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March 2025 - Issue 392

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3rd & 4th
May 2025

SALTASH MAY FAIR
Celebrate on Fore Street and Longstone Park

Kernoasis

Devolution will be a major topic in the coming months as the government has invited proposals for the largest restructuring of local government in over 50 years,

Devonwall: A Dangerous Illusion for Cornwall

promising to devolve powers and funding from Whitehall. The developments will have a crucial impact on us in South East Cornwall.

Although Anna Gelderd MP, along with all other Cornish MPs, endorsed the recent Cornish Democracy report advocating for Cornish devolution, her article in the last issue of the Saltash

Observer appeared to favour Cornwall as part of an authority including Devon, Torbay and Plymouth. But experience shows that when Cornwall is grouped with Devon, power and funding shift eastward. This has already happened with policing and water services, which are both based in Exeter. Much of our healthcare is already in Plymouth, and unless you walk over the bridge, you have to pay to access them, either through bridge tolls, train fares or bus tickets. A Devonwall mayor and strategic authority would almost certainly operate from Devon, further drawing services away from South East Cornwall.

Devonwall would not be devolution. It would be a loss of control that threatens our economy, services, identity and language.

So, what is the alternative? The Devolution for Cornwall report, produced by the Institute of Cornish Studies and endorsed by Cornwall's 6 MPs, sets out a clear and reasoned vision of a devolved Cornwall with the power and funding to make its own decisions. With proper devolution,

Cornwall could take control of planning to ensure that housing developments serve local needs rather than external interests. South East Cornwall could become an economic zone, with targeted projects to attract businesses and create jobs. Crucially, we could engage from a position of strength rather than dependency, making the case for fairer funding that would allow for greater investment in our communities, including the abolition of tolls on the Tamar Crossings.

By the 10th January deadline, the government had received 17 proposals for local government mergers. At the beginning of February, Deputy Prime Minister Angela Rayner announced the six areas selected for the priority devolution programme, with the 'Devonwall' proposal notably not among them.

Cornwall is not just another administrative county. We hold protected national minority status under the Council of Europe's Framework Convention. On the same day the priority devolution areas were announced, the Deputy Prime Minister spoke in the

House of Commons, reaffirming her recognition of Cornwall's national minority status and committing to ensuring that devolution will be shaped with the people of Cornwall, not imposed on us. We welcome her pledge to work with Cornwall to deliver meaningful devolution.

To be clear, this is not about cutting ourselves off from Plymouth or Devon. It is about securing the power to shape our own future, because no one understands the needs of our fishermen, farmers, ageing pop-

ulation and rural communities better than the people who live and work here. The River Tamar has marked Cornwall's boundary for over a thousand years. Our culture is distinct, our identity unique, and our history one of resilience. Cornwall has fiercely rejected past attempts to weaken our heritage. We must reject this one, too. Devonwall is a dangerous illusion.

Malcolm Williams, Professor at the Institute of Cornish Studies and Saltash resident
Hilary Frank, Cornwall Councillor representing Saltash Essa


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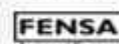
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Town Messenger

Working for the People of Saltash

News from Saltash Town Council
Konsel an dre Essa



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adultcare@cornwall.gov.uk

Highways Department
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Email:
customerrelations@cornwallimited.co.uk

Transport Department
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(Bus Pass) Telephone: 0300 1234 222
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Email:
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Waste Department
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Email: via contact form on website only.

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customerrelations@cormacitd.co.uk
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*Town Messenger news
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Town Council*

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**Cornwall Councillors
Cover such services as:**
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Social Services
Highways
Waste & Recycling
Tamar Bridge

From the Mayor of Saltash

I know I say this every month about the wonderful people that I get to meet but this last month I've met some amazing young people.

I was really impressed by all the performers at the Saltash Music and Drama Festival, what talented young people we have in our town! I also enjoyed a lovely afternoon tea that was cooked by the young people at The Core. Young people join the Grub Club after school learning to cook, make delicious, tasty treats for their families, friends and guests. I attended the most fantastic production of Mary Poppins at our Saltash community school. Over 100 enthusiastic young people singing, dancing and acting their hearts out. Well done to all those involved.

