

UNWRAP CHRISTMAS AT ASHBURTON'S 'NIGHTS OF LIGHTS' FESTIVAL

19 November 2018 - ADC - A special Christmas festival will ignite Ashburton's seasonal joy this year, with the town's very first 'Nights of Lights' activities happening in Baring Square East every Friday evening in the lead up to Christmas.

The festivities will kick off on 30 November with the town's annual lighting of the Christmas tree at 'Light Up the Night', followed by two 'Buskers Nights' on 7 and 21 December, and a screening of the classic Christmas favourite, How the Grinch Stole Christmas at 'Movie Night' on 14 December. A decorated 'Festive Walk' along the East Street walkway will also deliver a magical experience between 30 November and 4 January.

Ashburton Mayor Donna Favel says 'Nights of Lights' will be a festival not to miss. 'The festive season is a time to celebrate the values we hold dear at Christmas time: sharing and the importance of family and friends. 'Nights of Lights' brings these values together with free fun and entertainment that the whole family can enjoy. Get your friends and family together and head along to Baring Square East to join in these fantastic events and share in one of Ashburton's biggest Christmas yet.'

The first event, 'Light Up the Night', presented by EA Networks, will include performances and Christmas carols, before the giant Christmas tree is switched on to light up the Square. Food from Lil Orbits, The Food Den, Mr Whippy, The Coffee Lady and Pita Pit will be available to purchase throughout the night. The activities will get underway from 6.00pm on 30 November.

Friday 7 and 21 December will see talented local performers sharing their music at the 'Buskers Nights' in the Square, starting at 6.00pm.

An outdoor screening of the 2000 family favourite, How the Grinch Stole Christmas will take over Baring Square East on 14 December. Movie-goers are encouraged to bring along chairs and blankets to settle in for the evening, and will be able to purchase tasty treats from Kettle Corn, Yes Chef and Mr Whippy to help complete the experience. A Grinch-themed 'best dressed' competition for the kids will take place before the movie starts.

From 30 November, people out walking through town will be able to enjoy a magical evening stroll along the East Street 'Festive Walk' presented by Four Seasons Treecare Ltd. The walk will be complete with lights in the trees and art installations.

For more information about Ashburton Nights of Lights, visit ashburtondc.govt.nz/nightsoflights and

follow the Ashburton District Council Facebook page @Ashburtondc.