

SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

Your only truly "local" newspaper ...

May 2013 - Issue 250

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Cornwall Council Seats Split three Ways...

One option is a Rainbow Alliance where we all agree to work together for Cornwall.



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and our PL12 community
For Observer readers
From Councillor Derek Holley
Saltash East

Elections come, elections go, and Cornwall is now in an interesting but challenging post-election period. But firstly I must pass on a message from your four Cornwall councillors including myself, Bob Austin and two new councillors Hilary Frank and Joe Ellison, both experienced on the town council but new to the county.

We would all like to thank you, Saltash residents, for your support at the election. We would say to those not elected that none of us took the result for granted, we all worked hard.

What we will say is that we pledge to work with two priorities in mind, encompassing all that has been written in our various election leaflets: firstly we will do the best we can for Saltash and we will push Saltash's cause at every opportunity; secondly we will work for Cornwall as a county and do our best for the people wherever they live. We may vote differently if we see different sides to an issue but we pledge to keep those two priorities in mind.

The next week or two is a challenging period because Cornwall has to be governed and an administration has to be formed so that decisions can be made. It cannot be left long because Cornwall Council is in effect a huge economy and of course is a

large employer of people.

The current problem is that the seats in Cornwall are split three ways, more or less equally between the Liberal Democrats, the Conservatives and the Independents, with a small number of seats to other groups including Labour, UKIP, Mebyon Kernow and the Greens. One option, which appeals to me, is a Rainbow Alliance where we all agree to work together for Cornwall.

Why is this all so important now? I think that Cornwall, because of a worsening financial situation, is quietly entering what will be the most difficult period in its governed history. Money is critically short at the moment and there is every likelihood that even more government grant cuts will occur after the next government comprehensive spending review.

Let me give you a simple example: four years ago I could almost guarantee the filling of a bad pothole in a road within twenty-four hours; now it may involve days or even weeks of nagging. It is not the fault of Cormac, who look after the roads of Cornwall. It is just that they have fewer staff and less money to do the job. That is a direct result of central government cuts, and as I said before, we all have to live with that.

When an administration is formed it will look somewhat different to the last one. There will still be a cabinet of ten councillors with ultimate decision-making responsibility (I voted against that and still believe it is wrong - I voted for a committee-led system where a group makes a decision). However democracy has spoken at County Hall and has decided for a cabinet system. The difference now is that those ten councillors will each have a dedicated (I hope) committee of councillors to advise, challenge and oversee their actions. Will it work in our interests? I really hope so!

Now for the most important debate: the continuing and unpredictable season has me in a quandary: when should I plant my runner beans, and will continual rain, like last year, drown my tender crops? Perhaps I should cover more of our garden with polytunnels, a move that would really please my better half! Hey Ho!

Derek Holley Cornwall
Councillor, Saltash East.
dholley@cornwall.gov.uk

Bridge Repair Costs Mounts as More Faults Found

Six thousand litres of Goose grey paint have been applied so far in the Royal Albert Bridge repainting project, while around ten layers of old paint have been blasted off the main tubes. Around 190 tonnes of new steel have been added to the bridge while the diagonal bracing, added in the 1960's and 70's has been removed having been found to be detrimental to the bridge.

'The bridge would shake whenever a train crossed back when we started the work. Now it feels more solid,' said Peter Cook, project manager for Taziker Industrial, the company contracted to carry out the bridge works. He was giving an update in the Ashtorre Rock Centre on the project, originally priced at £11 million but now upped to £17 million as more work has been found to be necessary.

However the project, which began in March 2011, is still on target for completion by December this year. The company is seeking to persuade Network Rail to let them also paint and repair the seventeen approach spans as it would save considerable money to have completed as part of the same project and they would otherwise stand out adversely against the neatly painted bridge restored to its original 1859 colour scheme. The scaffolding should soon move on to the stone pillars as work commences on the main portals.

Any change to the structure has to be approved by English Heritage he advised, and he described the stringent demands of the health and safety executive, especially for men removing lead based paint and those working with the tube where decades of pigeon and starling droppings have accumulated. It is hoped to seal the tube against future bird invasion. Other past damage to the structure under repair date from enemy air raids in 1941, and from 1950 when HMS Roberts struck the structure.

The good news for those living close by is that once work is completed the paint should last for twenty-five years and the steel work for a minimum of fifty years. Meanwhile the work team will move on to Tamerton Foliot viaduct, Laira Bridge and possibly the Tavy Bridge which has been left half painted for several decades.

Saltash Surveys the Wondrous Cross



Saltash finally has its iconic sculpture welcoming visitors and returning Cornishmen crossing the Tamar Bridge and resplendent of Cornwall's Celtic past. An excited crowd gathered by the bridge in the early hours of a Sunday morning to view the erection of a cross originally planned for Saltash thirteen years ago.

The Cornish Cross was originally suggested by Saltash Churches Together as a millennium project to commemorate two thousand years of Christianity. Various designs were commissioned and townspeople selected the current structure as their favourite for a site adjacent to Carkeel roundabout.

Planning issues arose with the Highways Agency over that site and after some lengthy deliberations the plans were shelved, with the model of the proposed cross gathering dust in the Guildhall.

It was when the Saltash Waterside Resident's Association formulated plans to turn Elwell Woods, under the Tamar Bridge, from a piece of overgrown scrubland to a community woodland and orchard, that plans for the Cornish Cross, to be placed in those woods, were revived. It was Tim Smit, promoter of the

Eden Project and Heligan Gardens, who came to voice his support for the project in 2009, who suggested that rather than be hidden below, the cross should stand proudly alongside the Tamar Bridge, visible to those entering Cornwall, a symbol of the county's unique Celtic culture.

There were further setbacks and delays, up to this year when problems were discovered in the fitting of the cross to the plinth. Then the weather proved unsuitable with temperatures too cold for the resin used to set.

Photo by Peter Clements. Story continued on page 7

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Town Gives Town Council's Go-Ahead for Demolition of Inn Opposed by Cornwall

Following the decision by Saltash Town Council to approve the planned development of apartments on the site of the Waterside Inn, Tamar Street, I was one of several people writing to object to the decision, which may explain Cornwall Council's decision to take another look at this planning application.

