

SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

Your only truly "local" newspaper ...

October 2025 - Issue 398

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SATURDAY 6TH DECEMBER

DON'T MISS THE STREET MARKET FROM 13.00

THE SANTA FUN FROM FROM 14.30

OR THE MAGICAL LANTERN PARADE AT 18.00

**Saltash
Christmas
Festival
2025**

This event is hosted by the Saltash Chamber of Commerce and made possible by grants from the Town Council and Scrapstore

Saltash Rallies to Save The Core

Saltash's much-loved youth and community centre, The Core, is facing the most difficult financial challenges in its ten-year history. Rising costs and falling grant

income have left the charity fighting to keep its doors open, but the town has already begun to rally round with heartfelt offers of help.

Set up by volunteers in 2015

to fill the gap left when Saltash's purpose-built youth centre closed, The Core has become a lifeline for young people and a thriving community hub for all ages. What began as two youth

club evenings a week has grown into a centre offering everything from climbing and craft clubs to home education support and the ever-popular Grub Club.

"The Core isn't just a place for young people to hang out," said Kirstie Dickson, Chair of Trustees. "We look at the bigger picture. We support, listen and respond to the challenges our young people face, whether that's education, training, mental health or simply the need to feel safe, seen and heard."

For ten years, Kirstie and the team of staff, Trustees and other volunteers have kept The Core running through hard work, commitment and care, making sure it remains a welcoming and safe place for all.

The Core is also home to groups that bring the wider community together, including Saltash Amateur Boxing Club, Saltash Community Shed, Saltash Short Mat Bowls Club and Redeemer Church, whose Sunday gatherings regularly fill the centre with families. For these groups, The Core provides not just space but connection. It's a place to meet, learn and belong.

Today, around 400 young people are registered with The Core, building on years of support that have reached thousands over the years, including through the challenges of Covid. Along the way, the centre has

helped young people gain confidence, skills and friendships that last well beyond their teenage years. But the financial pressures of running this vital facility have become almost insurmountable. Rising utility bills and maintenance costs coupled with a downturn in grant funding have created an unprecedented financial strain.

Now, the charity is asking the community it has served for a decade to help secure its future.

News of the centre's financial struggles has already sparked a wave of kindness across the town. Residents, businesses and young people who have been Core members over the years have reached out offering donations, fundraising ideas and practical help. Saltash Community School is organising a 'non-uniform' day to raise funds, and messages of encouragement have poured in on social media, with many calling The Core "the beating heart of Saltash".

"If everyone who has ever set foot in The Core could give a little," said Kirstie, "it would make all the difference. We want to keep the lights on, not just for today's young people, but for the next generation, too."

Anyone wishing to support The Core can get in touch via its website or social media pages. Or send an email to hello@thecoresaltash.co.uk.

New CCTV Cameras Installed in Saltash to Enhance Public Safety

Saltash Town Council is pleased to confirm that new CCTV cameras were recently installed in key areas across the town, as part of a wider initiative to strengthen public safety and support local policing efforts.

The move follows detailed planning and consultation and reflects a clear commitment to fostering a safer and more secure environment for residents, businesses, and visitors. The installations are being carried out in partnership with Plymouth City Council, Cornwall Council, Devon & Cornwall Police, and Safer Saltash.

Cameras are to be fitted at identified priority locations including Old Ferry Road, Fore Street, and Burraton Cross.

This investment in modern surveillance infrastructure is a significant step forward in tackling anti-social behaviour and improving public confidence in local safety measures. The cameras will provide vital support to the police and other enforcement partners, both as a deterrent and a source of evidential footage when needed.

Mayor Cllr Rachel Bullock commented,

"This is a really positive step for Saltash. By installing these new cameras, we're helping to create a safer environment for

everyone who lives, works, and visits our town. It's about reassurance, prevention, and making sure that we're doing everything we can to support our community and our local police. We want Saltash to feel safe and welcoming, and this is part of that commitment."

All footage captured by the cameras will be managed in accordance with legal requirements and data protection regulations. The Council assures residents that the system will be operated transparently and responsibly, with public interest and accountability at its core.

The installation of the cameras marks the culmination of a community-focused project aimed at making Saltash not only safer, but more welcoming and resilient in the face of modern challenges.

CCTV in Saltash is monitored by the Plymouth CCTV Control Room. For more information about the Plymouth CCTV Control Room or to obtain CCTV footage please visit their website.

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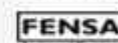
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Town Messenger

Working for the People of Saltash

News from Saltash Town Council

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Education Welfare:
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educationwelfare@cornwall.gov.uk

Housing Department
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Email: info@cornwallhousing.org.uk

Social Services Department
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Email: children@cornwall.gov.uk

Social Services Department
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adultcare@cornwall.gov.uk

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Saltash Tamar ED
Cllr Keith Johnson
cllr.keith.johnson@cornwall.gov.uk

Saltash Trematon & Landrake ED
Cllr Paul Cador
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Cornwall Councillors Cover such services as:
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Tamar Bridge

From the Mayor of Saltash

Welcome fellow Saltashians to my monthly column. September has been a busy month again for various reasons.

One of the first issues I feel compelled to raise is the ongoing disruption to Stagecoach bus services—or more accurately, the lack of them. Hopefully, by the time this article reaches you, a fully operational service will have been restored in Saltash, and this will be “old news”.

We understand how frustrating this situation has been for residents. Saltash Town Council has been actively working with our MP Anna Gelderd and Stagecoach to push for meaningful solutions. Recently, we met with Hazel Constituency Support Officer for Anna Gelderd, to discuss the matter in detail. During the meeting, we shared numerous examples from residents highlighting missed buses and, in some cases, the serious consequences that followed.

The MP Anna Gelderd, Cornwall Councillor Frank and the Town Council have written



to Stagecoach to seek clarity on the underlying issues and to explore how we can support improvements moving forward.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to share their experiences. Your input has been invaluable in helping our MP and the Council clearly express the impact these disruptions are having on the Saltash community.

Moving on to more positive things, I'd like to share a few events my husband and I had the pleasure of attending this month.

