

# SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

*Your only truly "local" newspaper ...*

April 2025 - Issue 393

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## Average Speed Cameras Announced for Saltash Section of A38



National Highways have announced that average speed cameras are to be installed on the A38 between Carkeel and Trerulefoot

this year. The safety measures, originally scheduled for after 2030, are being brought forward by National Highways in collaboration with the Vision Zero South West Road Safety Partnership.

The announcement is a significant victory for local campaign group Safe38, who have long called for safety improvements on this hazardous stretch of road. The delivery of these safety measures brings to an end a seven-year wait.

A spokesperson for the campaign group said: "Safe38 are delighted that average speed cameras and speed reduction measures are shortly to be delivered on the A38 between Carkeel and Trerulefoot. We have campaigned for this for over seven years and to see them now set for delivery in just a matter of months rather than years is fantastic news for the residents and visitors of South East Cornwall."

The latest five-year validated collision data from 2019 to 2023 shows a total of 60 collisions, with 97 casualties including two fatalities, on a stretch of road just six miles long. Studies show that average speed cameras and lower speed limits make an enormous difference to road safety, and the cameras are therefore vital on this section of road that historically has had a stubbornly high KSI (killed and seriously injured) rate three times the national average, with many hazards for drivers to navigate.

Safe38 thanked both current and previous MPs for their efforts to bring forward this funding, adding: "We are grateful for the work of Vision Zero, Cornwall Council and National Highways to find creative solutions for their forward funding. These cameras will help save lives and secure livelihoods by making the road safer and more reliable."

National Highways, who are responsible for England's motorways and strategic A roads, have worked with exter-

nal partners like the Devon and Cornwall Police to identify safety issues on the road.

The £750,000 scheme will include ten average speed camera installations and two bi-directional spot speed cameras with new 30mph speed restrictions installed in the villages of Landrake and Tideford. A Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) has been initiated, and work is expected to start on the installation of cameras in early summer.

National Highways have said they will continue to work with members of the Vision Zero South West Road Safety Partnership to improve safety, and will be monitoring the effectiveness of the new average speed cameras.

MP for South East Cornwall, Anna Gelderd, welcomed the development, saying: "I am delighted to see a positive step forward in road safety. This collaborative effort demonstrates commitment to making our roads safer for everyone."



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**Sat 3<sup>rd</sup> & Sun 4<sup>th</sup> May Bring your Family & Friends for a Great Weekend full of Fun**



# New Train Timetable and ‘New’ Trains for Saltash

There will be a few changes to our rail services next month. Cross Country and Great Western Railway are swapping some of their paths that cover Cornwall. This will mean that we lose a number of key services, but gain some new ones. Despite intense lobbying Cross Country continue to refuse to call at

Saltash which is hugely disappointing. For weekdays the key service that will be lost is the 15.55 to Penzance which is very well used by School children. The 16.18 will still call providing an alternative, all station stopping service from Plymouth. There are a small number of changes at weekends but Saltash retains over 10 services to or from London Paddington on a Saturday, with only minor changes on a Sunday. Looking ahead to September when the Saltash Tunnel works start, Great

There are also changes coming to the trains we use. The old High Speed Trains that have been providing services for over 40 years will finally be retired. Just a handful of these remain, in a 4 carriage format that mostly provide services between Plymouth and Penzance these will be replaced by a fleet of Class 175 trains that have previously been used in Wales. These trains come in 2 and 3 carriage sets, and with 26 sets in total GWR hope to be able provide a much more reliable service. The Class 175's have a capacity of up to 200 passengers (in 3 carriage format) with some tables, WIFI, CCTV, accessible seating and toilets. These trains are being transferred to Laira Depot in Plymouth where they will be prepared for driver training and passenger use. They will be maintained in Plymouth so we can expect to see a fair amount of them on journeys through Devon and Cornwall, whilst the long distance London services will be operated by the newer Intercity Express Train IET fleet as they are now. Rail is now far and away the cheapest and quickest way for many people to get to and from Plymouth, mainly the City Centre, but many services do also call at St Budeaux Ferry Road, Dockyard, Keyham and Devonport stations. With minimum journeys times of less than 10 minutes and a walk-on return fare of £4.30 for adults you might find that walking a little further to the station in Saltash will pay you back in journey time savings and cost. You can save even more with a railcard which can bring the return fare down to just £2.85 with validity varying on the railcard, but the Devon and Cornwall Railcard which is available to everyone is valid on the 08.56 or later to Plymouth. Remember that under 16's travel for half the adult fare so just £2.15 return to Plymouth, less for Devonport, a popular school route. Under 18's can get the same fares with a '16-17 Railcard' (£30 a year). For more information on using trains from Saltash please contact Sarah Bickford from the Saltash Rail Users Group on 07737390151 or follow Saltash Rail Users Group on Facebook to keep up to date with news.



On the upside Saltash will gain a number of direct London services including two morning Paddington bound services at 10am and 11am, and there will also be a later evening direct service to London at 19.30. Two additional services from Paddington will call at Saltash at around 13.30 and 15.30, the later might provide an alternative to the loss of the 15.55, but we know it may be too early for many. Western Railway are doing their bit to help alleviate the traffic chaos by adding 3 or 4 additional weekday services where they can. We are keeping a close eye on this and will let you know which services and when they will start, but we hope that rail will provide the best option when the tunnel works scheduled to last until Christmas severely impact the morning and evening commute across the Tamar.

