

PRESS RELEASE: Tavistock Dickensian Evening 2020

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TAVISTOCK'S ANNUAL DICKENSIAN EVENING 2020 IS CANCELLED DUE TO THE ONGOING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, Tavistock BID has made the difficult decision to cancel this year's Dickensian Evening scheduled to take place on Friday 4th December.

The event, which attracts around 5,000 visitors locally and regionally, is a popular part of the town's Christmas season and, until 2019, included the Christmas light switch-on ceremony. At the recent meeting of BID Board Directors, careful consideration was given to the potential impact of the event on the safety of the local community, exhibitors and visitors.

Chris Palmer, Chairman of Tavistock BID, said 'The tradition of Tavistock Dickensian Evening is a really special part of the town's Christmas season and we are really disappointed to have to cancel it this year. Sadly, in the current climate, we cannot consider hosting an event which focuses entirely on bringing people into the town centre to visit businesses and enjoy an evening of entertainment. The whole spirit of Dickensian Evening would be compromised under current government guidelines and our priority is the safety of those who attend and who work during the event. We will focus now on how we can still make Christmas 2020 special in Tavistock despite COVID-19'.

The event is made possible by the businesses of the town centre who fund it through their BID levy. It not only brings colour and cheer to the town in the lead up to Christmas but also serves an important role in highlighting the integral part the high street plays in the town's community life.

2019 saw a separate Christmas light switch-on event earlier in November which featured entertainment from a variety of performers and attracted some 1,000 onlookers. The BID has taken the decision to also cancel any formal switch-on for 2020 for the same reasons around social distancing and public safety.

Tavistock Mayor, Councillor Anne Johnson said: 'Dickensian Evening is one of the highlights of Tavistock's calendar. It is understandable that BID has decided to cancel this year's event due to Covid-19, I know some people will be very disappointed but we all look forward to seeing it return in 2021 when circumstances should be much safer.'

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