On 6th September, I was honoured to present a prize to Seb Bate, the winner of the library youth writing competition. Seb wrote a wonderfully humorous story about a fly named Fly Jr VI. That same day, we attended a Saltash United U16s football match to see the club's new

goalposts in action, partially funded by a grant from Saltash Town Council. The new lightweight posts are easily removable and can be stored away after matches, making them a practical addition to the club.

If you'd like to learn more about Saltash Town Council grants, please contact the Guildhall or visit www.saltash.gov.uk.

On Monday 8th September, we were invited by Saltash Sailing to the opening ceremony of the J24 World Championships at Mount Batten. The event was officially opened by the Lord Mayor of Plymouth, Kathy Watkin, and her consort, Dr John Mahony. While the evening remained dry, the forecast for the week ahead promised challenging conditions for the competitors out on the Sound.

The following Wednesday, Saltash Sailing Club hosted a reception for the J24 competitors. Sailors from around the world were ferried up the Tamar to the club, where they enjoyed live music and a traditional Cornish supper of pasties and scones! The weather held beautifully, the wind dropped, the rain stopped, and the moon rose over the high tide Tamar. It was a great evening, with guests admiring the stunning view of the Royal Albert Bridge, a sight we

sometimes take for granted.

We had the pleasure of speaking with teams from the US, Australia, Germany, Argentina, Ireland, Sweden, and Italy. A fabulous night was had by all.

On 13th September, we attended the opening of the Royal Naval Association Area 4 meeting at Saltash Social Club. Representatives from branches across Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, and Dorset gathered for the occasion.

On 16th September, we joined attendees at The Core's AGM, which included Core users, their parents, hirers, councillors, and other guests. It was a powerful reminder of the incredible work The Core does far beyond being just a youth club. After the meeting, we were treated to a delicious tea prepared by Tracey and her team. My husband declared it the best cottage pie he's ever eaten!

Unfortunately, the Saltash Market and Meet Your Councillor session scheduled for 20th September had to be cancelled due to heavy rain and wind. However, both events will return on 18th October. Thanks to funding awarded to Saltash Town Team, the market will now run every third Saturday of the month through to December, from 10am to 3pm, weather permitting. Thank you to everyone who continues to support the Saltash markets, your involvement is what brings energy and life to our town on market days. Without your support, the vibrant atmosphere we all enjoy simply wouldn't be possible.

On 24th September, the Saltash Town Crier auditions took place on Waterside Green. The judging panel included Torpoint Town Crier David Green, Deputy Mayor Councillor Brian Stoyel, and myself. After a demonstration

cry from David, candidate Andy Williams gave a fantastic audition, impressing residents and passers-by alike. I'm delighted to confirm that Saltash Town Council has appointed Andy as our new Town Crier, a wonderful addition to our town's future history.

Finally, September 2025 marked the 200-year anniversary of the invention of the railway. Saltash Town Council celebrated with a series of railway-themed events at Isambard House, beginning with a Victorian-themed murder mystery night featuring Brunel himself! The week continued with themed talks, a quiz, a photo competition, and an exhibition. A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended and helped make these events such a success.

*Councillor Rachel Bullock
Mayor of Saltash 2025-26*

Your Town Council & Wards

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Cllr Rachel Bullock

Deputy Mayor.
Cllr Brian Stoyel

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Facebook: [SaltashTownCouncilOfficial](https://www.facebook.com/SaltashTownCouncilOfficial)
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Meet Your Councillor

Cllr Richard Bickford



I would like to start with a thank you to all who offered their support in May, during the local elections. I still consider it a great privilege to be a Town Councillor for Saltash and look forward to working with all our councillors and staff for the next few years, for the benefit of the town and its residents.

Since May we've welcomed a number of new councillors and they have added many positive views and ideas.

This year, I've been elected Chair of the Services Committee and I'm committed to ensuring that our team delivers for Saltash both in terms of maintaining facilities but also in achieving good value. The team is quite small, but has a large remit, from buildings maintenance to grass cutting Saltash Town Council managed areas.

There's not much we can do about the confusion between the responsibilities of Cornwall Council and

Saltash Town Council, but I will say that we can't simply take on everything that Cornwall Council doesn't do as well as we might hope, that would simply be unaffordable. We need to continue to work with them to find the best solutions that benefit Saltash, in an equitable manner.

I'm currently pleased to be involved in a number of projects on the Waterside where we're looking to deliver a number of improvements, including a new play area and improvements to some of the green space near the Jubilee Pontoon. Another project is to look at what we might do with the Waterside toilets and some of the neglected area around them. I'm focused on deliverability, which is not just around timescales, but ensuring any ideas are affordable.

You won't be surprised to hear that I'm also continuing to champion the need for our

Railway Station platforms to become more accessible. The London bound platform is particularly poor. It would help if many people wrote to our MP to ask for improvement as the investment is significant and will need to come from government level. I'm pleased the Town Council back calls for an improved rail service too, whilst we have gained a few extra calls mainly due to projected delays on the A38 due to the tunnel works, these additional services could disappear in December unless they are well used. As always, please get in touch if you'd like any advice on using the train service.

Some other things that keep me busy are being part of our Town Team who are delivering Town Centre improvements, attaining 18 years as a volunteer director of CEPL12 who operate the Community Kitchen and nearby Community shop.

I am also a Trustee of two wonderful Saltash Charities, the St Barnabas Healthcare Charity and Ashtorre Rock. Please get in touch if you have any questions or suggestions for me at r.bickford@saltash.gov.uk

Our Girls Raised £800 for Penhaligon's Friends

A wonderful Summer for lots of reasons for the girls at Newell's Travel Saltash!

In August Faye got married to Alex, which was such a special day. She is looking forward to her honeymoon, later in the year to New Zealand! Please call in and see her for first hand knowledge and recommendations for this amazing destination.

Rachel visited Istanbul, which is the most incredible city, a long weekend flying from Bristol was just ideal. Such a vibrant city so much history and hustle and bustle, if you would like more information, please feel free to pop in and have a chat.

The team took place in Race Across the county on a very wet day in September! Each

Newell's Travel office started off from their own town and following the clues ended



up in the same place in Wadebridge. Saltash office didn't win, but more importantly raised £800 for our chosen charity Penhaligon's Friends, a wonderful charity that supports bereaved children in Cornwall. A huge thank you to all our amazing customers and Saltash community who kindly sponsored us, we are so grateful.

