

SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

Your only truly "local" newspaper ...

December 2013 - Issue 257

Established 21 years

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Don't Charge for Tamar Tags – Raise Ferry Fares Saltash Suggests

The proposed monthly charge to all Tamar Tag holders of eighty pence per month however much they use it would be particularly unfair to infrequent users, Saltash Town Councillors agreed. They submitted a response to the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Committee's consultation unanimously agreeing that this charge was not an appropriate response to the authority's funding crisis.

They added, that the Saltash Town Council is disappointed that other alternatives, such as a differential tolling charge between the bridge and the Torpoint ferry had not been given proper consideration.

Reductions in tolls received over each of the last three years at least had resulted in income falling short by half a million pounds, County Councillor Bob Austin, who sits on the bridge and ferry joint committee, told the Town Council.

Meanwhile maintenance costs had increased and the reserves held fallen to £2 million, the minimum level which should be retained.

Officers had recommended to the committee that rather than increase the cost of tag or cash crossing an eighty pence charge per month be added to each account. This would help pay for the tags which so far have been issued free of charge.

The Tamar Bridge currently subsidises the Torpoint Ferry by a ratio of three to one, added County Councillor Derek Holley, also a bridge and ferry committee member. If it were not for the bridge users' subsidy ferry crossings could cost over five pounds. Councillors had asked the officers to prepare a report on the option of recovering the £1/2 million shortfall by a modest increase on cash paid fares for the ferry. This would not affect Torpoint residents who used the tag, but would slightly increase the sum paid by holiday makers and other occasional users. However this option was not shown to the bridge committee.

"I am angry that this option, put forward by all three Saltash members of the committee was totally ignored", said County Councillor Joe Ellison, the third local bridge and ferry committee member. He added that one reason might be that

any toll increase must be referred to the Secretary of State and that it costs £40,000 to do so. "They simply chose the simplest option" complained all three Saltash Committee members. The eighty pence is easier to collect, whether or not it is the fairest solution to the shortfall.

"Those who use their tag only occasionally will pay a disproportionate charge to daily commuters if this charge comes into affect", added Mayor Councillor David Yates.

The Town Council's submissions will be considered before a decision is made.

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Kirsty from the Hearing Room as 'The Mad Hatter' see pages 4&5!

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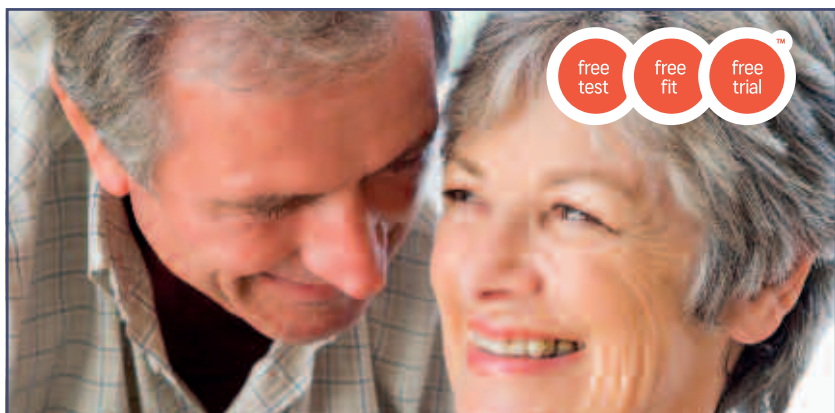
Starters:
HOMEMADE SOUP - Broccoli and stilton served with a granary roll
SMOKED SALMON AND DILL CREAM MOUSSE - a creamy lemon, dill and smoked salmon mousse, finished with a layer of chopped smoked salmon and dill, served with a salad garnish and melba toast.
BREADED BRIE WEDGES(V) - two deep fried, melt in the mouth breaded brie wedges, served with a cranberry dip and salad garnish.

Mains:
ROAST TURKEY - traditional succulent Turkey, served with four seasonal vegetables and roast and new potatoes.
ROAST BEEF - Cornish topside beef, served with four seasonal vegetables, roast and new potatoes and a Yorkshire pudding.
HADDOCK FLORENTINE - a fillet of prime haddock, served on a bed of spinach, in a rich cheese sauce and accompanied with carrot and green bean bundles and new potatoes.

MUSHROOM AND WALNUT HOTPOT(V) - a crisp pastry case surrounding rich, braised mushrooms and onions and topped with slices of potatoes and finished with chopped walnuts. Served with seasonal vegetables and new potatoes.

