

# SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

Your only truly "local" newspaper ...

May 2024 - Issue 383

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## Cross-Party Fighting sees the Tamar Crossings a Priority

As the yet unannounced General Election draws closer, South East Cornwall MP Sheryll Murray has presented her petition to freeze the tolls, with over 6300 signatures, to the House of Commons.

The petition was supported by Moor View MP Johnny Mercer and five other Devon and Cornwall MPs. It is also calling for annual contribution costs towards maintaining the bridge to be included in the next 5-year RIS3 pipeline funding, and for a review to investigate a longer-term alternative to tolls.

Meanwhile, though, the request to increase the current tolls by 15.4% has been submit-

ted to the Secretary of State, Mark Harper MP. Campaign group Tamar Toll Action Group are calling on locals to show their disapproval by using a template letter on their Facebook page to lodge an objection. TTAG Vice Chair Scott Slavin said, "We need lots of local people to state their objections loud and clear." Correspondence stating the grounds for objection should be sent by Friday 14th June to [nationalcasework@dft.gov.uk](mailto:nationalcasework@dft.gov.uk) or to Sandra Zamenzedah, National Transport Casework Team Newcastle, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 7AR.

The toll revision application, if approved, would lead cash tolls to increase to £3 and TAG tolls to increase to £1.50 from

as early as the autumn, unless the Tory petition is successful.

The SE Cornwall MP Sheryll Murray has recently pointed out the lack of cross party support for her petition saying, "We had hoped that this strength of opinion would lead to a local cross-party effort to freeze the tolls in 2024. With their knee-jerk reaction, however, Labour have instead chosen to side with the joint committee over commuters."

Labour Plymouth Devonport MP Luke Pollard and the Plymouth Labour party led by Cllr Tudor Evans, who took a majority of the 19 seats in recent local elections, have been calling for cheaper tolls for locals in their campaign. They say that proposals by Conservatives to freeze tolls are unfunded. Firing back in a stri-

dent open letter to Cllr Evans, Tory MP Johnny Mercer calls out the Leader's 'repeated and deliberately misleading statements' about Mercer's efforts to 'stop the 'ridiculous Tamar Bridge toll hike'.

Mercer says that Labour's mismanagement has left the bridge £41 million in debt, costing around £1 million a year to service, something the MP calls "an obscene amount of money".

Mel Priston, Chair of TTAG said: "This pre-election, cross-party focus on the Tamar Crossings signifies a real opportunity to begin the work to dismantle the reliance on local users to fund the bridge and ferry running costs, work which TTAG has campaigned for since the last toll rise in 2023, and has been given added momentum by the motion submitted by Cornwall Liberal Democrat councillors.

"We must ensure the work to investigate abolishing the tolls is robust, sincere and fruitful. It must be more than just 'meaningful'."

## Thank You for the Music - Thank You for May Fair!



Photo Mary Crawford

Saltash May Fair made a triumphant return over the Bank Holiday weekend, igniting smiles and memories. Fore Street hummed

with activity as over 100 stalls filled the Street Market, a testament to the vibrancy of local businesses and community groups.

Longstone Park was the stage for diverse musical acts, ranging from the spirited pirates of St Stephens Primary School choir to Rock Choir and bands curated by Livewire. As Saturday's live entertainment drew to a close, the sky was painted in hues of orange and pink, and the crowds danced to the catchy tunes of headline act ABBA Reunion, turning Longstone Park into a cross-generational dance floor, alive with laughter and music.

Behind the scenes, dedicated volunteers orchestrated the festivities, led by Hilary Frank who said, "We've got such an amazing bunch of

volunteers, from Colin Bunting who organised the running races, to students from Saltash Community School, who were just bursting with enthusiasm. It really goes to show what a fantastic community we have here."

Expressing gratitude to sponsors and Saltash Town Council for their financial support, Hilary also emphasised the need for more funds to help cover the costs of this year's event and start preparing for May Fair 2025, and urged residents to purchase raffle tickets for a Prize Draw of items kindly donated by businesses in the town. Tickets are available from Nicky's Glow Beads on Fore Street, with the draw scheduled for 24th May.

Don't miss extended May Fair coverage in the next edition of the Observer.

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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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Telephone: 0300 1234 131  
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*Town Messenger  
news is supplied  
by the Town  
Council*

## Cornwall Councillors/ Wards

### Saltash Essa ED

Cllr Hilary Frank  
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### Saltash Tamar ED

Cllr Sheila Lennox-Boyd  
[cldr.sheila.lennox-boyd@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:cldr.sheila.lennox-boyd@cornwall.gov.uk)

### Saltash Trematon & Landrake ED

Cllr Martin Worth  
[cldr.martin.worth@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:cldr.martin.worth@cornwall.gov.uk)

**Cornwall Councillors Cover such services as:**  
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Tamar Bridge

## From the Outgoing Mayor of Saltash

It was a pleasure to be asked by Councillor Julia Peggs to propose her for Mayor of Saltash for 2024-25. I have worked closely with Julia for the last two years, and I know she will do a fantastic job, both around Saltash and beyond. We have a similar positive outlook, and aims.

She will be well supported by Councillor Rachel Bullock as Deputy Mayor, both will continue our push to deliver well thought out projects that will benefit Saltash. Julia and Rachel have both been part of the team seeking funding and delivering for our Connectivity Project and we hope there will be more projects in the pipeline.

I have been lucky to have Sarah's wonderful support over the last two years, and I know that Julia and Rachel will have the key support of Geoff and Matt as their consorts. The volunteer roles of Mayor and Deputy Mayor have grown over

the years and having people to support and help you is so important in ensuring you both get things done and enjoy yourself along the way.