As a member of the Saltash Neighbourhood Development Plan Working Group, I was very disappointed to learn that Saltash Town Council had, in my opinion, short-sightedly passed this planning application. Given that one of Cornwall's Strategic Objectives in the Saltash Town Framework Plan is to improve Saltash as a tourism destination through the promotion of its heritage and regeneration of the Waterfront, allowing this development of an incongruous block of flats on the waterfront is in direct opposition to this.

The Vision in the Saltash Town Framework Plan is "to promote the town as the primary gateway to Cornwall, unlocking its potential to become a centre of commercial, education and cultural excellence, and as a place to visit, live, and work". Cornwall Council is currently assisting Saltash in our efforts to create a Neighbourhood Plan in line with their Local Plan.

I do believe that allowing a second incongruous building to blot the historical waterfront image will negate any chance the Saltash Neighbourhood Plan will have of enhancing the area with cultural/historical

facilities to be enjoyed by the whole community. For example, several people have said to me that they would like a good restaurant there.

Given that the current application allows for ground level parking, this would also be suitable for a first-floor restaurant or other facility that could be built to reflect the history of the waterfront. And the token gesture of a hot food retail unit in the current planned development provides no seating, especially niggling since there is an outside patio area adjacent to the unit that is restricted to apartment residents only!

I have no doubt that the Saltash Neighbourhood Plan will want to include regeneration of the waterfront in its Vision. The process will take at least two years to achieve but, given the importance of the Waterfront Inn site, the fact that it is in a conservation area, and the current interest in a more community-wide economic, environmental and social plan for development, I do think it is worth finding an alternative.

Denise Watkins Member, Saltash Waterfront Residents Association

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'For Saltash' Open at the Heart of Community it Serves



Local MP Sheryll Murray was pleased to join Saltash Mayor Martin Gee at the opening of the new base for the Saltash Gateway Community Interest Company (CIC) in Fore Street at the site of the old gas showroom. Pictured above: Beryl Dickerson who was the manageress at the old gas showroom with Mayoress Maggie Gee, Mayor Martin Gee and Sheryll Murray MP

'For Saltash', a Fore Street outlet which combines a showcase for community activities with a retail outlet for local entrepreneurs, has been formally opened at the foot of Fore Street. Number 4, Fore Street, has been empty for much of the past twenty years, presenting a cheerless welcome to the town standing as it does at the entrance to the street. Over the past couple of years the town's Community Interest Company (CIC) has brightened up the premises by using the window to promote local organisations and activities. Now the CIC has negotiated with the owners for three years free retail to be followed up, hopefully, by guaranteed leasehold.

This has enabled the CIC to refurbish the premises for community use, hence the pun on the street number and street name 'For Saltash'

'At our heart is the idea of helping Fore Street to stay alive', declared C.I.C.'s Peter Thistlethwaite at the opening ceremony. 'We have great shops here; we want to ensure the footfall to match them.'

On opening day there were eight attractive market-style stalls in the shop offering a variety ranging from home made arts and crafts to cup cakes.

In addition to serving as a local market the shop will host various community activities and can also hold art displays. In particular it will act as a volunteer centre where residents can be put in touch with the town's many voluntary groups, either to benefit from their services or to volunteer to join them. It will also serve as a 'booking office' for the CIC's newly acquired community 'Hopper Bus', available for local groups of any age range. The bus is disabled friendly, and for disabled shoppers in Saltash 'For Saltash' now holds mobility scooters which can be loaned out free of charge.

'This building which has been an eyesore for much of the past two decades has been filled, for retail by a fabulous group of people, those running the market stalls and also the CIC using it as a base,' said Mayor Cllr, Martin Gee, following his cutting the ribbon for the formal opening.

Saltash CIC, explained Peter Thistlethwaite, is just a group of local people who have volunteered to serve as directors. Anyone who lives or works in Saltash is welcome to become a member. Their purpose is to promote the well-being of the town and to make a difference to the lives of the people of Saltash. Although it is a registered company it is non-profit making and any money made gets put back into the community.

Lib-Dems and Independents Split Saltash Seats

Saltash voters elected two Liberal Democrats and two Independents to represent their interests on Cornwall Council. Independent Derek Holley retained Saltash East with 80% of the vote followed by David Ward (Conservative) 13% and James Shepherd (Lib Dem) 7%.

Fellow Independent and former Mayor Joe Ellison won Saltash North with 46% followed by Denise Watkins (Lib Dem) 33% and John Brady (Independent) 21%. In Saltash West Bob Austin, Liberal Democrat retained his seat with 62% of the vote in a straight fight with Conservative Gloria Challen, 38%. Newcomer, current Town Councillor Hilary Frank won Saltash South for the Lib Dems with 70% of the vote against Conservative Beryl Rosekilly 30%.

Insufficient candidates to require a vote on Town Council

There was only one contested election for the Town Council, in three of the four wards there were insufficient candidates to require a vote. Five candidates stood for four seats in Saltash West with the current deputy Mayor David Yates elected along with Bob Austin, Gloria Challen and Jean Dent.

Four candidates were elected unopposed for Saltash East, Richard Bickford, Martin Gee (the current Mayor) Derek Holley and James Shepherd. Similarly in Saltash North the four candidates automatically gained their Town Council seats, John Brady, Joe Ellison, Bill Phillips and Lee Russell. Saltash South saw only three candidates stand unopposed Hilary Frank, Sue Hooper and Adam Killeya, necessitating

another candidate to be co-opted by the new council.

Of the fifteen seats filled on the new Town Council there are seven Independents, six Liberal Democrats and two Conservative members.

Ex-Mayor Stands Down from Council

Among familiar Saltash Town Councillors who have not stood for re-election this year is the Mayor for the year 2011 - 2012 Colin Oakes.

Other familiar faces who have retired from the Council are Peter Clements, Bruce Reid and Colin Riches.

Colin Riches has also stood down from Cornwall Council as has Bryan Preston.

At the final full monthly meeting of the existing Town Council Mayor Martin Gee paid tribute to all the work put in to the community by the town's four retiring councillors.

All other existing councillors have put in nominations for the new council.

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The Essa Files

by Adam Killeya

My six years as a councillor for Essa Ward has come to an end, but an exciting four as a councillor for South Ward now begin. I even considered changing the name of this column to mark the occasion but couldn't think of a good enough alternative (Due South? Song of the South? South Specific?) and in any case Saltash Town Council is still 'Konsel an dre Essa' in Cornish.