Desserts:
CHRISTMAS PUDDING - traditional Christmas pudding, served with brandy sauce or Cornish clotted cream (must be stated on pre-order)
WHITE CHOCOLATE AND RASPBERRY CHEESECAKE - an individual white chocolate cheesecake on a crumble biscuit base, marbled with raspberry sauce.
ICED HAZELNUT AND HONEY PARFAIT - this frozen dessert is flavoured with honey and finished with chopped, caramelised hazelnuts and served with Cornish clotted cream.
CHOCOCOLATE BOX - an all butter shortbread base, topped with an indulgent dark chocolate mousse, surrounding a caramel centre... naughty but nice!

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Saltash Salon's Surprise Award from 'Heaven'



Planning is a dirty word. Well, it is to some people who think that all planning officers are corrupt, that councillors who sit on planning committees are even more corrupt and that the whole system stinks. I can see all that nodding...

Before I explain about corruption please understand two things: first is that most applications go to Saltash Town Council (STC) for debate and a recommendation. If that is the same as the Cornwall Planning Officer's (CC) recommendation then all is OK. If not then STC may ask the CC officer to justify their reasoning and this is followed by STC having an internet debate and vote, (all open to the public). If STC still disagree with county then they may ask (through their Cornwall Councillor) for the application to go to Planning East, which is a higher Cornwall committee for a debate and decision. There is an even higher committee for huge applications. The second thing is that there are some big housing applications coming up so perhaps now is a good time to try and lay this demon to rest.

Anyway my problem with corruption is that I just cannot see how it works in the sort of system we have. To start with STC do not have an officer report so it cannot work in that way in Saltash. Theoretically it is possible at Planning East level for a county officer to be bribed to produce a report that is unfair to one of the parties concerned, and I suppose that on rare occasions nationwide it goes on. Why rare? Because councillors give those reports such intense scrutiny, as does the internet-using public, that something not right is jumped upon mercilessly. I know that because I sit on Cornwall's Planning East committee which every month looks at certain applications. These are large or contentious applications or otherwise special ones such as those brought forward by STC through their Cornwall Councillors. We give the officers a really hard time on many occasions, for many

reasons, one of which is if their reports are wrong or not good enough. We pick on and ask for explanations for mistakes or inconsistencies. Come along to a Planning East meeting and see for yourself. It is a rare meeting of Planning East where we deliver every verdict in line with the officers recommendations. I have been at meetings where every officer recommendation was reversed. Everyone!

So what about councillor corruption? Again I am sure it goes on nationwide, on rare occasions. Why again rare? Because it would be virtually impossible, on Planning East for example, to bribe and get away with bribing enough councillors to swing a vote... we have 15 councillors there, four Independents, four Lib Dems, five Tories, one UKIP and one Mebyon Kernow. If other committees reflect ours then they are an argumentative disparate bunch who freely criticise and disagree with each other's viewpoints at every meeting...I mean that...at every meeting. At STC level there is just the same rigorous debate. We really do try at all levels to get to a fair decision based on planning law. I just cannot see corruption paying off, it would be so difficult to get it to work and extremely risky. It is not much good either saying a committee chairman could be got at. Why? Because basically they just conduct the meeting and usually don't even vote unless there is a tied vote. If they tried to unfairly lead discussion they would be jumped upon.

So does the system stink? Well here I have some



CORNWALL COUNCIL
and our PL12 community
For Observer readers
Derek Holley, Cornwall Councillor, Saltash East

sympathy because planning law is nowadays set down by the Cornwall Local Plan and the NPPF, the National Planning Framework, a slim, vague document we have to abide by. If we give a decision that goes against the NPPF the applicant can take it to an inspector, and if our decision is unreasonable they can ask for an award of costs. The problem some people see (and I am simplifying this a bit for lack of space) is that the NPPF is based on assumptions, such as that "sustainable" development is OK. Sometimes this can fly in the face of what appears to be common sense: for example a new house close to Saltash town centre can get away without any parking spaces because people should catch buses etc, when it is most likely, people say, that they will still have two cars and have to park on the road. The other thing I don't like is that while the applicant can appeal if they are turned down, the opposition has almost no right of appeal, so, for example, if you don't like a wind turbine close to you and after due process it is passed...tough...but if the developer is refused he has another chance with an appeal inspector. On the whole, though, I think the NPPF is reasonable.

I usually give a

vegetable comment here but as my wellies are down the garden stuck in mud...no, I will comment...how on earth can there be, in this almost freezing weather, great big caterpillars still happily munching on my sprouts? Unbelievable. I blame it on the Mayor; he should control the wildlife in his town.

Have a very Happy Christmas.
Derek Holley
Cornwall and Town Councillor.

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What was anticipated to be a day's seminar followed by a dinner and dance had an exciting conclusion for a local beautician who bought back to Saltash a prestigious national award.