As a volunteer at Livewire, I'm impressed every week by the young people who have the confidence to stand on stage and sing, no matter what their style of music, or what their voice is like. They can also have free drumming, guitar, singing, stage lighting etc lessons for free! One young man has gone on to work on the cruise ships doing, sound and lighting, and quite a few play in bands as well.

Saltash Youth Network, which consists of all the young people's organisations in Saltash, from Cubs, Brownies, Guides, Scouts, Boxing Clubs, Football, Rugby, St Johns, all do an amazing job. Without the volunteers who give up their time to help with these young people we would not have all



these organisations in our town, and I can assure you many towns have nothing like the facilities for young people like Saltash. I know of late that we have heard some very disturbing incidents, about a small group of young people causing problems, fortunately this is the minority, and very often it's not young people from Saltash. We have so many young people who do amazing things in our town that we don't hear about and should celebrate, like, litter picking, shopping for elderly, fund raising, gardening, counselling and mentoring other young people.

Well did you turn right? I'm glad to see the now positive feedback from the "left turn only" at Gilston Road, no queues!!! It is only a trial, and your feedback is important before any permanent decisions are put into place. It's like our recycling centre, I have to say I was a bit sceptical, however it's so easy to book a slot and not have to queue around Waitrose or Carkeel roundabouts just to take a few old pieces of carpet to the tip.

Most people I've spoken to feel the same. We must give these trials a bit of time before jumping on social media to complain the first day that it's changed.

I will be coming towards the end of my Mayoral year in May, and I have to say that I've enjoyed 99.9% of it. I know most people say we see you in the paper all the time, but that's just the easy and enjoyable part of the Mayoral side of the role, it's all the other meetings,

consultations and decisions that have to be made that take up a lot of time as Chairman of the Town Council, however if you are thinking of becoming a Town Councillor I can assure you it's very rewarding, there is some time commitment, mostly evening meetings, but you do have the opportunity to put forward ideas from our residents, and help make our town the special place it is. For further information, contact a Town Councillor to

find out more about what the role entails www.saltash.gov.uk

Some of the special things I've enjoyed being part of is, putting together the first business plan that Saltash Town Council have adopted, getting funding for two new play parks in Pillmere and another play park and sensory garden on the Jubilee Green soon to be delivered, we also have a ferry, two new memorial benches, and I'm really looking

forward to seeing the transformation in Fore St with new planters, seating, potentially some living walls and improved wayfinding coming this Spring. Of course, we have an amazing Town Clerk and Admin Team. I don't know what we would do without them!!

*Love our chats as always
Best Wishes
Councillor Julia Peggs
Mayor of Saltash 2024-25*

Your Town Council & Wards

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negotiations with Great Western Railway will lead to further improvements to the core timetable, and a few extra rail services during the works to the Saltash Tunnel which are likely to cause chaos for us all. I should have some more news soon.

As a whole the town council are getting better at winning funding bids, and it is great to be part of the small working group that have helped secure £100,000 of funding to deliver a new playpark and other improvements on the Waterside. We also have other plans and ideas to improve the area in the short term whilst the longer-term plans for a flood prevention scheme will sadly take years to deliver, but at least we have plans. Living close to the Waterside and being part of the organising team for Saltash Regatta as well as being a regular river user, I have a good understanding of the area and I am pleased that the council have recognised its importance to everyone in the town.

Whilst delivering on so many fronts the town council must continue to be prudent with its spending, seeking maximum community benefit in all it does. To that end, I will continue to challenge spending in certain areas and look for funding partners that can help deliver projects at a better value for our town. If you are interested too, then have a look at the website or come along to a meeting.

Meet Your Councillor

*Councillor
Richard Bickford
Essa Ward*



our website to find out more.

I recently joined the team planning to breathe new life into the charity 'League of Friends of St Barnabas Hospital' the charity has reprioritised into one which aims to improve healthcare provision in Saltash, this compliments the work of the Saltash Healthcare Action Group where we are demanding better provision within the town.