Please come and see us for your Winter Sun holidays, some fantastic deals available.

We also have some exclusive tours to China and

Japan, departing in 2026 and 2027, please call in and see us for more details. Cruises are still very popular with a selection of departures including transport from Saltash.

Don't forget our European Christmas Markets Flying from Bristol

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Pete's Point of View ...

On 13th September 2025 one hundred and ten thousand Far Right, Fascist, Racist thugs marched through London. Or so certain elements of the press and media would have you believe. Less biased outlets showed copious aerial footage of the marchers, together with footage taken at ground level.

What is very clear is that the march consisted of many thousands of ordinary people from multiple ethnic backgrounds, the young, the middle aged, those of pensionable age, many of whom were interviewed by media outlets to establish the reasons that they had joined the march. It was clear from very many responses that possibly the disaffected silent majority had begun to awake, with a desire to make their voices and their feelings known. No longer was it considered almost shameful to fly the Union Flag or the flag of the constituent nations of the United Kingdom, no longer was it politically incorrect to decry the leftish metropolitan elite who feel that they have the moral authority to educate the

populace to their own beliefs.

These were real people, pensioners that had lost their winter fuel allowance, young families that feared for the future of their children, families that were feeling the pinch due to excessive taxation, individuals who wanted to feel proud of their country, ex-service men and women who had risked their lives for their country, but now treated with disdain.

The official estimate of the number of marchers has been put at 110,000 but the footage appears to show rather more, backed up by those who either attended or witnessed the march. Perhaps that conservative estimate was calculated by a graduate of the Reeves Academy of Mathematical Miscalculation?

The march may initially have been organised by somebody who is often described as 'far right' but it was perfectly clear that the vast majority of those that joined had much more moderate views, wanting only to vent their frustration at how they interpret being ignored for too long. There is a clear and present danger in incorrectly attributing more than a hundred thousand people as being far-right, as that will only enable extremists to claim massive support which in reality is most probably not there.

Over in Downing Street, Prime Minister Keir Starmer (correct at time of going to

press) was fretting over what he described as an alarming situation. I'm sure he probably was alarmed, not truly at any perceived rise of the far-right, but alarmed at his catastrophically and rapidly declining popularity, not only amongst the general public, but his own Party as well. Also alarmed that marchers were chanting his name, but not in a particularly complimentary way.

Have we forgotten that during the 2019 General Election campaign, the Conservative Party was described as far-right by elements within the Labour Party, with Boris Johnson ultimately securing an 80-seat majority? Those on the left of UK politics continue to slate any politician described as 'populist' and possibly without any reference to a dictionary, so for those, here is one dictionary definition: 'A person, especially a politician, who strives to appeal to ordinary people who feel that their concerns are disregarded by established elite groups'. Seems to me that we are witnessing an affliction best described as Nigelphobia!

Cheer-up everybody, we will have a General Election at some point in the next three-and-three-quarter years.

Pete Samuels

Any views expressed are personal views and not that of any organisation with which Pete is associated.

Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping Us Updated

At our meeting on the 6th October much reminiscing took place due to the passing of Peter Dickerson. Pete had been a long-term member of the Chamber and although had not been able to attend for several years was well remembered by those who knew him with several anecdotes re. the antics he used to get up to.

He was a well-loved man, and the Chamber passes on its respects to the family. He was, at various stages, Secretary and Treasurer of the Chamber which roles he more than adequately dealt with. Personally, although I had known him for many years, my wife knew him even longer having worked with him at Midland Bank (now HSBC) in Fore Street. A sad loss.

The meeting started with the AGM and I was once again voted in as Chairman and Doug Bond also stayed on as Treasurer. He explained the new system for payment of annual subscription and Pete Samuels updated on how he proposed that members could make better use of the website etc.

I apologised that my annual report had not been circulated but I had had a very busy month with, in addition to my various other roles, having become a carer for my wife who had recently had a knee replacement and was sent home from hospital after only two days. I have, however, learnt many things in home management that I was unaware of previously.

Once the AGM was over, we then went on to the normal Monthly Meeting and were pleased to hear that matters were progressing well with the Christmas Festival. We have been awarded grants from the

Town Council Festival Fund and from Scrapstore for which we are very grateful. We are looking forward to a bumper festival on the 6th December.

Updates were received on the Town Council event for the new Christmas Lights switch-on and the Late-Night Shopping event on the 14th November. Also, on the work of Town Team and the recent installation of CCTV in the town by the Town Council.

At a previous meeting a question was asked about the legality of using one's phone to pay at the toll booth and I was able to give a response from Devon and Cornwall Police that such was legal providing the phone is no longer in the hand of the driver when pulling away from the toll booth.

It was noted that there was a lack of ability to purchase fresh bread in the town centre, and I undertook to do some research. I also agreed to invite the new Chief Officer for the Tamar Crossings to attend a future meeting as the Tamar Bridge is an important element in the everyday running of businesses in the town.

Saltash Old Cornwall Society

Having, from early childhood as a wartime evacuee at Merrymeet, begun writing music 'almost as soon as my alphabet', Clive Jenkins has for decades been bringing delight to thousands of music lovers in the Southwest and beyond. Saltash Old Cornwall Society members were privileged to share with him his musical memories and listen to recordings of a sample of the wide repertoire of orchestral, instrumental, choral and solo music that he has composed over his long career.

After first composing music

for public performance at a school while teaching languages, Clive went on to perform in major concert halls and on television. Most recently his music has been broadcast by the BBC Concert Orchestra.

For his talk he concentrated on locally connected music including his much loved 'Tamar-side' which was inspired by a walk at Halton Quay near St Dominic. He played recordings from this and, by contrast, the musical dialogue written for Plymouth's millennial 'Tales from the City' in which a girl from 1900 meets

a boy from 2000 in 'Sundial in the Sunset'. This contrasted with his harsh World War I centenary piece 'No Man's Land'.

His talk in particular promoted Plymouth Music Accord's work in education, Mr Jenkins having served on its committee for thirty years.

