

## Mayors Column Town Council Messenger December 2023

Seasons greetings to everyone in our wonderful town.

A very big thank you to all those who took part in the Towns Remembrance commemorations a few weeks ago. It is an honour to play a small part in the activities, and the Town Council staff always ensure the service is well planned. I would like to offer a personal thank you to the team from the Saltash branch of the Royal British Legion, led by David Newman, he is ably assisted by Bill Dent and the Reverend Brian Anderson, alongside others over the two days of formal commemoration. We should not forget the loyal team of supporters who brave any weather to collect for the poppy appeal, in particular I want to mention Wendy, who is always outside the Coop. This year we joined with Wendy and others at the Borough War memorial at St Stephens Church on the morning of Remembrance Sunday in terrible weather conditions to pay our respects.

We were honoured to attend an event at Saltash Fire Station where Craig Jones was awarded a Queens Bravery Award for services whilst travelling as an off duty firefighter. Craig was awarded this as one of the last recipients by her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, but the ceremony in Saltash was led by the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall in the last few weeks. We have made numerous other visits throughout the town, thank you for all the invitations, we try and attend them all. When we can we post pictures on the Town Councils Facebook page.

Thank you to everyone who came along to the Christmas Festival organised by the Saltash Chamber of Commerce Christmas Festival Committee, there was an amazing turnout for the whole day, with so many highlights. The weather held and I am sure everyone had a great time. This wouldn't happen without a dedicated team working hard in the background, thank you to all. This year the Town Council worked with the team to enable the towns Christmas lights to be switched on during the event, and I must offer my thanks to our Service Delivery team for ensuring things went smoothly.

### Healthcare in Saltash

Last year, I was asked to chair a healthcare action group for the town. We have been meeting regularly to try and achieve significant improvements in provision. The group has included local stakeholders including Town and Cornwall Councillors, NHS professionals, including both of our GP surgeries, as well as from St Barnabas Hospital, and also key representation from those responsible for commissioning NHS provision.

The group recognises the excellent work already taking place in the town at both our GP Surgeries and at the hospital. St Barnabas Hospital may not be open for Minor Injuries or In-patient beds, but there are a range of important services offered from there and we would encourage everyone to ask for treatment in Saltash where appropriate.

The group have now agreed a vision document, that we very much hope will lead to local improvements. We would love you to have a look and let us know your views. Please Scan the QR code on this page to download the vision document.

### Mayors Charity Quiz

A date for your diary in the new year, a Quiz Night in aid of the Saltash Mayors Charities on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> January 2024. More details to follow on the Town Council Facebook page.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.  
Councillor Richard Bickford  
Mayor of Saltash 2023-24



<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ynqGBDRxI75B7A7H2bcGxQ-HG428atH2/view>

## Meet Your Councillor

### **Councillor Sarah Martin - Tamar Ward**



This is currently my second term as councillor for the town and it's a role that I really enjoy. But that has to come with a caveat. As members of the Town Council we get involved in some very interesting discussions and decision-making for the town and it's not always easy to think about the best way forward - yet that is what is expected of us. It's our duty to gain as much knowledge as we can and to determine the best outcome for the residents of our wards that we represent on the Town Council. We are your voices and our votes on committees are decisions we make on behalf of residents in our wards.

I read all too often on social media about the misgivings people have about councils in general. We're all given 'backhanders' and generally we don't carry out our roles appropriately. The grass isn't cut, the weeds aren't removed etc, etc. It's actually quite perturbing to read comments like that, especially when at the bottom of them is just misinformation. Sometimes it's not easy to recognise the difference between the two councils that govern Saltash and what they are responsible for; most people think for example, that we are paid to be councillors on the Town Council when in fact, we are volunteers.

A lot of this I think comes down to communication, and as someone who works in Comms & PR, it's really important that going forward, as a Town Council we do everything we can to enhance our reputation but also to put pay to the misinformation in circulation.

The Town Council is currently working on a Communications Strategy as part of our new business plan which many of you will have read about previously. It's important the Town Council use all means available to us to keep you abreast of what is going on. It's taxpayer's money the Town Council is responsible for after all. It's an exciting time to be on a council which has so many plans afoot waiting to be rolled out once the anticipated funding comes in! Rest assured; the Town Council will be making sure to let you know of all the good things coming your way to enhance this town we live in.

This page on Saltash Town Councils website gives you guidance on which areas the Town Council look after, and which ones are the responsibility of Cornwall Council: <https://www.saltash.gov.uk/who-does-what.php>. If you don't like to go online, our Service Delivery Team are a really friendly bunch and will answer any questions you may have as you're out and about - or just ask at the Guildhall or one of your councillors in our regular Meet Your Councillor sessions on Fore Street.