After many years of rail campaigning, the train services have grown to a pretty decent level that has also seen passenger numbers grow alongside, I hope that recent

I have been lucky enough to have been elected as a town councillor for several years, all of it enjoyable, although it can often be challenging.

After serving as Mayor for two years, it was a pleasure to hand over the chains to Julia, and she has been doing a fantastic job in representing the town.

It has given me an opportunity to turn my attention to some other aspects of town council life, including chairing our Services committee, who deliver so much for the town. The small team are based at the depot at Longstone Park. Their duties are wide ranging, have a look at the reports for the Services committee meetings on

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Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping Us Updated

At the February Chamber meeting, we discussed matters as diverse as retail, manufacturing, highways and even Christmas! Yes, Christmas, because planning for the festivities starts now. A recent meeting between Chamber members and the Town Council has resulted in a decision to deliver the lights switch-on and the Christmas Festival on separate days. The Chamber will support the Town Council in organising the switch-on event, while continuing to run the Festival, as it has for many years. It was felt this would be the best approach for residents and traders.

A concern was raised about the lack of employment space in Saltash, with one Chamber member struggling to find suitable premises to expand their business. Concerns were also raised about the traffic initiative at the mouth of Gilston Road, as drivers still

attempt to turn right when exiting, which may reduce its effectiveness during peak times.

Studies show that spending £10 in a local shop can circulate around £50 in the local economy. That's why the Chamber is delighted to be

working with the nationwide Totally Locally campaign to deliver the Magic Tenner initiative in Saltash. From 1st to 16th March, Fore Street businesses are offering special £10 deals, giving you an excellent chance to pick up a bargain while keeping money flowing in our community.

Representing the Chamber, I've been working on the Town Team, alongside town and Cornwall councillors and representatives from Community Enterprises PL12, to implement solutions to boost footfall into the town centre. One key outcome of our consultation last spring is the launch of a monthly street market on the third Saturday of each month. The first will take place on 15th March in the area outside Superdrug and The Original Factory Shop, offering a range of goods, including cakes, chutneys and eggs.

Meanwhile, Town Team has appointed contractors to deliver improvements on Fore Street, including new planters and better signage. Cornwall Highways will also be addressing uneven pavements and road signs, making the town centre a safer, more inviting place to visit.

It's not often I get excited, but with so much happening in Saltash, I can't help but feel optimistic. With fresh initiatives, community-driven events and long-overdue improvements, now is the time to get involved, shop local, and make the most of all that's happening in our town.

Cornwall Council Investment Secures

Future of Saltash Leisure Centre

Saltash Leisure Centre is set to undergo a major transformation into Cornwall's first multi-purpose community hub, thanks to a £1.88 million investment by Cornwall Council. This pioneering pilot project will bring a broad range of health and wellbeing services under one roof, keeping the swimming pool and improving the changing rooms.

In 2021, when the leisure centre faced the threat of closure, residents and sports clubs rallied to demonstrate that it was much more than just a recreational venue. Their determined campaign helped reverse the closure plans, and since then Cornwall and town councillors have actively supported GLL, the not-for-profit social enterprise contracted by Cornwall Council to operate the centre. GLL has delivered a range of improvements, including expanded fitness programmes and the introduction of a popular café serving local food and Senior Citizens' meal deals. The increased use by schools, clubs and the general public has underscored local commitment, and paved the way for this substantial investment.

A key element of the redevelopment is the reinstatement of the registrar service in Saltash. Under the plan, a dedicated registrar will operate from the centre one day a week to handle birth, marriage and death registrations. Although there won't be a dedicated ceremony room, the centre will be the base for a team that will handle ceremonies in the area. A new Safe and Well Hub will also be set up in the centre, creating a shared space where a range of services and organisations can work together in a coordinated way. The hub will feature meeting rooms and drop-in facilities for Cornwall Council, making it easier for the Saltash community to access services.

James Curry, GLL's Head of Service in Cornwall, said: "We're very grateful for the continued local support and delighted to be working with our key partner, Cornwall Council, on this exciting new development. This model is the first of its kind in Cornwall and will give Saltash Leisure Centre a new lease of life."

