

Town Traders Meeting Notes – 13 April 2026

Meeting:	Town Traders Meeting
Date and Time:	Monday 13 April 2026 - 5.30 pm

Present:	Title/Representing:
P Ryland	Chamber of Commerce/Chairman of Saltash Town Team
S Burrows	Town Clerk
M Richardson	Consultant
R Bickford	CEPL12
B Samuels	Saltash Town Council
J Suter	Saltash Town Council
J Peggs	Saltash Town Council
S Gillies	Saltash Town Council
S Martin	Saltash Town Council
B Stoyel	Saltash Town Council
E Lowton-Smith	Planning and General Administrator
H Frank	Cornwall Council
K Johnson	Cornwall Council
P Cador	Cornwall Council
C Bailey	CEPL12
A Marks	CEPL12
A Monk	Diverse Events
N Webb	Nicky's Glow Beads & Boutique
A Webb	Nicky's Glow Beads & Boutique
S Brain	The New Hearing Centre

B Moore	The New Hearing Centre
D Bond	Saphira Jewellers
M Chessell	The Bookshelf & Tearooms
K Chessell	The Bookshelf & Tearooms
N Harvey	Vice Commodore – Saltash Sailing Club
M Fox	Business Ash Tree Saltash CIC
S Baggs	Creative Explorers Workshop
E Ball	Bolla Coffy
L Endean	Salt Arts CIC & Saltash Studio
M Finch	Saltash Age Concern
J Crosley	Saltash Social Club
L Edwards	Saltash Social Club
H Pollard	St Lukes Hospice
R Water	Scrapstore
S Boyd	Banking Hub

Peter Ryland, Chairman of Saltash Town Team and Saltash Chamber of Commerce, welcomed attendees and outlined the purpose of the meeting. Peter explained that the gathering was arranged to discuss the future of Saltash town centre and explore ways to strengthen the local business environment.

Peter reminded attendees of the survey conducted late last year by Mel Richardson on behalf of the Town Team, which examined the level of interest in establishing a Business Improvement District (BID) within the central shopping area.

Peter highlighted the importance of hearing directly from traders about what would help increase footfall and support local businesses. He outlined the Town Teams recent achievements, including securing grants that funded the Saturday Markets, new seating and planters on Fore Street, and improved signage. Remaining grants must be used within the next year, and with future grants becoming scarce, new ways of funding improvements will be needed.

He encouraged traders to contribute time, expertise or financial support to help create a modern, welcoming town centre for current residents, the new residents from Treledan

and visitors. A positive outlook for the future of the town centre was emphasised, along with the importance of continued involvement from local traders in the next phase of improvements.

Sinead Burrows, Town Clerk of Saltash Town Council, provided an overview of the role of the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, explaining that the position ensures the Town Council operates legally, efficiently and in the best interests of residents, while supporting councillors in delivering their decisions.

It was noted that the Town Council is funded primarily through the precept, which is collected by Cornwall Council as part of Council Tax. It receives no income from business rates, making alternative funding essential for delivering projects that benefit the town, with little or no impact on the precept.

Sinead's attendance at the meeting was in an advisory capacity, working alongside the Town Team, who collaborate closely with the Town Council. Attendees were encouraged to review the display boards and provide feedback.

Sinead provided a brief overview of some of the projects that have been delivered and how they have been funded.

Overview of Projects and Funding

Transport Trial Day

This was funded through Community Levelling Up Funding (CLUP). On the day, a variety of transport options were available, including the tuk tuk, Red Bus, and ferry. The event was very successful, and one of the key outcomes is that the Town Council now works in partnership with Plymouth Boat Trips to provide a seasonal Waterlink Ferry. The ferry moors on the Jubilee Pontoon and offers improved access to places such as the Royal William Yard and the Barbican. Connection to Mount Edgcumbe can be included via the Cremyll Ferry.

