

## Sweet success for Huddersfield Food and Drink Festival with record visitor numbers

RECORD numbers of people flocked to the four-day Huddersfield Food and Drink Festival.

Delighted organisers announced last night that there were almost 100,000 visitors over the course of the four days – up 35% on last year.

And the free festival at St George's Square and Byram Arcade hosted more than 70 food and drink stalls and 30 cookery demonstrations.

Cathy Burger, festival organiser, said late-night opening on Friday and Saturday nights and live entertainment from Yorkshire pop band Helter Skelter helped drum up the crowds.

She said: "We were overwhelmed with the support from visitors – many from outside Kirklees.

"This will have had an impact on our local economy, not just over the four days, but hopefully also in the months to come as visitors to the region not only come back to our town but also support our local businesses that were represented".

The festival took place from August 11 to 14.

Stallholders also found it a successful event with many selling out of their products and having to go back to their premises for more stock.

**Simon Hirst, from Hinchliffe's Farm Shop and Restaurant, said: "It was a phenomenal festival – we sold over 2,500 award-winning pork pies and over a thousand barbecued burgers, steak sandwiches and bacon butties.**

**"We've been overwhelmed by the response from customers old and new. The festival is so well organised and is a credit to Huddersfield, its town centre, and its local food producers.**

**"It's been a great opportunity for us and we are extremely proud to have been the main sponsors."**

Julie Leadbeater, from Brighouse, one of the visitors, told the Examiner: "What a success the Food and Drink festival was – a fabulous use of our community space in St George's square.

"The weather seemed to help bring people into town over the weekend for what proved to be a pleasurable experience for many.

"A big well done to the organisers and volunteers."

Ms Leadbeater made some suggestions for next year's event including the introduction of recycling facilities, better provision of seating and entertainment from local talent."

Festival organisers are already thinking about next year's event which will take place from August 9 to 12, 2012, linking in with the Olympic games in London.