### LICENSING ACT 2003

I/We MV PROPERTIES SW LTD give notice that I/we have applied to Cornwall Council as Licensing Authority for the grant/variation of a Premises Licence/Club Premises Certificate in respect of THE CROFT INN, HATT, SALTASH. PL12 6PJ

The application is to :

LIVE MUSIC 11AM-11PM  
RECORDED MUSIC 11AM-11PM  
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OPENING HOURS 11AM-11.30PM

A responsible authority or other person wishing to make representations to this application may do so by writing to the Licensing Team, Cornwall Council, New County Hall, Truro TR1 3AY or email [licensing@cornwall.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@cornwall.gov.uk) not later than 24<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2025

A record of the application can be viewed at the Licensing Authority's address Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays) by prior appointment. Details are also at [www.cornwall.gov.uk](http://www.cornwall.gov.uk) by searching 'List of current premises licence applications'. Alternatively, telephone the Licensing Office on 01872 324210

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with this application, the maximum fine on summary conviction being £5000.

Signed N.WESTLAKE *N. Westlake*

**Applicant / on behalf of the applicant**  
**Dated 28<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2025**

## Three local champions standing together for Saltash: Hilary Frank (Essa), Sarah Martin (Tamar), Steve Miller (Trematon and Landrake)



Liberal Democrats Hilary Frank, Steve Miller and Sarah Martin are standing for Cornwall Council. For fourteen years, our Conservative MP and Conservative Councillors failed to secure any funding for the Tamar Bridge. Our new Labour MP has meekly supported everything the new Government has done to impoverish Cornwall:

- Cutting the winter fuel allowance
- Keeping the cruel two-child benefit cap
- Cuts to disability benefits and carer's allowance
- Raising the Tamar Tolls by 15% to £3!

**Hilary Frank: Saltash Essa**

As a long-standing councillor and active volunteer, Hilary is a trusted leader who works hard for the community all year round. From delivering solutions for better healthcare to supporting young people and nurturing biodiversity, Hilary brings people together to get things done. Whether organising local events like May Fair, supporting residents and community groups, or delivering initiatives like the Magic Tenner to help our town centre thrive, she is always ready to listen and act. Hilary says: "I believe in local leadership, grounded in care, collaboration and trust."

**Sarah Martin: Saltash Tamar**

A town councillor for seven years and Chair of the Chamber of Commerce for two, Sarah has spent the last decade dedicated to serving Saltash and is looking to ensure equity of access to NHS services. With a background in Health Service communications, she said: "The NHS wants to deliver more services closer to people's homes, and the bridge shouldn't act as a barrier to this. Accessing essential NHS services such as blood tests in the town needs to be our priority to ensure Saltash residents are not short-changed."

**Steve Miller: Saltash Trematon & Landrake**

Town Councillor Steve has lived in Saltash for over 30 years. He is a key member of Safe38, campaigning for safety improvements to the deadly A38, and a founder member of the Tamar Toll Action Group. Steve is concerned that Labour's new housing targets will prioritise developer greed over the needs of local families for affordable housing. "Saltash deserves better. That's why I'm standing to be your local councillor: To make sure our community gets a fairer deal."

On 1<sup>st</sup> May, many voters in Saltash will want to use their vote to protest against the Tamar Tolls. But what does each party say about the future funding of the crossings? Individual Labour and Conservative politicians have objected to the inflation-busting increase from £2.60 to £3.00, but their concerns have been ignored by colleagues: Last year, Labour and Conservative Councillors united for a knife-edge vote in favour of the increase. Just one Councillor could have reversed the decision!

The Liberal Democrats have shown real leadership on this issue: Supporting the Tamar Toll Action Group and the march over the Bridge. Uniting as a party to vote against the increase. Making abolition of the tolls official Lib Dem national policy: All Lib Dem MPs now support full Government funding for the crossings. Local Conservatives and Labour have failed to persuade their party to support abolition of the tolls. The Liberal Democrat petition calls for the tolls to be ABOLISHED.

Sign the petition to abolish the Tamar Tolls on the Lib Dem website [seclibdems.uk/tamar-tolls](http://seclibdems.uk/tamar-tolls)



Published and promoted by A Sturtridge on behalf of Hilary Frank, Steve Miller, Sarah Martin and SE Cornwall Liberal Democrats, all at Eden House, St Germans Rd, Callington PL17 7HX.



## Mary Poppins Proves 'Practically Perfect'

**M**ary Poppins takes you to places you never dreamed of" was the promise, and it was wonderfully fulfilled for the enchanted audience of Saltash Community School's big production.

While based on the familiar film, Mary Poppins Junior was a faster-paced performance, zipping through familiar and new scenes in a production that was sung almost continuously. This presented a challenge, but the team rose to this with great success. The vast cast and chorus, engaged in non-stop song and dance, never put a foot wrong.

Songs, scenes and characters were added to the original film, including a talking statue and a 'holy terror' nanny in stark contrast to Mary. But the core theme remained the same as the emotionally crippled father and party-person mother learned the value of a fun-filled, loving family.