Regardless of name changes, congratulations to all of those elected or re-elected on May 2nd, and commiserations to those who were not. We now have a new town council with a good mix of experience and fresh blood, a wide range of backgrounds and skills and a larger number of working councillors.

What is disappointing for a democrat is that so few of the town council seats were contested - only one ward, West, actually needed a vote. Of course it was nice for me to be unopposed but it is troubling that so few people put themselves forwards. I know that this isn't because everyone feels that the Town Council does nothing - hard to argue with all of the recent projects coming to fruition in Saltash (free parking, torch relay, Christmas event, Celtic Cross etc). Equally it cannot be just because everyone is happy - there were plenty of

people objecting to some decisions of the town council but not standing.

I am personally a great believer in 'if you don't like the current councillor vote for another, if you don't like the choice stand, and if you neither vote nor stand then don't complain' I do hope that the lack of candidates isn't simply because people prefer to sit on the sidelines and criticise than give it a go - we were fortunate at Saltash.net community school this last month to have a visit by the Speaker John Berrow, who brought an inspiring message of 'politics isn't just for other people: you can do it', which certainly resonated with the students.

Having said all of that there is one vacancy on the town council - in my own ward of South - so if you didn't stand but now fancy giving it a go then watch out for the opportunity to apply shortly.

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From The Mayor's Parlour...

Warm Greetings

This is my final outpouring written on the May Bank Holiday weekend in surprising warmth and sunshine.

This must be the start of Spring! Yesterday on the annual Harding's Hike the hedgerows were covered in wild flowers. They were all trying to catch up with the season and many were out together when they are usually weeks apart. It was glorious.

I would like to start with a summary of the last mayorial year and close on the more gritty bits of news. Maggie and I have met wonderful people throughout our year and know in depth, how our town, Saltash is such a magnificent place to live. All the organisations have been wonderful hosts and we have had some really tremendous times. We feel humbled by you inviting us to your celebrations and events. Thank you all.

The year has been marked by several unique events. At first there was the Olympic torch being run through the town when over 5000 people participated in sporting and musical activities (remember the Tai Chi attempt at a the Guinness Record event). The Queen's Jubilee celebrations took place in awful weather

but it did not dampen the spirits of the parties near Yellow Tor Road, Babis Farm and other areas. The Saltash Community Interest Company (CIC) has opened in 4 Fore Street with several stalls selling works of art and craft and small items, along with mobility vehicles. The Cornish Cross was erected in Elwell Woods after three years hard work from Saltash Waterfront Residents Association who resurrected the Cross project abandoned thirteen years ago.

The Town produced super events as it always does for the Regatta, Christmas lights, (this year called the Victorian Day) and, of course, the Lions Mayfair which took place on Warfelton Green. All were extremely successful. The volunteers who work so hard should be praised. You help make our Town so wonderful.

The formal opening of the Cornish Cross will take place this Friday and a Ceremony of Dedication is to be organized. In addition, the opening of the sculpture to remember the Saltash ferry is on the Waterside on June 1st.

Tesco is still arguing about how much it should pay as Section 106 money to the Town but Cornwall Council are promising a solution soon. In the same area we are promised a new footbridge over the A38. The toilets at the Waterfront continue slowly to be renovated and the completion date slips ever forwards. It must be finished before the Regatta in 6 weeks time.

The meeting to set up a committee for the Maurice Huggins room has produced some ideas for its use, however, most applicants seem to be applying for their own sole use rather than the global use of the Town. This small resource must be beneficial for the whole town. St Barnabas Hospital Friends is celebrating 100 years of our local hospital. Please support them so we may retain this vital part of our Health Service —Derriford is a long way away (especially by bus).

And the final area of concern is the bridge tolls. I am expecting the worse. Maybe, just maybe our new Cornwall Councilors will control the management profligate spending. The new Town Council needs to work closely with Cornwall Council on producing the Neighbourhood Plan and on that note,

I wish the next Mayor and Town Council good fortune and a good year.

I leave you with my thanks and Maggies for all your support

Best Wishes Martin Gee
Mayor of Saltash

LAUNCH OF CHARITY SINGLE



Senior residents (and Staff) from St Annes Care Home, Saltash who are still young at heart raised the roof at a party to mark the launch of their charity single which was in the charts on Monday 22nd April. Audrey Masztalers 86 and Brenda Hodge 79 were joined by family friend's staff and other residents to hear the song "See Yourself" for the first time since it was recorded. The Mayor of Saltash Martin Gee and his wife Maggie also had fun with the band members. Audrey and Brenda said they had a great time during rehearsals with staff it was such fun, and they looked

forward to hearing the final version. They both never thought that they would appear on a single at their age. All the money raised from the sales of the Anchor Community Band single will be donated to the charity Contact the Elderly which organises monthly tea parties for older people living alone in the community.

Drivers and Walkers Will Gain on £1.5 Million Carkeel Improvements

Drivers, walkers and cyclists will all gain from major improvements at Carkeel roundabout which will include a long sought footbridge.

This follows a visit to the site last year by the then transport minister Theresa Villiers. Mrs Villiers was invited by Sheryll Murray MP to see for herself the density of traffic on a morning and she, local councillors and the 'Observer' representative all emphasised to the minister the danger to pedestrians forced to cross continual stream of traffic.

The number of pedestrians crossing the A38 has grown as the large supermarket, on the far side from the town's residential areas, has expanded while the amount of factory units to which workers have to travel, many on foot, have grown.

The Highways Agency has included Carkeel in a further six schemes in the South West to boost economy, reduce congestion and improve safety in the third and final stage of its pinch point programme.

'The government is committed to cutting congestion and accelerating growth - that is why the Chancellor injected an extra £100 million into the Highways Agency pinch and point programme last autumn', said roads minister Stephen Hammond.

The objective of the Carkeel improvement scheme is to increase capacity to improve the operation and reduce delay at this roundabout to achieve wider benefits in supporting growth at Saltash, according to a Highways Agency news release.

The A38 is a key highway link in the south west region with major flows heading east towards Plymouth. It also

provides a key route for tourists in the summer months for travel to Cornwall in the west. Improvements here will support the objectives of the Cornwall Council core strategy, with the potential to help facilitate the delivery of a thousand jobs and 1828 homes by 2020.