One of my last events was to host the annual Civic Service at the end of April. Many thanks to the Saltash Baptist Church, especially the Reverend Tim Parkman who has been Mayors Chaplain for the last two years, providing invaluable advice, support and jokes. It was lovely to use this event to give out many Civic Awards that were presented to recognise volunteering across Saltash, please see elsewhere in this paper for more details. We also presented the very rare Freedom of Saltash award to Bob Austin for distinguished service across many organisations in Saltash. I was also proud to award the Mayors Award to our Town Clerk, Sinead Burrows who works so hard in the background for us all, she is without doubt the best Town Clerk I have ever had the pleasure to work with, and I've been a councillor for quite a while!

That is it from me and Sarah. I wish Julia and Rachel good fortune in the year ahead.

*Councillor Richard Bickford  
Former Mayor of Saltash  
2022-24*

## New Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Saltash



Left: New Mayor for Saltash 2024/25  
Councillor Julia Peggs

Right: Deputy Mayor of Saltash 2024/25  
Councillor Rachel Bullock

## Saltash Town Council goes Electric!



Saltash Town Council have now purchased an electric vehicle for use by the Town Council's Service Delivery Team.

The Services Committee considered the available options taking in to account annual mileage and load requirements and felt that introducing an electric van into the small fleet of vehicles currently in use was the best option available at this time.

The all electric, zero emission, E-Transit will help to reduce the Town Council's carbon footprint and improve local air quality as the vehicle is used to carry out general maintenance tasks on a daily basis.

The vehicle, which is sign

written with the Town Council Seals and an additional icon to represent that it's an electric vehicle will have sufficient range and is well equipped to meet the needs of the department.

The Chairman of Saltash Town Council, Councillor Richard Bickford said "I am very pleased that the Town Council is taking this first step in using a battery powered vehicle, we will carefully assess its suitability before making further fleet changes, but I am hopeful it will be welcomed by residents and our staff."

The use of electric vehicles fits into a number of the Town Council's newly adopted Strategic Priorities and is just one way in which the Town Council is aiming to reduce its impact on the environment, other changes are to better draught proof the Grade II listed Guildhall, installing more energy efficient windows at the Library and more careful monitoring of energy usage.

The Beacon will be lit at 9.15 at Saltash Waterside. Residents will be asked to light a light for peace.

Look out for more information on our social media, notice boards and at the library.

*Cllr. Julia Peggs  
Mayor of Saltash  
2024/25*

## STC Highlight Adult Education Provision in Saltash

Saltash Town Council invites all residents interested in enhancing their skills in Maths, English, or ICT to explore the diverse courses provided by Cornwall Council's Adult Education Service, with some available free of charge!

These courses are held at Saltash Wesley Church, over various times and dates to accommodate everyone.

The Town Council working with Cornwall Council endeavours to broaden the array of courses available.

Mayor of Saltash Councillor Richard Bickford said "I was very disappointed to discover the very limited range of courses available in Saltash. We have met and challenged the Adult Education team and sought reassurance that they will seek to improve the offer available to the people of Saltash who deserve much better."

"The Adult Education team have now committed to redressing the imbalance and I hope that new courses will be available in Saltash in the coming months. I urge anyone interested in a course to directly ask the Adult Education team to put more courses on in Saltash"

For details on the courses offered, please visit <https://www.cornwall.gov.uk/schools-and-education/adult-and-community-education/>

## Bowled Over

In one of their final engagements at the Cornwall International Male Choral Festival, the Svanholm Singers, an internationally acclaimed male voice choir from a Swedish town near the Eurovision spotlight, left students from Saltash schools awestruck with their flawless harmonies.

As the singers were leaving, they saw Saltash Bowls Club practicing at Longstone Park. The singers were thrilled to be invited for an impromptu training session, where their curling skills proved they are adept at hitting the right spots in song and on the green.

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## Your Town Council & Wards

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- Cllr Sheila Lennox-Boyd  
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### Saltash Tamar:

- Cllr Lisa Mortimore  
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### Mayor:

Cllr Julia Peggs

### Deputy Mayor:

Cllr Rachel Bullock

### Town Clerk:

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## SAFE38 Follow "Three E's" Approach to Road Safety

In the week that I write this column, two people have been killed and several others injured in two separate road traffic incidents. Both of these deadly collisions occurred in my Lostwithiel Council area, but these roads are two of the main arteries of South East Cornwall. The A38 from Saltash to Bodmin has a serious collision rate three times higher than the national average for this type of road, and the A390 from St Blazey to Gunnislake has also seen more than its fair share of tragic crashes.

For the past seven years, I have been an active member of the SAFE38 campaign group, which follows the "Three E's" approach to road safety: The first "E" is Education; reminding people that excess speed, unnecessary overtaking and driving under the influence of drink or drugs have always been the biggest causes of crashes. In recent years, an increasing number of incidents have also been caused by drivers taking their eyes off the road to look at their smartphones. This is particularly important on high-speed roads like the A38 and the A390 where vehicles can travel up to 30 metres in a second.

The second "E" is Enforcement: All political parties agree that Average Speed Cameras would save lives on the deadly A38. But almost a year after our MP obtained a promise from a Government minister to work with our Police and Crime Commissioner and our Council (all Conservatives) to provide funding through "Vision Zero South West", there is still no progress on buying the cameras.

The third "E" is Engineering: The most dangerous sections of the A38 and A390 were built in the age of the horse and cart. They are full of twists, turns and blind junctions. Even with warning

signs and average speed cameras, these roads are simply too hazardous for the volume of high-speed traffic they now carry. They need to be physically changed to eliminate the most serious hazards. Single-carriageway sections of the A38 need to be replaced by dual carriageways, and junctions like those at Stoketon Cross (for Callington), Clicker (for Menheniot) and Lean Quarry (for Looe) need to be upgraded with roundabouts or overpasses. Where the roads cannot be made safer, the speed limits need to be reduced.

