



## Frodsham Town Council Food & Drink Festival 2025

### Background

It was agreed at an Events Committee held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2024 to increase the number of free events for residents hosted by Frodsham Town Council (FTC) during 2025-26.

Local events provide opportunities to bring people together, stimulate economic growth, and celebrate unique traditions. These benefits extend beyond the event itself, leaving a lasting impact on the community.

It was agreed that hosting a food & drink festival would generate foot fall, benefiting shops, restaurants, and service providers. Both residents and visitors to a local festival may also explore nearby cafes or boutiques, boosting sales for local businesses.

Additionally, a food & drink festival event would provide a platform for local suppliers and business owners to showcase their products and services to a wider audience.

### Aims

To create an annual event in Castle Park to bring the community together for a family friendly day celebrating the local food and drink industry. The free entry event would feature workshops, demonstrations, local chef demonstrations plus a Man v Food competition. It was hoped that this new event to Frodsham would provide an excellent opportunity to explore a variety of culinary delights that Frodsham has to offer and enjoy live entertainment and free family fun.

We would like to:

- Celebrate and champion Frodsham's food and drink community
- Promote Frodsham as a great food and drink destination
- Provide fun and engaging activities for people of all ages that educate how to grow, cook and eat healthy food
- Introduce emerging and established producers to new customers and markets
- Encourage discussion and debate on issues relating to food and nutrition

Events showcase a community's vibrancy, attracting investors interested in cultural and commercial projects. They also serve as a platform to highlight our town's potential, encouraging businesses to choose the area for future events or collaborations.

### Planning

A working group was established to develop all FTC events. It was agreed that the food & drink festival would be a collaboration between [Independent Street](#) and FTC. The date and location for the food & drink festival was agreed at an initial working group meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February. The date and location would be Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> June between 11.00am and 5.00pm at Castle Park.

The working group held several meetings between March and June to plan the logistics of the event, covering the following topics:

- Permissions (CW&C)
- Temporary Event Notice (TENs) and plan layout
- Artwork and promotion
- Sponsorship
- Stall bookings
- Entertainment
- Compere & sound engineer
- Attractions
- Infrastructure and facilities
- Traffic management
- Parking and marshalling
- Refuse management

## Programme

The following programme was developed with the help of our sponsors:

- Artisan market (approx. 70 stalls) – Independent Street
- Hot foods & drinks (approx. 10 stalls) – Independent Street
- Toddler fair rides – Independent Street
- Children’s craft area – Independent Street
- Live music – Independent Street
- Circus tricks workshop – Independent Street
- Colouring competition – [Main Street Kitchen](#)
- Marquee demonstrations and workshops:
  - [Elysium Health & Fitness](#) – benefits of exercise & healthy eating
  - [One Voice Community Choir](#) – medley of music and songs
  - Tail Mates – natural dog food & treats
  - [HE Coward](#) – Man v Food challenge featuring Sue Coward’s steak pies
  - Bene Gelateria – award winning gelato
  - [Whitmore & White](#) – the perfect gin & tonic with Frodsham gin!
  - [By Jenny Penny](#) – floral artistry for your dining table
  - [Restaurant Next Door](#) – culinary delights cooked over coals paired with exquisite wines
- Seating – Warburton’s Farm
- Traffic management – [Cheshire Constabulary \(PCSO\)](#)
- Safety barriers – [Blue Arrow Traffic Management](#)
- Refuse management – [Cheshire West & Chester Council](#)

## Metrics

The event proved to be very successful with over 2,000 people attending throughout the day. The ‘seating & dwell’ area proved very popular with many couples, families and groups staying to enjoy a picnic or some tasty hot food from the ‘street food’

stalls and bar areas. Children and parents were entertained by a circus tricks workshop running throughout the day.

The Main Street Kitchen event was popular with over 70 under 10-yrs children completing the colouring competition which was won by Ruby, who won a 3-course mini pizza for five people. Two runners up, Sophie and Dominic each won a £25 voucher.

The demonstration marquee, showcasing Frodsham's independent food and drink hero's and retailers, also proved to be a draw for everybody attending the event especially as most of these were providing delicious samples and discount vouchers for their audiences. Warburton's Farm provided hay bales for seating approx. 50people. As you can see from the attendances below, it was seated and standing room only for some of the demonstrations:

- Elysium Health & Fitness – 47
- One Voice Community Choir – 107
- Tail Mates – 56
- HE Cowards – 118
- Bene Gelateria – 84
- Whitmore & White – 88
- By Jenny Penny – 83
- Restaurant Next Door - 164

## **Budget**

The budget for the event was agreed at an Events Committee as £3,000. Total expenditure for the event amounted to £2,786.76.

## **Feedback**

We had some fantastic feedback from our residents and traders alike. The following are just a small selection received.