Lisa Watson of 'Glow' salon was surprised and thrilled, after a day of training on the use of a new beauty product used by royalty, to be called forward by Deborah Mitchell, founder of the internationally renowned 'Heaven' health and beauty range. 'Glow' the salon which Lisa had founded in Fore Street was the proud winner of the Heaven best British 'Salon of the Year 2013'.

She had travelled to Shropshire for ongoing training in their organic skin care range and in particular the new 'afternoon tea range' as used by Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall. 'There were so many larger salons represented that I never expected any award', said Lisa. She put her success down to the fact that the Heaven founder herself began with a small salon dedicated to offering a high standard of client care with constant updating and training in treatment through new and effective organic products, just as Lisa seeks to achieve for her own Saltash clientele.



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- 6/ Grown Ups 2
- 7/ Alpha Papa
- 8/ Elysium
- 9/ Percy Jackson- Sea of Monsters
- 10/ Pain and Gain.

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Public Exhibition Broadmoor Farm, West Saltash

At our first exhibition last summer, local residents gave us positive and valuable feedback on our initial thoughts for a mixed use development at Broadmoor Farm, West Saltash

Since then we've been developing our proposals and would like to share our latest ideas which will include updates on community amenities, employment opportunities, education facilities, traffic, design, ecology and water management

Friday 10th January 9.00 am – 5pm
Saturday 11th January 9.00 am – 1pm

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Our team will be on hand to answer any questions

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Rotary Take on XFactor in the Race for Christmas Hit

During this festive season Rotarians in SW England have been working to release a Christmas song to hit the charts and the hearts of millions around the world to support the increasing humanitarian work they do globally. Rotary is asking you to “click, click”: click to download the single and click to share!

“Christmas Time (Children Sing)” is a feel-good Christmas ballad, penned by songwriter and music producer AJ Lornie, and sung by Cornish singer and TV presenter Shane Solomon.

“Christmas Time (Children Sing)” is now available to download on iTunes and other digital outlets. Rotarians are looking to harness the support of their 53,000 strong UK membership, the 1.2 million Rotarians around the world and the public at large in their bid to reach the UK charts, raise awareness of Rotary’s great work and to raise funds for The Rotary Foundation.

“Click click” to save a life, change a life and give hope to those millions affected by disaster, conflict, disease or poverty.

All profits will go to The Rotary Foundation where every penny raised goes to support Rotary’s six areas of focus: peace and conflict prevention/resolution; disease prevention and treatment;

water and sanitation; maternal and child health; basic education and literacy; and economic and community development. In the UK the song is to take on “The X Factor” winner in the fight for the Number 1 spot in the UK, Irish & North American Christmas charts.

The song, and music video, aims to make people think about those less fortunate and provides a way they can actively help Rotary to help others. Copies can be downloaded for 79p of which 34p will go to The Rotary Foundation. The music video features school children from around the world and examples of Rotary’s humanitarian work. Many celebrities who have worked with the Rotary End Polio Now campaign, including Olympian medalists Tonia Couch, Tom Daley, Helen Glover & world record holder Ruta Meilutyte, Chefs Michael Caines, Peter Gorton & James Tanner, ex England

Rugby International Graham Dawe are giving their support and help to promote the Christmas single.

Rotary International President Ron Burton whose presidential theme for the year is “Engage Rotary Change Lives” said: “Rotarians around the world are working to save lives, change lives and to give hope especially to eradicate polio and those recently affected by disaster or conflict. Please ‘click’ to download the song and ‘click’ to share it amongst your network of contacts. It is that simple, together we can change lives.”

“Christmas Time (Children Sing)” song is now available to download from iTunes. The music video was officially launched on the ‘Rotary in the SW’ TV programme which was broadcast on Monday 2nd December (Sky 212 and FreeSat 401 9.30 – 10pm)

Go to: www.childrenging.info to download and help us to make the Rotary “Christmas Time (Children Sing)” song Christmas No 1

From The Mayor’s Parlour...

Christmas is coming and so, we’re told is the cold weather.

While, for the young and active, snowfall is exiting for the less active, the elderly and those in poor health winter can be a miserable and often life threatening time of year with many vulnerable people left cold and confined to their homes. There is a lot of advice available on how to cope with cold weather, I have summarised some of it below: Follow these tips to help keep you your family and your neighbours warm and well in extremely cold weather.

Get ready by making a list of the things you might need so you do not have to go out in really cold weather including: Making sure you have a stock of food

If you need medication make sure you have a sufficient stock in the house. If you have a prepayment energy meter top up your credit. Make sure you have a torch and know where it is in case of power cuts. Looking after your Neighbour! Check on older neighbours or relatives to make sure they’re safe and well.