In his vote of thanks society secretary Martin Lister spoke of the 'alchemy' by which a composer brings together the divergent instruments into a unified work and he thanked Mr Jenkins for sharing with members his particular musical magic.

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A Saltash Raised Academic Wins a Prestigious Global Award

Professor Vincent Hooper who was raised and educated in Saltash - attending St Stephens Primary and Junior and Saltash Community Schools - with his BA degrees and PHD obtained at Plymouth University has been awarded a Distinguished Achievement Award in Political Economy for the Twenty-First Century the World Association

for Political Economy (WAPE) for his groundbreaking research on political risk in emerging markets.

The award, one of the most prestigious honours in the field, was conferred for his paper, “The Explanatory Power of Political Risk in Emerging Markets.” His work sheds new light on the ways political uncertainty shapes investment flows, financial stability, and economic development in countries undergoing rapid transformation.

The Distinguished Achievement Award is presented annually to a select number of scholars whose research redefines political economy for contemporary challenges. Past recipients include leading economists, political theorists, and policy innovators whose ideas have influenced governments, multilateral organisations, and academia

Vincent’s career has taken him overseas, however, he has fond reflections and memories of his Saltash schools — taking part in so many school productions, from leading roles in Pirates of Penzance and Barbican Ballad (produced by the late Mike Hasshill) at St Stephens School - to Fiddler on the Roof and Gunslinger at Saltash Community School. Vincent for a time was also part of the Saltash Venture Scout movement.

At the Community School he was a joint pioneer with his then teacher Mr Garland in the school’s satellite tracking club, where in 1985

Brunel Primary and Nursery Academy Celebrate Harvest with Generosity and Community Spirit

Brunel Primary and Nursery Academy came together in wonderful spirit this week to celebrate their annual Harvest Festival. This year, the children and families at Brunel focused their efforts on collecting donations for Saltash Foodbank, an organisation that provides vital support to local people in crisis. With a focus on tinned vegetables this year, the response from the school community was truly heartwarming. Tables quickly filled with donations as pupils proudly brought in their contributions, showing thoughtfulness and compassion for others. Staff and volunteers were blown away



by the generosity shown by families across the school.

The school was also delighted to welcome Reverend Parkman, who spoke to pupils, staff, and families about the significance of Harvest — a time to reflect on gratitude, giving, and the importance of helping those in our community.

Each class contributed to the celebration with their own unique take on Harvest, sharing songs, poems, and beautiful artwork that reflected themes of thankfulness,

kindness, and community. The school opened its doors to families, inviting all members of the Brunel community to join together in what proved to be a joyful and uplifting occasion.

Compassion and Community

Headteacher Mr Woolner spoke about the importance of Harvest and the values it instils in pupils:

“Teaching our children about compassion and community is at the heart of what we do. Their kindness and generosity this Harvest

will make an incredible difference to those in need right here in our local town. I couldn’t be prouder of how our pupils have come together to support others.”

Brunel Primary and Nursery Academy would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to every child, parent, and member of staff who contributed to this year’s collection. The wonderful range of food donated will go directly to Saltash Foodbank, helping to make a real difference to families in need within our community.

Saltash Scrapstore & Too

Awarded BBC Radio Cornwall
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Highly Commended - The Green Award

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Saltash Studios Cinema Celebrates 1,000 Tickets Sold

The new community cinema at Saltash Studios recently celebrated a fantastic milestone with the sale of their 1,000th cinema ticket. Since opening in March, the cinema has built a loyal following with an eclectic programme of films, ranging from adventure documentaries to British comedy, musical theatre and family cinema.

As the nights draw in, the cinema is preparing to light up the season with more big screen entertainment for all ages.

Get the kids ready for trick-or-treat with the 1991 classic, The Addams Family (PG) screening as a special half term matinee on Thursday 30 October, 2pm. Packed with spooky charm, gothic wit and unforgettable characters, prizes will be awarded for the best audience Halloween costumes.

Adults and older kids will love Bat Out of Hell: The Musical, Friday 31 October, 7.30pm. The cast of the West End production will bring Jim Steinman and Meat Loaf’s iconic anthems to life, including I’d Do Anything For Love, Two Out of Three Ain’t Bad, Dead Ringer for Love, and, of course, Bat Out of Hell. Expect an electrifying, high-octane night of musical theatre.

Continuing the Autumn theme on Tuesday 11 November, 7.30pm the Cinema will be showing Grow (PG). A feel-good tale of a little girl who has a special connection with plants and a community obsessed with growing giant pumpkins. With a cast squashed full of comedy talent including Nick Frost (Hot Fuzz) and Jane Horrocks (Absolutely Fabulous) this film promises both laughs and charm.

Tickets cost from £4 for children and £8 for adults and are available from www.saltashstudios.org or purchase on the door from 30 minutes before events.

Cinema Director Lindsay Endean says, “Launching this project has come with many challenges and we want to send a huge thank you to the Saltash community for their support and enthusiasm and to the BFI FAN Fund for recent funding support. Highlights from the last few months have included seeing the queue down Fore Street for The Salt Path and the joy of inviting so many excited children in for Lilo & Stitch”.

Saltash Studios Cinema is powered by volunteers, and the team is always looking for new faces to help bring film to the heart of the community. If you’d like to get involved, contact Lindsay Endean at: lindsay@saltarts.org



Essa Voices

Before it Hurts

From Free School Meals to oral health; preventive care that puts children first.

Teachers in Saltash are telling me the same story: children are coming to school hungry, tired or in pain because their families simply can't get the support they need.

That's why the new Report on Child Poverty in Cornwall matters so much. It's written by Cornwall Council's Director of Public Health and shines a light on the reality that too many families live with every day: across Cornwall, more than 21,000 children are growing up in households below the poverty line. That's around 23% of all children. Behind those numbers are parents doing their best, juggling work, childcare and rising costs.

Here in Saltash, the picture is slightly better, but still stark. The most recent Safer Saltash Town Summary states that around 14% of children in Saltash live in poverty, roughly one in seven. It's a

reminder that hardship isn't confined to big cities; it's here, too, behind front doors in our own town.