It would be invidious to single out individual names from such a large cast, especially as all the lead roles were played by different students on alternate nights. We must say, however, that on the night we attended Bert the Sweep (played by one of our much appreciated Observer delivery team) more than fulfilled his promise to improve

## Car Park Privatisation Approved Despite Local Objections

**L**ocal councillors have expressed disappointment that the legal challenge they mounted has failed to stop Cornwall Council's Cabinet from transferring Belle Vue West car park to private sector management.

Belle Vue West is one of 19 car parks owned by Cornwall Council that are being transferred to Corserv, a company wholly owned by the Council. Corserv is now looking to appoint a private operator to take on the day-to-day management of the sites.

In the wake of the unpopular decision, Saltash councillors and the Chair of the Saltash Chamber of Commerce met with the Chief Executive of Corserv to express their grave concerns that high or punitive charges could

discourage local shopping and drive more people to Plymouth.

Another issue raised was the length of the grace period between parking and paying. While Cornwall Council has typically allowed a more generous window, private operators often give drivers only five minutes, which councillors felt to be unreasonable in Cornwall where phone signal can be patchy and some drivers need more time due to mobility issues. It was emphasised that any private operator should allow a minimum grace period of ten minutes.

These concerns are set against a broader challenge of enforcing parking rules. Under current legislation, local authorities in England are not permitted to use automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) in most public car parks. Without ANPR, enforcement relies on foot patrols, which are costly and less efficient. Councillors have raised this issue with local MP Anna Gelderd, and are calling for government to allow the use of ANPR equipment in council-run car parks.

Councillors have said they will continue to follow developments closely, and keep the pressure on Corserv and Cornwall Council to ensure that parking policy actively supports the local economy, protects accessibility and makes Saltash a welcoming place to visit and shop.

on Dick Van Dyke's accent, as he played his cheery cockney counterpart to a 'practically perfect' Mary. As the youngest cast members, those who played Michael and Jane Banks brought just the right degree of fun-loving mischief, while in one of the most challenging roles, the careerist Mr Banks successfully transformed his character as the show moved towards its joyous conclusion.

The audience, who turned out on a chill February night to fill the school hall, were drawn into the action through well-pitched audience participation. They surely left believing that with such an eager and enthusiastic cast as Saltash Community School, then, as the last number assured them: 'Anything Can Happen.'

*Martin Lister,  
Arts Reporter*

## Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping Us Updated

**I**gather that many of you benefitted from the offers that were available in various businesses in the town when the Chamber ran the Magic Tenner promotion. I have heard many positive comments from traders who had more of you coming into their shops and from you, the customers, who had good deals. The Chamber is looking into how we can make this sort of promotion a regular event.

The Chamber was also pleased that, as part of Town Team, the first of the markets went well and again was well supported with lots of customers enjoying the products on offer. The next market is on the 19th April and we are hoping to have more stalls and a wider range of products available including a cheese merchant. Following the closure of the Martin Dean Butchers, we are also trying to get a butcher to attend.

As per the first market there will also be an Arts/Craft market in Saltash Studios at 24

Fore Street. If you didn't get down that far last time it is certainly worth a visit.

I don't know whether you have noticed but, as a result of some lobbying, several areas of pavement have been sorted out by Cormac. These are the areas around the base of the trees where the roots have caused unevenness. This has now made these areas safer and we now have red tarmac in the town, so a brighter colour.

Easter is almost upon us and the Chamber wishes you all a Happy Easter.

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Photo credit to Dave Pemberton

## Saltash Scrapstore & Too

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## Huge Turnout for Gateway Litter Pick

No fewer than 21 willing volunteers turned out recently to litter pick the area between Saltash Gateway and Waitrose, clearing a staggering 30 large bags of refuse.

Saltash Environmental Action (SEA) organised the event at short notice in response to members comments that the immense build-up of litter around bus stops, along footpaths in hedging, and around the footbridge spanning the safe walking route over the A38, was depressing to walk through and a blight on the town and wildlife. Expecting it would take two days to clear, the effort was timetabled for Sunday 19th and Monday 20th January but due to the unexpectedly large turnout, and dedicated precision picking, the area was cleared in just one, and the Monday event was cancelled.

For those who wish to attend future litter picks check on Facebook and [www.seasaltash.org.uk](http://www.seasaltash.org.uk) for dates and further information

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## Marathon Man Goes the Distance for Saltash Youth

Saltash resident Simon Wengradt is undertaking an extraordinary endurance challenge to mark his 50th birthday: running 50 marathons in 50 consecutive days.

Each step he takes will raise vital funds for Saltash Youth Network, a partnership between Saltash Town Council and local youth organisations that supports more than 20 youth groups including Girlguiding Saltash, The Core and Saltash Amateur Boxing Club. The network brings organisations together to offer broader opportunities and improved collaboration,

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helping young people find connection, creativity and confidence.

Simon will set off on his first marathon after the Parade of Youth at Saltash May Fair in the morning of Saturday 3rd May. His second marathon will follow the very next day, covering two full laps of the Saltash Half Marathon route.

“Running 50 marathons is nothing compared to the dedication shown every day by the volunteers and youth

workers in Saltash,” Simon says. “If my feet can help their work go further, it’s worth every blister.”

Residents are encouraged to show their support by donating via the Saltash Youth Network’s Facebook page or by giving Simon a wave or cheer if they spot him running through the streets of Saltash. Every mile he completes is a step towards a stronger, more connected future for the town’s young people.



