

# Have you ever had a conversation with a talking Christmas tree?

Hello Lamp Post is making it possible this festive season, by bringing towns and cities to life. Although Christmas is going to look and feel very different this year, that doesn't mean we should forget our festive traditions - if anything, spreading a little bit of Christmas joy has never been more important to our communities... even if it is in a completely unique, contactless and digital way.

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Over the last few months, we have been researching the impact of the pandemic on citizen engagement and how local authorities have adapted and responded to these changes. What we have discovered is that with less people visiting the high street, community engagement rates are falling, local businesses are suffering and planning local activities are proving difficult - and the announcement of a second lockdown hasn't helped.

This Christmas, Hello Lamp Post is digitally transforming towns and cities with an interactive Christmas Trail, to support local authorities, businesses and communities. Talking objects will be coming to life to have friendly chats with people of all ages, encouraging visitors to experience the high street in an innovative way, whilst reinvigorating the economy and keeping communities safe.

We bet you never thought that Christmas trees, sleighs, reindeers and presents could talk, but we've just made all that possible.

How does it work?

It's simple, all a person has to do is spot an object in their town or city that Hello Lamp Post has brought to life, scan its QR code and begin the conversation by replying to the SMS.

By encouraging people to have anonymous chats with objects, we are able to gather sentiment information from citizens, to better inform city decision makers.

Councils and BID's can activate several Christmas objects that are typically found around towns and cities during the festive season, and we have assigned AI personas to each object.

This could include anything from a Christmas tree asking a person questions about how they feel about Christmas this year, a virtual way of speaking to Santa and letting him know what's on your Christmas wish list and presents asking local residents where they plan on buying their gifts this year, online or in store.

And, it's not just Christmas decorations that can speak to communities, we're also offering councils the opportunity to choose several everyday objects to come to life too - anything from lamp posts, post boxes, waste bins and bus stops.

These street objects will ask more generic questions like: how people are feeling about the pandemic, what they've missed most about not being able to visit their high street as regularly and what they're most excited about when things begin to go back to normal.

Over the next six weeks, towns across the UK from Dorking to Lerwick and more, will be bringing their local areas to life with an interactive Christmas Trail - it really is going to be a digital Christmas!

*“People in Shetland are very sociable and the chance to have a chat with our festive additions in the town centre will be a lightsome change. Shopping local is so important this year and the Hello Christmas Trail will be a great addition to our socially distanced town centre activities, to bring people in to enjoy the area”. Project Manager at Living Lerwick*

“We want to do all that we can to welcome people safely back to the high street. By reimagining our public spaces in a playful way, we are encouraging people to rediscover and explore more of our local area, which in turn will support our local businesses and transform Dorking”. BID Manager at Dorking BID.

To find out more about talking street objects, enhancing public engagement or if you just want to chat with Hello Lamp Post, get in touch.

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[COVID-19: Interview with Tiernan Mines, CEO & Co-founder of Hello Lamp Post](#)