Enquiries from the Town Clerk Ray Lane confirmed that a footbridge would be at the heart of the improvement project. The plans are unrelated to access plans for a Tesco supermarket projected for a site alongside the roundabout. Plans for this supermarket are on hold during negotiations over the 'planning gains' Section 106 monies that Tesco will have to pay for Saltash town improvements as a condition of their planning permission at Carkeel roundabout.

The work at Carkeel is due to commence next year at a cost of £1.5 million and be completed in 2015.

Recycling

The Town Council recently received a briefing on recycling from Cornwall Councilors. Residents are reminded to only recycle items currently accepted and pay particular attention to plastics. At present only plastic bottles (without lids - including milk bottles, fizzy drinks bottles, shampoo bottles, detergent, washing up liquid bottles and the bottles containing yoghurt drinks) can be recycled. Research is being undertaken to widen the range of items that can be collected.

More information can be found on the Cornwall Council website

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Stages One and Two Complete...

Excitement Mounts as Phase Three Gets the Go Ahead...

Residents and their families came together with management, staff and friends of Rowan House to celebrate the opening of an extension which includes a new dining room also to be used for the residential home's many social activities. Owner Mike Westmore explained, 'We are all tremendously excited as this marks the completion of phase two of our improvement plans. Stage one was the installation of en suite facilities into each resident's room. Stage two is this spacious and welcoming multi-purpose dining and social area. We are equally excited to know that we now have permission for the go-ahead for stage three – an extension to include six more comfortable en suite residents' rooms.

This will bring the home's capacity up to 27 which Mike considers, just enough, a nice friendly number with which to maintain the family atmosphere for which Rowan House has become renowned. Two of the rooms are doubles, for couples or close family members, who like to share, the others all singles. All are finely furnished, though new residents are also encouraged to bring familiar furnishings and objects with them to their new home. It is hoped that the new bedrooms will be available before Christmas – and the grand Christmas party for which Rowan House is famous.

Residents dining in the new extension will continue to enjoy the finest of chef prepared meals, cooked on the premises and also enjoyed by many local residents in their homes as 'meals on wheels', as well as at the day centre. The new dining room means that there is additional lounge area, with one spacious television lounge in the former dining room and another even more spacious with fine picture window views out down the Tamar estuary. While there always seems to be activity to keep the residents entertained, there is also an attractive spacious area for those who prefer to sit back and relax.



Domiciliary Care... Enabling You to Stay in Your Own Home

Domestic Duties! Shopping! Hot Meals! Even One to One Trips Out

As well as offering a welcoming home to its residents Rowan House provides a wide range of domiciliary care to those in their own homes in Saltash and the villages around. Sandy Ferris, the care co-ordinator is always pleased to discuss individual needs and to draw up a personal care plan which can be private, social services or health funded.

This care plan can range from short term to full time and may extend to any age group from twenty to a hundred. It ranges from young disabled to the elderly who need certain help around the house and to palliative care, helping to bring comfort during final days and to assist and support the family in this difficult time.

Once a care package has been prepared to suit individual needs one of the team of eighteen experienced carers in the community, all NVQ trained and continually undertaking ongoing training to ensure that they are at the top of their profession, will call in daily or occasionally as fits the client's needs. The care that they can offer ranges from shopping, carrying and domestic duties such as cleaning and cooking, and personal care – all that is required to enable the client to live as independently as possible in his or her own home. Carers can take clients out for respite trips in their cars, all on a one to one basis.

As an alternative to having carers cook in the clients' homes, they can also avail themselves of Rowan House's own meals on wheels service. Nourishing and tasty two course meals are personally prepared and cooked that day in Rowan House kitchens then delivered daily throughout Saltash. Many clients look forward to enjoying these meals every day, others just have a Sunday roast delivered as a special treat. The meals on wheels can be organised for anyone, short or long term, not necessarily as part of a care package.

Whether one is looking for long term daily care or perhaps short term help to give a live-in carer time off, Sandy is always available to discuss the package that personally suits any individual needs.

Entertainment and Activity Enhances Quality of Life

As residents gazed around their sumptuous new extension and at the tables groaning with celebratory food and drink, others were singing along, sometimes dancing, or just sitting back and enjoying the live music in the adjacent lounge.

Partying seems to come naturally to Rowan House residents, whose grand Christmas party is legendary, as is the grand draw with super really prizes.

There is some sort of entertainment or activity each day helping to keep minds active and enhance quality of life for each one of the twenty plus residents. This varies from live music to regular visits from a donkey! 'Wayne', a rescue donkey at Sidmouth's donkey sanctuary, is sponsored by Rowan House which received regular and well enjoyed newsletters as well as a visit from Wayne every six months – eagerly anticipated by residents and staff.

Pam and Dave Carter, who sing professionally on cruise liners, always enjoy entertaining Rowan House residents and were present at the party for the extension opening, getting some residents jiving while others preferred to sit



back and listen. The Pantomime also comes to Rowan House four times a year, while residents also enjoy trips out in their own bus 'Charlie' to country or seaside as the weather permits. Especially enjoyed are visits to the theatre or to see the Christmas lights.

More relaxing in-house activities include one to one sessions which can include such skills as painting, jig-saws or recently, making Easter bonnets. There are exercise afternoons and pamper afternoons when residents are encouraged to keep as physically fit as possible and always to take pride in looking their best.

Memory therapy is encouraged and Manager Sharon has recently purchased a variety of war memorabilia, much appreciated by the senior residents. She also purchases DVD's and Nintendo wii games – some of the seniors' grasp of modern technology would seem to rival a teenager's.



Conundrum Corner

Taking the initial letter to the one-word answers to the following nine questions can you rearrange them to make a nine-letter word?

1 Which London Theatre was created for the express purpose of staging the works of Gilbert and Sullivan? (5)

2 Buxton Blue and Sage Derby are types of which food? (6)

3 What name is given to the crescent-shaped white area at the base of a human nail? (6)

4 Which Ocean lies between the continent of Africa and Australia? (6)

5 Which Scottish city is providing a retirement home for the former Royal Yacht Britannia? (9)

6 From which country did the U.S.A. buy Florida in 1819? (5)

7 In the Beatrix Potter stories what kind of animal is Samuel Whiskers? (3)

8 Jamie Cullum is best known for his skills on which musical instrument? (5)

9 Which tree has English, White and Slippery varieties? (3)

Conundrum Answers on Page 8...

