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Jan/Feb 2025 - Issue 391

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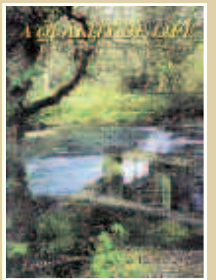
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A New Chapter for Storybook Dads



Storybook Dads, an award-winning charity helping prisoners stay connected with their children, has moved into Belle Vue Road, premises operated by Community Enterprises PL12 (CEPL12), which supports organisations making a difference in the local community.

The ribbon was cut by Mayor of Saltash, Cllr. Julia Peggs, at a ceremony attended by CEPL12 directors Peter Ryland and Chris Bailey. They were joined by the charity's founder Sharon Berry, Trustee Hilary Frank, and members of the Storybook Dads team.

Peter Ryland welcomed the charity, praising its valuable work in reducing reoffending rates and strengthening family bonds.

See page 4 for details.

Let's Be Ambitious for Cornwall's Future: Securing the Best Deal for Residents

Anna Gelderd MP calls for an exploration of all devolution options to secure the best deal for Cornwall

South East Cornwall's Labour MP, Anna Gelderd, today called for an exploration of all devolution options for Cornwall, stressing the importance of securing the best possible deal for the region. In a statement shared on her social media today, Gelderd highlighted the need for better services, improved infrastructure, and greater opportunities for residents across South East Cornwall.

With ongoing discussions about Cornwall's devolution deal, Gelderd emphasised the

unique geography and economic ties that South East Cornwall shares with Devon. Many Cornish residents' livelihoods and public services rely on jobs and opportunities across the Tamar. These factors, she argued, require cooperation beyond Cornwall's borders to address the region's challenges effectively.

"I believe we must explore every option to secure the best deal for Cornwall – one that serves local residents through better services, infrastructure, and greater opportunities," said Anna Gelderd, Member of Parliament for South East Cornwall.

Gelderd acknowledged the appeal of a Cornwall-only deal, which would allow Cornwall greater control over local decisions and protect its unique cultural heritage. However, she also pointed out the potential drawbacks of a Cornwall-only deal, particularly the risk of limited resources and powers to tackle major issues.

"A combined authority deal with Devon could unlock funding and powers that Cornwall might not achieve alone, which would be crucial for addressing key issues such as the Tamar Tolls, A38 safety upgrades, and better cross-border healthcare," Gelderd continued. "However, this approach must respect Cornwall's distinct identity and ensure resources are distributed fairly. Establishing safeguards from the outset is essential to protect our cultural

heritage and ensure Cornwall doesn't lose its voice."

The Cornwall Chamber of Commerce recently found that 60% of businesses believe a Cornwall-only deal may not be achievable under the current devolution framework. Gelderd agreed with this assessment, but also made it clear that she would not rush into any agreement without fully considering the potential impact on Cornwall's residents.

"As your MP, my job is to fight for the best possible future for South East Cornwall," Gelderd said. "If the deal isn't right for Cornwall, I'll reject it. But if it has the potential to secure the funding and powers we've long needed, we should be ready to act. This is about standing up for Cornwall, ensuring we don't lose out on opportunities to deliver real improvements to our services, infrastructure, and economy."

In closing, Gelderd reiterated the importance of protecting Cornwall's culture and heritage. She reaffirmed her commitment to pushing for concrete measures to support Cornwall's language, traditions, and identity in any devolution deal.

"Let's be ambitious. Let's work together. Let's see what's on the table," Gelderd said. "And let's make sure Cornwall has a brighter, better-funded future – one that respects our identity and delivers for everyone."



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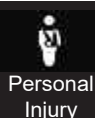
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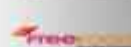
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Email: schooladmissions@cornwall.gov.uk

Education Welfare:
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educationwelfare@cornwall.gov.uk

Housing Department
Telephone: 0300 1234 161
Email: info@cornwallhousing.org.uk

Social Services Department
Telephone: 0300 1234 101
Email: children@cornwall.gov.uk

Social Services Department
Telephone: 0300 1234 131
adultcare@cornwall.gov.uk

Highways Department
Telephone: 0300 1234 222
Email: customerrelations@cornwalllimited.co.uk

Transport Department
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(Bus Pass) Telephone: 0300 1234 222
Email: schooltransport@cornwall.gov.uk

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Email: roadstransportandparking@cornwall.gov.uk

Waste Department
Telephone: 0300 1234 141
Email: via contact form on website only.

Cormac Solutions
Telephone: 01872 323 313
Email: customerrelations@cormacitd.co.uk
Fly Tipping:
Telephone: 0300 1234 141
Email: refuseandrecycling@cornwall.gov.uk

*Town Messenger news
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Cornwall Councillors/ Wards

Saltash Essa ED

Cllr Hilary Frank
cldr.hilary.frank@cornwall.gov.uk

Saltash Tamar ED

Cllr Sheila Lennox-Boyd
cldr.sheila.lennox-boyd@cornwall.gov.uk

Saltash Trematon & Landrake ED

Cllr Martin Worth
cldr.martin.worth@cornwall.gov.uk

Cornwall Councillors Cover such services as:

Housing – Education
Social Services
Highways
Waste & Recycling
Tamar Bridge

From the Mayor of Saltash

Well that's the festive period well and truly over, all the buildup, all the credit card bills, and two days later its gone! Unless like me you still have chocolates and sweets left over!

I feel for all those who have been ill over this period, including myself, so many residents were, which meant our local GPs, nurses, home care and hospitals were chocka block, a big thank you to all those who look after us all so well.

As part of the Saltash Health Action Group, we have been getting some very good feedback from various NHS authorities with reference to better healthcare provision nearer home.

We already have a one day a week overflow clinic at St Barnabus for non-urgent appointments e.g. infections, persistent colds etc. We are waiting eagerly to hear if we have a phlebotomy service in the town, so we won't have to travel to Windsor House, especially when the tunnel works are in full flow. The Xray car is also coming to Saltash, virtual nursing so patients can

Meet Your Councillor

*Councillor
Lisa Mortimore
Tamar Ward*

I became a Town Councillor for Tamar Ward in 2023. My main interests when joining were to represent families of ordinary income who struggle like everyone else. To make sure that we have facilities for families and children, and to consider the cost of living wherever possible.

