

Tavistock

BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

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Tavistock Gift Card launches in time for Christmas in a bid to drive high street recovery

The new Tavistock Gift Card has launched in time for Christmas, making it even easier to give the gift of Tavistock this festive season. Each gift card is a prepaid Mastercard that can be redeemed with over 50 businesses in the town, keeping money locked into Tavistock, and driving high street recovery.

Tavistock Gift Cards can be purchased [online](#), or from Lawsons Tavistock in early December, and spent in person or online with retail, leisure, hospitality and on services in the town, offering a way for people to support Tavistock businesses after a period of economic instability.

Both national and independent venues are part of the scheme, including Boutique 32. Owner Danni moved to a bigger store on Brook Street in August and said the Tavistock Gift Card will help people to shop locally:

“We have a lot of independent businesses in Tavistock, which makes it unique. More people want to shop locally now and support us, and the Tavistock Gift Card is an easy way for them to do that. It will also bring more people to the town who want to use the gift card as an experience, to have some lunch, do a bit of shopping or get their nails done. It’s a nice family present.

“Around 40% of the shop’s income is from Christmas sales, and another 30% from summer sales. We have experienced lockdowns in both of these key periods. When people shop locally, it is helping businesses in Tavistock to keep going and keep giving our customers the best shopping experience. You don’t get that with Amazon. I’m really grateful that the gift card has been set up.”

The Tavistock Gift Card project is an initiative from Tavistock Business Improvement District (BID) supported by West Devon Borough Council as part of its Town Recovery Fund. Independent school Mount Kelly has also supported the programme:

“Mount Kelly has been involved in discussion with various bodies focussing on developing ways that the town can bounce back from the impact of Covid-19,” said Guy Ayling, Head Master at Mount Kelly. “Tavistock BID's gift card idea is a plan that drives business directly to the heart of town and as such deserves support. Mount Kelly is supporting this initiative because of the inter-dependence between town and school; we will both emerge stronger for working together, and both benefit when the other thrives.”

Tavistock's new gift card is part of the [Town and City Gift Cards](#) programme from [Miconex](#). Exeter launched its Town and City Gift Card, the In Exeter Gift Card, in 2018 with thousands spent through the programme since then. Data from the [Centre for Cities](#) suggests Exeter is experiencing a moderately strong recovery from lockdown, whilst [McKinsey data](#) pinpoints the South West as one of the regions of the UK with the greatest percentage of jobs at risk.

Councillor Neil Jory, leader of West Devon Borough Council said: "This is a brilliant initiative on the part of BID and Tavistock retailers which West Devon Borough Council is delighted to support. Let's all get behind our amazing town centre shops and buy local this Christmas."

Tavistock hosted the Great Goose Gander in October, to encourage people offline and into the town. The event was in place of the Goose Fair which usually attracts people into Tavistock en-masse. A popular Dickensian evening was also cancelled amidst requirements to avoid mass gatherings.

BID Manager Janna Sanders said the Tavistock Gift Card will drive the recovery of the town and encourage visitors in a careful, managed way:

"As a BID, we have wanted to introduce a gift card for nearly two years and have been fortunate in securing the funds necessary to launch the Tavistock Gift Card this year, thanks to West Devon Borough Council and Mount Kelly.

"Tavistock is a destination town for visitors from Plymouth, South Devon and locally. Our position on the edge of Dartmoor with a high proportion of independent shops makes Tavistock a day out as well as a place to shop. With the introduction of the Tavistock Gift Card, we are bringing the focus back to our town and encouraging visitors and locals alike to look at what we have on offer in Tavistock. We have recently welcomed new traders to the town including homeware and lifestyle, a wine bar and an antiques shop.

"We've had a very positive response from residents about the introduction of the card and from businesses too. It's free for businesses to be a part of the scheme. Covid-19 has been hugely challenging for businesses so the launch of the card comes at a really critical moment for our high street.

"With Christmas around the corner, there is an opportunity for people to buy the Tavistock Gift Card as a present for others. We hope employers will buy the card for their staff as a reward through the UK trivial benefits scheme, and that cards will be given as gifts for teachers, for birthdays and more. It is the card for all events."

The Town and City Gift Cards programme has been growing throughout the UK and Ireland, driven in part by the shop local movement. In the South, Canterbury, London and the Isle of Wight will launch new Town and City Gift Card programmes in November and December. Managing director of Miconex Colin Munro said the programmes are instrumental in driving high street regeneration:

“2020 has made us appreciate our communities, towns and cities all the more. Small local businesses give high streets their heart, their buzz and their atmosphere but without local support, they will close. Amazon is posting record profits but local traders are facing a real fight for survival.

“From other places, we know that recipients of gift cards spend around 65% more than the value of the card they receive, and they are more experimental. This means more revenue for traders, and new customers too. Every Tavistock Gift Card sold is money locked into the area, protecting jobs and protecting livelihoods.”

Ends.

Press information

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Tavistock BID has raised the profile of Tavistock significantly over the last five years. Through national, regional, and local promotions, the initiative has helped increase footfall in the town resulting in positive changes for both businesses and tourism.

Since the BID started back in 2011, the town has continued to flourish, winning its first gold in the Britain in Bloom awards to help improve the high street. There has been a significant reduction in parking fees, an increased number of coaches coming into the town, as well as community events and training opportunities for all to enjoy.

We have worked closely with the business community to be the voice, and force, that takes action to combat any issues and ensure Tavistock's prosperity.

Over the past five years, we have learned, evolved and developed relationships with local authorities and community groups that now provide a firm footing to go forward and continue the work that has helped improve Tavistock and its business.

It is our promise to endeavour to ensure Tavistock continues to thrive during difficult economic times. But ultimately we need you to decide if the next five-year program should go ahead.

We want to continue the BID and help provide funds towards important projects in the town that other organisations would struggle with due to budget cuts.