Takeaway Gains Approval

A new Pizza and Kebab takeaway for Fore Street has been recommended for approval by the Town Council. The go-ahead was given, subject to confirmation by Cornwall's planning officer, for the former shop at 46 Fore Street.

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Youth Theatre Cast Transported Audience on Flights of Fancy

An evening of theatrical magic was brought to saltash.net school hall as Page 2 Stage, a newly formed youth theatre group, transported their enchanted audience to Peter Pan's Neverland.

Their musical version of 'Peter Pan' was an ambitious production for a large newly created cast of forty-four aged from 7 to 17 and many with no previous stage experience. The fact that it came off in so spectacular a fashion is a credit to the production team, the backstage crew and above all the cast who all worked so hard to ensure a seamless performance.

From when the curtain rose through the mist of Edwardian London the choreography evidenced the hard work and dedication that the young people had put into the production. When Pan appeared to whisk the Darling children to the world of Neverland a frisson of magic carried through the audience

This was a darker Peter Pan than the traditional Christmas show. The teenagers playing the lead roles well rose to the heavier issued of motherhood, innocence, loss and jealousy



Hook & Smee

as well as distinguishing fantasy and fact. These all lie below Barrie's curious contracts of escapist adventure and the harsh reality of adulthood. The complex character of Hook is explored ('A Pirate with a Conscience') as is Wendy

torn between childhood, motherhood and her enigmatic feelings for Pan.

Yet above all it is Pan's cry of 'I'm youth, I'm Joy!' that epitomises the spirit shown by these exuberant youngsters.

'These young people are fabulous' summed up Mayor Martin Gee whom, we were pleased to note, together with Mayoress Maggie, clapped to confirm that they believed in fairies and so helped revive the dying Tinkerbell. The Mayor recalled attending Page 2 Stage's inaugural meeting last June. If this is what they can produce by way of an opening production we can only wonder at what future dramatic delights we will share with this enthusiastic but disciplined troupe.

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Programme 2

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Memory Cafe Welcomes New Members

A friendly social gathering for those whose memories are starting to fade, and for those who care for them, is promised at Saltash's own Memory Cafe.

More 'customers' would be welcomed at the regular meetings held twice monthly at Burraton Methodist Church, Liskeard Road. Those interested are invited to call Linda on 01872 277963 or just turn up at the Memory Cafe on the second or fourth Wednesday of any month between 2 and 4pm.

This forms a pleasant opportunity to meet with others in a similar situation in a relaxed social setting. One can spend time sharing

information and experiences or simply sit back for a friendly chat over tea. Staff and volunteers from the Alzheimer's Society are available to give support and information if required, especially useful for carers who join with family members or friends to attend.

'It's nice to socialise with people who have dementia. I can have a few laughs with them without worrying about my memory', one regular customer commented.

'Saltash Gems' Walk Led to Unique Chapel and Cream Tea

Do you know where there is a turnpike boundary stone or a mysterious carved face in a stone wall, where were Marble Arch or the town's notorious 'black hole'? These were among the 'Saltash Gems' discovered by over forty walkers around the town led by Observer reporter Martin Lister, as part of the St. Barnabas Hospital 125th anniversary celebrations.

First Coming Across a Cross

Early on Sunday morning following the erection of the Cornish Cross Reverend Josephine Lobb was driving up from Landrake to take the early Eucharist service in St. Nicholas church. As a mist hung low in the Tamar valley she caught her first ever glimpse of the Cornish Cross. It rose ethereally from out of the mist, the early morning sun glancing off this timeless symbol of the Christian faith and reflecting the light of a new dawn.

Standing near the altar in the ancient church where Saltash has worshipped since the 12th Century she described her coming upon the latest addition to the Saltash skyline. She told her congregation there, and at the later service, 'That cross is why we are all here'.

The year also marks fifty years of the hospital's League of Friends and it was in support of the Friends who contribute towards medical aids and comforts for patients, that the 'Saltash Gems' walk was organised as part of a year of special events.

The walk, joined by Mayor and Mayoress Martin and Maggie Gee, started from the Guildhall and went around the town centre and down to the Waterside. On the way up Culver Road walkers heard of 'Mary Newman's cottage - the fiction and the fact' before hearing the history of some of the homes and other landmarks before passing into Port View. At St. Barnabas Hospital there was a rare opportunity to enjoy the hospital's own 'gem', it's beautiful Victorian Chapel, before participating of a well-earned cream tea in the day room.

The Friends' committee are now preparing the Fete and Fun Day at the hospital on the afternoon of Saturday 13th July.

Burraton Community Players present...

"Murder Treads the Boards"

Following their recent successful production of "Ali the Barber and the 39 thieves", Burraton Community Players take to the stage again on May 18th with a murder mystery evening. "Murder treads the boards", devised by Leigh Hughes, is the Players' fifth murder mystery event and is set in the early 1960s in a slightly run-down theatre in Cornwall. It is the first night of a touring production but just before the curtain rises a body is discovered! It becomes clear that there are more than enough suspects with motives for murder but will the real killer be discovered?

As is the tradition with these murder mystery evenings the audience will be fully involved in unmasking the true villain. During the interval, the Players will be fulfilling another commitment: as has been the practice with all of their 24 pantomimes to date, the cast select local charities to benefit from the proceeds and will be presenting cheques to representatives of Storybook Dads and St Lukes Hospice

Tickets for the production at the Burraton Community Centre cost £5.00 which includes a complimentary party. Sat 18th May the Performance begins at 7.30pm.

Tell your friends & family to visit us at...
www.saltash-observer.co.uk

Ferryman's Families Sought for Memorial Unveiling

Anyone whose parent, grandparent or other family members worked on the Saltash Ferry is invited to attend as a special guest to mark 900 years of ferry crossings.

The last ferry ran in October 1961, the day before the opening of the Tamar Bridge, and there were major celebrations to mark these fifty years later in 2011. A memorial to the ferry was

planned, designed and funding raised, and this is to be publicly unveiled at 4 pm on Saturday 1st June. The memorial will figure a ferry, a ferryman, and memories and pictures featuring its nine hundred or more years of serving Saltash. Further memories of the ferry may be recorded at the unveiling from anyone who recalls using it, and recordings will be stored in Saltash Museum and on the website.