Work to modernise the changing rooms and enhance the health and fitness areas is scheduled to begin in late spring. The project will be carried out in phases to minimise disruption, and the leisure centre will remain fully operational throughout the transformation.

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To be able to continue to preserve and maintain services for the community of Saltash it is necessary to increase your Council Tax for 2025/2026 by 11%.

This equates to £27.34 per year which is just **53 pence per week**

for a typical Band D property.

The larger portion of your Council Tax is set by Cornwall Council, Devon and Cornwall Police, and Adult Social Care.

The Saltash Town Council portion of council tax is used to support the community in many ways.

Here are just a few examples of how your Saltash portion of council tax money has been reinvested in the community during 2023-2024:

- £59,069 for professional youth work commissioning
- £25,000 for Community Chest and Festival funds
- £20,000 for Saltash Play Park upgrades
- £4,726 for Saltash Youth Network

- Kitchen refurbishment at Isambard House for venue hire purposes
- Devolution of assets, including Victoria Gardens
- Installation of new stone memorial benches
- Grounds maintenance and floral display management
- Refurbishment of library windows
- Christmas lighting display installation
- St Stephens Churchyard upkeep
- Organisation of civic events and parades
- Tree planting initiatives
- Maintenance and management of public conveniences
- Library services provision
- Street furniture installation and maintenance
- Allotment management and development

Funding Streams

The Town Council has been successful in securing various funding during the year 2023-2024.

Funds have been received from Town Vitality (Working in partnership with Town Team), Cornwall Council's Community Infrastructure Fund, and Community Levelling Up, to be able to start reinvesting into the community.

Business Plan

Saltash Town Council has officially launched the new Business Plan for the period 2024-2027, setting out a road-map for the town's development over the next few years.

Deliverables

The Town Council has been focused on advancing key strategic priorities, with significant progress already made in several key areas. A summary of some of these achievements are highlighted in the following section.



Boosting Jobs and Economic Prosperity

Saltash Town Council has made a commitment to growth and has successfully recruited for new positions within the council to support the needs of the community.



Travel and Transport

A successful connectivity trial at Waterside has fostered a strong partnership with Plymouth Boat Trips, resulting in new water transport options for both residents and tourists to enjoy.



Health and Wellbeing

Saltash Town Council installed Happy Plaques on Town Council benches, creating welcoming spaces where residents and visitors can sit and engage in open, safe conversations to support mental health and well-being.



Climate Emergency

Saltash Town Council is dedicated to transitioning its fleet to 100% electric vehicles in order to reduce its carbon footprint.



Housing

Saltash Town Council is committed to improving housing access for all by considering all housing types, including rental and affordable options, and providing support input to the Treledan developments for the town's benefit.



Recreation and Leisure

Upgrades to Saltash Play Parks funded with £75,000 from Cornwall Council's CIL fund and £20,000 from Saltash Town Council, have been a great success for the Saltash community.

Sustainable Saltash

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

We have lived in our house for almost 7 years now. Like most people, we moved in with a list of things we wanted to do. A leaking wall, the roof, the heating. These have been the priorities. The house is now warm, dry and as futureproof as we can make it. There is a bit of repair to some render still to come and then all else is cosmetic.

It's funny looking at that list now. We have become more conscious of resource use, but the assumptions we made when we moved in have also been challenged. Partly through living in the house, but also as a result of spiralling costs. The best example has to be the kitchen.

Honey pine! - declared a favourite auntie on her first visit. She was wincing. Our kitchen is cutting edge for the late 1980s. Knotty wood units with rustic farmhouse floor tiling that has been described as both deep pink and 'like tinned ham' by various observers. We boast counters that are the same shade and a black sink that sounds unappealing, but has never discoloured from that starting point.

The reflex would be to replace it, we may have if we had possessed the resources to do work before moving in, but we didn't. As a result, we

have been living this Duran Duran dream ever since. The best thing is, everything works. The cupboards are well made and durable. The ham tiles have survived all we have thrown at them, including a cast iron pan, which shattered. The sink is solid and hides visible signs of my tea habit better than any stainless steel or white porcelain ever would. The better part of a decade later, we are in love with this old kitchen. We now see it as a challenge to keep it this good for as long as possible. Authentic, even. I struggle to hide my disappointment if an appliance needs replacing and I can't find it in brown and cream!