Make sure they’re warm enough, especially at night, and have stocks of food and medicines so they don’t need to go out during very cold weather. If you’re worried about a relative or an elderly neighbour, ring Cornwall Council or the Age UK helpline on 0800 00 99 66.

If you have a neighbour who struggles with their mobility and is unable to get out due to the slippery pavements, offer to go shopping for them to ensure they have enough basic food items in the house. If you have an immediate concern for your neighbour, for example, they are not responding to your telephone calls or your knocks on the door and you are not expecting them to be out, call your local police station which will be able to gain access to check on them.

Additional advice for the elderly: To keep warm and well during spells of cold weather: Have regular hot drinks and eat at least one hot meal a day if possible. Eating regularly helps keep energy levels up during winter. Keep as active in your home as possible. If possible, stay inside during a cold period particularly if you have heart or respiratory problems. Draw your curtains at dusk and keep

your doors closed to block out draughts. Wear several light layers of warm clothes (rather than one chunky layer).

Keep your main living room at around 18-21°C (65-70°F), and the rest of the house at least 16°C (61°F). If you can’t heat all the rooms you use, heat the living room during the day and the bedroom just before you go to bed. You can also use a hot-water bottle or electric blanket (but not both at the same time) to keep warm while you’re in bed. Going out in icy weather Take extra care, wrap up warm and wear shoes with a good grip if you need to go outside on cold days.

Icy pavements and roads can be very slippery. In snow a pair of old socks over the soles of your shoes will improve grip or you can buy overshoes. The Met Office advises putting grit or cat litter on paths and driveways to lessen the risk of slipping. It adds that you should wait until the roads have been gritted if you’re travelling by car.

Bear in mind that black ice on pavements or roads might not be clearly visible, and that compacted snow may turn to ice and become slippery. Saltash Town Council Advice to Residents on Cold Weather Precautions Saltash Town Council has a cold weather plan on the Town Council Website.

If you want details of the plan and guidance on precautions to be taken during extreme cold weather or wish to offer any assistance please contact Saltash Town Council on 01752 844846 or Email enquiries@saltash.gov.uk

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Conundrum Corner

Taking the initial letter to the on-word answers to the following nine questions can you re-arrange them to make a nine-letter word?

- 1 Who are the little people who help Santa with his toys? (5)
- 2 Which Religious Festival begins on January 6th? (8)
- 3 In George Orwell’s Animal Farm what type of creature is Snowball? (3)
- 4 What is the surname of the author of A Christmas Carol? (7)
- 5 To which Saint is Boxing Day dedicated? (7)
- 6 Who were Comet, Vixen and Cupid? (8)
- 7 How is New Year’s Eve known in Scotland? (8)
- 8 How many points does a Snowflake have? (3)
- 9 Located in London’s Regent Street which is the World’s largest Toy Store? (7)

Answers on page 7

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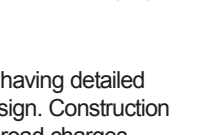
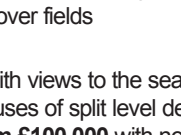
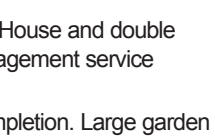
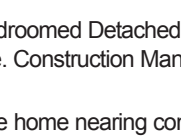
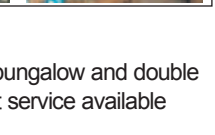
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Chichester House consists of seven beautifully furnished rooms each with a kitchenette. Six of the rooms are ensuite. Each room has a TV point with wireless internet connectivity throughout. There is a large communal kitchen, lounge and dining room. The house is within 200m of the local shops and opposite a quiet park.

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This Christmas as Always Saltash is the Town to Shop

Saltash is always a pleasant place to shop for presents, or for oneself, where quality, individuality and friendly person service are still practiced. Saltash Shopping Week, launched as we go to press, is the ideal opportunity to rediscover that wealth of different shopping opportunities the town has to offer.

Unlike many towns and cities too, the main Fore Street presents rows of attractive shops, decorated for the festive season, and with few or any vacant premises. Though we have been sad to lose a few long established businesses we have been delighted to welcome new traders to Fore Street, traders who see a future in our friendly little town and who believe that they have something to offer townsfolk and the many visitors from Plymouth and beyond who come here looking for life beyond the faceless malls and lines of lookalike chain stores. Over the last month we have welcomed Smokey Joes, with its array of scented candles and other eclectic gifts and products. Meanwhile in Lower Fore Street a new florists is justifying the belief of Danielle, when she opened her traditional sweet shop 'Truly Scrumptious' next door that the ancient heart of the town has a good future.