Anyone with a family ferry connection is invited to contact Lynn Marsh on 01752 844255 or email or just turn up on the day.

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Many regular Fore Street shoppers have bemoaned the loss of their specialist fruit and vegetable shop just before Easter. Local shopkeepers too have noticed the fall in footfall in that part of Saltash.

So as to ensure that a range of fruit and vegetables may be made available from a specialist local shop Michael of 'Acorns', renowned for his exclusive floral displays, is now extending his range to cover a small selection of the finest fresh fruit and vegetables. Starting with just eleven of the varieties he believes to be most in demand he will welcome requests and will aim to expand to satisfy demand. 'There have been many favourable comments already,' Michael explained. 'How far I expand into fruit and vegetable supply will depend entirely upon the support that I receive from the town's shoppers.'

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SHERYLL MURRAY MP WRITES...



I am delighted that the Secretary of State has listened to my lobbying and has at last agreed the funding of a footbridge across the A38 at Carkeel. I know that residents have been waiting for this for a very long time. This victory is of even greater significance given the present economic climate. This clearly shows that when you have a Conservative MP and a Conservative Secretary of State, you do get things done.

I have written in the past about my Private Member's Bill, the Marine Navigation Bill and am delighted that this received Royal Assent on 25 April. It is not often that a back bench MP gets a Private Bill into Law and I am not sure but this may be a first for South East Cornwall. It is of personal significance to me that my Bill was sponsored in the House of Lords by Baroness Wilcox of Plymouth who shares my personal interest in the fishing industry.

I was pleased to welcome Mr Speaker, John Bercow, to Saltash.net school at the end of April. Mr Bercow undertook a tour of the school, attended assembly and was questioned by the A level politics class.

I joined Mr Bercow on the tour with Headmistress Isobel Bryce visiting various areas including the

farm. During his speech to the assembly Mr Speaker praised the hard work Members of Parliament undertake and I was pleased that he mentioned the personal work that I do as a Member of Parliament.

It was fantastic to meet with Mr Speaker in my home constituency of South East Cornwall. Mr Speaker does a fantastic amount promoting the work of Parliament throughout the country.

I was also pleased to join Saltash Mayor Martin Gee at the opening of the new base for the Saltash Gateway Community Interest Company (CIC) in Fore Street at the site of the old gas showroom.

The shop front will host a variety of CIC based projects and on its official opening held a market where local producers could sell their products. The CIC will undertake a number of projects such as the Saltash Hopper, a community minibus acquired to serve local people.

I remember the place when it was the old gas showroom and it has been disused for around 20 years. I am pleased that this derelict shop has now been given a new lease of life through this project. I would like to thank all those from the community who have made this project the success it clearly is.

When Thatcher Spoke in Saltash

The late Dame Margaret Thatcher was a frequent visitor to Cornwall but is mainly remembered for holidaying around Constantine, on the north coast, while husband Denis played golf at Trevoze.

She was however well remembered for addressing a meeting at Shillingham Manor, Saltash in 1976 while still leader of the opposition.

St Stephens Community Hall The Vision has Faded

The 'Development Committee' regrets that they are unable to continue with endeavouring to raise funds to develop this most needed facility in the St Stephens Area.

After three years of hard work by the committee to obtain the required funds, the necessary larger donations and grants have eluded us. Consideration is being given to other ways of providing this community facility, but for the present unless a benefactor can be found within the next month the development fund will be closed.

If there is any way that you can help in this matter, please contact:- The Chairman of the Development Committee The Rev'd Canon Alan Butler The Rectory, St Stephens Road, Saltash. PL12 4AP

She was, as she emphasised to her audience who included local leaders of the National Farmers Union 'looking for promotion' as she encouraged them to do likewise.

The lady who was to be acclaimed as Britain's greatest peace time Prime Minister, if also considered by many as the most divisive, is remembered for an early showing of her prime ministerial qualities at Saltash. While evidently well informed and opinionated on the agricultural and other issues raised she was strident in speech and cut short questioners who she considered ill thought out the views they expressed.

Her political career was to see her rise upon the national and international stage, following her visit to Shillingham, before she plummeted from power and favour in 1990. Yet on a more recent visit to our area she told a 2001 election rally in Plymouth 'I'm back and you knew I was coming. On the way here I passed a cinema with a sign 'The Mummy Returns'.

Crime Figures Still Falling

Crime reported to the Police during the March - April period was down by almost a third on the same period last year. This marks a continuing trend of falling crime figures in the Saltash Police area.

There were no dwelling burglaries but two other burglaries, five assaults and one theft from a dwelling. There were two criminal damage cases including one breaking of a large plate glass window in a generally peaceful area of the town.

There was also one fraud and one blackmail offence reported.

The town now has a new PCSO, Andrew Halls, who joins the neighbourhood team having completed his training at Exeter

Speeding Through Carkeel

The 'Speedviser' used to monitor speeding through Carkeel and encourage drivers to slow through the village, has not been replaced since removed by Cornwall Council for repairs.

The Town Council has been asked to pay for a replacement and the Town's road safety committee is to consider this.

The accident blackspot at Stoketon Cross, on the A38 above the hill leading down to Notter Bridge, is targeted for safety improvements. The Highways Agency should soon be putting proposals forward for local consideration.

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Saltash Surveys the Wondrous Cross



at the glittering cross. Those still working on it kept Clare Ellison busy, serving up burgers. Her husband Joe Ellison of the Waterside Residents' Association, relaxing now, told the 'Observer', 'Many years of hard work by many people eager to achieve this icon for Saltash have finally paid off. It proved to be a faultless operation'.

He reminded us that the Elwell Woods project was continuing, though nearing completion, with wild flower seeds to be sown and picnic benches, part funded by the Duchy of Cornwall, to be erected in the attractively landscaped woods and newly re-planted old orchard. The Cornish Cross, a part of the wider Elwell Woods regeneration project, is supported by the Big Lottery Fund Community Spaces Programme, administered by

Groundwork UK. The project has also received funding and support from Cornwall Council and Saltash Town Council as well as the Duchy of Cornwall. It is hoped that up to 55,000 visitors per year, who might otherwise have sped past Saltash, will stop to admire the Cornish Cross, perhaps walk or picnic in the woods, then cross to Fore Street to discover the wealth of small, friendly and individualistic shops that the town has to offer. And, with the celebrations over and the first rays of the sun glittering on our Cornish Cross on a fine spring morning, the dreams of all of those who had striven for this monument to our Cornish culture and two millennia of Christianity brought by our Celtic ancestors, were fully realised as the cross sparkled in an April dawn.