Markets

The markets were funded through the Town Regeneration and Investment Programme (TRIP). We have now completed a 12-month programme of markets. While the winter period was less successful—largely due to weather conditions—the Town Team remains confident that farmers' markets are what people want to see in Saltash. A subgroup is currently exploring how the markets can be made sustainable going forward.

Town Centre Public Realm Improvements

This includes planters, signage, and additional seating in Fore Street and was also funded through TRIP. The Town Council adopted this work from the Town Team, and it now forms part of our ongoing maintenance programme.

Christmas and Festoon Lighting

These are funded through the Town Council precept. Each year, the Town Council budgets to provide festoon lighting in both the town centre and the Waterside. In recent years, the decision was made to switch on festoon lighting in the evenings to make the areas feel more welcoming, support town activity, and reduce darker patches.

In 2025, the Town Council agreed to allocate £90,000 over three years to improve Christmas lighting across the town. I am not aware of any negative feedback, and many people commented on how fantastic the lights looked. However, it is important to be clear that this came at a significant cost and was funded through Council Tax.

Further Initiatives

Town Leaflet / Visitor Guide

This was funded through Section 106 monies from the Waitrose development. The result is a modern, engaging visitor leaflet that feels fun and inviting—something people actually want to read. It is being distributed beyond Saltash to encourage people to visit our town, and there are copies available for you to take this evening. The next step is to bring the visitor guide to life within the town itself.

Annual events

The May Fair and the Regatta

These events are funded through the Town Council's grants budget, alongside other income such as sponsorship and crowdfunding. They rely heavily on volunteers, and at present, volunteer numbers are very low. This raises real concerns about what these events may look like in the future unless more people come forward to help.

It was noted that recent projects and events in town and at the Waterside are hoped to have been beneficial and may have positively supported local businesses. A comment from the BID survey, 'If it isn't broken, don't fix it' was shared as a reminder that while the current model has worked in the past, it now feels financially and voluntarily vulnerable, and requires careful consideration going forwards. It was explained that funding opportunities are becoming fewer, funding criteria more challenging and the Town Councils resources and budgets stretched.

Mel Richardson provided an overview of the early feasibility study commissioned by Saltash Town Council and Town Team to explore whether a Business Improvement District (BID) could be viable for Saltash. The work was funded through the final allocated of Shared prosperity Funds. Mel provided an outline of what a BID is, explaining it as a business led and business funded model aimed at improving a defined commercial area, with projects covering marketing, events, public realm improvements, safety and business support. It was noted that a BID would apply to public and voluntary sector premises as well as private businesses and would only proceed following a successful ballot.

Mel discussed the Saltash Feasibility scope, engagement results and key findings.

Scope:

- Proposed boundary included the town centre, Leisure Centre and Waterside.
- 213 businesses/organisations had the opportunity to take part.
- The aim was to assess financial viability, project priorities and business appetite.

Engagement Results:

- Businesses/organisations were engaged with in person, by telephone and email.
- 49 survey responses were received (23% response rate).
- There was an additional engagement with 78 businesses.
- 60% engagement overall.

Key Findings:

Financial Viability

- We could generate around £42,000 on a 2.5% levy.
- Potential adjustment to the boundary, included the Waterside, may affect income.

Project Priorities

- Increase footfall.
- Marketing and events to compete with Plymouth.
- Address anti-social behaviour.
- Improve vibrancy and markets.
- Enhance shopfronts/signage and public realm.
- Improve parking and transport to the Waterside.
- More effective and cohesive platform for businesses to work in collaboration and be heard.

Business appetite

- Mixed response, with just over half interested in progressing.
- Cost being the main concern.
- Majority, more than two thirds would pay less than £200 per annum.

- 37 of the 213 businesses would pay half of the income.
- Uncertainty on ROI.

Mel concluded that the BID feasibility work highlighted both opportunities and uncertainties, and invited traders to share their views on whether a BID or alternative approaches would best support Saltash.