As a Liberal Democrat, I believe that roads which enable everyone to move around efficiently and safely, (by car, bike, bus or on foot) are an essential part of a fair, free and sustainable society. Our last Liberal Democrat MP Colin Breed secured funding for the Dobwalls bypass, which is the fastest and safest piece of road in South East Cornwall. If only our current Conservative MP had followed his example, we could have more of the safe roads we deserve. Unfortunately after fourteen years all we have is a set of plans for £40m of safety measures which the Treasury has said it will not fund before 2030 because they don't provide sufficient economic benefit!

**Colin Martin**  
Leader of the Lib Dems

## FREE Blood Pressure Checks at The Community Kitchen

Saltash, Cornwall - Community Enterprises PL12 is excited to announce a new initiative aimed at promoting community health and well-being. The Community Kitchen, located in Fore Street, Saltash, will offer free blood pressure checks every Friday at 11:30am.

The free blood pressure checks will be conducted by Charity Gladstone MBE, an esteemed advanced nurse practitioner in Cornwall. Charity's dedication to nursing excellence was recently recognised when she was awarded an MBE for her outstanding services to nursing in January 2024. Her commitment to healthcare was also celebrated when she was invited to attend King Charles' 75th birthday celebrations at Buckingham Palace last November, in acknowledgment of the invaluable contributions made by internationally educated nurses, midwives, and the Windrush generation to the NHS.

Melanie Cowie Smith, Marketing Director of Community Enterprises PL12, expressed her enthusiasm about this new service, stating, "We're delighted to welcome Charity's new service to the Community Kitchen. High blood pressure is a significant risk factor for heart attacks, strokes, kidney disease, and other serious illnesses. However, with regular checks, it can be easily detected and managed. It's crucial for everyone to know their numbers and take proac-

tive steps towards maintaining good health."

The addition of free blood pressure checks at the Community Kitchen complements the existing range of free community services available in Saltash. From therapy dogs and mental health support groups to social prescriber and dementia support groups, the Community Kitchen continues to serve as a hub for holistic community care.

"The collaboration with Charity underscores how much can be achieved when the local community comes together," added Melanie. "We're

proud to have this vital service and look forward to supporting the health and well-being of our residents."

Community Enterprises PL12 is a community-focused organisation dedicated to enhancing the well-being and quality of life for residents in and around Saltash, Cornwall. Through various initiatives and partnerships, they strive to address local needs and promote a thriving and inclusive community.

Councillor Richard Bickford, Mayor of Saltash, attended to have his blood pressure checked and to show his support for the initiative.)



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# Saltash Celebrates Community with the Annual Civic Awards

On Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April the sun shone on Saltash as it celebrated and recognised people doing amazing things in the town. Each year, residents have the opportunity to nominate individuals and organisations for a Civic Award, to recognise people who give willingly of their time and expertise to benefit the town. Nominations from the public were considered by a Civic Awards Panel, and 18 awards were presented by the Mayor of Saltash at the annual Civic Service, held at Saltash Baptist Church.

## Contribution to the Community



**Charmian Jones**, for her steadfast dedication as a volunteer with Saltash Rugby Football Club

**Chris Haverson**, for his unstinting efforts in keeping Saltash tidy

**David Newman**, for being the Music Man at Saltash Library Hub

**Ruth Wunderle**, for her unwavering dedication to Saltash Food Bank

**Sho Frank, Tanya Hatch and Tracey Rhodes**, for their vision and commitment in managing the C.R.A.P. Saltash Facebook group, providing a place for unwanted items to find new homes

**Saltash Blind and Partially Sighted Club**, for their exemplary work with visually impaired people in the town

## Cultural Contribution



**Bruce Hunt** for his tireless dedication to the history of Saltash



**Steve Kent**, for founding the Caradon Gig Club and his unwavering support for gig racing

The cup for best performance was given to the **Burraton Boys**, who also led the singing at the uplifting service, while the Essa Cup was awarded to Saltash Town Clerk, **Sinead Burrows**, for her dedicated, outstanding work for the Town Council. The recipients for these two cups were chosen by the Mayor, Councillor Richard Bickford, who said: "All today's awards are a testament to the breadth and depth of the remarkable spirit of our community. It was an honour to present them and share in the celebration of everyone's achievements."



## Youth Group Leader



**Craig Jones**, for his inspirational coaching of youth teams at Saltash Rugby Football Club



**Micky Northfield**, for his outstanding work with young people at The Core and Saltash Amateur Boxing Club



**Bob Austin**

## Freedom of Saltash Given to Longstanding Saltash Volunteer

Saltash Town Council has announced that **Bob Austin** has been awarded the Freedom of Saltash, joining a select group of five current Freemen of the town.

Bob was one of the original members of both Saltash Environmental Action and the Friends of Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve. He has remained as Chair of the Friends for over 20 years, organising activities such as educational walks and events, as well as volunteering to support the work of Cornwall Wildlife Trust in maintaining and protecting the habitats on the Nature Reserve. Bob's impact isn't confined to environmental causes. In 2015, he played a pivotal role as a founder member of The Core Youth and Community Centre. He has continued to serve as a Trustee of The Core ever since, and is currently Vice Chair of its Management Committee. He has also devoted significant energy over a period of many years as a Trustee at Saltash Wesley Methodist Church. The church is a social hub for many and Bob's role is

fundamental in many of the activities that take place there.

Bob was also a founding director of Community Enterprises, and served as a volunteer director of the CIC from 2006 through to 2019. His career in local government is even longer, serving as an elected councillor not only at Caradon District Council and Cornwall Council, but also at Saltash Town Council, where he served as dedicated Mayor in 2007.

The announcement was made at the Civic Service in April marking the 2023/24 civic year, with the outgoing Mayor of Saltash Councillor Richard Bickford, commenting: "There are stringent criteria for this rare award, but Bob is an extremely worthy recipient. Bob is dedicated, is always open to new ideas and is naturally a welcoming person, making him such an asset to many organisations and an excellent ambassador for Saltash."