Will it see me out? Who knows? Maybe I will fill it with houseplants and paint the walls orange, to match the kitchen of my childhood memories. Maybe we will dance to Chris de Burgh in it on our 60th anniversary.

Just Thinking Aloud

Stuff happens to me on buses. 1959 and 2025 stand out in my memory. Last month, on boarding the no.2 bus, I was hailed as "a proper Saltash character". For the other date's significance you'll have to either read on to the end or just jump directly to the final paragraph.

Perhaps it will be wanted as a film set one day.

Either way, our growing affection has saved a huge volume of wood, ceramic, metals and plastic from landfill. We have been able to tick something big off the list without raising a finger and we have saved literally thousands of pounds in one fell swoop, just by deciding not to replace a kitchen. So the message of this month's piece is simply this. Why not save your money and time by embracing what you possess now? If it's not in vogue, you'll never have to watch it fall out of style. Go for unique, make the old things fun. You'll tread a little lighter on the earth for doing so. Marc Bramham

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

The gentleman on the bus (who embarrassed me by orally awarding me an accolade for which I do not qualify) nevertheless gave me an idea for this month's meanderings, and led me into memories of the thirty five years which preceded my fifty years in fair Esse. Not that it meant anything to me at the time, but the changes to our health system wrought by Clem Attlee's government after World War 2 very much impacted on my working class inner city Manchester family. Before the NHS came on the scene my father paid into something called the Hospital Saturday Fund. Our GP was a Scot. My mother and I would be called into his room, where he would be smoking his Capstan full strength cigarettes and sipping from a generous glass of whisky. Those were different days. Mum used to take me regularly to the eye hospital, as I had been born with a squint. Just after the NHS came on the scene I was introduced to the dentist for the first time - a jolly little bald German Jew who had escaped Hitler just before the war. He was nice. He extracted all of my parents' teeth and replaced them with false ones. That's what working class adults did in Moss Side in those days - waited until their teeth were rotten! I also experienced surgery for the first time when my tonsils were removed. I don't recall that with any pleasure. One of my brothers

had poliomyelitis (he survived) and that was a dreadful time.

I have never forgotten the winter of 1947. Our house was a two up two down terrace with walls of single brick thickness, plus mini kitchen/scullery, outside loo, bomb shelter, coalhole and a back yard. Only one room was heated (coal fire), chilblains, chapped legs, falls and broken collar bones, bedroom windows frozen on the inside, and outside loo frozen up. I think we acquired a bathroom by carving out part of the already poky back bedroom. The National Health Service didn't make its appearance until the following July, and rationing of nearly everything didn't finally disappear until July 1954, when meat and other foodstuffs were freed from restriction. Even sweets and chocolates had to wait until mid-1953. I still recall being deeply unimpressed on those occasions when I arrived at Mr Arrowsmith's sweetie shop only to find that he hadn't got any!

And yet, the nineteen fifties really were much more fun, and before the end of that decade I had left home to go to university and to meet my future wife on a bus going from Leeds to Ilkley Moor one November Sunday. Watch this space!!!!

Bob Munro

News from the Local General Practices & East Cornwall Primary Care Network

EPCPN is the network that covers the seven Practices Oak Tree, Old Bridge, Port View, Quay Lane, Rame Group, Rosedean and Saltash Health Centre. We wanted to highlight some of the services that are currently on offer to patients in East Cornwall in addition to your normal GP service and these include the following:

Mental Health Link workers - help and support to those who are experiencing issues impacting on mental wellbeing. Normal Magic - specialist mental health support for

people under the age of 18 and this can be arranged with your GP or self-referral via the website below.

Social prescribing - help and support to those who wish to improve their health and wellbeing. The service will signpost to services that will tailor support to an individual.

Employment specialists - a service supporting anyone with significant mental illness to find and maintain employment of their choosing.

Music for Good - Support provided by a practitioner using music as a way of promoting wellbeing. A specialist music and pain group is also available.