On that theme I have been involved with several projects within Saltash including the recently delivered play parks within the Pilmere area. My own daughter enjoys playing in these parks so I am sure the community enjoy them just as much, seeing how many children have been playing in them just shows how much they were needed.

More recently I have also been part of the working group to rejuvenate areas of Waterside which has seen Saltash Town Council awarded 100k funding through the Community Infrastructure Levy to relocate the tired play area from its current position to Jubilee Green with a new play area and equipment, and to install Sensory Gardens. You will see these projects taking shape over



be discharged earlier with care. We all know people recover much quicker in the comfort of their own home.

There is a free Winter Wellbeing event at The Guildhall, Saltash on the 1 February, find out about what local support there is, have a health check and advice from Professional's and many other things of Interest. You can also give your views on the 10-year plan for local health and care services.

We were pleased to see the new windows completed at the library as the first phase of its refurbishment. Libraries are not what they used to be. In Saltash for instance we have Spanish lessons, toddlers singing mornings, story time, knit and natter, games



the coming months and I am really excited to see them. I generally would like to make the Waterside a more visitor friendly area and will aim to do so when opportunities arise.

It was also my pleasure to assist Saltash 2nd Scouts with their application towards the same fund which has also seen them awarded 100k to finish their two-story extension.

As Saltash is growing considerably over the coming years I think that both of these projects are really import for our growing family population. This will provide increased capacity for our Scouting groups but also much needed additional community spaces.

I am now a member of Saltash Team for Youth which has seen us working closely with Livewire, The Core and Saltash Community School, it's great to be able to communicate directly with these organisations to see the amazing work they do and to share ideas and represent the

afternoons, and lots of exhibitions and talks of interest. You can also have your library books delivered to you at home if you are unable to visit the library. For further information please contact the library direct 01752 844846.

We are all eagerly waiting to hear further information about the withdrawal of Adult Education in Saltash. Whilst it is due to go ahead there is a group who are looking at other ways to

provide this in our town.

Town and Parish elections take place on 1 May 2025, please make sure you vote for your local Town Councillor who stands in your ward or, if you're thinking about standing yourself, talk to any existing Councillor who will gladly give you information on what is involved.

At the time of writing this we are still waiting to hear if we will have a Mayor for South Devon and Cornwall.

If Cornwall elections will go ahead this year? But we should hear very soon.

I have also been informed of the significant improvement with which the Police force answers 999 and 101 calls. The second half of last year 2024 the average answer was 4 minutes, 27 minutes quicker than the same time 2023, which can only be good news.

Please look on the Saltash website to nominate a volunteer who has done something

outstanding in our community; there are many, so please send in your nominations so that these people can have recognition for their valuable contribution.

Lastly please remember to Support our local traders, "Use it or lose it" is the saying.

I always look forward to our chats in Fore street and on dog walks.

Warmest Regards to you all
**Councillor Julia Peggs
Mayor of Saltash 2024-25**

Your Town Council & Wards

Saltash Essa:

1. Cllr Richard Bickford
r.bickford@saltash.gov.uk
2. Cllr Rachel Bullock
r.bullock@saltash.gov.uk
3. Cllr John Brady
j.brady@saltash.gov.uk
4. Cllr Matt Griffiths
m.griffiths@saltash.gov.uk
5. Cllr Jon Foster
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6. Cllr Sheila Lennox-Boyd
s.lennox-boyd@saltash.gov.uk

Saltash Tamar:

1. Cllr Lisa Mortimore
l.mortimore@saltash.gov.uk
2. Cllr Sarah Gillies
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3. Cllr Sarah Martin
s.martin@saltash.gov.uk
4. Cllr Julia Peggs
j.peggs@saltash.gov.uk
5. Cllr Pete Samuels
p.samuels@saltash.gov.uk
6. Cllr Jean Dent
j.dent@saltash.gov.uk

Saltash Trematon:

1. Cllr Steve Miller
s.miller@saltash.gov.uk
2. Cllr Brenda Samuels
b.samuels@saltash.gov.uk
3. Cllr Brian Stoyel
b.stoyel@saltash.gov.uk
4. Cllr Yates
d.yates@saltash.gov.uk

Mayor:

Cllr Julia Peggs

Deputy Mayor:

Cllr Rachel Bullock

Town Clerk:

Sinead Burrows
T: 844846
E: enquiries@saltash.gov.uk

Councillors' Telephone Numbers can be obtained at The Guildhall.

**Saltash Town Council, The Guildhall 12 Lower Fore Street
Saltash PL12 6JX Tel: 01752 844846
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Library Reopens with 'Amazing Activities'

Saltash Library is stepping in to an even brighter future following the completion of its stunning new window frontage. During the renovations, library services were temporarily relocated to the Guildhall, but now they're back with a fresh look and exciting plans.

The re-opening was celebrated by the Mayor, councillors and library staff, who were joined by representatives from Horizon Windows, the team behind the impressive upgrade. The improvements to the imposing west front of the iconic structure, a listed building, will not only enhance the iconic 1950s architecture, but also improve natural light and energy efficiency. Chair of the Library Committee, Councillor Jean Dent, noted that the unique roof shape represents an open book.

Mayor Councillor Julia Peggs thanked everyone

involved in the project and encouraged everyone to visit.

"Libraries are greatly changed, and there are amazing things happening here. I hope people come and enjoy the refurbished space."

There is plenty on offer at the library. February brings the continuation of the Winter Bio-Watch project, where residents are invited to report sightings of plants and wildlife observed in the garden or while walking in the town or surrounding countryside to help build a picture of the town's natural history. February will also feature 'Wellbeing Month' including opportunities to learn about yoga and meditation.

Looking ahead, March will see another brief relocation to the Guildhall while the side windows are replaced. After this, the Spring Bio-Watch campaign will be launched. This will be followed in April

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Campaign to Recruit New Town Councillors

2025 will see local elections being held across the country including Saltash Town Council.

The Town Council will be launching a recruitment campaign to encourage people to find out more about being a Town Councillor in the town. The Guildhall is open Monday to Friday 10am to 1pm and 2pm and 4pm to learn more

by a two-week long 'Lit Fest' to include visits by published authors for readers of all ages, a creative writing class and a writing competition.