The child poverty report isn't just a bundle of grim statistics. It's a call to action, and it challenges us all to take practical steps to improve life chances for our children. As the Cabinet member with responsibility for Children, Families and Schools at Cornwall Council, I'm pleased that one of Cabinet's initial responses is to introduce auto-enrolment for Free School Meals.

Right now, nearly a quarter of Cornwall's pupils qualify for Free School Meals, but around 11% don't receive them. Auto-enrolment will close that gap. It will cost the Council around £111,000 a year to manage the systems, but in the first year alone our estimates show that it will unlock as much as £2.9 million in extra funding from central government for Cornwall's children and schools. Just as importantly, it will remove the paperwork and stigma that too often stop families from applying in the first place.



Councillor Hilary Frank
crlr.hilary.frank@cornwall.gov.uk

Hunger is only one part of the story. Last year, teachers and families were already telling us that some children in primary school had never seen a dentist, which prompted a group of us to expand oral health programmes in local schools and take Oral Health Champion training. Then, in the same week that the Child Poverty report was published, we reviewed findings from Healthwatch Cornwall on dentistry that confirmed how serious the situation is. Their study shows that only around half of Cornwall's children have seen an NHS dentist in the past year, well below the national average.

We're now looking to build on the oral health work, but only national policy can change the framework that prevents dentistry from caring better for our children. We need government to introduce child-focused dental contracts that prioritise children who have never had an NHS appointment, and to make sure that dentists are properly rewarded for prevention work. Healthy teeth shouldn't depend on geography or income.

The truth is simple: a hungry child can't concentrate, and a child in pain can't learn. But when policy focuses on prevention rather than getting lost in paperwork and barriers, it changes lives in tangible ways — a hot lunch, a dental check, a child who can smile with confidence. That's the kind of focus worth maintaining, because the best care should start before it hurts.

The Saltash Bus Services Crisis

Just as our children and young people were going back to school, I received a flurry of emails from local people in Saltash about the dreadful state of Stagecoach bus routes going through the town. You can imagine families trying to get to school on time, and parents rushing to work, but then the bus doesn't turn up. This only adds to the pressures facing families in our area.

I am incredibly disappointed that poor public transport in our area is affecting our children's education. Everyone deserves to get to work, school, or access services. In our area, where public transport is patchy, this is especially important. One of my top priorities is to improve transport. I am glad that the Government supports me with this and is putting the right legislation in place to make this possible.

So, as your MP, I wanted to get to the root of this issue and hold those responsible to account. That's why I asked you to get in touch with me about your concerns so I could tell Stagecoach what people were going through. I demanded that action needs to be taken immediately.

After that, I contacted Cornwall Council, Plymouth City Council, and Saltash Town Council to see what they could do to resolve the issue. I know that the councils have spoken with Stagecoach, and Saltash Town Council was actively speaking to local residents about their individual cases.



Going forward, the Bus Services Bill coming through Parliament will give councils more power to manage bus routes. I'll be pushing Cornwall Council to improve our services so that they turn up when they're meant to.

We're already seeing some good news on our railways, with the proper investments being delivered to fix the digital blackspot in the Treverin Tunnel. Looking to the future, GWR will come under public ownership next year, which gives us a real opportunity to fix the issues privatisation left us with.

It is also clear to me that the A38 has been a serious concern for people in South East Cornwall for years, and I've taken action on this. Delays in achieving road safety improvements are finally over, and I welcome the collaboration that has helped to get this scheme over the line.

I'd like to thank everyone who has worked on this over the years, campaigning and pushing for better, safer roads. I will keep doing the same — fighting to deliver safer, more reliable transport, and better infrastructure in South East Cornwall because I know how much this matters to local people. Please do not hesitate to get in touch if there are any issues you would like to raise.

Anna Gelderd MP

Brunel Primary's Pop-Up Toddler Group Thrives as Families Flock to Weekly Play Sessions

For the past six months, Brunel Primary and Nursery Academy has been opening its doors every Wednesday morning to local families for its free, teacher-led pop-up Toddler Group — and it's proving to be a huge hit.

Aimed at parents and carers with toddlers aged 18 months to 4 years old, the group has grown steadily in numbers since its launch, offering a wonderful opportunity for children to play, explore, and learn in the academy's incredible early years environment.

Each week, the session follows a fun new theme — from dinosaurs to the seaside — with a vast range of play-based activities both indoors and outdoors. From messy play

and storytelling to sensory exploration and creative crafts, there's something for every curious little mind. Parents and children alike enjoy the welcoming atmosphere and engaging activities that make Wednesday mornings a highlight of the week.

Katie Grinsted, Assistant Head and Early Years Lead at Brunel Primary, shared her delight at the success of the group:

"It has been incredible to welcome members of the local community into Brunel each week. The sessions provide a fantastic opportunity for children to explore, play, and develop their social skills — all while parents enjoy connecting with one another in a relaxed, supportive environment."

Parents have also praised the group for helping them feel part of the community. One local mum said:

"Since moving to the area,



the toddler group has allowed me to make connections each week with other like-minded parents. It's really helped my daughter to interact with other children and grow in confidence."

The Brunel Primary Pop-Up

Toddler Group runs every Wednesday during term time from 10:00am to 11:15am. There's no need to book, it's teacher-led, and absolutely free — making it the perfect midweek treat for toddlers and their parents alike.

Within Days Reform Have Lost Two Senior Figures

Following the resignation of Rob Parsonage as leader of the Reform UK group on Cornwall Council, Anna Gelderd, Member of Parliament for South East Cornwall, said:

"Within days, Reform has lost its two most senior figures in Cornwall. This shows a party that is unserious, unstable, and unfit for office.

"If they can't even run their own party, how could they possibly run the services that teach our children, care for our families, and keep our communities moving? Cornwall deserves better. "I know that people have long been feeling the effects of stagnant wages, unaffordable housing, and a lack of investment, fuelled by Tory-run Westminster forgetting Cornwall. Reform shows that anger alone does not build anything. It can burn brightly, but it cannot light the way forward.

"My politics is about service, not spectacle. I'll keep working every day to make sure South East Cornwall gets its fair share."

