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ABBFEST PRESS RELEASE



### **ABBFEST CANCELLED FOR SECOND YEAR**

It is with a heavy heart that the Trustees and Management Committee of ABBFEST have made the difficult decision to cancel this year's Festival.

Festival Director Liz Clowes said, "ABBFEST is organised and operated by an army of volunteers who give up their time to put on one of Devon's most popular celebrations of food and drink. Given the level of new Covid cases together with isolation requirements and changing Government guidance it would have been an almost impossible task to make safe the collective groups attending and volunteering at ABBFEST". Liz went on to say "ABBFEST is a charity and a unique event that supports and encourages local groups to grow. It would not be in anyone's interest to put our volunteers, staff or visitors at risk, or indeed risk the long-term future of the charity if we had to cancel at short notice".

Brian Mackness, Chair of the ABBFEST Trustees said "Whilst we are disappointed the event cannot go ahead, we feel that it is the right decision in these uncertain times. A large amount of work has already been done by the committed and enthusiastic group of volunteers who organise ABBFEST and we would like to thank them and Festival Director Liz Clowes for their continued support. Hopefully 2022 will see the return of ABBFEST and its celebration of great produce, food, drink and music from our region".

Sadly, the decision to cancel was made despite ABBFEST recently receiving a ringing endorsement from key sponsor Fermoy's Garden Centre via a deal guaranteeing a total of eight more years sponsorship - essentially providing a financial lifeline for the Festival in the face of current uncertainty. Brian added "The Trustees of the ABBFEST Charity welcome the generous support Fermoy's Garden Centre and owners Blue Diamond have committed, removing some of the financial uncertainty around how the Covid pandemic will pan out and helping to secure the long term future for ABBFEST".

A spokesperson for Blue Diamond added "Fermoy's is a local garden centre serving the community. Whilst Blue Diamond operates across the UK, our support of ABBFEST demonstrates our willingness to embrace the unique coming together of community and local business owners. Fermoy's decision to support ABBFEST in the cancellation of this year's event was the right one, and we have committed to support the ABBFEST charity throughout this turbulent time. 2022 will be bigger and better and Blue Diamond will continue to be a key supporter".

Ends.

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