalism of the security firm who worked with the town centre businesses and residents to enable permitted access was maintained. The dismantling and pull down of the event went according to plan to ensure adequate safety conditions were upheld.
8. It was the first year that the charity car park collection did not take place at the Southern Road Recreational Grounds, due to Thame Rotary not having enough volunteers to aid with the requirements. The Community Services Manager contacted other organisations to help but unfortunately were unable to help. The Security Team ensured that the gates were locked and clear of cars every evening.
9. The October Fair road closure requirements had been changed, as requested by the Showmen, with the car park/side road closure taking place at 9pm on the Wednesday evening, the security team were in place from 4pm which aided this time change.

Event Monitoring / Complaints / Compliments

10. Some official paperwork for the September fair was late with Officers and Guild Stewards having to chase individual showmen to obtain paperwork before they opened to trade. Following an accessibility complaint, the Fair Co-Ordinator placed a disability ramp outside the crossing point from the Town Hall to Boots to aid the requirement.

11. The security team supported the police with no issues reported from the event.
12. This was the first year that the fire engine had an issue driving through the top of Cornmarket, having to manoeuvre to get through a traffic island within the emergency lane. This issue was caused by a different attraction being in place than previous years, the Showmens Guild will be asked to review the plot size before the next fair.
13. The contracted medical company on site for the September Fair had no medical issues dealt with, other than supplying a plaster to a showman who had cut themselves.
14. Noise monitoring was undertaken by Councillors, volunteers, and staff, with no warnings raised. Thank you to those Councillors and volunteers that helped with this event.
15. During the September Fair event the footfall was monitored by the Security Firm. Results recorded the peak number of event goers within the fairground on from 2021,2022, 2023 and 2024:



16. The Fair Working Group will reconvene a meeting in March/April to undertake a wash up of both the September & October Fairs with the Showmen’s Guild.

Recommendation:

The Committee is asked:

- i) To note the report.***