Letter to the Editor



Dear Mary,

Could you please pass on my thanks and praise for the kindness that the people of St Stephens showed me, after I was involved in an RTA.

I was driving a Bus in Spencer Gardens and collided with a parked flatbed van, which shunted into another car, pushing into another car.

I was very shaken up after the RTA, and the Kindness and compassion shown by the people of St Stephens was humbling. Several offered to make me a hot drink and were more concerned about my wellbeing than any damage sustained to the vehicles. My Faith in Humanity restored.

Roger

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Sustainable Saltash

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

We live in a digital world. Isn't that the mantra at the moment? It relieves me that the world actually remains a constant, whatever we are up to in our heads. The World is the real story as we move from one 'age' to the next. What we do affects it though, for good or ill.

There is no denying that we are choosing to perform more admin electronically. We are also choosing to entertain ourselves individually rather than collectively, through streaming platforms and curated messaging boards. What more and more of us are realising is that this isn't all falling out of the air. Every email, video, voice message, gif, like, share, comment and stream calls for storage and distribution. Vast data centres collate this information, hold onto it, and send it when we say we want it. Often between continents, in a heartbeat. This takes energy for powering and water for cooling gigantic machines.

In the last few years, AI has come onto the scene. This technology not only requires the vast repository of information that we have

already stored, but also demands that it is scoured, analysed and collated to present an answer to a given request. Recently at an international conference for my own work in healthcare, the resource needs of this emerging technology were described as 'colossal' by one speaker. Where is that supposed to come from? At every turn a new opportunity and a new set of challenges. I don't think that this technology is evil or destructive, it just is. How we approach it will be the test.

We can all choose to have these services delivered by companies who act positively for climate. There are plenty of phone networks and internet providers that do this, and also lobby for their providers to do likewise. Added up, their voices have clout. As ever, they are often cheaper or as cheap as the alternative. We have recently switched and are saving money.

There are also the individual and collective choices we make when we use these things. Personal actions add up rapidly in this arena. This is where I will choose to direct much of my attention. Isn't it time I deleted these emails? Do I really need to reply to this? Can I chat or sit calmly in this

You might think we have been quiet for several months, but we have still been actively pursuing much-needed improvement in local healthcare provision through our Action Group. Our main focus has been on ensuring local patients can get blood tests in the town, instead of having to travel to Plymouth; and on bringing underused space at St Barnabas Hospital

waiting room rather than going snow blind on YouTube? Can I find this information myself instead of asking an AI assistant to do so? Might it not be better to learn something rather than endlessly enquire?

I freely admit that some of my concern comes from what I see our current choices doing to our minds and communities. That is a societal conversation, in full swing at long last. When we work out the boundaries and the rules, once a rigorous framework of standards and accountability is in place for this new realm, we will be happier, healthier and more nuanced in our thinking. Moderation in conviction will return. But will we also have networks and services that aren't overheating our 'digital world'? I hope so. Marc Bramham

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

Voice of Saltash Patients

Making Progress Slowly?

into modern use as a flexible home for a range of additional care and support services.

Progress on these two projects has been slow, dogged mainly by the extreme difficulty of getting the various empires of the NHS to work together efficiently - for the benefit of patients who, after all, pay for the NHS through taxes, and are its customers. So, the community representatives on the Action Group (councillors and patients) have naturally been exasperated by this, and have said so forcibly. We now have some glimmers of hope.

A trial of a local blood testing service for SE Cornwall has been agreed to be established at St Barnabas, and NHS staff are at the stage of working on the booking system for tests. Port View Surgery and the Health Centre will continue to provide over 100 tests each per week, with additional demand being met here in Saltash instead of Plymouth, once staff are appointed.

The Action Group has also just heard that the first quotes for the refurbishment work on the Day Rooms at the rear of St Barnabas have been received, and we look forward to community engagement in the overall project. The interesting thing is that the government's 10-year plan extols "care closer to home", and this is already reflected enthusiastically by the NHS in Cornwall and by Derriford Hospital. Our own community hospital should be used imaginatively to complement

this. In fact, the next phase in this part of Cornwall is for an integrated "neighbourhood" system of health and social care to be put in place. The route is therefore clear for leaders at our two GP Practices and at St Barnabas Hospital to work together to secure a better resourced future for their patients. If they don't, Liskeard and Torpoint will be the beneficiaries.

A final word. We are well aware that not every community healthcare service can be provided in the town. We do have ready access to the city across the river, and we appreciate the opening of the new Urgent Treatment Centre and Fracture Clinic on the Derriford site. We also realise that the state-of-the-art Community Diagnostic Centre under construction in the centre of Plymouth will soon be a great boon for Saltash patients and for our GPs.

But let's do more of the simpler things here in Saltash, and do them more in the way that patients need them. Please do whatever you can to argue for this.

No Funding Available

Cornwall Councillor Raises Safety Alarm Over Faded Yellow Lines Council Claims No Funding Available

A Cornwall Councillor is calling for urgent action after faded yellow lines in Saltash have led to unsafe parking and rendered enforcement impossible, with Cornwall Council reportedly stating that there is no funding left to repaint them.

Cllr Keith Johnson who represents Saltash Tamar, said: "Vital yellow line markings have faded to the point of being nearly invisible in parts of Berry Park. This has allowed dangerous and obstructive parking near junctions and narrow roads, putting pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers at risk."

What's even more concerning is that civil enforcement officers are unable to issue penalties because the road markings are no longer legally enforceable. This creates a loophole where unsafe parking goes unchecked."

Cllr Johnson confirmed that when the issue was raised with

Cornwall Council officers, the response was that no funding remains in the current budget to carry out line repainting in the area.

"Public safety should never be sidelined due to a lack of basic maintenance funds. These are small-scale, preventative works that could save lives and reduce risk".

"I am calling on Cornwall Council to urgently review its priorities and allocate emergency funding to repaint the yellow lines — not just in Saltash, but across all areas facing similar risks."

Residents are being encouraged to report faded lines and any near-miss incidents to Cornwall Council to strengthen the case for immediate intervention.



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Tamar Reflections

Anniversary of Saltash Waterside Boys' Club / LIVEWIRE

Livewire Youth Project (formerly Waterside and later Saltash Boys' Club) which is an Independent Charitable Youth Organisation, stands proudly on the banks of the River Tamar, just south of the two famous Saltash bridges, linking Devon and Cornwall.