## Cinema, Creative Events & Co-Work Launch at Saltash Studios

The once derelict Barclays Bank on Fore Street has now been well and truly reborn as Saltash Studios; a brand new space for arts, events and co-working.

This community-driven venue is already active with a wide variety of programmes, including cinema screenings, creative workshops, and co-working opportunities.

Saltash Studios’ Director, Lindsay Endean, is excited to be bringing cinema back to the town for the first time since 1961: “Our ground-floor space, which doubles as a co-working hub by day, transforms into a cinema with 4K projection, a 150-inch screen, Dolby Surround Sound, licensed bar and seating for 60. We’re thrilled to offer a great cinema experience and look forward to developing a diverse film programme for the community.”

Upcoming film events include a range of Oscar-winning blockbusters, locally made films, family-friendly matinees, and live West End theatre screenings.

The Studios is also hosting a

spring series of taster creative workshops, made possible through support from Saltash Section 106 fund. The workshops include opportunities to explore activities such as painting, photography, creative writing, and printmaking. These sessions offer a chance to meet others, try new creative outlets, and unwind.

The venue’s co-working space is also gaining traction, with nearly 30 members joining in the first month. The space provides an affordable and attractive environment for local professionals looking for a place to focus on work and collaborate with others.

Director Lindsay Endean acknowledged the efforts that have gone into the project: “The transformation of the building into a community asset has been the result of two years of hard work by many local people. We are now excited to welcome everyone to Saltash Studios and encourage people to get involved—whether as a visitor, co-working member, or volunteer.”

To find out more about Saltash Studios see [www.saltashstudios.org](http://www.saltashstudios.org)

## Cornwall Council Elections

### 1st May 2025

### More People Vote for Cake

The average person in Cornwall is more likely to vote in Bake Off than in a local election. But while we all love cake, it’s your local election vote that shapes our children’s futures, roads, housing and social care services.

Elections will be held on Thursday 1st May, and it’s your chance to help decide who’ll be our voice at Cornwall Council. There won’t be an election for Saltash Town Council this time, as just 13 people stood for the 16 places available, so all candidates are appointed without a vote.

But please, don’t sit this out. Decisions made at Cornwall Council have a real impact on our community. You can vote any time between 7am and 10pm, but make sure you bring photo ID so you can cast your vote.

Someone will be elected either way, so make sure your voice is heard. Better it’s someone you chose.



# Saturday 3rd & Sunday 4th May **May Fair Magic**

## SALTASH STUDIOS

CO-WORK  
EVENTS  
ARTS

### APRIL:

Fri 25th, 7.30-8.45pm. £8 / £7.

**Film / Q&A: Kerdroya & the Cornish Hedge**

Exploring 4,000-year-old Cornish hedges, with Will Coleman.



Thu 24th, 1, 8, 15 May, 10-11am

£40 / £35 4x1hr workshops.

**Workshop: Handmade Hustle**  
How to sell your crafts online.

### MAY:

Fri 2nd, 7.30-10pm. £8 / £7.

**Film: Bonnie & Clyde, The Musical Live (12A)**

Wed 7th, 6.30-8.30pm. £12.

**Workshop: Willow Weaving**  
& **Workshop: Tone in Art - pencil drawing with Mark Fielding**

Fri 9th, 7.30-10pm. £8 / £7.

**Film: A Complete Unknown (15)**

19-year-old Bob Dylan's meteoric rise to the top of the charts.



Wed 14th, 7.30-10pm. £8 / £7.

**Film / Q&A: Women & The Wind**

Documentary about three women, one catamaran and an epic ocean adventure.



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Market stalls, maypole dancing and May Fair magic are all on the way as Saltash prepares for a weekend packed with community spirit.

On Saturday 3rd May, Fore Street will be lined with a vibrant street market from 10am to 4pm, offering a wide array of stalls, food and local crafts to browse and enjoy. At the bottom of Fore Street, the trailer stage will host a fast-paced Rubik's Cube competition from 2pm. Meanwhile, Victoria Gardens will be home to the Youth Village, where local youth groups will be showcasing their projects and activities in a welcoming community space.

Just a short stroll away in Longstone Park, the festival stage will welcome performers from 11am, offering live music throughout the day until gone 9pm. The line-up celebrates home-grown talent, from the young performers of St Stephens Primary School to the high energy of Livewire and the soulful sound of Tom Hannigan. The music will

build to a show-stopping headline performance from Kernoasis, Cornwall's very own Oasis tribute band.

Sunday 4th May brings a change of pace, with traditional maypole dancing, inflatables and running races offering family fun in Longstone Park.

Behind the scenes, it takes over £16,000 to bring the May Fair to life. The event simply wouldn't be possible without the £5,000 grant from Saltash Town Council and the generous support of local sponsors. Bandits, Nicky's Glowbeads and Boutique, and the Cockleshell Micropub have each sponsored the cash raffle, with prizes of £150, £100 and £50. Organisers are urging everyone who enjoys the May Fair to buy a ticket. Not only could you win some money, but it is also a great way to show your support and help keep the May Fair magic alive.

