

Mayors Column

Regatta weekend lived up to all expectations with so much going on, both on our beautiful part of the river and on shore. The Saltash Regatta is one of the oldest of its kind in the country, having started almost 200 years ago, reflecting the influence of the River Tamar on Saltash life for all that time. The Gig racing, Flashboat rowing and Dinghy racing were run impeccably by the Caradon Gig Club, Saltash Rowing Club and Saltash Sailing Club, and I have seen the praise heaped on them for running great events. It is only in the last 20 years that the 'Waterside Festival' part has really taken off, and now the onshore activities provide something for everyone.

I am lucky to have been part of the organising committee for several years, although my input has been lower this year due to other commitments, but I really do know how hard the small team work to bring this event to the town. Karen Lilley took over as Chair of the Regatta Committee from me several years ago and continues to grow and develop the event year on year. If you have an interest or desire to keep the long running event going then please get in touch through Social Media or the regatta website.

The Town Council continue to support our town events financially as well as allowing the rowers to utilise the pontoon on Jubilee Green for crew changes and berthing, but there are multiple other partners and local sponsors for all these events. Please look out for them and thank them when you can.

Back in the Guildhall the Town Council continue to plan for the town's future. The Green Open Spaces project consultation has now closed, and we await a final report. I am confident that the views and concerns of residents and businesses will be listened to. Notwithstanding all the work going on to make our town centre better, I am pleased that new businesses continue to open and show interest in opening their doors in our town, keep shopping on our doorstep and the trend will continue.

On the Waterside, the consultation on flood defences and public realm improvements has also closed for now, and the team will assess the responses. This is a long-term project and inevitably will take years to deliver. Pulling together the large amounts of funding from multiple sources takes time to get through budget processes, but rising sea levels will continue to highlight the problems on every Spring Tide, made worse depending on weather conditions.

There are more plans afoot though, we have a project to improve connectivity and to look at ferry links along the river coming along very soon, and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding, CIL allows Cornwall Council to raise funds from new developments and pass this on to community projects making a real difference. Saltash Town Council CIL Working Group have been successful in their expression of interest and are now looking at ways to improve some Pillmere play parks to make a difference to children and young people in the area, watch out for further information.

Sarah and I were very pleased to attend the 30th birthday party for GLL, the 'Not for Profit' Social Enterprise that runs Saltash Leisure Centre and many others across Cornwall and throughout the country. Since our battle a few years ago, to keep our leisure centre open, I have been very impressed with their approach and willingness

to work with the local community. Town and Cornwall Councillors continue to meet with them on a regular basis to try and ensure we never go back to that precarious position and to support and help them to provide a great local resource for the future. I thoroughly recommend you pop in to meet Ben and the team and see if there is something for you.

Councillor Richard Bickford
Mayor of Saltash 2023-24

Meet Your Councillor

Councillor Jean Dent – Tamar Ward



I have been thinking recently about how much has changed in the nearly 10 years I have been a Saltash Town Councillor. There was a short break in my service, but I couldn't stay away!

I have seen Councillors come and go, but I have always been amazed by how dedicated they have always been. All volunteers, all prepared to give their time and energy for Saltash.

Recent training on Employment Law showed us how much that has changed, planning always seems in a state of flux and new possibilities for changes within Saltash funded externally are coming on stream. It is a good time to be a Councillor.

Finally, one of my particular interests is the Town Council Library. Since the transfer from Cornwall Council to ensure its future it is now a Library Hub, not only for any book you may want to read, but also for a huge range of events and activities for all ages. Come along and see what we have for you. You can even ask one of our lovely library staff to arrange delivery of books to you if you can't make it in.