



Saltash and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry



Who would ever have envisaged how 2020 would pan out. Twelve months down the line and we are pleased to be invited to report back the work undertaken by the Chamber in a year framed by Coronavirus to this STC Parishioner's Meeting.

Change at Head of Chamber

Sarah Martin became the elected Chair of Saltash Chamber of Commerce in October 2020. She has been an active member of the Chamber committee involved in its town events and succeeded Peter Ryland who continues to take an active role on Chamber as Vice-Chair for the year.

Chamber Events

Saltash Chamber organises two major events in the town, namely the Christmas Festival and May Fair. Understandably, both were cancelled last year but our committee was able to set up an alternative Christmas event that reflected the government guidance around avoidance of large groups gathering. The Window Wanderland became the main Christmas attraction in the town during the festive period and was a massive success. Over 300 windows were decorated with shops and schools taking part in the festival - STC decorated the windows of the Guildhall too. It became a focal point for the Christmas period and attracted visits from the Lord Mayor of Plymouth and Mayors of Penzance and Redruth, with Chair of Redruth Chamber and the High Sheriff of Cornwall. We would like to thank all dignitaries for taking the time out of their busy schedules to visit. With school artwork on display in town centre shops, we were able to boost footfall in to the town's retail centre. I'm pleased to say that the Chamber has secured the rights to host Window Wanderland again in 2021, building on the success of the 2020 event. We will work to ensure it becomes an integral part of Christmas festivities in Saltash.

Town Teams

One positive outcome from the pandemic is the cross-organisational working enabled by Cornwall Council via Saltash Town Team. Various bodies are represented on the team including Saltash Town Councillors, Cornwall Councillors, Saltash Chamber and Community Enterprises PL12. Chamber is represented on the group by two of our members, and their input has helped generate ideas for the improvement of the retail

centre of Saltash. We very much welcome this partnership working, and remain committed to helping shape the town for future years.

Saltash Food Alliance

During the Autumn half term Chamber businesses became aware of the issues around food being provided for schoolchildren during the holiday period. Two Chamber members offered free lunches to children in the community, alongside a host of Saltash businesses doing the same. Saltash Food Alliance, an informal group of town organisations, was formed to look at a coordinated effort to ensure equality of access to shared food throughout the town. The Chamber of Commerce is playing an active role within the Food Alliance, looking at how local businesses can help tackle food poverty and minimise food waste.

Online Business Advice and Help

Chamber is investing in building its online presence and business support. Our website is being relaunched, and we continue to regularly post business advice to the Chamber Facebook page @SaltashChamber as well as having a regular column in the Saltash Observer. We would encourage Saltash businesses to follow our page and share the posts. Despite offering to host the Kickstart campaign which was open to encourage apprenticeships there was little uptake from the town. The Kickstart campaign which has now been extended, and has been a huge success for Cornwall Chamber of Commerce so any businesses needing advice, please get in touch - we have a Saltash company which is happy to offer help and advice.

Shopping Directory

Chamber members Saltash-based web design and marketing company Carbon Pixel has produced a Shopping Directory for Saltash. www.shop-saltash.co.uk is available for all Saltash-based businesses to sign up and profile their products and services. An entry on the site is free of charge by accessing the 'Submit my Business' page, and we are encouraging businesses and residents alike to use and adopt this great resource.

Car Parking

Car parking continues to be an area where Chamber can negotiate fee reductions to encourage visitors to park in the car parks and leave town centre side roads empty for residential parking. The last BOGOF before the first lockdown was a success with the initiative showing an increase in cars using the 4 sites in Saltash. During lockdowns Cornwall Council has made the car parks free of charge, and plans to restart a car parking campaign in Saltash have been put on hold until restrictions are once again eased allowing shops to reopen.

Condolences

2020 was a very sad year as the Chamber lost former members and important Saltash business figures. Honorary President of Chamber Bill Cotton sadly lost his both mother and wife in a very short period of time. Both of these ladies were well known in the town for their work at Cotton's Taxis, and their funerals were marked by town people who lined the route of the processions to show their respect. The Chamber would like to remember the legacy of both ladies in the town - they are both sorely missed. 2020 also saw the passing of former Saltash Chamber member and community volunteer Steve Whiteway. Steve passed peacefully a few days after he was able to visit the GWR train that was named in his honour. His legacy of philanthropic work in Saltash and Plymouth will continue on..

Free membership for 2021

After a difficult 12 months in 2020 and in order to help businesses and retailers in Saltash recover from the impact of the pandemic, Chamber is offering free membership for this year. As affiliate members of Cornwall Chamber of Commerce, Saltash members can access business information and support via Cornwall Chamber and participate in their events without paying a single penny. Contact secretary@saltashbusinesses.co.uk for more information.



A Shop Local campaign is in preparation to help celebrate our local independent shops and businesses in the town as we open up after lockdown.