Bob was selected from several nominations put forward by residents of Saltash. "Crumbs!" said Bob, visibly surprised and moved at the honour.

# Lifetime Achievement



**Bill Dent**, for his distinguished and longstanding commitment to Saltash Royal British Legion



**Phil Taylor**, for his 50-year inspirational leadership of Burraton Male Voice Choir and transformational chairmanship of the Saltash Music, Speech and Drama Festival



**Steve Kent**, for founding the Caradon Gig Club and his unwavering support for gig racing

**Dave Oliver**, for his longstanding, exemplary commitment volunteering at Saltash Sailing Club

## Youth Achievement



**Rhys Martin and Sophie Morrell** for volunteering at LiveWire and supporting young people



**Milo Sanders** for volunteering at the Community Fridge and Larder

*The Civic Awards are held annually to celebrate and award achievements within the community and those who continually go the extra mile for the town. Nominations are normally open in January of each year. All nominations must be made on the nominations form.*



## Saltash Scrapstore & Too

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## Erin is Supported by the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation

Saltash's young person, Erin Wilton was delighted to learn that she had been successful in obtaining a financial award from the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation recently.

Erin auditioned for a place at the Morea Performing Arts, in Cheltenham. 150 dancers applied and only eleven were successful, Erin being one of them. The grant from the Trust will go towards Erin's three year course with a DDE diploma and will help her purchase her dance clothing, footwear and accommodation.

Erin is also studying for an Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing (ISTD) teaching qualification.

Erin learned to dance at Ballare School of Performing Arts in Saltash, under the direction of Laura Fleet. Erin attended the school for ten years. She was educated at Saltash Community School and appeared in the school's musical productions; including



Peter Pan, Madagascar, Billy Elliott, Grease and We Will Rock You.

A spokesperson from the Morea Performing Arts said: "We very much enjoyed Erin's performances during the Ballet and Musical Theatre lessons, Erin showed a great talent and willingness to adapt to all forms of dance and the Performing Arts". A spokesperson from the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation added: "Erin has shown that she is prepared to work hard in her disciplines of the Performing Arts, and her outstanding achievements fell most pleasingly into the Trust's aims and objectives in supporting studies and education in musicality, drama, dance and all the aspects of performing artistry. The Trustees wish Erin continued success in her chosen vocation".

For further details of the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation, please refer to [www.suehcf.org.uk](http://www.suehcf.org.uk)

## Local Artist Acclaimed in Museum Display of Arts and Skills

In yet another 'first' for Saltash museum their 2024 exhibition, formally opened by Mayor and Mayoress Richard and Sarah Bickford, includes the Largest ever display of the work of a renowned artist who did much of his work while living in Saltash.

Several descendants and other family members of John Henry Martin RA were honoured guests at the Saltash museum when the Mayor, having been welcomed by Heritage chair Mrs Jean Dent, thanked all of the Saltash Heritage members and stewards for the volunteer hours 'that they put into keep our splendid museum running'. He reminded them that 'the town council who own the museum building is proud to support the society and the work that they do to preserve the town's history'.

Each year there is a new exhibition alongside the permanent display and this year's theme is 'Lost Art and Skills'. It features in particular the work of London born John Henry Martin who travelled the world and studied art in Antwerp before

## Essa Voices

*I want to go home, can't afford a property,  
I want to go home, but someone bought the sea.*

Rising Cornish music star Mantaraybryn, who grew up in Saltash, echoes the frustration of many in his song 'No Economy' released on St Piran's Day this year, a song that rages against



Councillor Hilary Frank  
[cllr.hilary.frank@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.hilary.frank@cornwall.gov.uk)

second homes and locals being priced out of Cornwall.

Figures show that nearly 1,900 people in Cornwall experienced homelessness during Christmas 2023, and there are over 27,000 households on the waiting list for affordable homes here.

At the same time, there are at least 26,000 holiday and second homes in Cornwall. About 12,500 of these properties are registered for business rates rather than council tax, as the owners assert they're primarily used as 'short term (holiday) rentals'. This allows owners to apply for Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR) and then pay nothing in taxes.

SBRR provides a fighting chance of survival to many small businesses, including the last remaining shop in a village, or tea rooms and pubs that provide a helpful boost to a local community's economy. But a scheme where owners of holiday homes can opt out of paying taxes operates to the

disadvantage of Cornwall's hotels and guest houses, and of course the more holiday homes, the fewer available as full-time homes for local people. It also equates to around £22m per year being lost in taxes. This is not a national figure - it's just for Cornwall.

For all these reasons, I've been pleased to work with fellow councillors Colin Martin and Andrew George to submit a motion to the May meeting of Cornwall Council calling for the government to end the SBRR subsidy for short term rentals, and asking for this funding to be diverted to councils to meet housing needs.

On a local level, I've also been pleased to see the efforts being made by Saltash Wesley Church where members have rallied together to help people find a route out of homelessness, providing hot meals, laundry facilities and clothes to people in need. Their recent success in securing Levelling Up funding is enabling them to transform the church foyer into a Warm Welcome and Community Meeting Space, enhancing accessibility and fostering a sense of belonging.

As Mantaraybryn's lyrics remind us, the longing for home resonates deeply within us all. We need to be working together to forge a future where the echoes of 'No Economy' are replaced by the harmonious melody of community support and housing equity.

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## The Saltash Chronicles Return

The Saltash Chronicles Embroidery is now back on display in the town's Guildhall. This magnificent work was removed in November last year to be cleaned, inspected, repaired and re-sewn to produce a better fit in its new home. The reconstructive work was completed by Yvonne Oake.