Plans for long-term library improvements include the addition of toilet facilities and a bistro-style refreshment area, where visitors will be able to relax by the new picture windows with hot or cold drinks and snacks. Take a fresh look at Saltash Library and see things in a brighter light.

about the commitment involved.

If anyone is interested in being a Town Councillor follow the Town Council on their social media @saltashtowncouncilofficial for the campaign launch in 2025 or pop in to talk to the Town Clerk.

Healthwise Physical Activity Referral

We have been asked to correct the contact details for the Healthwise physical activity referral schemes running at Saltash Leisure Centre. (Printed in the Saltash Observer December 2024 issue)

For more information about how Healthwise helps local patients improve their health and fitness, visit <https://www.better.org.uk/what-we-offer/activities/healthwise>
If you're considering joining Healthwise, please consult with your GP or practice nurse who can approve your participation.
After receiving a filled-out referral form from them, you should contact the program coordinator via email to schedule your initial appointment.

Residents Voice Anger Over Car Park Leasing Proposals

Residents across Cornwall have expressed frustration over proposals to lease 28 Cornwall Council-managed car parks, including Belle Vue West in Saltash, to a private company. Results of the recent consultation inviting feedback on these controversial plans are expected in early February, with Cornwall Council taking decisions on individual car parks soon after.

Cornwall Council oversees 132 chargeable and 72 free car parks – the highest number managed by any local authority in the UK. Revenue from parking fees is reinvested in to maintaining car parks and improving the transport network. However, local authorities are currently not allowed to use ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) technology to manage car parks, and as a result, they have to rely on traffic wardens and payment machines, which is both inefficient and costly.

Concerns about the leasing proposals are widespread. Many residents worry about potential harm to the already fragile high street economy if robust controls are not in place. There are calls for guarantees that a private company could not raise prices without consulting the council, and residents are urging Cornwall Council to insist on longer grace periods for parking payments, as the five-minute window is widely regarded as unreasonably short.

Amid growing concerns, residents are also calling on the government to authorise the use of ANPR technology to allow councils to manage car

parks more efficiently while avoiding the need to lease them out to a private company.

Saltash Unites for Sustainable Adult Education

Cornwall Council's decision to close six Adult Education Centres, including the one in Saltash, has drawn sharp criticism.

The closures were announced in December, following what has been described as a deeply flawed consultation process. Cornwall Councillor Hilary Frank, alongside Saltash Town Council and the Wesley Church, has voiced strong opposition, highlighting a lack of transparency, misleading consultation practices, and the disproportionate impact on East Cornwall.

The Saltash centre, currently based at the Wesley Church, serves as a vital resource for vulnerable residents, including Afghan and Ukrainian families and those facing homelessness. Councillor Frank emphasised the potential to explore cost-

Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping Us Updated

At its January meeting, the Chamber of Commerce welcomed Pete Robinson from the Ribbon Company to his first meeting. Pete shared that he had recently moved the business back to Saltash from Plymouth, thanks to the availability of premises at Burley Court that fully suited their requirements.

After the minutes were approved with a slight amendment, members then discussed last year's Christmas Festival, hosted by the Chamber of Commerce. Hilary Frank was able to give a report on why last year's festival had to be reformatted due to the impact of Storm Darragh. The discussion moved to whether the town council's lights switch could be merged with the festival. After debate, members agreed that a separate lights switch on event in November could act as the start of the build up to Christmas, with the festival on the first Saturday in December giving footfall a boost during the festive shopping period. Hilary pointed out that the date for the festival was not a random choice but was designed to coincide with the Santas on Bikes Charity Run, and to align with the availability of Diverse Events, the festival's

event management team. The Chairman said that he had been asked to attend a meeting with Town Councillors to consider the options, and would report on those discussions at the February Chamber meeting. Members then went on to discuss the Totally Locally Magic Tenner initiative, a national campaign being run between 1st and 16th March encouraging shoppers to spend £10 locally. By circulating money within the community, the scheme highlights how small shifts in spending habits can make a substantial difference to local businesses and the wider economy. With positive feedback from Saltash businesses on their participation in the original version of the scheme, Fiver Fest, delivered through Totally Locally in 2021, members expressed enthusiasm for rolling out the

effective alternatives rather than dismantling services outright.

Local stakeholders have proposed establishing a collaborative Skills Hub to sustain and enhance adult education in the area. They urge Cornwall Council to reconsider its decision, engage meaningfully, and allocate resources to safeguard this essential community service.

Magic Tenner initiative in March.

The matter of the congestion around Gilston Road and the Waitrose and Carkeel roundabouts was then raised, particularly the severe delays seen over the Christmas period. It was explained that there is shortly to be a six-month initiative for left turn only traffic from Gilston Road. Members were concerned that this would put a strain on Pillmere roundabout, and that there could then be issues on Burraton Road as westbound traffic would be directed to join the A38 at Latchbrook. It was agreed that members with businesses on the industrial estates would monitor the situation and report back ongoing issues.

Other matters raised included instigating an initiative regarding car parking charges to assist customers in Fore Street, and whether the Saltash Card could be brought back to life. The Chairman undertook to put thought to these matters. Members were also asked if the Chamber should organise anything around VE80 day, and it was agreed to come back to this next month for discussion.

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A Veteran's Journey of Hope

At just 17½ years old, I stood at the train station, suitcase in hand, ready to leave my family and start my career in the Royal Navy as a Combat Medic. The excitement of seeing the world, making new friends and doing a job I loved carried me through 22 years of service, full of amazing memories, some

good, some not so good.

We did our duty during the war, but losses were rarely discussed. Friends were injured, careers ended and lives lost. I was given a medal for my service during the war. It looks great with the others that I proudly wear on Remembrance Sunday before it gets tucked in to a drawer for the rest of the year.

When my service ended, I was eager for "civvy street"

but unprepared for how alien it felt. Job interviews were draining, and I struggled to translate my military experience into civilian terms. Sleepless nights, mood swings and flashbacks took a toll on my family life, and I felt like the world was against me.

One day, I saw an ad on the TV screen in the post office which read: 'Are you a veteran?' It was a turning point. I joined a group that offered camaraderie, support and understanding. Meeting other veterans, I realised I wasn't alone. Through counselling and PTSD courses, I rebuilt my life, restoring my mental health and family relationships.