Take advantage of the week's free parking and the array of entertainments and offers, and rediscover the joys of Christmas shopping in a town with a tradition of service as well as unique gift ideas. If, due to our printing dates, Saltash Shopping Week is over when you receive your Observer, the shops and their products are still there, with free weekend parking and a host of inns and cafes in which to enjoy seasonal fare and a warm welcome.

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Hearing Staff Show off their Fancy Dress Sense

Lower power hippies, cartoon characters and those from works as diverse as Alice in Wonderland and Little Britain were serving coffee and cakes to Saltash shoppers from the Saltash Audiology Centre and The Hearing Room. Children in Need day has always brought out the staff of Saltash's Hearing Room and Audiology Centre to share the fun of the national fundraising effort while seeking to make a difference to the lives of children locally and nationally. In past years there has been a 'theme', this year staff decided to let their imaginations run riot in their fancy dress sense with colourful results. They also worked hard to make cakes enjoyed by passing shoppers, who helped the fancy dressed coffee servers make over £200 for the national funds. Funding was also boosted by a raffle in which staff and customers participated. They pass on grateful thanks for the support of Florabella's Florists and Jennifer's Deli who provided superb raffle prizes.

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'Uniting as One to Support the Philippines'



saltash.net's reputation as a 'compassionate school' was strengthened last week when the whole school community came together to raise as much money as possible in a short space of time to help the people of the Philippines. "Everyone was affected by the upsetting images being shown on national media over the weekend of November 9th and 10th," explained headteacher, Isobel Bryce. "We just felt we had to do something as quickly as possible to help provide support for this humanitarian crisis". A 'SOS' email to staff resulted in three key ideas being chosen as fundraisers on Thursday 14th and Friday 15th November. On the Thursday, staff and students dressed up in their 'Onesies' for a 'one off' non uniform day. There was also a cake sale extravaganza at morning break which raised a staggering £230 in 20 minutes!

On the Friday, Year 9 students helped to organise a Penalty Shoot Out in the Sports Hall with a 'Beat the Teacher' competition and lots of fundraising 'lunchtime fayre' stalls. Donations also came in from parents and other community members and at the end of the two days a massive £1675.64 had been raised.

Speaking at the end of the two days, International Coordinator at saltash.net, Vicky Higgs, said, "I am extremely proud of the way in which staff and students have pulled together to support this worthwhile cause. The students have shown great compassion to the people of the Philippines and they should be very proud of the large amounts of money that they have managed to raise in such a short period of time."

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Essa Files

This month I was enjoying a hotel stay in London that I wasn't paying for (neither, I hasten to add, were you!) and I was upgraded into a mini-suite that had almost as many rooms as my house, and a shower containing more technology than Neil Armstrong took to the moon.

In particular it included three separate shower heads, one of which turned out to squirt you in the face if you pressed the wrong button which really helped to wake me up. However, contrary to what you might expect, this upgrade (along with the customary three course hotel breakfast) did not put me in a good mood. Why, simply because I didn't get the usual free packet of biscuits with the tea and coffee in my room.

This suggests two things, Firstly that I should have read my own August column about the importance of keeping things in perspective.

Secondly that, in common with many Brits, I am rubbish at complaining - I could have just asked for my biscuits at the hotel desk and they'd probably have been both apologetic and glad to be able to sort it, but that would have been awkward and frankly, well unbrish.

It's not that we can't moan - I moaned about it on facebook, I moaned about it to my Mum, and effectively

I'm moaning about it to a large chunk of Saltash right now. In fact as a nation we're very good at moaning about the weather, the people in charge and much else besides. What we're not so good at is taking the obvious action to actually do something about it.

My resolution this month is therefore to pick something that bothers me, and make an attempt to improve the situation. In fact I am achieving this right now by writing an article about people moaning and not doing something about it.

If any of you would like to do the same then the best of luck to you - do something about what bothers you by speaking to the person in charge, or going to a council meeting to ask about it, or even sorting it out directly yourself. After all taking action to help sort out those petty annoyances is actually far more fulfilling than sitting in your suite being quietly bothered by the lack of biscuits!

Editor... 'I totally agree with you Adam'!

As a teenager, I remember walking through Saltash Fore Street and seeing the fantastic variety of shops. Back then you could find a shop that met almost all your needs and little need to cross the Tamar to Plymouth.

I also remember travelling by train to the Cinema in St Budeaux and using the Station Building which was in a much better state of repair than it is today. It is really disappointing to see the state of disrepair into which the building has fallen.