## Another Great Start to the Year for Newell's Travel Saltash



With our other 10 branches we held a very successful Destination show in Wadebridge in February, where we had over 650 customers through the door. 28 tour operators, 2 airports and 1 charity attended, and the public were able to discuss different types of holidays as well as book on the day. We are going to be holding a walking holidays presentation in Saltash at the end of April, please call us or pop in for more details and to register to attend. Please keep an eye on social media for any other events that are coming up.

We have teamed up with Bounce Saltash, Inflatable Play to offer a free Birthday party for up to 10 children when you book your family holiday with us, minimum spend applies.

There has been lots of interest in holidays for 2027 and even 2028, the great thing about booking in advance is that you can spread the cost and paying monthly feels so much easier. Pop in and ask us for some quotes.

Our cruises from Southampton with transport from Saltash are now on sale for 2026, some lovely itineraries available. We also have four pre Christmas trips departing by coach from Saltash including Exeter, London, Bath and Bristol and Longleat Festival of Lights, these trips always prove to be very popular.

**Foreign exchange available in store, great rates and Euros and US \$ always in stock.**

Rachel, Sarah, Faye and Robyn look forward to seeing you soon to help you arrange your dream holidays.

## Music at the Station for Museum Stewards

The volunteer stewards, who offer a friendly welcome to visitors from near and far to our award-winning museum, are thanked every year with a party organised by Saltash Heritage committee. This year's event was held at Isambard House, the former station building, where the team from Trackside Café provided a sumptuous buffet tea.

Before everyone tucked into the buffet, Heritage Chair Brian Stoyel gave a speech, expressing his pleasure and honour to lead such a committed team, and noting that the museum is admired worldwide thanks to the hard work of its volunteers. He then presented awards in categories such as 'working on the most occasions' and 'being most ready to help out at short notice'.

Following the buffet, the volunteer stewards were entertained by well-known local musicians 'Hi-Jack', Jack Roisetter with Hilary, who soon had many of the guests singing along, and some even dancing.

New stewards are always welcome and can volunteer as often or as occasionally as they wish at time slots they find convenient. Full training is given and stewards always work in pairs so are never alone in the museum. For more information, please contact the secretary on 01752 847800.

## Tamar Tolls to Rise Again

Tolls are set to rise on the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry for the second time in three years.

Tamar Crossings, the joint authority of Cornwall Council and Plymouth City Council that operates the crossings, was informed of the decision via a letter to Andrew Vallance, Governance and Finance Manager for the Tamar Crossings, on 17th March. In it, Secretary of State for Transport Heidi Alexander MP notes that "without a toll increase, the services would not be sustainable and that the proposed increases are necessary to ensure the continued operation of the crossings."

The letter further states: "The Secretary of State also agrees that the financial evidence is clear that, with the crossings being run as directed by the parent local authorities, income is required, and at present, the level of income is insufficient."

The increase will see tolls on the Tamar crossings rise to £3 for cars, with a 50% discount for TAG holders. Motorbike tolls will increase to £1, while other vehicle categories will see a pro rata rise.

The news comes as a bitter blow to the Tamar Toll Action Group, which gave evidence at the one-day public inquiry into the toll revision application held in Plymouth last October. The campaign group was formed in 2023 after the previous toll increase, and had encouraged residents

to object to this latest proposal.

A spokesperson for the Tamar Toll Action Group said: "The decision to further put upon the people of Plymouth and South East Cornwall comes on the same day that the Government commits £9 billion of public money to yet another Thames crossing. It is extremely disappointing that in parallel to committing this enormous infrastructure funding in the South East, the Government also announces that it cannot find a single penny to support the hard pressed people in the South West, and therefore approves the Toll Revision Application to increase the Tamar Toll Tax by a further 15%.

"This constitutes a 100% rise in four years and a 650% rise in the last three decades. Four times the rate of inflation over the same period."

According to a spokesperson for the Tamar Crossings: "The Department of Transport will now complete the legal process necessary for a formal Toll Order. This process can take a little time. When completed, we will seek to increase rates as soon as practical."

Sources close to County Hall say that officers have the power to implement the increase and that the new tolls could come into effect ahead of the Cornwall-wide local elections on 1st May.

**3 & 4 May 2025**

# SALTASH MAY FAIR

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## Sustainable Saltash

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

There is warmth in the sun and the first flowers are finally out. Bird nesting season will soon be upon us. Than can only mean one thing, we will soon be beset by hungry, amorous seagulls.

Thankfully, I have recently discovered that there is no such thing as a seagull, so I have stopped worrying. We can actually see more than a dozen species of gull around our shores (not including kittiwakes, fulmars and terns, which most of us can't differentiate) and not one of those species bears the name 'seagull'. Once you start looking, the variety is dazzling. My favourites are the aptly named little gull, who has a bright red beak and sports a jazzy black hood in the summer. I also look out for the graceful great black-back on coastal visits. The world's largest gull, they are incredible flyers and have an impressive wingspan of 1.6m.

Cornwall (and the rest of the UK) is an internationally important breeding site for many gulls. Our fabulous rocky coasts, warm relative to other sites this far north, house native breeding populations, offer shelter to

migrant species who pause in autumn, and become home to northern birds avoiding harsh winters.

Sadly, we are not currently the haven we were. The infamous chip-stealing herring gull (grey wings, pink legs) is now on the red list of endangered species. All of our 6 most common gulls are now either amber or red listed and populations have plummeted in the last 20 years. A 44% tumble in the case of the herring gull.