Today, I have a fulfilling job and I volunteer with veterans' groups that support others like me. These groups are a lifeline, offering a place where veterans feel understood and valued. If you're a veteran or want to help, join Saltash Veterans - we'd love to welcome you!

Written by Linda Fergus-Hunt, former Chief Petty Officer Medical Assistant.

Saltash at the Heart of Storybook Dads' National Work



Storybook Dads, an award-winning charity set up by Saltash resident Sharon Berry as a small initiative in Dartmoor Prison in 2003, has grown into a vital service supporting families of prisoners in 100 prisons across the country.

Every year, about 300,000 children in the UK are affected by the imprisonment of a parent. Many experience feelings of abandonment and shame, which can lead to poor educational performance. These children are also three times more likely to experience mental health issues than their peers. Storybook Dads addresses these challenges by providing comfort and continuity through personalised bedtime stories recorded by parents in prison.

Forced to relocate from Dartmoor Prison due to radon issues, the charity has now found a welcoming home on Belle Vue Road, supported by Community Enterprises PL12. The Mayor of Saltash, Cllr. Julia Peggs, visited the new premises to learn more about the charity's work. "It's incredible how something so simple can have such a powerful impact," she said. "The stories created by Storybook Dads help children feel loved and connected, even when their parent isn't there with them. That's really inspiring."

Sharon Berry explained how the new office will support their mission: "It's a small space, but it's just what we need to stay focused on what matters most - helping families stay connected. We're grateful to Community Enterprises PL12 for making this possible."

Blitz Bench to Remain Following Protest

Plans to move a bench in Fore Street dedicated to victims of the 1941 Saltash Blitz have been withdrawn following strong opposition from members of the former Blitz Committee, particularly from those who lost family members when the bombs fell on Saltash.

The bench was placed by the Blitz Committee near the junction with Belle Vue Road as a 'mirror image' to another bench opposite, next to an information board relating to the Saltash Blitz. When the committee was wound up, Saltash Town Council agreed to take on the maintenance of both the benches as part of the town's heritage.

Plans from Saltash Town Team to bring new life to Fore Street include holding a monthly market on the site outside Superdrug. This is due to commence in March and run for a six-month trial period. The Town Team asked the Town Council to consider moving the bench elsewhere in the street to create more space for stalls and the council agreed.

However, news of this decision sparked a storm of protest, in particular from people involved in the original placement of the bench. Resident Barry Brooking, whose grandfather was a Saltash volunteer firefighter who lost his life in the Plymouth Blitz, made representations to council seeking that their decision be reversed. He described the proposal to move the bench as "insensitive and even abusive, showing a lack of honour to our fallen." Some

people, he said, wanted to start a national press campaign and protest with placards at the proposed markets.

Mr. Brooking argued that the bench occupies minimal space in the proposed market area, and that its present location was pleasant, sheltered from wind, and much used - in particular by a number of residents who sit there specifically to remember the war dead. Some, he noted, considered the bench 'sacrosanct' due to the blessing it received when installed.

Following this representation, in which Mr. Brooking accused the council of failing to undertake 'due diligence,' Mayor Councillor Julia Peggs acknowledged, "On reflection, you are right." She confirmed that the bench would remain in place during the six month trial period. After that time, the Town Team would review the market's success, with comprehensive input from local traders and the public, before making any further decisions.

Mr. Brooking thanked the Mayor for reversing the decision but firmly added: "We will be back if there is any attempt to move the bench."

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Pete's Point of View ...

I recall watching an episode of 'Who Wants To Be A Millionaire' a few years ago, in which the contestant was asked to name the most south westerly county of England. He responded with the answer that the producers of the show expected to hear - "It's Cornwall, final answer". I could only imagine the good folks of Cornwall screaming at the TV that

Cornwall is in fact a Duchy, rather than an English county and indeed a very unique part of the UK that has its own language and customs.

But it now looks as though Cornwall is about to be swallowed up, as part of a South West Regional Council, which will include Devon and possibly also Dorset and Somerset, led by a South West Mayor. If this comes to pass, as seems likely under the so-called devolution policy of the current government, this will result in decisions affecting our daily lives, being potentially taken many miles away, rather than here in the Duchy. In terms of investment, we could be left behind, as there is an inherent risk that such a regional council might prioritise areas closer to home of the new power base, whilst increased taxation on a regional basis

is a real possibility.

Plymouth City Council have already voted to become part of the proposed 'super council' and have indicated that they expect Cornwall to join. I watched online, the unedifying spectacle of turkeys voting for Christmas.

I have always been a proponent of people-power, so if, like me, you are both appalled and fearful of being sucked into such a 'super council' with diminished representation at a local level, now is the time to make your voices heard loud and clear.

At election time last year, we were promised change, but as we all know, change is not always for the better. So, what has changed? Well, quite a lot actually. Rather than protecting the elderly and vulnerable from viruses such as Covid, they are condemned to freeze during the worst of the winter months. Our farmers are no longer supported and encouraged, with the industry set to be decimated, small family businesses are to be taxed to the point of oblivion, the rail industry is to be dragged back to the bad old days of British Rail, the WASPI women are now facing up to broken promises, the price of an everyday shopping basket is likely to increase as a result of the higher NI contributions, a previously recovering economy is now taking a nosedive, spending cuts that were once derided as 'austerity' are now to be supercharged. But what has been achieved? A spiralling national debt to the tune of billions in interest payments!

Optimistically, I am looking forward to a change, but one that may take another four years, or so, to achieve.

Pete Samuels.

Any views expressed are personal views and not that of any organisation with which Pete is associated.

Essa Voices

Baubles and Borders

Christmas decorations have been packed away, but my column this month is still about baubles.

Not the festive kind, but the shiny baubles of new powers and enhanced funding that central government is hanging on the 'devolution tree' to decorate its radical restructuring of local government. The 'Devolution Revolution', announced in a White Paper just before Christmas, represents the biggest shake-up in council structure for 50 years. Urban areas may have seen this as a wonderful Christmas present, but for Cornwall it raises serious concerns about whether our distinct identity and needs will be overshadowed by a rigid, one-size-fits-all approach.