This is why I was so pleased to meet with Darren Bennetts recently and learn about his plans for the redevelopment of the Station Building. I hope that all of my constituents in Saltash and the surrounding area will join me in welcoming local man Darren's bid to create a positive welcome for people who visit Cornwall by train.

I also hope that a new visual image of Saltash Station will encourage people to take a break in their journey to see what is currently on offer from the businesses in Saltash town centre. I really hope that visitors and locals can enjoy the fantastic Saltash Town centre that I remember from my teenage years.

I also had a follow up meeting in Westminster with the Commercial Estates Group to receive an update on their Community Engagement Events in Saltash concerning their plans for a major development at Broadmoor Farm.

Some of the things that I was able to impress on CEG

SHERYLL MURRAY MP WRITES...



was the need to ensure that any community facilities they intend to introduce as part of the Development should take account of attracting visitors to Saltash Town Centre and provide locals with facilities that are not already available. Some things that spring to mind are a Cinema and Bowling Alley. The provision of facilities such as this would benefit the wider surrounding area as well as the people of Saltash. I was also able to emphasise the need for road improvements on the A38 and I sincerely hope that final plans will be forward looking. Saltash already has so much to offer but there is far more that can be done. I am fully behind any plans that will bring real benefits to this fantastic town.

It is also essential to remember that whilst we are all proud of our Cornish heritage, we rely on the City on the other side of the Tamar for many jobs and Department Stores. This does not however

mean that we should be isolationist and cannot attract something in return from our closeness to Plymouth. There is real potential to attract trade and visitors from the City for the benefit of places like Saltash and the wider area.

I really believe that there is a lot to gain for the Saltash economy from our larger city neighbour across the River Tamar.

What better time to start than during the Christmas Period. I hope all the businesses in Saltash and the surrounding area enjoy a very prosperous Christmas period. I would also like to wish all of my Constituents a very Merry Christmas and Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

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CAB Aim to Stay in Saltash

As far as the Citizens' Advice Bureau is concerned a presence in Saltash is vital. Following concerns that they might be forced to leave the town and their premises be sold off by Cornwall Council, who are reluctant to pay the £15,000 to £20,000 per year to run it, the CAB had been asked to consider alternatives. It had been feared that Saltash might lose its CAB despite it being the second busiest bureau in Cornwall with a constant demand for appointments and high numbers attending presenting a variety of financial and other problems, many desperate.

Meanwhile government cuts had reduced the legal fees grant to the CAB causing a reduction of 'face to face' appointments to half a day on Fridays, though staff are available on other days. The CAB would have liked to take over the building if the right financial package could be put together, failing which they were asked to look at alternative venues. They included the Guildhall, Library and Maurice Huggins Room but none offer the accommodation and privacy required.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Councillors David Yates and Jean Dent, with Town Clerk Ray Lane met with Neil Calhoun of the CAB who confirmed that if necessary administration would move to Liskeard but it was considered vital that face to face appointments in Saltash would continue. They understood however that Cornwall Council still wishes to sell the building in Belle Vue Road and the CAB would be asked to vacate it in early spring of 2014.

Saltash Town Council has

had it confirmed that Cornwall Council is carrying out a survey and valuation of the building. If a decision to sell was made the Town Council could register it as a "Community Asset" and seek to retain it. Other alternatives might include using other premises in the town if they could be located, or "piggy backing" by sharing the use of other premises.

The CAB will provide the Town Council with full figures showing their Saltash workload to confirm what would be involved. This would also remove the obstruction on the Town Council continuing to help fund the CAB.

Saltash School Pack Presents for Less Fortunate Families



Children at St. Stephens School were busy, with Christmas approaching, helping to ensure a happier Christmas for families less fortunate than their own. Saltash Rotary past President Brian Stoyel, with Rotarian and Observer Editor, Mary Crawford helped a team of school councillors and other willing volunteers from years one to six prepare, pack and decorate shoe boxes.

Labelled as suitable for boy, girl or family, these would soon be sent by Rotary to deprived families in Eastern Europe together with seasonal greetings and pictures from the St. Stephens children. They and their families and friends helped to gather suitable toys, clothes and practical gifts to improve the quality of life for the recipients.

The children were thrilled to be told that the film taken of them filling the boxes by Brian Stoyel might feature, in a

specially recorded Christmas 'Children's Song' aimed to raise funds for similar Rotary projects. The 'Children's Song' aimed to hit the Christmas top forty, will be downloaded for 79 pence, 34 pence of which will go to Rotary's International Aid. St. Stephens children, all of them internet-wise, had reason to hope that they might appear on the hit song's video, with other children from throughout the world busy helping others to enjoy Christmas. Rotary take on XFactor in the race for Christmas Hit Please tell all of your friends to download the song by following the link below. Go to to download and help us to make the Rotary "Christmas Time (Children Sing)" song Christmas No 1

introducing 80p per month whether or not tag holders cross the bridge does, to me, seem like a form of blackmail. Kind regards Rodger Skinner

Ref: article in the Nov. edition of The Observer. As a regular bridge user for more than forty years, I would just like to say that I totally agree with the article regarding the Tamar Bridge charges. A satisfactory conclusion to this on-going debate is long overdue. P Simpson Saltash

Conundrum answers...