Comments and Questions

- A question was raised about the ongoing shortage of volunteers and what steps had been taken so far to recruit more support. It was noted that major town festivals rely heavily on volunteers, with only partial funding from the Town Council, and that efforts to attract additional help, such as public meetings, social media posts have had a limited response. Concerns were expressed that many community groups, including youth organisations such as Scouts and Guides, are also struggling for volunteers. Suggestions included exploring ways to encourage wider community involvement and consider a shared volunteer database to support local events and groups.
- A question was raised about how the role of the BID would differ from existing arrangements and whether there would be overlap with current Town Council responsibilities. It was explained that a BID operates as a not for profit company led and funded by businesses, with its own project delivery, while public bodies such as the town council can be represented. Examples from Newquay and Falmouth were provided, advising that strong communication and working relationships are key to ensuring there is not an overlap. A BID would bring additional resources, ideas and support to the work already carried out by the Town Team and the Town Council. It was noted that if a BID were established, the Town Team would no longer be required, while the Chamber of Commerce would continue to represent the PL12 area. Clarification was given that the Town Councils Development and Engagement Manager role is separate to the BID and is focused on securing funding for the Council.
- A trader shared concerns about declining footfall in Saltash, noting that despite positive elements such as new seating, the town faces challenges attracting visitors, particularly as many people pass through on their way to other destinations. It was highlighted that some shopfronts and current retail mix may not appeal to tourists or residents, and that several businesses may be struggling. The trader reported a noticeable reduction in customer transactions and suggested this may reflect wider pressures on the high street, including the shift to online services. Concerns were raised about negative online comments from residents, which may discourage engagement and effect local business

activity in Saltash.

- In response to concerns about declining footfall, it was noted that the Visit Saltash website continues to attract 2000-3000 visits, indicating ongoing interest in the town. It was noted that Saltash still needs to persuade nearby residents to choose the town over other destinations such as Totnes, or Tavistock. Further discussion highlighted the changing nature of face to face retail and markets, with a shift towards online shopping and the need for the town centre to offer something distinctive to attract visitors. It was suggested that creating a stronger atmosphere and clearer sense of what the town offers could help support local businesses.
- A point was raised about the need for greater diversity in the Town's business offering, with concerns that high rent makes it difficult for small businesses to establish themselves. It was suggested that increased landlord involvement is essential. It was noted that with more diverse businesses, there would be a greater capacity to contribute to wider town projects, events and volunteer efforts. A need for stronger engagement from landlords was encouraged.
- A trader from an established charity shop noted that their store continues to experience good trade, demonstrating that people do come to Saltash. However, they felt the town is missing opportunities to better promote what it offers. They suggested that social media such as Facebook and Instagram could make a significant difference. Concerns were raised that visitors struggle to identify what Saltash has to offer and noted that residents have limited time available due to short parking periods. Comments were made that the improvements such as planters and seasonal events enhanced the town, but more could be done to actively encourage people to shop locally and showcase the town.
- It was noted that Saltash has a long tradition of working collaboratively as a community, with strong relationships among local traders and organisations. The comments and concerns raised will be taken forward, with Town Team reviewing all feedback at its next meeting to consider the next steps.
- Comments were made recognising both challenges and strengths of the town. It was noted that general footfall has declined, but events such as the Christmas light switch on helped the town feel vibrant and busy. Suggestions included making better use of good weather, exploring early evening activities/events and considering the free parking after 4pm to encourage people to stay longer. Events at Longstone park and Victoria Gardens were suggested. Collaboration between businesses such as cross promotion between shops were mentioned. Further

comments supported the value of early evening openings noting the success of the Christmas Light switch on which was well attended.

