

14th January 2021



Harrogate
Christmas & Gift

Harrogate Christmas & Gift moves to early May

The last year has without doubt left the majority of us feeling an air of uncertainty regarding our business and social lives alike; and the gift industry has been no exception.

Harrogate Christmas & Gift was fortunate enough to be one of the few UK trade shows able to experience 'business as usual' in 2020, celebrating another bumper event in January – just weeks before the news of COVID and subsequent social restrictions hit the national news.

However, in 2021 we have not been as fortunate and the restrictions and logistics for staging such a huge trade event have, as expected, been numerous and unprecedented. Simon Anslow, Harrogate Christmas & Gift show organiser explains: "After the first lockdown in spring 2020, our January show seemed a long way off and believing that the COVID situation would be under control by then, we carried on with plans as usual. By the autumn, it became blaringly apparent that this was becoming less likely and with the Prime Minister stating that it could be a further six months before exhibitions could re-open, we started to look at Plan B.

"The usual home for Harrogate Christmas & Gift – the Harrogate Convention Centre – is currently being used as a nightingale hospital, so our first challenge was to find an alternative venue. Fortunately, The Yorkshire Event Centre (YEC) situated on the edge of Harrogate ticked all of the boxes with excellent modern facilities, great accessibility and close to the town and amenities. We pencilled in a new show date of 28th February 2021 and were delighted to have the support of some of our bigger exhibitors such as Premier Decorations, Festive Productions and Gisela Graham, who were all impressed with the proposed new venue. The YEC team is already very COVID aware, with special measures in place to ensure the safety of those using the facilities. We had also planned to extend the period of the show to dilute the concentration of visitors over a longer period.

"On Friday 18th December, just a week before Christmas, we received information from the local authority that multi-day exhibitions would be allowed providing correct COVID measures were put into place. Our elation at this news was quickly deflated the following day on the 19th December with the announcement of a new variant of COVID and the rapid spread throughout London and the South East. This situation saw much of the country plunged back into Tier 4 lockdown and the Prime Minister's announcement of a nationwide lockdown on the 4th January meant there is no chance of the show going ahead as planned in February."

Simon continues, "Ultimately the most important thing is the safety of everyone involved in the show and the majority of the exhibitors signed up are keen to participate in Harrogate

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Christmas & Gift as and when it is able to happen. The festive and gift industry is quite unique – unlike industries where items are mostly branded and familiar to consumers – with these types of products, buyers really need to see and feel them to get the vibe of whether they will suit their store and customer requirements.

“We are delighted to confirm that we have now secured new dates for the show from Sunday 9th May to Tuesday 11th May 2021 at the Harrogate Convention Centre and will keep everything crossed that the Covid situation is under control and we are able to continue with plans by this time.”

Harrogate Christmas & Gift is one of the UK’s favourite trade shows not only for festive goods, but novelties and gifts for all occasions. Buyers attend from numerous sectors including garden centres, department stores, independent retailers and gift shops, tourist attractions and heritage centres and even cathedrals and places of worship seeking souvenirs and gifts and decorations for special occasions.

Simon concludes: “This has been such a difficult year and we hope that everyone has managed to stay safe and enjoy some semblance of celebrations over the Christmas period. We thank all of our exhibitors and visitors for their patience and understanding of the predicament facing not just Harrogate Christmas & Gift, but everyone involved in the exhibition industry and retail sector – and we look forward to welcoming you all back sometime in 2021, when hopefully we can return to our businesses as normal.”

Visit the website at www.harrogatefair.com for the latest information and updates.

Ends

Notes to editors: For more information and high resolution images, contact Christine Scippo – 01525 374020 or email: info@k-communications.co.uk