

**TAVISTOCK TOWN COUNCIL
TOWN HALL & BUTCHERS HALL REPORT AUGUST/SEPTEMBER
2026
DATE OF REPORT 04/09/2026**

Town Hall

1. General Update

- a) During July and August, the Town Hall hosted a diverse range of events, including a funeral and reception, Tavistock Memory Café's anniversary cream tea dance, two wellbeing fairs, a birthday party, three weddings, a concert, an anniversary ceilidh, and a performance of *Calendar Girls* by a theatre company from Liskeard. Feedback from hirers continues to be excellent, with a number of the hirers being regular users of the Town Hall.
- b) Three local AV suppliers have now completed site visits to the Town Hall and Pannier Market to discuss the requirements of each venue. These included improvements to sound quality and the installation of a hearing loop at the Town Hall, as well as a small upgrade to the Pannier Market, including the replacement of the failing amplifier unit. Following the site visits, we have received one full quotation and are awaiting the remaining two quotations before progressing further with the process.
- c) Work has continued to reduce bar stock that is unpopular or slow to sell, with the aim of streamlining the bar offer over the longer term and reducing wastage, while continuing to offer a good core range of drinks to Town Hall guests. We have also introduced a small increase in prices, which should be fully reflected in the margins reported in the next bar audit.
- d) The Town Hall continues to host a number of regular weekly hirers including Line Dancing (Tuesday), Vocal Harem (Tuesday), Dartmoor Dancers (Wednesday), Zumba (Thursday), Full of Life (Friday), as well as U3A (monthly). Full of Life have now increased their Friday session to two one hour classes on a trial basis to meet an increase in demand.
- e) Upcoming events in September & October include the Goosey Quilters Exhibition (10th – 12th September), Theatre Train's performances of "We Will Rock You", The Lions Club "Rock Choir" concert, Junior Life Skills, two Wedding receptions, a psychic evening, a talk on the "Secrets of Britain's Ancient Buildings", and the annual Civic Service Reception amongst others.

- f) The previous postholder has now vacated the Duty Officer role (Town Hall & Butchers Hall), with the successful new applicant having started in the position of August 3rd following the receipt of the required references. The new staff member is now being trained across all areas of the Market and Events department, and is transitioning into taking the lead role on the organisation of the Butchers Hall markets.
- g) We have now received confirmation that the Market and Events Assistant, who has been on maternity leave since January 2026, will be returning to work. They will return in a reduced capacity, with an agreement in place for a six-month trial period on a 19-hour-per-week contract, worked across two days.

This will be a new post within the Market and Events department, rather than a return to the post held prior to maternity leave. The operational requirement for a full-time, 37-hour-per-week Market and Events Assistant remains, while the new post will provide additional staffing capacity for the Guildhall alongside supporting the Market and Events Complex.

- h) Following a failure of the curtain rings at the back of the stage curtains, the curtains have been temporarily removed to allow repair works to be carried out. They are currently off site, where new rings are being sewn on, along with some necessary repairs to the lining. Once the repairs have been completed, the curtains will be rehung, with completion anticipated by 14th September.

Butchers Hall

- a) Butchers' Hall has hosted a number of markets and events over the summer period, including the August and September Arts Markets, the August Summer Fair, and the Youth Market held at the end of August. These in-house markets were generally well attended by both traders and visitors, with a number of traders reporting good levels of sales.
- b) On this occasion, the Youth Market did not attract a sufficient number of young traders, likely due to the clash with the NMTF National Youth Award Finals, as noted in my previous report. We therefore took the decision to amend the event to a "Young Creators & Local Makers" Market, extending the invitation to existing Butchers' Hall traders. This enabled us to retain the planned date, following a good level of additional trader bookings for the revised event. We have moved the event for 2027 to July with the aim of avoiding a similar clash of events next year.
- c) Trader bookings for the September Arts & Craft Fair have been difficult, with a significant number of cancellations over the last few weeks. The Saturday remains close to full but the Thursday and Friday

have become a challenge. We are continuing to work on replacing the traders who have cancelled over the next two weeks to ensure the markets are as full as possible.

- d) External hirers over this period have included Drawn to the Valley Summer Exhibition, two "Love Local" Markets, A Vintage Fair, and the Tavistock Photography Club exhibition. Upcoming events include Tavistock Group of Artists Exhibition, a two day craft market, and "Respect Festival" which completes a week of programmed local events celebrating culture and diversity.
- e) Dates have now been identified for the Town Council's 2027 organised markets in Butchers' Hall, following booking requests from most regular hirers. Arts Markets will continue to be held on the first Saturday of each month, with additional Friday markets during busier periods. Dates for the multi-day themed markets have also been set, with themes currently being allocated to each event. The programme has now been agreed, with just the last themed still to be chosen for our June 2027 market, which we are aiming to be a new theme for 2027. This means that dates will definitely be ready to be released to traders by mid to late September.

The schedule of themed markets for 2026 is as follows;

Art & Craft Fair - 24th – 26th September

Goose Fair – 14th October

Youth Market – 31st October

Makers Market – 20th & 21st November

Dickensian Market – 4th December

Christmas Markets – 11th – 23rd December

Advertising/Marketing

a) We are awaiting the final versions of the Christmas Promotional material for Butchers Hall, with a meeting to be held next week with our designer. This will then allow us to go to print for all of our physical promotional media sufficiently early to allow for an extend period of promotion of the festive events over the autumn/winter period.

b) Work is continuing on the designs for a new Town Hall logo, promotional brochure, and poster materials to modernise the venue's branding and increase awareness among potential hirers. This forms a key part of the new Town Hall Marketing Strategy, as the current materials are outdated. Refreshing the venue's promotional approach will help attract new customers who may not have previously considered the

Town Hall for their events. The aim is for this to be ready to launch in Spring 2027.

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