The reason so many of us feel surrounded by them this close to the sea is that some are moving inland due to lack of food, disease and changing weather patterns. The species we all recognise are fabulously resourceful. They vary their diet to fit in with their surroundings, learn from one another, and form lifelong pairs which will settle in an area and make it home. Remind you of anyone? We are alike in so many ways, it's a wonder we don't respect them more. We could see them as another successful species that is trying its best.

So this spring and summer, I will try to make space and be patient towards them, let

## Swap stress for success:

### Top tips to give you financial confidence

Money worries can become all-consuming, and with increased stress levels, it can be even harder to manage your finances effectively. At Christians Against Poverty (CAP), we recognise the impact stress can have on people's lives and their money. April is National Stress Awareness Month, and therefore it's the perfect opportunity to share some of our top tips to gain

financial confidence and put stress at bay.

#### Talk about money

Debt and money worries often lead to feelings of loneliness and shame, but talking about these issues can reduce stress and break the cycle of isolation. Sharing your money concerns with a trusted friend, family member or organisations like CAP could provide you with much-needed support and help move you toward the next step in taking back control of your finances.

#### Upskill your knowledge

Consider a money course to help you cope better with some of the stresses of managing on a budget. CAP offers free money coaching to give people the confidence and decision-making skills to live well and look after themselves. Money courses not only educate and empower you to learn about how to handle money effectively, but can also equip you with the skills to maintain a positive outlook, even on a low income.

#### Prioritise self-care

When money is tight and the bills mount high, it can be difficult to set aside time just for you, but it is important for your own wellbeing to look after yourself. Find something you enjoy doing

them raise their young in peace- and recognise that they do so every single year, imagine that, people!

Tips for reducing disruption- cover your food waste and refuse. Remember they learn quickly and teach one another, so if we don't it's not fair to hold it against them week after week! If you are out on the coast, it's easier if you eat by a wall or a building so they can't get behind you. They also don't like being watched, so if you stare them down they are much less likely to make off with your chips. Marc Bramham

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

## Voice of Saltash Patients

### Time to Re-Energise St Barnabas Hospital?

Patient representatives and elected councillors have been speaking to all the key NHS bodies which provide healthcare locally, and we have used the views

from recent consultations with patients to inform what we say. Understanding is good between ourselves, the two Surgeries, the Community Health Trust, the Cornwall Integrated Care Board, and, more recently, the Plymouth Hospitals strategy team. Whilst it would be fair to say that the voice of Saltash patients is being heard, progress in improving services has been slow and limited so far.

We all know that new funding for the NHS nationally is so restricted that getting extra investment or staff locally is a dim prospect. We have to live with this until the government updates its plans.

This column exists to keep local people up to date with progress, and to seek more information about your experiences of healthcare, good or bad. At the recent Action Group meeting, we heard confirmation that Derriford Hospital will be pursuing "care closer to home", with more out-patient clinics and services. But we understand that this is likely to start through Liskeard Hospital, and so benefit people in Looe, Liskeard, and the rural areas first. It feels as if Saltash is currently seen as an urban area (like a Plymouth suburb), and so able to access the main hospital site direct. Given that building work is well under way to provide a new Urgent Treatment Centre/Fracture Clinic at Derriford and a new Community Diagnostic Centre in the city centre, it is hard to argue with this. For most people here it will be easier to get to these facilities than Liskeard, and they will be state of the art.

Saltash folk are nevertheless entitled to more care closer to home, and a patient said to us recently that St Barnabas Hospital should be "re-energised". We thought that was a great way

to put it. We haven't given up hope that blood testing will soon be provided from there, to supplement the testing that the the two Surgeries provide for patients unable to travel to Plymouth for this. We also want to see the "overspill" Primary Care service available more regularly at St Barnabas: it is a good model, but is not available often enough. And although we recognise that community hospital beds will never return, local patients discharged from Derriford may well get care at home in "virtual wards", ie monitored by consultants and senior nurses through technology, with the practical support of community teams. Please let us know if you have experienced this - we'd value your opinions, and these would help our negotiations.

Furthermore, do you think that re-energising St Barnabas Hospital could be led by the community in the current absence of funding by the NHS? It would good if we got ourselves organised in a business-like way to to this - such things have been done elsewhere for all sorts of developments. Here we have charitable funds raised by the former League of Friends, plus money from bequests to the hospital, which are both available now. We should be able to raise more money for the right project to spruce up and modernise facilities - which our two Surgeries could access, and tempt simple NHS services back into the town. Care - where it is needed.

**We're going to have a think about this. Please let us know what you think too. Don't hesitate.**

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## Tamar Reflections 80th Anniversary of VE Day

As we approach the 80th anniversary of Victory in Europe VE 80 on MAY 8TH - Saltash and Britain and other parts of Europe will indeed, reflect upon, celebrate and commemorate not only in remembrance but in profound gratitude and honour, the resilience, the sacrifice, and the spirit of those who fought and lived through the darkest chapter of modern history, ensuring that peace and freedom could once again be restored to Europe.

For us in Saltash - VE Day is not merely a date in our history books - it is a moment that resonates deeply; for our town bore the scars of war too, with 122 fallen (including 15 civilians during 1941 blitz).

