



The Devizes to Westminster International Canoe Race

Statement by the Race Directors Saturday 14 March, 2020

It is with great regret that we announce the cancellation of the 2020 edition of the DW Canoe Race, as a result of the escalating Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

In light of growing concern about the organisation of large sporting events, we were already assessing our options to run this year's race, while still protecting the health and well-being of competitors, supporters and spectators alike from the risk of coronavirus infection.

However, we have now been advised by St. Thomas' Hospital that it is unable to accommodate the DW Finish Village and race infrastructure on its grounds this Easter while it responds to the current public health emergency. We fully respect St. Thomas' Hospital's decision. We thank the Hospital authorities for their stalwart support of DW over the past 20 years.

We have urgently explored options for relocating elsewhere on the South Bank but have been unable to secure an alternative finish area. We also considered running a shortened course in line with existing contingency plans for high river flow and stopping the race at Teddington.

Unfortunately it is apparent that with mounting concerns about gatherings of large numbers of people, and the cancellation of other major sports events, the prospects of running DW successfully were diminishing day by day. Even with a shortened race course it was still possible that official advice to event organisers would change, requiring us to cancel the race anyway. We did not feel it appropriate to continue with our plans amid such high levels of uncertainty.

On this basis, the Directors believe that a timely decision to cancel the race for 2020, rather than raise potentially false hopes and expectations, is in the best interests of all concerned.

We will refund entry fees for those who have already completed their 2020 entry. Full details will be published shortly on the DW website (www.dwrace.co.uk)

We understand this decision will be a great disappointment to many, as it is to us. But we believe it is the only appropriate course for us to take and ask for your understanding. We look forward to seeing you at Easter next year.

The Directors are available for any questions you may have; please feel free to email us at info@dwrace.co.uk