Photographs by
Ralph Bird



continued from page 1

But finally it happened, the great event on the night of 20th / 21st April when your Observer's correspondent joined a small group by the closed slip road to the bridge on which sat two giant cranes, of a hundred tonnes and eighty tons, from Macsalvors of Truro. Expectation mounted as the low – loader bearing the cross which had taken three and a half hours for the hundred and thirty mile journey from the construction site at Newquay airport was sighted crossing the Tamar Bridge.

It had travelled via Exeter, being unable to negotiate the winding A 38 through the Glyn Valley. The truck crossed the road and reversed down the slip road. We watched as giant hoists were placed around the two and a half ton, sixty-seven foot high structure (fractionally higher than the renowned Angel of the North on Tyneside). With apparent ease the cross was raised, light glinting off it as it reached its full height and could first be fully appreciated. It was eased across and placed on the plinth awaiting it, ready for the team to apply resin required to seal it in.

Among those watching the giant cross manoeuvring into position was designer Simon Thomas. 'For me this has been a thirteen year project, a rare catch that I thought would never happen,' he told the

Saltash Observer. He paid tribute to the people who started it off and are no longer with us, especially Pip Miller and Stephanie Rees. He also thanked the professionals who had all supported it through what he described as 'an extraordinary journey from a dream-like scenario'. David Kendall, the structural engineer of Optima Projects, who specialising in composite technology with a reputation for public art had worked closely with Simon on the project. 'He wanted it as robust as possible, I wanted to retain the artistic integrity, we worked hard together and the result is a dream come true.' Simon, who was brought up in Devon, studied at the Royal College of Art in London and now lives in Polruan put his success in achieving the winning design to 'having vision and thinking outside the box'. The structure is of carbon fibre epoxy resin, using the same technique as in aviation. The constructors, Gateguard of St. Mawgan, also build full – size reproduction aircraft as seen outside RAF stations.

The design of the cross, Simon told the Observer, relates to Cornwall's cultural heritage. 'Mining has been part of Cornwall's heritage so I chose a copper colour. The cross is already green and will probably become more so, while the silvery rays on the head will in time dull down'. It took from February 2012 to January this year to construct the cross, but it was still a revelation to the designer and the construction team to see it move out of its shed into day light.

In the early hours of Sunday morning, with the cross firmly in place, your Observer correspondent joined the designer, members of the construction team, and those who had promoted the project from its inception through all its setbacks for celebratory wine and burgers, while looking back

Services to Seniors Flourish

Now celebrating twenty-five years of service to Saltash's senior citizens, Saltash and District Age Concern offers a wide variety of service now under the 'umbrella' of Age UK.

It is totally dependent upon volunteers, Councillor Peter Clements told the annual Town meeting, with no-one paid and this includes the mini-bus manager and drivers. While some small grants are received it depends on its members to fund 90% of its activities.

These activities include a disability-friendly mini-bus for shopping and other trips, with coach outings further afield. Regular social events include the Tuesday sequence dancing club, the forty members of Thursday luncheon club including entertainment and transport if needed, and the monthly social club at Burraton Community Centre with speakers, music, bingo, and again transport provided. There are also advice and information services available.

Unfortunately the popular foot clinic has had to close following the loss of the well-liked chiropodist, but the last year has remained stable as far as the many other activities are concerned. New volunteers to help with these activities are constantly being sought and new members who would enjoy these activities are always welcome.

Youth Centre Hit by Spending Cuts

A dramatic cut in services offered to the town's young people by popular youth centre K3 has followed financial assistance cuts by Cornwall Council.

Youth Project Manager Gillian Furse left the centre in April last year and has not been replaced. Cornwall Council has shifted its priorities for youth provision within the locality. Councillor Hilary Frank told the town's annual meeting, and stated that it cannot maintain the previous level of expenditure at K3.

Whereas last year it was reported that K3 was open each day from 9 am until 3 pm or 5pm, offering a cafe and range of drop in advice and information services, as well as four evening open access sessions for eleven to twenty year olds and many other facilities, this was no longer the case. The climbing wall, backed by Saltash residents and opened to much acclaim in 2011, had not been publicly open since May last year.

There was some more hopeful news, after change in circumstances meant the management committee became severely depleted, key positions on it have now been filled again by dedicated volunteers with expert backgrounds in various fields. The new management committee was now in a much stronger position and was currently drafting a partnership agreement to submit to Cornwall Council proposing how they might play an active role in supporting youth provision in Saltash.

Museum Exhibits a Well Founded Town

Saltash, like any town, could not have been founded without a ready supply of water. It is the importance of water, including domestically and as a source of food, transport, power and other vital needs that forms the theme of our Heritage Museum exhibition for 2013.

The early private and public pumps and wells contrast with our present water supply system. The exhibition shows how we have used water in our homes, including display of traditional washday with mangle, bowls and new-washed bloomers, alongside stone hot water bottles, ewers and the inevitable chamber pots.

Its estuarial setting has given Saltash a special dependence on water with mills grinding our corn, overgrown creek side quays that once served our rural farms, and the broad tidal estuaries that provided the fish, especially the shellfish, that made Saltash's 'Picklecockle Alley' a seafood lover's delight. The ancient borough's rights over the 'liberty of the River Tamar' gave a jurisdiction over waters with a wide variety of wildlife, much of it represented in the exhibition from avocets to lampreys. From the ancient holy wells to the woollen knitted bathing costume of the 1930's Saltash Heritage have

once again mounted an excellent exhibition of our fascinating watery past.

All of this is alongside a newly selected and imaginatively lit selection from the Heritage permanent collection from the town's rich history covering in particular its rubustious Tudor seafaring past and its fine civic regalia.

The museum in Lower Fore Street is currently open on Wednesdays from 2 to 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., as well as Bank Holidays and Fridays in the summer. Admission is free though contributions to this volunteer-run community museum are appreciated.