Livewire, propelled by the extraordinary Andy Rance, is a unique youth hub and a powerhouse of youth activity and continues to be the jewel in the Crown for Saltash's young people and for those who live in surrounding areas; not only hosting musical education facilities but also education, friendship, health education in preparation for adulthood, moreover, helping with prospects and future employment opportunities in

numerous spheres.

So how things have evolved over the past 80 years?

The formation of a Saltash Boys' Club was recommended to the Saltash Youth Committee, by the Police and Probation Service in January 1944; and one of its boy founder members my dear friend the late Sir Vernon Seccombe, who later became the Chair of the management committee, told me, that it was originally a club for very naughty boys (more of this later).

By February 1944 an appeal for funds was set up by the Saltash Mayor at that time Alderman J.F. Ashton, and by October of the same year an executive committee was set up and a lease taken out on the old Mission Hall, with the appointment of Mr J. H Taylor as the first full time Boys' Club leader in December 1944.

The club was an immediate success and as it evolved, accommodated activities ranging from Duke of Edinburgh's award scheme, camping, sailing, canoeing, and canoe building, rowing, football, cricket, athletics, badminton, gymnastics, handicrafts, chess, snooker and billiards, table tennis and other such games. The boys also had their own boys' committee. The boys were encouraged to give service to the community.

Two Decades later

Two decades later, the Club was such a success with ever growing membership that the

small and deteriorating Mission Hall became inadequate and not really fit for purpose anymore.

Therefore, in 1962 a new fund was set up, this time, led by the Mayor of Saltash W.V.S. Seccombe (later to become Sir Vernon Seccombe) to raise funds for a brand-new building still situated on the Saltash Waterside in the vicinity of the Mission Hall. This new and modern building would accommodate the ever-expanding membership and the necessary improved facilities.



This was a very successful community fund-raising campaign to raise a quarter of the needed building costs initially estimated at £12,000 (which eventually grew to almost £13,000) – the remaining funding partners were Government 50% and the Local Education Authority 25% - and the new Club was completed in 1965.

Grand opening

In 1965 the new building was opened by famous singer Frankie Vaughan, which caused quite a stir at the time as Frankie was the heart throb of that era (Ah! I remember that well!).

The club continued to thrive thanks to supporters, club

members, and parents; that said, there were tremendous struggles at times with lack of funding from Local Authorities and National Youth bodies to keep up appearances and the ever-increasing needs of the young people.

Those pioneers would have been so delighted and proud to see how their original Boys' Club had evolved into a facility not now for very naughty boys, but for the benefit, advancement and opportunities for all young people and genre of the 21st century.

Looking Back

The Saltash Waterside Boys' Club was founded in 1945 at the suggestion of the then vicar of St Nicholas and St Faith Church the reverend Father (later Canon) Prior who was also the voluntary probation officer for the area.

Reverend Prior was concerned at the

increasing number of young juveniles who were appearing before the courts at that time, following the end of WW2 - having got into trouble for relatively minor offences because of having nothing else to do in their leisure time. He was supported in his views by the then Chairman of the juvenile board, Squire Rashleigh of Stoketon Manor - and with the backing of the former Saltash Borough Council and other prominent personages in the Borough, the Mission of the Good Shepherd agreed to follow up a suggestion from Reverend Prior that approach be made to the Parochial Church Council of St Nicholas and St Faith Church for permission to lease the old Mission Hall for an annual fee of one shilling (1/-) the lease was signed October 1st 1945 – marking its official youth centre for Boys (the one shilling lease remained the same until the building was sold to the management committee in the 1950's).

*** This story will continue over the next couple of issues

Sue Hooper MBE

Freeman and former Mayor of Saltash

Tel: 01752 843073 Email:

suehcf@msn.com

Saltash Mourns the Passing of Elizabeth

(Liz) Turner

Saltash is deeply saddened by the passing of Elizabeth (Liz) Turner — fondly known as the *Queen of Trematon*. A well-known and much-respected community stalwart, Liz dedicated much of her life to serving Trematon and its surrounding area with generosity, warmth, and tireless enthusiasm.

Liz was a woman of Faith, and a deeply charitable person who lived at the beautiful Trematon Hall — a childhood dream fulfilled. As a young girl, she would ride her horse through the area, dreaming one day of living in the Manor House. That dream came true when her parents purchased the Grade II listed Trematon Hall, which became the heart of her life and community work.

Over the decades, Liz organised and hosted countless charitable and social events at Trematon Hall — from Dog Shows, Easter Egg Hunts, and Murder Mysteries to grand

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Fond memories of times past and reflections of wonderful events at Trematon Hall ... RIP dear Liz Mary Crawford Editor Observer

musical evenings in aid of the Sue Hooper Charitable Foundation. Her famous *Trem Fest Musical Extravaganza*s featured Cornish choirs, ballet performances, and classical singers, while her *Big Band Nights* always ended with spectacular firework displays over the Cornish sky. Inside her elegant drawing rooms, Liz hosted many of the Foundation's musical evenings, serving her equally famous suppers that guests fondly recall to this day.

Liz's mother, Iris, was the founder of the Trematon Women's Institute, which first met in the local chapel. When the chapel closed, Iris kindly offered Trematon Hall as its new home. After her mother's passing, Liz continued the tradition, hosting the Trematon WI meetings for many years with grace and good humour.

A lifelong equestrian, Liz

was an expert in horses and side-saddle riding.

She gave commentaries at major agricultural shows, including the Cornwall and Devon County Shows, and successfully ran a side-saddle business admired across the region and country wide.

Liz passed away peacefully on October 4th this year, as she approached her ninth decade, following care at Abbeyfield Care Home in Tavistock and later at a nursing home in Callington. Her passing leaves an unfillable void — but also a lasting legacy of kindness, community spirit, and cultural life in Saltash and beyond.

Liz Turner will always be remembered with great affection by all who knew, befriended, and worked alongside her. Her generosity of spirit and love for Trematon will never be forgotten.