As part of the refurbishment, a new panel was added celebrating the achievements of Florence Mabel Tout who, at the age of 16, was the youngest winner of the annual swimming race from Neale Point to Saltash Passage in 1938. She was also the last winner as the race was never swum again. The work was embroidered by Andrew Tritton.

An exciting new panel showing a series of scenes including Saltash Rugby Club, the Peace Gardens, the rebuilding of Saltash Railway Station and the Coronation of King Charles III is currently being created. There will be a further announcement on its completion later in the year.

The work will be open for viewing at our annual Open House on Saturday June 8th between 10 am and 3 pm. Further visits can be organised through the Guildhall on 01752 844846.

settling in Newlyn prior to it becoming 'discovered' by the Newlyn group of artists. When it was so discovered Martin settled in Saltash for the remainder of his life. The museum display includes many studies of Late nineteenth century Saltash, the Waterside area and the sailing ships of that era. Much of the work, including original sketches never displayed before, have been lent by the Martin family as well as local residents.

The 'lost arts and skills' theme includes many such skills as pottery and early photography, while 'Miss Austin's Haberdashery Shop' displays a range of embroidery, lace and needlework tools. There is also a display of the blacksmith's skills based around the smithies once existing in Culver Road, Moorlands Lane Burraton and out at Longlands.

The museum in Lower Fore Street is now open on Wednesday afternoons and all-day Saturdays and bank holidays with extended hours in the Summer. Admission is free but donations are appreciated towards the support of the wholly volunteer run museum.

## Salty McSaltash

Cornwall has 25 gritters, with three in reserve. Together, they treated almost 35,000 miles of roads across Cornwall between October and March this year, a distance equivalent to circling the equator almost one and half times.

As these trusty gritters retire for the summer, Cornwall Council launched a poll to choose names for the fleet. While Mevagrity secured top place, Salty McSaltash emerged as another crowd favourite. It takes around three hours to treat each of Cornwall Council's 25 salting routes, which cover around 1,420 km (883 miles) of the road network and include the busiest A and B roads in Cornwall, handling around 80% of daily traffic. The roads to key sites such as hospitals, ambulance stations and secondary schools are also gritted.

With other names including Choughed to Grits and Hayle Storm, Cornwall's gritters are poised to sprinkle both salt and smiles on our roads this winter.

*Saltash Chronicles Embroidery Project*

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Saturday June  
8th 2024  
10 am to 3 pm  
Saltash Guildhall

*Come and see the new Chronicles display*

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## Sustainable Saltash

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

Hopefully at least a few of you will recall my invitation to readers of the March issue to consider joining in an event called an Exploratory Public Assembly which I declared I would have loved to have been able to tell you all a whole lot more about but which wasn't going to be scheduled until after the column had gone to press.

Whatever else I might have written, at least one or two readers responded to say, 'Wow! That sounds exciting! Please count me in.' And, even more excitingly for me, the event I was writing about has actually happened since then providing a small but perfectly formed group of Saltash locals with an opportunity to gain a real-life glimpse of what I had been talking about - i.e. a group of ordinary people coming together to find new ways of deciding about key issues we might expect to shape our common future.

So we talked and, more

importantly perhaps, listened to one another, sifting through an assortment of the most pressing issues in each of our lives and beginning to recognise the ways in which many of these are but individual facets of far larger, not merely local but sometimes regional, national or even global issues. And now and again we identified far smaller, simpler issues which it turned out we were able to solve for ourselves, between ourselves and with immediate effect.

It was my pleasure to serve in the role of facilitator for the group, a role I used once to fulfil professionally but this one was potentially a lot more meaningful for me. I put this down to three highly positive effects that talking meaningfully can have on each of us.

1. When ordinary people choose to leave any political interests of partisan agendas outside of the room, we can very often make better decisions than other 'experts', politicians, captains of industry or other service providers.

2. Coming together and listening to one another helps to break down the fake barriers of age, class, colour, religion, and so forth that those same 'experts' we have been relying on to solve our problems for us thrive on trying to persuade us exist.

3. When we observe, listen and seen and heard in this way, we regain a far stronger sense of our own agency, we are more able to imagine organising ourselves and taking the sorts of action that might genuinely improve all of our futures.

Overall then, the entire event was so very well received that an increasing number of individuals are eager to schedule yet more Public Assemblies right here in Saltash, the first of which seems likely to invite discussion to do with how easily or not members in our local community are able to get around both in and around the area.

This one is likely to take a little while longer to organise but I really am excited to imagine its unfolding. If you happen to feel the same then please email us at [sustainable.saltash@protonmail.com](mailto:sustainable.saltash@protonmail.com) and we'll be certain to keep you informed as to our progress.

Elizabeth Gay

*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](mailto:sustainable.saltash@protonmail.com)*

## Voice of Saltash Patients

The NHS is a much loved element of our public services. In the Saltash area patients have organised themselves to engage the NHS in improving our neglected range of local services, and our Action Group of community representatives and local NHS professionals is continuing its planning. Recently, we succeeded in bringing the chief executive of the Cornwall Partnership NHS Trust (CPT) to a meeting, and also the Regional Director of NHS Property Services. Two very important people with real power. We had to feel that their engagement was a positive sign. But there is a problem....

The NHS is not the single body we all imagine. It has many independent parts, and getting these to sing from the same hymn sheet at the same time feels impossible to us. Our two local surgeries are two separate businesses, owned by their GP partners; St Barnabas hospital is owned by NHS Property Services, which is a separate company outside the NHS as such; but services at St Barnabas are run by CPT which employs the staff there; all major hospitals like Derriford are managed by their own Trusts; finally, all the long term strategic planning for, and financing of, the NHS in Cornwall is undertaken by an Integrated Care Board - the latter being the employer of Dr Andy Sant who has been a fully supportive member of our Action Group from the start. Andy has the task of ensuring all these parts together deliver the right care for patients. Some might say it is a thankless task.

