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He's not afraid to speak his mind...

Lick that if you can! Ice cream fest is a big success

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The talking point in town over the past few days has been the huge success of the Garstang Ice Cream Festival held on Sunday. Its popularity was, I think, a surprise to everyone, even organisers. I knew it would be well, but the pre-planning, publicity plus the marvelously sunny weather combined to make it a mega-event, with crowds descending on the town from all compass points. Candidly, I don't think I have ever seen Garstang so crowded in my decades in town. My guess is that statis-

tics-wise, the ice cream festival was as busy, if not more so, than the Victorian Festival, possibly even the annual Children's Festival.

On Sunday, every part of the town centre from Bridge Street, Market Place, High Street, Church Street, Cherestance Square, parts of Park Hill Road, the riverside, and Hudson Park (the rugby club ground) were all choc-a-block with folk enjoying the atmosphere and the weather.

The queues for ice creams at most of these venues were exceedingly long. Even longer were the queues of cars coming into town! The professionalism of music from various groups was very high. The kite display at the northern end of town was spectacular, and the proximity of the nearby River Wyre and the tree-lined walkway encouraged people to go for a cooling paddle or sit in the shade.

Those responsible for planning this new event in Garstang's social calendar are to be thoroughly congratulated. Their efforts have paid off marvellously and lessons will have been learned for next year's second such festival.

The success of the festival is all the more astonishing because last weekend also saw two other local crowd pullers – the Great Eccleston show and Tram Sunday at Fleetwood. It was good to chat to some of the local stall holders, promoting Garstang activities, including the indefatigable Ruth Bruce on the Fairtrade stall.

(Thanks for letting me park my bike at your stall Ruth).

And it was good to meet up with Courier colleague Nicola Jaques who brought her two youngsters along ... (erm, note, it was Nic's daughter Georgia's Peppia Pig pink plastic snackbox I was holding, not mine!)