Under the proposals, the



Councillor Hilary Frank
cldr.hilary.frank@cornwall.gov.uk

two-tier structure of district and county councils that exists in some areas of England will be replaced by Strategic Authorities. These will come in three types: Established Mayoral Strategic Authorities, Mayoral Strategic Authorities, and Foundation Strategic Authorities, with Established MSAs enjoying the greatest level of funding and devolved powers in areas like strategic transport, housing and economic development. Cornwall already holds a Level 2 Devolution Deal, equivalent

to the Foundation Strategic Authority under this new framework.

Soon after revealing these startling reforms, the government invited councils in two-tier areas to propose how they could combine to form a Foundation Strategic Authority. Cornwall wasn't invited to make a proposal because we already operate as a unitary authority holding the responsibilities of the former Cornwall County Council and six District Councils. However, the government has stated that Strategic Authorities should serve populations of over 1.5 million. With Devon's population at 1.2 million and Plymouth's at 265,000, it was perhaps unsurprising that a proposal emerged from across the Tamar for a Mayoral Strategic Authority spanning Plymouth, Devon... and Cornwall.

Cornwall's six MPs met with Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner soon after the White Paper was published. She told them Cornwall has two options at this stage: to engage early in talks for a Mayoral Strategic Authority over a wider geographical area, or remain as a Foundation Strategic Authority while continuing to push for a Cornwall-only footprint. No guarantees were given that Cornwall could achieve standalone status. In practical terms, joining a Mayoral Strategic Authority would not make much difference: Cornwall Council would remain the same size, with 87

councillors. Decisions on strategic issues, however, would rest with a directly-elected mayor. While the mayor would consult Leaders of the principal councils in the authority, there is still a significant risk that Cornwall's voice could be diluted and overshadowed.

The implications of the restructure reforms were debated at a meeting of all 87 Cornwall Councillors on 21st January. After passionate speeches reflecting a range of views and concerns, councillors voted overwhelmingly in favour of campaigning for a structure that ensures Cornwall retains its own, independent footprint. I supported this, believing that Cornwall's distinct identity must be strengthened with policies designed to prioritise the needs of our residents.

It is reassuring to see Cornwall's six MPs stand firm in the face of voices that seem intent on pressuring Cornwall into compliance. We need to remember that the proposals in the White Paper are still in their infancy: there's a long road ahead before any of it becomes law, and an even longer journey before any new Mayoral Strategic Authority is created.

This isn't about isolationism or shutting out our neighbours. It's about ensuring Cornwall's voice is heard loud and clear. Andrew George MP, who attended the council meeting where we debated these issues, urged us to hold our nerve, reminding us: "This is a decision that will affect Cornwall for the next century. The baubles will only last two or three years."

I believe Cornwall deserves a devolution deal on its own terms - not one imposed to fit an urban template. Just as the festive baubles have been packed away, we should pack away any illusions that short-term rewards can outweigh the importance of safeguarding Cornwall's distinct identity and future.

Busy Behind the Scenes



2024 may have seemed quiet on the Safe38 front but we continued to be busy behind the scenes attending meeting and campaigning for average speed cameras to be delivered as soon as possible on the section of the A38 between Carkeel and Trerulefoot.

We were encouraged to learn from National Highways that there has been a slight improvement in the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) rate from Carkeel to Trerulefoot, and it would be appropriate to thank drivers who are taking that extra bit of care on a road that is notoriously challenging for drivers to navigate.

We saw drainage improvements at Notter Bridge which are designed to alleviate the unacceptable levels of standing water and flooding after rain which was an underlying cause in many incidents at this location.

Engineering out this hazard can only be excellent news for local drivers in terms of their safety, and for local businesses in terms of the performance of the road.

A Prevention of Future Deaths notice was issued to National Highways by the Coroner's office in December regarding the road layout between Carkeel and Trerulefoot which was judged to have been a contributing factor in a fatal incident earlier in 2024.

We will be sure to monitor the progress made by National Highways on this, and have written to our MP and to the Community Area Partnership to highlight this recommendation.

As we embark upon a New Year many of us will have made New Year's resolutions. Often these relate to our health and wellbeing but it is never too late to squeeze in another.

Safe38 would like to encourage readers and residents to pledge to drive within the speed limits this coming year. We know that lower speeds, especially on the A38, result in less severe collisions if they do occur. This is something that we can all easily do to make our roads a safer place.

Saltash Youth Network: Supporting Young People Together



The Saltash Youth Network held its Annual General Meeting in January, appointing Sue Hooper, MBE, as its first Honorary President. Sue, a founding member of the network 33 years ago, was recognised for her tireless dedication to supporting young people in Saltash. Mayor Julia Peggs offered her congratulations, saying, "Sue's visionary commitment has inspired so many over the years, and this appointment is richly deserved."

Chair Charlotte Carpenter reflected on their collective achievements, highlighting the Youth Village at May Fair and the network's success in connecting over 15 youth groups, including Girlguiding, Sailing Cadets and St John Ambulance Cadets. She also spoke about the recent name change from Saltash Town Youth Council, which better represents the network's role as a resource for youth leaders and volunteers.

The meeting was also attended by Sara Del Gaudio, Acting Headteacher of Saltash Community School, who reaffirmed the school's commitment to working with

the network. Paying tribute to the youth groups, the Mayor thanked everyone for their generous commitment of time and invaluable expertise. With strengthened partnerships and a renewed sense of shared purpose, the network looks forward to building on its work in the year ahead.

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Sustainable Saltash

A regular column on changes Saltash residents are making to confront climate and ecological breakdown

A child's ukelele, a glitter covered miniature reindeer, a carrier bag, an aluminium door threshold. I'm not trying to reprise a much-loved television game show, and these aren't items on the conveyor belt. These are all things I removed from the community allotment this week. We have a volunteer meeting there on Mondays. Before we get anywhere near a plant, we clear a slew of drinks cans, sweet wrappers and crisp packets from the perimeter. We do a visual sweep of the ground, picking out the 'treasures' passers by have seen fit to hurl over the hedge into the heart of our fruit garden.

The target is specific. The fruit garden is the part of the allotment that looks wilder than cultivated. The longer grasses, fruit and nut bushes, and small trees, are apparently worthy of nothing but the general contempt for nature expressed by anyone with an unwanted item they'd rather toss than dispose of legally and safely. Those who choose to litter are apparently incapable of discerning between higher order and successional plants and waste bins.