### The Blitz

Many readers of the Saltash Observer will have parents, grandparents, or even their own memories of those terrifying nights when bombs rained down on Devonport, Stonehouse, Union Street, and indeed Fore Street Saltash.

On April 28th 1941, 9 civilians were sadly killed during a German bombing raid - they were - Charles and Emma Allen, Alfred Olver, William Rogers, Dorothy Goad and her daughter Joan, Walter Eales, Aaron Brooking and an 18 year old Boy Scout (from the 2nd Saltash Scout Troop) Donald Cummins.

Furthermore, six days previously on April 22nd there were 6 brave and valiant volunteer Saltash Auxiliary Fire Fighters (AFS) tragically killed - they were - Francis Brooking, Stanley Crabb, Alfred Crapp, Bernard Jasper, John Stanlake and Leslie Tibbs; together, they all perished on their way to help Plymouth during the City's time of desperate need during the Plymouth Blitz.

All 15 Saltash civilians that were killed are 'commemorated in perpetuity' by the 'Commonwealth War Graves Commission' - and there are several plaques and memorial and pictorial boards in their honour placed in strategic places around Saltash.

### A Reflection

On the evening of Monday April 28th 1941 passed as most wartime evenings did listening to the wireless, or 'Digging for Victory' in the garden or Longstone Park Allotments - or just attempting to pass the time away with neighbours.

So, no one was greatly



surprised when on April 28th at precisely 9.55pm, the sirens sounded - 'warning take cover' - and the people of Saltash performed the familiar drill of bolting to the air raid shelters for safety (such as it was!).

### German Luftwaffe

The German Luftwaffe was targeting the Royal Albert Bridge and Devonport Dockyard - the Bridge had a lucky escape, since bridges were very difficult targets from the air to hit.

Saltash however, was in direct line with Brunel's Bridge and sadly took the brunt of the raid - in addition to the Saltash personnel killed - Saltash Fore Street and surrounding area of houses were hit and many destroyed - also churches (St Nicholas and St Faith and Wesley Methodist in Fore Street - North Road School, plus, shops and historic buildings.

But Saltash rose out of the ashes like a Phoenix!! And Saltash's spirit was never broken - houses, schools, shops, churches were restored and or rebuilt.

### Tribute

As we celebrate VE 80 - we must remember that victory was not won overnight.

It was earned through the bravery of our servicemen and women - additionally, our brave civilians - including our Dockyard and services workers, our Land Army volunteers, Home Guard, Boy Scouts, and other civilian movements, including Town Wardens, and the countless men and women who

contributed to the war effort in meaningful and purposeful ways large and small.

Women played an indispensable role in the war effort and took on jobs previously reserved for men - working in munitions factories, operating anti-aircraft defences, or nursing

were physical, emotional, and deeply personal.

VE Day was not just an end to war; it was the beginning of rebuilding, of healing, and of remembering our entire local fallen and indeed, those who never made it home.

### The Legacy of VE Day:

Lessons for Today - Eighty years on, we must ask ourselves: what does VE Day mean to us now? Firstly, we remember the value of unity.

The people of Saltash and Britain, and our allies stood together against tyranny.

They proved that even in the most trying times, strength comes from solidarity.

Today, we live in a world that is increasingly divided,

yet we must remind ourselves of the power of community, cooperation, and resilience.

Secondly, we must cherish peace. The horrors of war are not distant memories - they are real experiences that shaped the lives of our parents and grandparents.

VE Day is a stark reminder of what happens when hatred and aggression are left unchecked.

Our duty, as inheritors of this peace, is to ensure that future generations do not have to witness such devastation again.

And thirdly, we must honour the sacrifices made by remembering our history and sharing these stories -



including of our armed forces personnel, our veterans and to our civilian brave, these, the embodiment of the spirit that saw us through World War II.

### A Tribute to Our Veterans

Let us take a moment to pay tribute to our Veterans, both those who are still with us and those who have passed on - their legacy lives on, not just in the rebuilt streets but in the very fabric of our society.

### Closing Reflections: Looking Forward with Hope

The story of VE Day is one of resilience, of rebuilding, and of forging a better tomorrow.

So let us take this lesson forward, ensuring that our children and grandchildren grow up in a world where peace prevails, where unity triumphs over division, and where the sacrifices of those before us are never forgotten.

Let us celebrate, let us remember, and let us honour those who made VE Day possible.

Thank you one and all Sue Hooper MBE

Former Mayor of Saltash and Freeman of the Town  
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## On VE Day 8th May 2025

### The Saltash Branch Royal British Legion

We will be putting on a service to commemorate  
**the 80th Anniversary of VE Day.**  
(Victory in Europe).

The service will be held at  
**St Nicholas and Faith Church in Saltash.**  
The service will start at 10.15 am, with hymns  
and prayers led by the Legion Padre.

A roll of Honour will be read out for the  
gallant men and women who paid the  
ultimate sacrifice during WW2.

The Act of Remembrance will then be carried  
out, followed by the sounding of the Last Post.  
After the service, wreaths will be laid on the  
Memorial outside the Church.

All veterans and people of Saltash are invited to attend.