Patients here need more services to be provided locally. We now understand that St Barnabas is not destined for closure in the near future, so we are demanding that it is developed to house an expanded range of services: it is seriously underused, needs a face-lift, and

is therefore being run inefficiently. However, we must press for a modern health facility to be built in the longer term. We also demand that local NHS beds for short-term recovery are provided somehow in the town, and quickly. Keeping patients in Derriford after treatment, or discharging them to remote community hospitals is bad for patients and a waste of resources. There is also a modern NHS office building in Saltash which has been empty for more than a year. Would you believe it?

The Group is meeting again in May, and we hope to have reports on progress to encourage us in the wake of the attendance of the top-level leaders. In the meantime, Port View and the Health Centre are trying to give patients more direct access to care (nursing, physio, pharmacy, etc) without the need to see a GP first. This should help patients directly, and free up time for GPs to see other patients who need to see a doctor. We realise this is often seen negatively, but members of Patient Groups in the practices do support the change.

*Please support us in any way you can. Contact us at [patient.voice@icloud.com](mailto:patient.voice@icloud.com)*

## Four Reasons for Debt and How we can Tackle them

Everything is increasingly expensive these days, so it's easy to find ourselves in unmanageable debt. By recognising the causes of debt, we can gain a better understanding of the problem, prevent it and deal with it.

### Low incomes

At Christians Against Poverty (CAP) we offer free, face-to-face debt advice and budgeting help. One of the main reasons our clients fall into debt is living on a low income. A lower regular income means less wiggle room to cope with rising costs.

We often don't realise what benefit support we could be entitled to, so I recommend everyone tries the free Turn2us benefits calculator on CAP's website at: [capuk.org/calculator](http://capuk.org/calculator) to see if you are missing out on any vital income.

Why not give it a go? **Unexpected circumstances**

We've all had days where it feels like everything is going wrong and unexpected circumstances can have a massive impact on our finances - from relationship breakdowns to a loved one passing away. These types of situations can cause us both emotional and financial pain.

For a whole range of free support, check out [moneyhelper.org.uk](http://moneyhelper.org.uk).

### Physical and mental health struggles

Many of us will have heard the phrase 'health is wealth', meaning your health is always the most important thing. It's also true that long-term illnesses or injuries that happen to us or a close family member can have a huge impact on our household's finances.

Being kind to yourself, seeking professional, medical help early and readjusting your budget as quickly as you can following any changes to your regular income can be really helpful. This will give you a clearer picture of where your finances are at and help you make productive decisions.

### In need of budgeting support

Budgeting and learning to save are essential life skills, but many of us have never been taught how to manage our finances and avoid debt. When things go wrong, not having this vital knowledge can make it a lot harder to deal with situations that impact our income.

Building up a savings buffer of around three to six months of your monthly income can bring you peace of mind. For free budgeting resources, have a look at [capuk.org/budgeting](http://capuk.org/budgeting). If you're ready to act now and would like 1:1 budgeting or debt help, just drop me an email [timsquires@capuk.org](mailto:timsquires@capuk.org).

*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](http://capuk.org) to find out more.*

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## Please Support our Faye from Newell's Travel



**F**aye is doing a sky dive on 2nd June 2024 at Perranporth. In aid of Cornwall Air Ambulance

There will be a team of twelve girls from Newell's Travel taking part.

Faye is being very brave as she is terrified, please help to boost her confidence showing her that we are all behind her supporting her while helping to raise money for the Cornwall Air Ambulance.

You can donate either by visiting Faye's just giving page or QR code in the window of Newell's Travel Shop in Fore Street Saltash or pop in to the shop as Faye also has a sponsor form.

**Observer Telephone Numbers**  
**07971484872**  
**or 01579 345699**

### Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping us updated

**H**aving spent too much time in Derriford Hospital recently, it has sometimes been a struggle keeping on top of Chamber matters. But it has given me time and opportunity to reflect on the difficulties people in Saltash have getting to the hospital. It started because I was talking to one couple who had caught the train from Saltash to Plymouth and then caught a bus from Plymouth City Centre to the hospital. They were going to do the same route in reverse when they had finished. If only they had known about the number 71 bus that goes directly from Fore Street to Derriford.

Chipping into the above conversation was 'Eric', who had arrived later having got caught up in a hold-up on the Tamar Bridge. It had taken him the best part of an hour to travel from Saltash to Derriford and then find a parking space.

This brought to mind the total cost of having to get to Derriford from Saltash by your own means. First, there is the cost of the fuel. In travelling around Plymouth

and S.E. Cornwall on a regular basis, it is obvious that the petrol and diesel costs in and around Saltash are some of the most expensive in the area.

On top of this is the cost of the Tamar Toll: whether or not you have a Tag and get a concession, there is still a cost. The Chamber is supportive of all action which could fix the cost of the crossing, preferably reducing it to zero. In the meantime, however, there is still a cost.

A further expense is the cost of parking. People who live further away allow more time to get to Derriford because they do not want to be late for their appointment and hence often arrive in the car park early. Parking is charged on an hourly basis, which means the longer the stay the greater the cost.

A couple of other expenditures that I heard were: "because I was here so early, I bought myself a coffee and a cake" and "I don't normally buy a newspaper but bought one to read to help kill the time."

To go to Derriford can therefore be a costly venture, so I am pleased to hear that the Health Action Group in Saltash is working with the NHS to maximise the use of St. Barnabas and bring some health services over from Derriford.

## Tamar Reflections

### Reflections of The Saltash & District Journals past

Continuing the theme of reflections within The Saltash & District Journal of 50 years ago, I came across a large advert that took me back somewhat, when comparing like-for-like Saltash property prices of today.