Waste dumpers (to call them litterers seems too charitable) are inexplicably slightly more respecting of bare earth, where they imagine we might grow crops. However, the local cats don't respect our patch at all. Incapable of discerning between a carefully tended seedbed and a litter tray, neighbourhood felines guarantee that after we have finished litter picking, we will move onto removing cat faeces, all the while pondering whether we shall want to eat anything we have grown in the soil at all.

I feel as someone who likes to grow things and enjoy the outdoors, I am destined to live a life in servitude to the ignorant and lazy. Late-stage capitalism has spawned and entitled and profligate society that does not know how to live sustainably. While the cost-of-living crisis grinds on in the media, we have so much of everything we can throw away valuable resources and feed our pets so well their cumulative excretions are adding huge quantities of unrequired nutrients into our soil and water. These things have enormous environmental consequences.

Simultaneously, animal

Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation

Commemorating 80th Anniversary of the End of WW2 - Victory in Europe VE80 (May 8th, 2025)

'We'll Meet Again'

Get ready to step back in time and celebrate the spirit, resilience, and sacrifices of

those who lived through World War II to mark the 80th anniversary of VE Day in a truly memorable way!

rescue centres are bursting at the seams and foodbanks are oversubscribed.

It is hard to reconcile these two states, but these are the facts. I want to draw the readers attention to another fact. We are not the only living beings on Earth. Myriad small creatures that are not pets live alongside us. They are substantially disadvantaged by the onslaught of contaminants we hurl at them in our quest to jettison extraneous items. We love to coo over images of cute hedgehogs, wood mice, and small birds, but at the same time we are strangling them with a deluge of litter and allowing them to become prey to our feline pets.

Next time you go out, I challenge you to pick up some litter, take it home with you. If you have a cat, please give it a litter tray, a bell on its collar, and keep it in at night.

Dr Rebecca Pearce

This column is a conversation starter for our whole community. If you have comments on the subject, ideas of your own or suggestions for future content, please do get in touch at sustainable.saltash@protonmail.com

A Community-Wide Celebration of Music, Drama, and Remembrance from the early months of 2025, the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation will bring local communities together for a rich tapestry of events that honour the past and celebrate our present freedoms.

The Trust aims to stage WW2 themed Music, Songs, Speeches, Recitals, Poetry and Drama Workshops with Public Performances - inclusive to all.

These commemorations and celebration welcomes everyone! Whether you're a seasoned performer, a budding artist, or simply eager to be part of something special, there's a place for you. The Trust is reaching out to youth groups, and organisations to join in—and they are especially keen to include: the young and elderly, individuals with disabilities or health challenges - those who are disadvantaged or bereaved and so on!

A spokesperson from the Trust said: "Everyone is invited to share their time, skills, experience, talents, stories, and enthusiasm.

"Honouring History through Performance 'We'll Meet Again' events will pay heartfelt tribute to the men and women who served, sacrificed, and fought for the freedoms we cherish today.

"Let's come together as a community to ensure their legacy endures and their

Five Ways to Improve your Finances in 2025

Why not make it your New Year's resolution this year to prioritise your financial health? Many of us face money worries post-Christmas, and here at Christians Against Poverty (CAP), we want to share five top tips to empower you to take control of your finances. **Find out your financial personality** We all have different habits when it comes to managing money. CAP's free, online **money personality quiz** can help you to better understand your spending habits and provides useful tips on

sacrifices are never forgotten." Inspired by the power of music and drama to uplift spirits during wartime, this project aims to rekindle the hope and camaraderie of those years, showing that even in times of adversity, the human spirit can still shine bright.

Details of venues and times will be revealed in the early coming weeks. The Trust has advised people to keep an eye out for announcements and be ready to join the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation in this powerful journey of remembrance and celebration.

Sponsors so far are: The Carew-Pole Foundation, Viscountess Boyd Fund and the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation, in association with the Cornwall Community Foundation.

building a healthier relationship with money.

Create a personal budget. Creating a personal budget is key to understanding your financial situation in order to make positive changes. A balanced budget will help give you a clear picture of how much money you have coming in each month, what you're spending and where you're spending it. It can also help you with saving for the future.

Download CAP's budgeting guide at capuk.org/budgeting to create your own personal budget.

Cut back, cut costs and cut out

To make your money go further, you can reduce spending by cutting back (reducing how much or how often you buy something); by cutting the expenditure out completely (identifying if it's a need or want), or by cutting the cost (finding it cheaper elsewhere).

Consider buying second-hand, shopping around for the best price and use discount codes where you can. Plan ahead to give yourself plenty of time and use price comparison sites and online search engines to find the best deal. For grocery shopping, make a shopping list ahead of time, and try not to shop when you're hungry. Shopping in the evening may

also lead to discounts on food approaching expiry dates.

Build up an emergency fund It's important to save for future emergencies. Start small so that it's manageable within your budget, and set up your bank account to transfer the money into a savings account automatically each month so that you're not tempted to spend it. An emergency fund can offer huge peace of mind if and when unexpected costs arise.

Seek free help Find out how CAP can help you further improve your financial situation. We provide free, expert debt advice and money education, all delivered face-to-face so you'll receive an effective combination of practical and emotional support. If you're struggling with unmanageable debt, call our free helpline on **0800 328 0006**.

Alternatively, moneyhelper.org.uk is also great for a wide range of support.

Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a UK charity working with over 800 affiliated churches to deliver debt help, budgeting guidance, support to find work, life skills education and more. Visit capuk.org to find out more.

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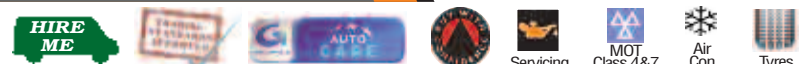
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Tamar Reflections

In thanking the folks that so kindly sent kind messages regarding part one of 'A Stitch Back in Time' of which I reflected upon events up until the 15th Century.

