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KINGSTON MAGICAL MARKET AUGMENTED REALITY TRAIL LAUNCHED THIS WEEK

Kingston First, the Business Improvement District for Kingston town centre, has launched its first ever augmented reality trail this week in Kingston town centre. The trail is based on a hidden market that can only be seen through the magic of augmented reality technology. Children from across the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames aged between four and thirteen took part in a competition to design characters that sell their wares in the magical market. Twelve winning designs were selected and have now been turned into moving, dancing and wiggling 3D creations that can be found on a walking trail around the town centre. Characters designed by the children include 'Elfie Holly the Purveyor of Wishes' to 'Rona Rainbow the Purveyor of Magic Clouds for Zapping Covid'.



The trail begins at the 'Out of Order' art installation on Old London Road (red telephone boxes), and there are twelve characters at different locations across the town centre that can be accessed by either downloading the app or by scanning the QR code which can be found on the posters. The trail will be in place for several months.

Kirsten Henly, Chief Executive of Kingston First said: "With the pandemic making it difficult for us to organise the usual events and activities this winter, the Magical Market AR Trail is the perfect way for families to discover something new and enjoy being out and about in Kingston town centre in a Covid-secure way. We had some fantastic entries so a big thank you to the children for making this happen. We hope that lots of children and their families experience the trail and enjoy seeing the twelve characters come to life before their very eyes."

Kate Priestley, Library Development Officer: Children, Young People and Families of Kingston Libraries said: “The Magical Market Augmented Reality Trail is a really imaginative way of bringing the town centre to life for families. Who knew there was a whole other fantasy world hiding right in front of our eyes! Families are going to love meeting the magical 3D characters together and imagining the weird and wonderful items they are selling in the market. Kingston Libraries have been preparing children for just these kinds of magical adventures all their lives so I'm sure they'll rise to the challenge.”

Lara Standen, Teacher at St Andrew’s and St Mark’s C of E Junior School said: “I ran the competition across our school (Years 3 - 6) and had entries from every year group. The three children, whose designs were chosen to be made a reality, were absolutely delighted and I can’t wait to see their creations in the trail. They all loved creating their weird and wonderful characters for the magical market. I thought it was a fantastic opportunity for the children to get their creative juices flowing and they all did a fantastic job!”

Megan Roche, Teacher at Knollmead Primary School said: “The children were excited to take on the challenge of creating their ideal magical creature. This was unlike any other competition that they have entered; the prospect of having something they’ve imagined and designed come to life really drove their enthusiasm. We can’t wait to see the trail.”

Notes

Further information

Visit our website [here](#) where you can find the app download links, view our trail map, and meet all of the characters. We’re asking people to share their photos to our [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#) channels by tagging [@InKingstonUK](#) and using the hashtag **#KingstonMagicalMarket**

Please contact Joelle Fry at joelle.fry@kingstonfirst.co.uk or 07707344208 for further information about the trail.

About Kingston First

Kingston First is a business improvement district (BID) which operates within Kingston town centre. It is a not-for-profit company funded by a levy which is used to provide additional projects and services to those provided by Kingston Council and other public agencies. Our work focuses on four key themes; Attractive Streets & Spaces, Marketing the Town, Supporting & Informing and Influencing & Representing.

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