I was looking at a most interesting advert placed by J.Kittow & Son, at that time situated at 6, North Road, Saltash - **Auctioneers, Estate Agents, Surveyors, & Valuers** - Branch Manager, Eric R. Distin, A.R.I.C.S.

J. Kittow & Son in the August 1974 issue had many properties for sale to include one in particular selling by auction at the Y.M.C.A. (Y.M.C.A. now long gone, and replaced by lovely Fore Street shops).

A substantial detached 6-bedroomed house, together with garden and the benefit of outline planning permission, and known as - **THE ELMS, GRENFELL AVENUE, SALTASH** - it was with vacant possession on completion - and afforded 4 reception rooms, kitchen, 2 bathrooms and 6 bedrooms. The advert continued that the property was ideal for two flats or large family residence. Mains service was connected, with a garage and a pleasant garden.

I am not sure how much the property was sold for, but certainly, I have witnessed how the property and site has been extensively developed over the past 50 years and it is now a most valued Care Centre with 36 rooms. I have visited The Elms on various occasions as Mayor and also to deliver talks to the residents on my vast collection of the bygone era.



### The Elms, Grenfell Avenue, Saltash More desirable properties were on sale

Within the same advert were more Saltash properties for sale, such as a semi-detached cottage, with 2 receptions, kitchen, 2 bedrooms, bathroom and outside w.c. £6,750.

Further, a ground floor flat with 2 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, bathroom and car space £7,500.

A 3 bedroomed house with 2 receptions, kitchen, bathroom, separate w.c. garden and permission for a garage was £8,500.

Then there were a few bungalows - a detached, 3 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen, bathroom with w.c. on a good site, would cost the purchaser £9,500.

Another bungalow on a good site, selling at £10,250 with 3 bedrooms, lounge, kitchen and bathroom was also on offer.

Fifty years on, and these properties could sell for well

over £200,000! Quite extraordinary! I would not speculate on the value of The Elms, but suffice to say that it is a priceless Care facility and a great asset to Saltash and further afield.

### Holidaying together

A unique event happened and was reported in issue 132 of the Saltash Journal too. The Saltash Rangers and Venture Scouts went off to France. Eight Rangers and five Venture Scouts left Saltash on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> August 1974 for a combined holiday. Accompanied by Mrs. Nodder, the Ranger Guider, Mrs. G. Lumley, and the District Assistant for the Guides Mr. D. Allen, the Venture Scout leader. The group travelled over on the Roscoff Ferry and would stay at a school in St. Paul de Lion, Brittany, for eight days. Although the group had combined for week-end hikes and training sessions this was the first holiday that they had taken together! ... (How wonderful!).

### Save our Saltash

In the same issue of the Journal - there was a plea from the Saltash Road Action Committee - publicising a Public Meeting for Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September 1974. The announcement read ...

**"SAVE OUR SALTASH !! ...**  
*The Department of the Environment has promised to announce the route of the proposed trunk road from Saltash to Trerulefoot by the end of the year. At the Plymouth enquiry into the route of the trunk road from Marsh Mills it was announced that a six-lane carriageway was being contemplated on the Cornish side of the bridge. The Department of the Environment argument that a wider road through Saltash is essential for commuter traffic does not stand up to statistical scrutiny. The residents of Saltash know that it is not the perennial commuter that congest Burraton cross-roads every summer, but the tourists. The tourists would happily bypass Saltash if an alternative route was available. The first consequence of not providing an alternative route from Marsh Mills by-passing Saltash will be high density and high speed traffic polluting its way through Saltash. The second consequence if traffic density continues to rise will be a second crossing of the Tamar at Saltash.*

*The Road Action Committee presented the case of Saltash objectors at the enquiry and now anticipates a similar fight on this side of the water. Effective resistance to the road needs to be well prepared. Time may be short to collect evidence and funds if Saltash waits until the Department announce their route.*

*In the interest of protecting our environment a PUBLIC MEETING has been planned for MONDAY, 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 8.00pm. At this meeting the possible routes through Saltash will be displayed and the arguments against this devastation will be voiced. It is hoped that the community of Saltash - both young and old -*

*will unite in its resolve to repel the tarmac, the pollution and the demolition of our homes - SAVE OUR SALTASH!!"*

My observations on the above Road Action Committee's 1974 statement, action and meaningful endeavours are that they fought valiantly to SAVE SALTASH. Many of those folks sadly have long gone, but they stood up for Saltash and its environs good and proper. Thankfully, Saltash still boasts such purposeful people holding closely, our wonderful town in their hearts and minds.

**In the mist of time**  
 Of course in the mist of time there have been major road and traffic management and improvement schemes that did go ahead; such as the bridge cantilevers - the Saltash Tunnel, completed in 1988 - Carkeel pedestrian bridge and A38 roundabout traffic lights. But we still see polluted commuter traffic build-ups with the ever increasing demands on our road network! - So what next?  
 More to come of course!  
 Sue Hooper MBE  
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## Pete's Point of View ...

Together with several other members of Saltash Rotary Club, I recently attended an 'onboarding session' with GWR at Saltash Station, the purpose of which was to induct us as GWR Volunteers in order that we may plant and maintain the flower boats that have been part of the platform view over many years, but sadly neglected in recent years.

Travellers and other visitors to the Station can now look forward to a bright and cheery welcome to the platforms, once the new plants and shrubs are in situ, something that will happen over the coming weeks.

The 'onboarding session' which was essentially a training session, proved to be most interesting, not only in terms of the quite stringent safety requirements which must be observed by volunteers, but also learning of the strict rules under which the railway companies operate.

I feel sure that not many people know of the requirements on the railway operators to provide the best possible service, not only in the operation of trains, but also in the service provided at stations such as Saltash, the failure to provide the basic requirements resulting in financial penalties being imposed on the train operator.