Sue Hooper MBE

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We are Recruiting for our Delivery Team - Do you Like to Walk?

Every month over the last thirty three years (including through Covid lockdown the Saltash and District Observer has been welcomed as it drops through the letter boxes throughout the town and beyond, bringing with it its unique blend of truly local news and promotion of local businesses. This would not be possible without our loyal and well appreciated dedicated delivery team, many of whom have been with us over most of these 33 years, some for all of them.

However, some of the team need to move on especially in the Autumn when school leavers move away for further education, leaving a gap which we seek to fill. If you would like to spend a few hours each month outside enjoying healthy exercise while bringing a much welcomed and appreciated truly local newspaper to each door, there is room in the team for you. Please contact Editor Mary on details below.

To Deliver Monthly "The Saltash Observer" In the Saltash Area Call Mary Crawford on M: 07971 484872 Or email details to: maryecrawford@hotmail.com

If you are very enthusiastic & enjoy getting your daily exercise, it's healthy as well as rewarding... call me!

Just Thinking Aloud ...

Every now and again our youngest kindly drives us out from fair Esse to The Lost Gardens of Heligan, for which we have local passes. We love it there. These days, the others do some serious walking while I soon end up sitting in the sundial garden, enjoying doing not a lot bar keeping my eyes and ears open and reflecting on my lot. Most recently I found myself sitting

near a couple of chaps having a vigorous conversation about AI (which I was earwigging!) in which they seemed to believe that it heralded the end of our world as we know it. Growing weary, I leant over to tell them that I had believed that “AI” was short for Artificial Insemination, and to ask if I was in error. They were taken aback, I fear, as their reaction was to decamp smartly. Ah well...the internet is quite helpful.

Among politicians who are known hereabouts, Anna

Gelder MP - in my view - is a good egg. That tells you nothing about my politics, as I have been known to use the same epithet for folk from other parties. What I can say is that, unlike some, she clearly works her socks off for her constituents. The evidence from all sources (pro, undecided and anti) is clear on that. It is a pity, therefore, that -come the next election - her minuscule majority will sadly not be sufficient to save her, barring a currently unlikely miracle. None of the current parties - bar Farage's gang - would go for

any form of proportional representation, so that's that. We could be doomed. The up to date forecast for every ward in SE Cornwall is of a Reform UK majority.

In the meantime Saltash Town Council members have come together to put its next chapter before us. “Our Vision for Saltash” is realistic, exciting and encouraging. It talks of leading, shaping and inspiring. Its Business Plan is similarly uplifting. Do look them up. Do talk to your ward councillor. Likewise, look up Safer Cornwall online, wherein you

will find Safer Saltash, There's a lot of worthwhile stuff in the pipeline.

The trouble with scribbling this well in advance of publication date (as I exceptionally have to this time) is that the goalposts may have moved after I have pontificated on whatever is exercising me on a given date. For instance, HMG under the guidance of Sir Keir and his chief of staff may move on from my take on Labour today as lacking an overall sense of mission or direction, and HMG may re-acquire the faith and support of those it is losing/has lost. But there again, whether or not the chief of staff disappears, I wouldn't put money on Sir Keir remaining in charge if next May's local elections are less than encouraging. Successor? As a fellow Moss Side person, I am much attracted by Lucy Powell, if she overcomes Bridget Philipson in the Deputy Leader stakes.

Bob Munro

Who are Rotary and What Do They Do?

That was a question posed by a local gentleman who found Saltash Rotary Club providing Bacon Rolls and Home-Made Cakes to visitors at the Ashtorre Rock, where the Saltash Model Club were exhibiting during the first weekend in October. Our occasional catering activities raise vital funds that enable the work that we do and the projects we support.

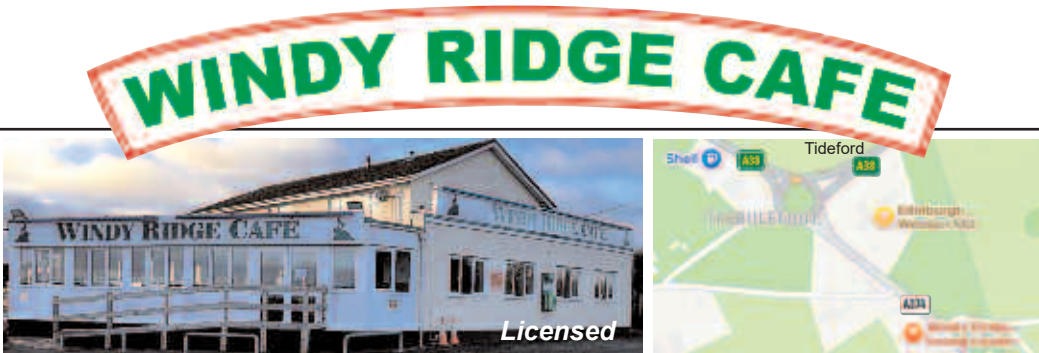
As an organisation that is non-political and non-religious, Rotary dates back an impressive 120 years and currently has around 1.4 million members worldwide. Saltash Rotary dates back to 1959 with one-time Saltash Town Clerk A. Gordon Bellingham as one of the founding members alongside Cyril Underhill.

There is to some extent an outdated impression of Rotary as consisting of retired bank managers and the like, but nowadays the local Club is made up with people from all walks of life, coming together to put something back into the community in which they live.

One of the most high-profile members of Saltash Rotary is Santa Claus, who can be found out and about, together with his sleigh, during the festive period. The Rotary flower boats can be found at various locations around the town, together with the more recently adopted boats at the railway station. Saltash Rotary have also either bought, or contributed to, several life-saving defibrillators throughout the local area.

As an international organisation, Rotary have played a major role in helping to eradicate polio and assist in poverty-stricken areas, especially when disaster strikes. Many of you will have seen news items where Shelterbox, an organisation with roots in Rotary, have provided basic shelter and essential items during a time of crisis.

Saltash Rotary are always on the lookout, both for new members and also for those with a little time on their hands, who could become friends of Rotary, assisting with various projects, as time permits. They would love to hear from you, perhaps by email to rotaryclubsaltash@gmail.com and the current Club President Mike Phillips or the Club Secretary will get in touch.



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