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Shelterbox Gains from Garden Opening

A terraced garden in Hillside Road was in full spring bloom when opened to visitors on an April Sunday. Those who came to enjoy Mrs Brenda Andrew's north facing terraces with their spectacular views up the Tamar Valley and beyond resulted in over £100 being collected towards 'Shelterbox'. This Cornish-based charity provides disaster relief all over the world and is currently engaged in helping Syrian refugees.

This sum is being topped up by donations to cover half the cost of a box of life-saving equipment for some such area. Mrs Andrews was delighted at the response and hopes to open her garden again as the flowering season's progress.

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Chernobyl Fireman Described a Night to Remember

When the alarm sounded for Petr Makarenko and his fellow crewmembers at 1 am on 26th April twenty-seven years ago, he could not have imagined how the fire that they sped off to would affect him, his family, and the wider community for hundreds of miles around through generations to follow. Petr, officially proclaimed a Hero of Chernobyl, described the fateful hours that followed, and the aftermath, in the Saltash Guildhall to guest of the local Link organisations that each year brings children from the Chernobyl region to stay with host families in Saltash and Plymouth.



The ten coming this summer will, as they all have, spend a month breathing clean air, eating uncontaminated food and having fun together, an experience that is proved to add at least two years to their life expectancy. Petr and the other twenty-seven firemen who fought the initial blaze in the reactor had been given no special training for the task. 'We had been told that under no circumstances could the reactor explode' he explained through his interpreter Tania

Voskovskaia. Within two days he had seen his wife and two year old son evacuated and was himself in hospital told that he had absorbed ten times the acceptable level of radiation and had just a month to live. 'That was when I realised how much I loved life', he recalled.

The crew were later told by a Soviet government official that their action had 'saved Europe' from the radioactive elements that encircled the world twice. 'Thank you for your attempts to

save our children to see a better future, make their life happier and longer and hopefully help them learn and change their country', he concluded. Petr and Tania enjoyed a traditional Cornish lunch of pasty and saffron cake while chatting to their Saltash hosts.

In conclusion Mayor Martin Gee presented Petr, who is now a railway safety officer in Minsk, with a framed print of a steam train crossing the Royal Albert Bridge.



Top Eight!

PE Technician, Dan Budd, made saltash.net proud last Sunday when he not only completed the London Marathon, but also finished in the top 8%. Dan returned to school on Monday morning showing no signs of weariness, but carrying a very big smile and with it a treasured medal. So far Dan has raised over £500 in support of St Luke's Hospice, Plymouth with monies still being received.

Dan continues to promote running by participating with a handful of saltash.net students in the Plymouth Half Marathon Schools Challenge this Sunday on the Hoe. He has been training a group of 15 students over the last few months, all of whom have now completed a run of 12 miles. The students will join together with other schools to run their final mile once the main race has set off. This mile will be one lap of the Hoe, thereby completing the Half Marathon.

Headteacher, Mrs Isobel Bryce, said, "This is a fantastic way of introducing our young people to running and improving their overall fitness and wellbeing. I would like to thank our PE Department and Dan for their time and motivation and congratulate Dan on his outstanding achievement in the London Marathon."

Coach Park by Co-op Remains

There is still a marked coach parking place in the Co-op car park despite it having proved impractical for coaches to use it. Cornwall Council has been asked to convert this back to car parking spaces but as of the April Council meeting had not yet done so. Coach parking will be provided close to the Cornish Cross to accommodate increasing visitors, it is anticipated.

Direct access between Belle Vue East car park and Fore Street cannot be made available due to private land intervening, it has been reported.

Saltash Amateur Boxing Club

Amateur Boxing in Saltash

Saltash Amateur Boxing Club (SABC) has grown from strength to strength over the past two and a half years with regular training sessions for those aged 11 upwards. Currently our youngest boxer is eleven with the oldest in their fifties. We will get you fit and coach you if you wish to compete in a ring and our boxers regularly attend shows throughout Devon and Cornwall representing the club.

We do however also have a large number of boxers who train just to get fit and learn how to defend themselves in what is one of the toughest training sessions you can undertake. We train twice weekly at the K3 Young People's Centre on Tuesday and Thursday evening from 7 - 8.30 pm. We currently have four coaches and a fitness trainer who can tailor a programme to help you achieve a goal and teach you all the basics and advanced skills of boxing.

The club actively welcomes both male and female boxers whether new to boxing or those with previous experience. Juniors start at age 11 and seniors from 18+ and as a non profit making club we charge just £1.50 for the one and a half hour session with an insurance cost of £3.50 for juniors and £5.00 for seniors per boxing season (1st October to 30 September)

We are a fully registered and insured ABA Boxing Club with all coaching and training staff holding an in date first aid certificate and CRB clearance and we have grown over the past two years and are now bringing a Third Boxing Show to Saltash - this May. The show will take place on Thursday 23 May 2012 in the Saltash Working Men's Club Function Suite with bouts commencing at 8.00 pm

Advance tickets can be obtained from Micky Northfield on 077725 65761 or in the Working Men's Club.



Conundrum Answers

Kind regards, John
word: Priceless
Piano 9 Elm Nine-letter
Edinburgh 6 Span 7 Rail 8
3 Lunula 4 Indian 5
Answers: 1 Savoy 2 Cheese

into fun

Whitsun Holiday Activities

Monday 27 - Friday 31 May 2013

East Cornwall



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Pass holders are entitled to access selected activities in this brochure at a 50% discount on the normal activity price.



Activities in Saltash

Wednesday 29th May
Art Attack

1pm - 3pm, 4-7 yrs, £4

Please bring a drink and wear old clothes. Come along and get creative using lots of recycled materials to make goodies to take away.

Thursday 30th May
Activity Afternoon

1pm - 3pm, 4-7 yrs, £4

Please bring a drink. An afternoon of activities and games guaranteed to keep your little one(s) entertained!

Friday 31st May
Wet n Wild

10am - 12 noon
All Ages, £3.50 per person

Body boards, balls, super soakers and great music make this session great fun for all ages. Please note that all children under eight years must be accompanied by an adult and under fours will still be charged the full price due to a restriction on numbers in the pool.

* Mon-Fri 6.30am-10pm

* Sat-6.30am-8pm

* Sun-7.30am-7pm



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