I am long enough in the tooth to remember the days of British Railways when the nationalised industry presided over years of decline and decay, resulting ultimately in the loss of thousands of miles of track and closed stations. Yet here we are, in this election year, with talk again of 'bringing the train operations back into public ownership' (nationalisation).

Whilst some might see this as an opportunity to reduce fares, the much-needed investment in rail travel will simply fall away, leaving us back in the dark days of decline. Whilst we are all

## Just Thinking Aloud

Q: "Will you be voting?" A: "No. It's a waste of time." (from a recent Spotlight interview on Saltash Fore St). By the time you cast your eyes over this, my latest bit of drivel, the election for a Devon & Cornwall Police and Crime Commissioner will have produced a "winner". Or will it? That depends on your understanding of the term "winner" in a truly democratic society. Let me explain.

First, I am prepared to bet that the number of those qualified to cast their vote who actually do so will be way below half. Next, some who do turn up will not have brought with them the newly necessary ID. Last, a fair number will not have realised that the current party in power have changed the voting rules since last time. It was previously possible to indicate your first and second preferences on your ballot slip, thus increasing the chances of a genuinely democratic winner. Not this time, dear reader. We are back to "first past the post" gets the prize. It will matter not one jot if way less than half of us vote and if the "first" one has less than half of those and only squeaks through by a handful. And that is democracy?

Want to change it? Well, you have to take part. My Dad, who I loved dearly, was an old-fashioned working class Tory of the hang'em and flog'em variety. As you might imagine, he and I had some feisty conversations as I struggled through my teens in the nineteen fifties. But I have never forgotten and have consistently acted upon his parting words at the end of our many political

entitled to our opinions, I would say to those who think that nationalising the railways is a good idea, then be very careful what you wish for. Are we not capable of learning lessons from history?

Pete Samuels.

*Pete is a former Mayor of Saltash and past President of Saltash Rotary. Any views expressed are personal views and not that of any organisation with which Pete is associated.*

disputes: "When you are old enough to vote, make sure you do. If you don't vote you have no right to complain". So I always turn up and always make my mark on the paper.....

So let's look forward to May 2025, when it will be our turn to vote for county and town councillors. The current national hysteria and brouhaha should have died down by then, and we will be able to take part dispassionately, without becoming overheated. The latest Cornwall statistics tell us that there are 12,624 of us in Saltash who are eligible to vote, and I doubt that those numbers will change too much. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have far more of us taking part than has been historically the case? The whole of the county council is up for grabs, as is the entirety of Saltash Town Council. Some existing councillors will not be standing again. Others may be unsuccessful in defending their seats. You might even be persuaded to put yourself forward. What's to lose?

I look forward to seeing lists of candidates being published at some point next year, so that I can begin to decide which candidates in my ward are worth my support, and which - if any - share my interest in proportional representation and various versions of it.

Bob Munro

**Contact the Observer**  
01579 345699  
07971 484872

## Saltash U15s win CRFU Bowl

Saltash Rugby Football Club Under 15s triumphed in the Cornwall RFU Bowl Final at Camborne at the end of April. The team showed strong defence and impressive breaks, leading to a 22-12 victory. Man of the match for his outstanding sportsmanship was Oliver Hulford of Saltash. The victory crowned a successful season for the U15s, which included a tour to Malta where they competed against teams from Llantwit Major, Winscombe, Shrewsbury, and Malta's own U15s team. As a club, Saltash



RFC is rightly proud of its youth development programme, with many

seniors having begun their rugby journey in the youth section. The team anticipates

continued success as players progress to the Colts and Senior Teams next season.

## International Musicians Coming to Saltash

Saltash Songs & Shanties Festival will be returning to the town on 15-24 June. The programme celebrates music from Cornwall and the Tamar Valley and includes folk, rock, blues, choral music and more in venues across the town.

Hailing from St Germans, Wurlitza perform live soundtracks to classic silent films on 20 June, including the hilarious One Week with Buster Keaton and the Hitchcockian A Cottage on Dartmoor.

With her pure silken voice, Cornish musician Martha Tilston has built a large worldwide following. She has played on some of the world's most prestigious stages, released critically acclaimed albums and gained a nomination for BBC best newcomer. She will be performing supported by the Saltash Shanty Singers, on 21 June.

Saltash-based, musician Diabel Cissokho hails from Senegal and will be performing with fellow musicians from West and North Africa and St Neot's Canyryon Lowen choir on 22 June. His pioneering work draws on traditional music, fused with blues, afro-beat and more.

Bagas Fellyon re-imagine the sound of Cornish traditional music while Barrett's Privateers share a love of sea-faring songs, shanties and folk music on 23 June. Helmed by their captain, Gideon Barrett, with his vast knowledge of traditional songs, their mixed voices give hugely entertaining performances.

This year's event also features workshops ranging from shanty singing to samba drumming. The Festival kicks off on 15 June with a Saturday Scratch Band event with Livewire Youth Music - for young people who are learning guitar, bass, drums or singing and would like to learn how to play in a band. The day will end with the new Scratch Band supporting Livewire prodigies The Other Woman and Haunt the Woods.

Other opportunities to take part include music for pre-schoolers in the library, tango, tea and cake with Tango Sonoro, a pop-up piano session and an acapella-harmony workshop with GraceNotes. There will also be an afternoon of community music by the River Tamar, folk group Tipil performing at Mary Newman's Cottage and Saltash Town Band in Victoria Gardens.

Launched in 2022, this non-profit community Festival is becoming a notable annual fixture in the Cornish music scene. Tickets will once again be sold with pay-what-you-feel options, making the event accessible to all.

The event is supported by Arts Council England through its open access National Lottery Project Grants, Cornwall County Council, the Scops Arts Trust, Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation and Saltash Town Council. It is produced by Salt Arts CIC.

More information and tickets are available at [www.songsandshanties.co.uk](http://www.songsandshanties.co.uk)

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