**Resident** - *'I attended the above today. What a fabulous event that FTC put on. Huge thanks to all who put in what must have been such an effort. Not forgetting that FTC councillors are volunteers. A truly family event and so lovely to see the park being used for events like this. I hope the stalls did well - looking forward to our curry shortly (bought from a trader). Events committee - you are doing a sterling 'job'. Thanks again'* - email

**One Voice Community Choir** – *'I want to thank you for organising such a great event. Junior was so helpful on our arrival and made setting up very smooth. Nathan gave us a great introduction and the opportunity to promote the choir at the end of our set. The demos in the marquee were very entertaining and held the crowd. The atmosphere on the day was happy and uplifting. A great mix of stalls. We look forward to the 2026 event, and hope you will invite us back.'* - email

**Tail Mates** – *'Just wanted to send a quick email to thank you for this weekend's food and drink festival. It was a great day and you did a fantastic job in setting it all up. We did better than expected and really enjoyed the day so thanks again.'* - email

**HE Coward** – *‘What a fabulous event. It was so very well organised. A massive thank you to all those who helped organise and make it such a success. We would love to make the Man V Food an annual event :) and we are already thinking of next year’s challenge!! My only feed back is positive, as was that of everyone we spoke to, so can’t think of anything to improve on...*

*Well done again and thank you for inviting us to take part. Roll on next year!’ - email*

**Bene Gelateria** – *‘It truly was a fab event and thank you so much for everything you and the council put in to it also. We love being part of Frodsham’s vibrant foodie and business community.’ - email*

**By Jenny Penny** – *‘Thanks for letting me come along, it was good fun. I got some lovely feedback from some people that came to it. I had a couple of customers in the shop on Saturday that fed back about the parking situation, they thought there could have been more signs to show where people could park instead of them attempting to drive into Castle Park to get turned away. Also, better advertising, maybe some banners around town as lots of people (in particular the older generation) don’t use social media so didn’t see the Facebook stuff. Some of my regulars had arranged to go to barbecues and stuff as they didn’t realise it was on until too late!*

*Well done for planning such a brilliant event! I’m glad the blood, sweat and tears paid off for you!’ - email*

**Restaurant Next Door** – *‘What an amazing day! I couldn’t quite believe the massive turn out, how engaged the crowd were and the overwhelmingly positive impact it had across the whole of Frodsham. We all just wanted to say a massive, massive thank you to your team and especially to yourself for allowing us to be involved and also for your commitment and passion towards supporting local business.*

*When the time comes for the next Frodsham Food & Drink Festival we’d definitely love to be even more involved through a demonstration and maybe other ways too, I know Ric has some ideas in his back pocket and I’m sure Vicki will too.*

*Once again thank you so much for putting on such a special event for our community and we look forward to seeing you soon.’ - email*

## **De-brief**

A de-brief meeting was held on 20th June and we were very lucky to be joined by Brian Mellor who made himself known on the day of the event. Brian has worked in the Food & Drink industry for most of his career and has been involved in organising and managing food & drink festivals for a considerable number of years. He volunteered his wisdom in helping to shape a future event for Frodsham in 2026.

The consensus was that our first food & drink festival had been a great success but could be even better. The following are a mixture of lessons learnt and opportunities for a future event in 2026, in no particular order:

- More / better signs along A56
- Definitive car parking signs / directions from the Sutton Weaver swing bridge and Helsby High School
- Map of Frodsham identifying independent food & drink hospitality, retailers for people to visit – Frodsham Food Trail ‘Route 56’

- Better marshalling of car parks / disabled parking
- Use of radios / walkie talkies between volunteers, in particular marshalling
- Possible 'park & ride' option from Frodsham Community Centre
- Additional volunteers needed (possibly connecting with [u3a](#))
- Defined shifts / tasks for volunteers on the day
- Earlier planning of the event
- More drinks bars (hot and cold) with local bars given priority
- Chef demonstration's online booking – timings available prior to the event
- Photogenic backdrop in the marquee, including the FTC Food & Drink Logo
- TV screen and overhead cameras available to better show the demonstration (much better view for all using dome cameras)
- Better decorations in the marquee – flower, leaf, fruit garlands etc.
- Better height for chefs / demonstrators to work at (worktop rather than trestle table)
- Staging area required to hide the equipment / utility area
- Litter picking throughout the day / emptying bins regularly
- Recycling opportunities rather than generic bins
- Photographs of all volunteers to give credit to their service – possibly entice more support from local people too
- Sponsorship from local businesses
- Contribution towards the upkeep of Castle Park

## **Recommendations**

There were numerous requests for a two-day event in 2026 but consensus and better judgement overruled the excitement of its success so another 1-day event has been agreed. The date has been scheduled for Saturday 13th June 2026. This date will be confirmed at an Events Committee in the new year.

The working group would like to take onboard all the lessons learned and invite Brian to join in the preparations for 2026. We might require a larger budget in order to make the event more professional for our independent artisans to excel in the space we designate for them to shine!

We will prepare a map of Frodsham to ensure everybody knows where our artisan food & drink specialists and fabulous hostelrys and retailers are situated in Frodsham.

And over to you ... we will require many more volunteers and I'm hoping that our Civic Pride volunteers will be able to help us with this event.

We want to showcase what Frodsham has to offer for everybody. Let's make our town a destination!

Thank you so much for your support.

Report prepared by Helen Hayes.  
Chair, Frodsham Town Council.