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Volunteers Tackle Speeding in Saltash

Concerns over speeding have led to the launch of a volunteer Community Speed Watch team in Saltash. The national initiative, managed locally

by Cornwall Councillor Hilary Frank, is a joint effort between residents and police to monitor speeds and improve road safety. Speed data is recorded in a national

police database, and keepers of vehicles exceeding the speed limit are contacted with a letter detailing the risks and consequences of their dangerous behaviour. Repeat offenders will receive a police visit.

Currently, the two locations in Saltash where volunteers will be recording data are New Road and Fairmead Road. Councillor Frank said, "I encourage anyone with suggestions for other locations or interested in joining our volunteer team to contact me. Your input is crucial in helping us deter dangerous driving and keep our streets safe."



What's the Story, May Fair Glory?

Missed out on tickets for the Oasis Reunion Tour? Don't look back in anger because Kernoasis, the ultimate Cornish Oasis tribute band, will be headlining Longstone Park on Saturday 3rd May, bringing Britpop anthems to Saltash May Fair.

It's all part of the annual community celebration on the first weekend of May. On Saturday, Fore Street will be packed with a bustling street market, showcasing local traders, crafts and family-friendly fun. Meanwhile, Longstone Park will be rocking with free music throughout the day, building up to the much-anticipated Kernoasis performance in the evening.

But that's not all: on Sunday 4th May, Tamar Trotters will be hosting running races, including a Half Marathon, 5K and Fun Run. Visit their website for details on how to roll with it and sign up!

Don't let the weekend's festivities slip inside the eye of your mind - save the date and come join the fun!

Advertorial

Beverly Gordon To Voters in Tamar Ward, Saltash

My name is Beverly Gordon, may I ask for your vote, as an independent candidate. It would be a privilege to represent and serve you, as a new Town Councillor with new ideas, to help the community.

I have lived in Saltash Tamar Ward nearly all my life.

I was educated here and started my banking career at Lloyds Bank in Saltash, where I became a Bank Manager.

I would want to see Council delivering for the community and spending the budget wisely.

Priorities include health, safety and general town upkeep, with an emphasis on good old-fashioned value for money.

I would want to balance traditional events with newer events like the trial town market.

I would be on Council to serve you, not myself.

I have now attended many Council and Committee meetings to familiarise myself and would hope to hit the ground running.

I have helped organise the William Odgers, and General Penn Symons tributes together with trying to keep the WW2 memorial bench in place.

I belong to a local Knit and Natter group as well as volunteering at a local National Trust property.

If you vote for me, I promise to do my very best to represent you on Council.

*Promoted by Beverly Gordon Saltash Cornwall (full address supplied.)
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Pete's Point of View

I've heard it said that history is not what it used to be, something that may have a basis in fact, given the propensity of some modern-day historians to re-write chapters of the past, often to suit a particular narrative or to make a political point. There are a number of inconsistencies in the current interpretation of certain chapters in history, compared with those that I was taught way back in my schooldays. But we must all learn from history and not allow the darkest of days to re-occur. We will soon be commemorating the 80th anniversary of VE Day, with the defeat of a tyrannical leader who had a few years previously, invaded or annexed neighbouring countries, embarking on an expansionist plan but under the pretext of liberating or protecting some parts of the population. This was against a backdrop of an increasingly isolationist United States who did not want to be involved in the conflict. As a result of this aggression and oppression, many people made the ultimate sacrifice that has given us the freedoms we have come to enjoy. Other than my mention of the 80th anniversary, it all sounds very familiar in a modern context, does it not? I will be very, very concerned if President Trump concludes his current discussions over the future of Ukraine and declares "peace in our time". That did not work out terribly well in 1939, did it? My column in the Observer will now be taking a break for a couple of months, whilst election fever takes over, so may I just say a big thank you to all those who have voluntarily given their time over the past few years, and indeed to all the voluntary organisations that make Saltash a very special place to both live and work. I will conclude by saying, rather tongue-in-cheek, let's make Saltash great again!

Pete Samuels.

Any views expressed are
personal views and not that
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