Conundrum Answers: 1 Elves 2 Epiphany 3 Pig 4 Dickens 5 Stephen 6 Reindeer 7 Hogmanay 8 Six 9 Hamleys Nine-letter word: Shepherds

The Trouble with Kids

Recently I ventured into Saltash Community College.net to talk to sixth formers about Politics. Now as you know all teenagers are completely disinterested in anything other than computer games and music. Well at least, that's what the media will have you think, and certainly, it might be true, that they might spend a fair proportion of their spare time plugged into their iPods and glued to their computer screens.

They are not, however, disinterested in Politics. Just, I suggest, Politicians, who during our talk described them as "liars", "greedy", "manipulative" and "in it for themselves".

So it was against that public perception that I started the discussion. What did surprise me is that against national trends Saltash pupils were prepared to consider voting. Using my Voter-a-meter 3000 (okay, I made that name up, it was in fact a large wooden box spilt in two with a Perspex side), I asked them to place a plastic ball in either the Yes or No side of the box to say if they could, would they vote, if there was an election tomorrow?

The result was about 50% said they would, which I have to say is very encouraging given national statistics which suggests it is much less with the younger generation. What's more, when we discussed issues such as voting age, MP's salaries and student fees, they very much had a view and were keen to express it.

Why is this so important? Well because we now have a

fixed term Parliament, so if they don't vote in May 2015, they will not be able to vote again nationally until 2020 and! Statistically missing the first time to vote can also mean they are less likely to vote at all in later life. For a democrat like me that is very worrying that we might stop hearing the collective voice of first time voters

Well after an hour of the discussion which included some well informed and tough questions, I came away from the session really impressed with the level of knowledge and understanding young people had. I am certain this is helped by the positive ethos of the school, which encourages young people to think about their community and what they want the future to be.

Personally I always enjoy listening and learning from people, so I had a great time. You would need to ask your own child for their experience of the day. The good thing is I'm sure they will have one!

Phil Hutty
Lib Dem Parliamentary Candidate for South East Cornwall

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Letter to the Editor Contentious tolls across the Tamar! (Nov 13)

Ways of increasing revenue rather than targeting local tag holders only.

A: Bring in a charge for motor cycles as they use the main carriageway across the bridge.
B: Provide the long promised cafe in the car park on the Plymouth side which will bring in additional revenue and provide travellers with a glorious view of the two bridges and river.

C: Introduce long stay charges (say after two hours) to present free car parks in Saltash.

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Heritage Hold the Shield After Closely Contested Quiz

In which war did the term 'Fifth Column' emanate? What does 'Farcic' mean in culinary circles? And whose deadly foe was Von Stalheim? These were among the ten rounds of questions in a variety of categories put to the sixteen teams who entered this year's Town Quiz.

Once again question master John White posed the questions and Saltash Scouts were kept busy collecting answer sheets, the profits from the evening being for the scouts.

After a close run final the winners were Saltash Heritage Ancients, the team which included Observer reporter Martin Lister and which proudly accepted the winners' shield from Mayor David Yates. One point behind in joint second place were Little Grey Cells and Beer Hunters, and one point again behind and third were Saltash Heritage Moderns.

And the answers to those three questions are Spanish Civil War, stuffed, and Biggles.



Hi-Tech Beds Provided by Friends of Hospital

Adjustable high-low beds will add to patient comfort and staff convenience at St. Barnabas Community Hospital thanks to the hospital's League of Friends.

Celebrating their fiftieth anniversary this year with a number of high profile events the League of Friends has, over half a century raised over half a million pounds to provide medical equipment and patient comfort not available on the NHS budget.

The easy access beds, together with new bladeless fans for air conditioning were presented to Sister Sue Lloyd at the hospital by Dr. Colin Randall and Mrs Joyce Mepsted, president and chairman of the League of Friends, with other members



who took the opportunity to see the electrically controlled bed in action.

The friends, who recently raised around £200 at the

anniversary barn dance, are now fund raising for a vein carrying out blood tests

especially in the home, and new curtains tracks to provide privacy for beds on the wards.