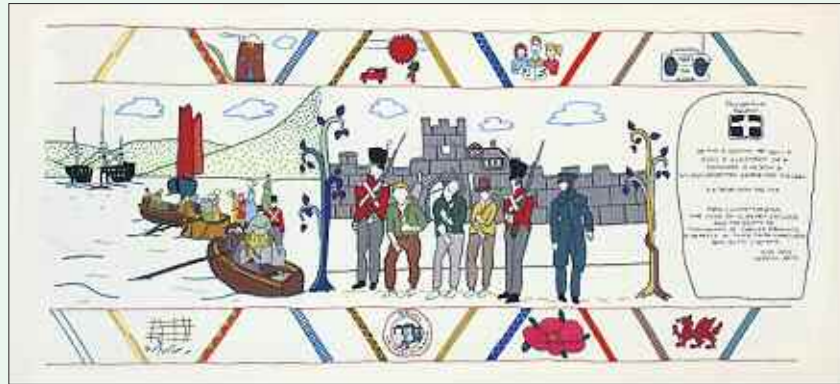
In association with Andrew Tritton's supporting booklet, I continue within Tamar Reflections the historic journey of the Saltash Chronicles Embroidery which hangs majestically at the Saltash Guildhall.

The Prayer Book Rebellion

During the first half of the 16th Century, the English Reformation was a time of religious upheaval. Two Saltash men, Nicholas Kempe and Peter Gryslinge, were imprisoned for allegedly having spoken words criticising Henry VIII. Along with Andrew Furlong a Saltash priest and schoolmaster - merely for possessing a Bible. This was all tied in with the Prayer Book Rebellion - Prayer Book Revolt, Prayer Book Rising, Western Rising or Western Rebellion which was a popular revolt in Devon and Cornwall in 1549. In that year the Book of Common Prayer, presenting the theology of the English Reformation, was introduced. Catholics in Cornwall objected to the imposition of the Church of England and its new Prayer Book.

Sir Francis Drake and Mary Newman

Mary Newman became the first wife of Sir Francis Drake when they married at St Budeaux Church in 1569. Mary died twelve years later in 1581. The embroidery features alongside them - the Elizabethan Galleon Golden Hind, captained by Drake which was brought up the River Tamar when he



returned from his great voyage around the world carrying huge quantities of plundered booty.

The English Civil War

Saltash, due to its strategic position, played a major role during the English Civil War 1642-1646. Cornwall was mainly for the King (Royalist) and one of the last areas to fall to the Roundheads (Parliamentarians). Saltash held an important position on the side of the River Tamar crossing. Batteries were constructed at the southern end of the Town Quay and at

Wearde Quay, where remains can still be seen today. Saltash sustained more damage than any other Cornish town and many of its Jacobean buildings were destroyed.

Charles II

In 1671 Charles II visited Plymouth and sailed up the Hamoaze as far as Saltash. The Monarch expressed admiration of the charms the 'Saltash

in the Tamar Valley. At Saltash he received a poor welcome, and was told to go back to where he came from, but he persisted and in 1794 a Baptist Chapel was erected on the land in Culver Road. The present Baptist Church was dedicated and opened in March 1992 following the destruction of the second Church by fire on Christmas Day 1987

Burraton Methodist Chapel

The Chapel was erected in 1893 with a schoolroom annexed, on a commanding site on the borders of Burraton. It was demolished to be replaced by the present Church (with flats built above). The Church was opened and dedicated in 2007.

Passage House Inn

The renowned artist JMW Turner produced two local paintings; one of the Hamoaze, with Saltash in the distance, and one of the Ferry Beach situated on Saltash Waterside in 1812. The latter painting features the old Passage House Inn. This has in more recent years changed management and purpose.

Floating Bridge

In 1832, in an effort to regain some of the ferry passengers lost to Torpoint, a private Company obtained the Act of Parliament for the purpose of purchasing the ferry rights of the Saltash Corporation. They established a new steam-powered 'Floating Bridge' ferry running along chains. A few years later, however, the 'Floating Bridge' was withdrawn for repairs. The old 'Horse Boats' were re-instated again during that time.

Royal Albert Bridge

Isambard Kingdom Brunel was the engineer responsible for the new railway bridge constructed during the 1850's. Brunel's Bridge cost £230,000 to build and is 2,240 feet long. On May 2nd 1859 the Royal Albert Bridge was opened by Prince Albert, after whom it was named.

William Odgers - 1834-1873 - Buried at St Stephens Church Yard

William Odgers of Saltash was 26 years old, and a leading seaman in the Royal Navy during the Taranaki Maori War, New Zealand when the following deed took place for which he was awarded the VC on March 28th 1860 at Omata, New Zealand. Leading Seaman Odgers of HMS Niger displayed conspicuous gallantry when a party of officers, sailors and marines from the ship stormed Kaipopo Pa during operations against Maori insurgents, having been the first to enter it under heavy fire.

From the history text, all the above stories feature on the Saltash Chronicles Embroideries and really do commemorate and celebrate the steepness of Saltash's ancient history. All credit to Andrew Tritton and such a talented team of designers, artists, embroiderers. Indeed, the local community organisations, with children from the schools, youth groups and other talented volunteers.

I shall continue in the next available issue of the Saltash Observer this remarkable story told in stitch craft and exhibited at the Saltash Guildhall for all to see by appointment at the Saltash Town Council Offices. Sue Hooper MBE Former Mayor of Saltash & Freeman of the Town

Email: suechef@msn.com

Illustrations courtesy Andrew Tritton

Post Christmas Walk Proves Popular

Over seventy eager walkers, including a number of family groups and many equally eager dogs, gathered to shake off seasonal food and drink on a post Christmas ramble round the Saltash countryside. Organisers Rachel Bullock and Martin Lister led the group, sharing fascinating insight in to local history along the way. Special thanks were extended to Gary Richardson, whose experience in the Metropolitan Police proved invaluable in marshalling the large group along narrow lanes.

At Moditonham Quay, Martin outlined the busy scene that once defined the area, with market boats taking away fresh produce and loading 'dock dung.' The adjacent Pineapple Inn, now a farm, was a lively hub catering for carters and boatmen. Walkers also heard about the history of ancient Moditonham House, the rise and fall of the Methodist Chapel and village school, and the days when crowds flocked from Saltash and Plymouth to admire the cherry blossom in what was known as 'Little Japan.'

The parish church at Botus Fleming was opened for walkers to view the crusader tomb and village stocks. The walk continued to the traditional



Congratulations On the Arrival of Baby Eli!