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## Just Thinking Aloud

It took me a long time to sort out where I was going wrong – and why. Looking back, it had something to do with being unwilling (or unable!) to respond negatively to requests, with no thought as to whether it was a “Bob” sort of issue, sometimes insisting on doing for others what they could perfectly well undertake for themselves. Don’t misunderstand me. I have been perfectly happy for most of my life, and more than content with its family aspects, my varied jobs, my “divertissements” (French for “hobbies” or “interests”) and the earnings which enhanced my enjoyment of such. After leaving home I became a university student in Leeds and Bristol, found teaching jobs in France, Bristol, Blackpool, Coventry and Saltash, acquired a wife and children along the way (and more recently grandchildren and a great-granddaughter), after a breakdown worked in

management information for a few years, trained to become an Anglican priest, learnt to drive after eighty seven lessons and three goes at the test, had hands-on voluntary commitments to more organisations than I can shake a stick at, and in the very recent past have come to terms with what looks like being my fifth and final retirement. It seems to be attractive. So why should I be muttering darkly about stuff going wrong? Well, my treasures, it’s like this – and those of you who know me well need read no further – my work and life experiences as a teacher taught me lessons which I am keen to share. Let me explain.

The aforementioned breakdown was vile. I wouldn’t have wished it on my worst enemy. There were those who assumed that it was stress caused by “those horrid adolescents”. Wrong. I loved being alongside those youngsters. The stress was self-inflicted. I was my own worst enemy. Yes, the breakdown was vile, but a boon at the same time. It taught me

that I was not the answer to other folk’s problems. Not only that – I learnt that I was surrounded by folk who understood what I had been going through and rescued me from the pit of despair. My life was renewed, and I finally accepted that renewal thirty years ago in a bedroom of a very grotty French hotel bedroom. On occasion – and this was one of them - life can be full of the unexpected...

Talking of the unexpected, have you heard the latest rumour about me? Apparently I have founded a new political party which is going to make its maiden appearance in the forthcoming town council election. It is focussed on attracting the more mature punter, and is to be called Octogeraniums UK. How did I know about this rumour? Chuckle chuckle. I must confess – I had been putting it about for a bit of a lark. Nomination papers had to be in by Wednesday 2nd April at 4pm. I was mildly tempted, but that would have been a step too far – even for silly old me!

Bob Munro

## Civic Memorial Service for Barbara

Saltash still mourns the passing of one of its faithful daughters - the late Barbara Spring.

Barbara passed away peacefully in the presence of her close and loving family, on September 18th 2024 at the age of 97; and a very touching Civic Memorial Service and Burial of Ashes was held on Thursday 20th February at St Stephens-by-Saltash Church – attended the Civics of Saltash and Cornwall.

Previous to the celebration of Barbara’s full and active life – the Saltash Town Council flew the town flag at half-mast at the Brunel Bust in her honour.

Barbara was Mayor of Saltash in 1992-1993 and was given the honour of Freeman of Saltash in 2001 for her dedication to the town.

Very passionate about the

arts, Barbara championed these throughout her time as a Town and Cornwall Councillor. She was also a great supporter of the railways in Saltash, St Barnabas Hospital and led the campaign to have the pedestrian humps installed in Fore Street.

Barbara left a lasting legacy in Saltash in being instrumental in the refurbishment of the Guildhall - many of her colour choices for internal decoration are still in place today.

At the Memorial Service, Barbara’s very talented family performed beautiful music – including Barbara’s late husband George’s own composition of ‘The Cornish Riviera’ with the music by their son Matthew, and the illustration of Brunel’s majestic Bridge by their daughter Emma.

Other family members – Sara, Matthew and Lewis played and sang music of the 17th Century.

The Service, Commendation and Blessing were conducted by Reverend

## Churchtown Farm: A Spring in its Step

Churchtown Farm Community Nature Reserve got a spring clean in March, thanks to a well-organised litter pick led by the Friends of Churchtown Farm. As volunteers made their way along footpaths, meadows and estuary edges, the distinctive sound of skylarks in full song could be heard overhead, providing a joyful soundtrack to a morning’s work.

“The skylarks were in fine voice, and it really brought home just how lucky we are to have this haven on our doorstep,” said Bob Austin, Chair of the Friends group.

Covering more than 150 acres of fields, woodland and

creeks between Saltash and the River Lynher, Churchtown Farm is owned by Antony Estate and has been managed as a nature reserve by Cornwall Wildlife Trust since 2000. With spectacular views over the scenic waterways that connect Saltash to the sea, it has become a much-valued place for walking with dogs and friends, birdwatching and enjoying the outdoors, all within easy reach of the town.

There is, however, some uncertainty ahead as the 25-year lease under which the reserve has been managed comes to an end this September. Bob Austin remains positive. “We’re in active talks and I’m confident that, with collective effort, we’ll find a way forward to safeguard the reserve.”

With spring in the air and the community behind it, there is fresh optimism for this much-loved corner of Saltash.

Diane Burrows.

The Mayor of Saltash Councillor Julia Peggs gave a Bible reading and offered her condolences to Barbara’s family and friends.

Addresses were given by Verna Roberts (friend) and Daniel Spring (Barbara’s youngest son) – with further tributes by Barbara’s two granddaughters.

Barbara when she was Mayor during 1992 – was the first Mayor to write the Mayor’s column for the Saltash Observer and was present at the launch of the publication in the same year.

Sue Hooper MBE

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