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Chamber Needs Business Support to be an Active Force

The need for local businesses to work together as government cuts continue to affect public spending, is as great as ever, Saltash Chamber of Commerce and Industry believes. At its annual general meeting there was discussion of a proposed joint South East Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, with the five local towns retaining their own chamber's identities while federating to ensure that this corner of the county pushes for its share of funding from a distant county authority in Truro. Chairman William Cotton promised more updates on this during the coming year.

A busy year in office has seen him and fellow committee members attending presentations on proposed developments at Broadmoor and Tamar Village, Saltmill and making the views of business people known on each. He had attended town council and local regeneration group meetings and spoken out at them on issues of concern to local business.

The Chamber generally supported the free weekend parking scheme though expressing concern as to its abuse by those using it for commuting or shopping trips to Plymouth. Mr Cotton had carried out a survey of weekend parking for the STIG town improvement group.

The Chamber could only fully function as a representative body for local businesses and trades people if it received full support from those with businesses in the town. More active members were needed to attend meetings. The evening meeting times had been fixed for earlier and breakfast meetings had been organised in the hope that these might better suit members and prospective members but it was still a hard core of regular attendees on whom the work of representing local businesses fell.

Mr. Cotton was unanimously re-elected Chairman with Mr. Peter Ryland as Vice-Chairman and Mr. Peter Dickerson as Secretary and Treasurer.

While Fore Street still presents a lively picture with relatively few empty shops compared with other local towns, members agreed that more active members needed to work with the Chamber in order to ensure that shops remained occupied and that the local economy could flourish in nationally difficult times for small shops and businesses.

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Friday 13th December: G Sharp

Saturday 14th December: Short Notice

Christmas Eve : Tues 24th Dec: Clive Price Disco

Saturday 28th December: Dave Rich Disco

Sunday 29th December: Jazz Evening

Jazz Night last Sunday in every month

New Years Eve :Tues 31st Dec: Clive Price Disco

Comprehensive Menu with Specials Board

Choose from Our Varied Menu

Monday to Thursday

Enjoy 2 Home-made specials for £12.00

(Choosing from the home-made special Menu)

All day Tuesday 2 Rump Steaks £13.00

Food...

Lunch Menu available from: 12noon-2.30pm Mon-Fri
Evening Meals available from:

Mon-Thurs-5pm-8.30pm Fri-5pm-8.30pm

Saturdays from 12noon-8.30pm Sundays from 12noon-8-00pm

Clubs, Organisations & Coaches Welcome

We are open for Morning Coffee & Afternoon Tea.

Call 01752 842861 for bookings

and all enquires...book early to avoid disappointment!

-- Bookings advisable --

Saltash Leisure Centre

Feel Fit for Christmas Treat yourself to a...

Breeze leisure membership...
Live the Breeze...Breeze Card for Cornwall



Everything you need to know...
About your Leisure Centres

Introducing the Breeze card...

- NO JOINING FEE ■ NO CONTRACT ■ UNLIMITED USAGE
- NO OFF PEAK RESTRICTIONS ■ FREE INDUCTIONS
- FREE HEALTH ASSESSMENTS ■ FREE PERSONAL PROGRAMMES
- ONLINE BOOKING ■ VERY COMPETITIVE MEMBERSHIP FEES

Junior, Intermediate, Concession and Swim Only Memberships are also available.

New for 2014 SH'BAM! The new workout dance sensation from Les Mills

Contact Saltash Leisure Centre for details and prices of the best membership to suit you

Your Breeze card is your ticket to a healthier lifestyle and is valid at 14 leisure facilities across Cornwall. With fantastic amenities and friendly, professional staff you will enjoy all the benefits of living the breeze lifestyle to keep you more active and healthy.

You will need to apply for a Breeze card at **Saltash Leisure Centre** (your local centre) to take up membership or qualify for concessionary prices (See our admission fees for current non-member session prices or contact Saltash Leisure Centre for membership details).

Ask about Breeze Membership Options or Pay and Play for further details. Contact us during opening hours.



Saltash Leisure Centre Christmas & New Year

Opening hours 2013-2014

Tues 24th Dec 9am-2pm Wed 25th Dec Closed Thurs 26th Dec Closed

Fri 27th Dec to Mon 30th Dec 7am-6pm

Tues 31st Dec 9am 2pm Wed 1st Jan 2014 Closed

Thurs 2nd Jan back to normal hours

Open Hours: Mon-Fri 6.30am-10pm * Sat-6.30am-8pm * Sun-7.30am-7pm

Look Out for our forthcoming Christmas Events

Crackers, Wine & Mince Pie Morning Contact the Centre for further details!

Best Wishes to you & your families from all the staff

Have a great Christmas

Tel: 01752 840940 www.tempusleisure.org.uk