We are thrilled to announce the arrival of Eli Paul Henry Thomas Harvey, born on December 22nd, weighing a healthy 6lb 11.5oz. Eli is the beloved brother to Joseph and Ronnie, cherished grandchild to Bryan and Sue, and the first grandchild to Paul and Beccy. He is also the dear nephew to Wayne and Donna. Eli arrived safely and is content, bringing immense joy to all who meet him. We are absolutely besotted with him! Zoe told the Observer.

Zoe Angear

village local, the Rising Sun, where walkers could enjoy refreshments and warm themselves by a roaring fire before the return to Saltash.

Following enthusiastic feedback, plans are already underway to make the post-Christmas walk an annual tradition.

PUBLIC NOTICE

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ADVANCE WARNING

**Roads closed for:
Saltash May Fair 2025
& Saltash Half Marathon 2025**

SAT 3RD MAY 2025 06:30 - 19:00
A38 Sliproad (south lane of south off slip)
Fore Street (full length)
Wesley Road (full length)
Victoria Road (King Edward Road TO Wesley Road) - Eastbound only
Belle Vue Road (Car Park junction TO Fore Street)
King Edward Road (Essa Road TO Victoria Road) - Northbound only

SAT 3RD MAY 2025 10:00 - 10:15
Callington Road (Fore Street Roundabout)
St Stephens Road (Fore Street Roundabout)
King Edward Road (Fore Street Roundabout)

SUN 4TH MAY 2025 09:50 - 10:15
Callington Road (Church Road TO Glebe Avenue)

SUN 4TH MAY 2025 10:50 - 11:15
Callington Road (Church Road TO Glebe Avenue)

Parking Restrictions

SAT 3RD MAY 2025 06:30 - 19:00
St Stephens Road (Essa Road TO Fore Street)
King Edward Road (Wesley Lane TO Fore Street)
Callington Road (Fore Street TO Glebe Avenue)
Glebe Avenue (Callington Road TO North Road)
Longstone Car Park is the only carpark affected

SUN 4TH MAY 2025 09:30 - 13:00
Callington Road (Glebe Avenue TO Plougastel Drive)

Just Thinking Aloud

A belated Happy New Year to all readers! "Never Hit a Jellyfish with a Spade". Read on: all will be revealed. They tell me that confession is good for the soul. Well, I have done so much of it in my time that my soul by now ought to be squeaky clean and shining bright – but I fear not. It is at this point that I must confess that I am not too keen on Christmas at the best of times – all that conspicuous consumption, the eye-watering expense of cards plus postage, the considerable ignorance re what it should really be about, and so on. Easter is much more my thing as a practising Christian – plenty to chew on theologically and not too much in the way of distractions other than those blessed eggs.

Anyway, I ceased being an active C of E priest on my 80th birthday. These days I just sit in the pews at SS Nicholas &

Faith, not doing a great deal other than chuntering (mainly to myself) about an Anglican church which among its lofty and distant leaders seems to have more than a few who have a warped view of what they ought to be about. Don't misunderstand me. We at St Nicks are mostly elderly but I like to think that we know what our faith demands of us. And I think we know at least one of the reasons why churches are emptying at a rate of knots. Most of my immediate family are non-believers of the agnostic or even atheist persuasion, so this Christmas I inflicted myself more on them than on my church, not darkening any church doors between 23rd December and 4th January, just praying and meditating in occasional sessions of solitude, pleading to be offered hope where hope appears to be not on offer. That prayer is ongoing. I prayed also to have my sense of humour restored.

May God bless my nonagenarian friend Dorothy,

Saltash Patient Voice

Blood testing to return to the town soon?

Last autumn, the Health Action Group put to local NHS leaders the **simple services** which we thought should be more available in the town. These are:

- blood tests
- minor injuries
- regular dressings
- an increased range of outpatient clinics
- ultrasound scans, and a mobile X-Ray service
- short-term recovery after hospital discharge - at home via "virtual wards", and in NHS beds in a local nursing home
- NHS dental care provision

who knows me far too well. She decided that I needed cheering up, and so a week before Christmas Day presented me with a book by Guy Browning, the title of which begins this month's offering. The extracts you are about to read may reveal to you something about my quirky sense of humour.

"Very occasionally the great British public get so annoyed about something that they decide to demonstrate. This generally involves descending on London en masse, discovering how few public toilets there are, and then returning home with lots of shopping".

"Before you get to see the doctor you generally have to sit in the waiting room. After fifty minutes you discover the reason behind the term 'patient'. However, waiting does give you the time to look at all the other malingerers. Unless someone clearly has a saucepan wedged on their head, there's always the suspicion that they're just wasting the doctor's valuable time which would be far better spent on your life-threatening rash".

Bob Munro

specialised investigations in the new Urgent Care Centre and Fracture Clinic being built near the main Derriford site, and the Community Diagnostic Centre planned for Western Approach in Plymouth. These new services cover a wide area, but will be reasonably accessible from Saltash.

The Action Group is led by the Town Council, local councillors and chairs of Patient Groups at Port View and the Health Centre. We engage all local NHS leaders as best we can, and at the most recent meeting Mayor Julia Peggs was clear to them that "we will not be giving up" in our pursuit of improved access to services. We want Saltash to be a pilot project in East Cornwall for Care Closer to Home, and for integrating neighbourhood health and care services.

The Action Group meets regularly with local NHS leaders, and we are also getting encouragement for these ideas from senior management at Derriford Hospital. They too want to see "care closer to home".

At long last, the first signs of change are appearing. We have been informed that it is 99% certain that soon Saltash folk will no longer have to troop over to the Future Inn in Plymouth for blood tests. Other services which are currently being considered by the NHS for us are: providing outpatient clinics, expanding virtual wards after discharge, and establishing mobile X-ray. We await detailed proposals for these. Finally, extra GP/paramedic appointments have already started to be provided at times in St Barnabas hospital, which the Health Centre and Port View can access for their patients.

Patients in the town will also benefit in time from more

Members of the Group know that their work will be helped if wide community support can be clearly demonstrated. Please come and give your views at an NHS-run event at the Guildhall on Saturday February 1st; join the new St Barnabas charity as a supporter and watch out for its events; and let your councillor and local MP know your views. Comments and questions also invited at patient.voice@icloud.com

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