- A concern was raised about access to cash during events, with reports that the two ATMs run out of cash at busy times. The importance of ensuring reliable cash access was noted.
- The Town Clerk noted that several ideas raised were very positive, but would require promotion, volunteers, coordination and funding to deliver. Peter Ryland highlighted that organising events, including road closures involved significant cost and resource. It was highlighted that a new modern Visit Saltash leaflet has recently been published to promote Saltash, the town and local walking trails. A trader suggested that pleasant weather and a welcoming atmosphere could encourage more people to volunteer, and suggested small activities, music or workshops to create a regular early evening offer. Free parking from 4pm was identified as a potential opportunity to support this. A suggestion was made to engage local schools and young people, who may have digital skills and could contribute through youth projects, helping both with promotion and community involvement. It was agreed that this could be something Town Team could look into further. Cllr Peggs mentioned the Town Councils youth funding of £150,000.
- Comments were made about the need for Saltash to develop a distinctive attraction that draws people into the town, similar to how other places use heritage or features to create interest. An example was shared of a town in Menorca that revitalised its old centre through creative painted buildings, which drew in visitors and photographers. It was suggested that Saltash could explore a similar investment in unique visual features to increase footfall, that could be widely promoted including through magazines and other media. Another example was provided of the Launceston Murals being famous in France. It was noted that many residents in the PL12 area are still unaware of what is available in Fore Street with examples given of people living a few miles away who had never visited certain stores. One trader suggested reviewing how local residents are being reached through marketing, questioning how many people from nearby housing developments visit the town centre. They emphasised the need to focus on engaging with the local community first and strengthening local economy, before looking outwards.
- A discussion took place regarding parking and the possibility of introducing one hour of free parking to support local businesses. It was raised that Callington has implemented free parking, and attempts have previously been made to secure similar arrangements in Saltash. It was clarified that the parking in Callington

was an agreement with Coop. Traders felt an hour of free parking would encourage more local residents to return to Fore Street as half hour is not sufficient for shopping and visiting cafes. Town Team has explored this in the past and agreed to revisit the issue. It was raised that cars parking for long periods on Fore Street causes congestion and creates an unwelcome impression.

- Concerns were made about the need to better attract local residents to Fore Street, as many residents bypass the town and head straight to Plymouth or other destinations. Additional concerns were expressed about competition from large retailers on the outskirts, and the impact this has on local spending patterns, including community transport taking residents to Plymouth Supermarket due to cost and choice. It was acknowledged that businesses in the town centre have differing needs, and a single approach cannot represent all organisations. A question was asked about whether the town should prioritise essential community focused shops, such as a butchers and greengrocers, or focus on attracting more unique businesses to attract different types of visitors.

Comments from the Display Boards

The Town Team has secured £60,000 in Section 106 Funding. What Improvements or projects would you like to see in the town centre?

- 1 hour free parking x 4
- Parking costs inhibit the town. Free parking would be good or longer stay for the money paid.
- ½ hour street parking, and 2 hours free parking in the car park.
- Sky does location fixed advertising to promote the town wider.
- Open public toilets.
- Town banners on lampposts to promote events, designed like the leaflet.
- CCTV.
- Crafts – Cornish Made Events. Advertise drop-off on the way down to deepest darkest Cornwall.
- Experience is important. Retail is dying. Workshops, markets, events.
- Get landlords to contribute and be more involved.
- Need different shops in Saltash.
- Carkeel Roundabout more attractive to visitors passing by and going into Cornwall.
- Provide opportunities for small (Van) based businesses on the waterfront.
- Indoor market – possible use of the Guildhall.
- Town Team to do their own PR promotions alongside local businesses.

- Stop giving shops to hairdresser's male and female.
- We get 2000-3000 visitors each month to visitsaltash.co.uk website. Lots of people interested in what happens here.
- Promote Saltash on the A38. Too often people are through the tunnel and gone.
- The older demographic is catered for. Footfall is down from them as they are dying. What do the younger audience want?
- Evening entertainment, how does it help the business in Saltash?
- People want food, drink, entertainment – events.
- The demographic of those in the room already visit. Market to those who don't.
- Marketing to others to come to Saltash is great. What do they see or do once here? Not much.

A recent feasibility study has identified the need for a town square. How do you feel about creating a town square for regular events, markets and community activities outside Superdrug? Are there other locations in town you think might be more suitable?

- There is no where for a town square. It would have to be created.