



## REPORT TO TOWN COUNCIL

**27.06.23**

The Saltash Community have been making the most of the hot weather with trips to the park, beach and the Waterside, it's been great to see families spending time together and making the most of the sunshine. Unfortunately this also means that the number of customers visiting our Community Shop and Kitchen have been reduced – despite that, we continue to be there as usual for those that need us.

Earlier this year our Shop and Hub Director made the decision to step down from her post in order to concentrate on her other role, that of Community Liaison Director, this is a new role and one that clearly demonstrates our commitment to working with the local community in order to further develop our links with other organisations. Our aim is always to complement rather than compete with other local groups. We are delighted that our Lead Volunteer, Lisa Hamley, together with the support of other volunteers, has taken over managing No 4, she is doing a great job! Thanks to a successful marketing campaign by our Marketing Director, Melanie Cowie, we have made contact with a number of local craftspeople who are keen to use our facility to promote their goods, please pop in to have a look at the new selection we have on offer.

Our position at the bottom of Fore Street means that, despite every best effort, many people in Saltash are still unaware of our existence. We recently conducted a short survey with visitors to No 4 to try to gain some understanding as to how we are perceived and how we can attract more visitors. Many visitors thought we were a charity shop, but the majority were unaware of our purpose and ethos. As a result we are making some simple changes to No 4 with the aim of making it more user friendly, this includes rearranging the shelves and making more space for people to browse. We are also using No 8 to show off our produce and using social media to increase awareness of everything we have to offer.

No 4 is also our 'hub' that provides help and information about the local community, we're an unofficial tourist information centre for Saltash and promote other activities in the town alongside our own trips and activities. We have a number of regular customers who pop in for a chat and to find out what's going on.

We are delighted that the amount of food we receive from local shops has seen an increase over the last few weeks, our mission is to only use food destined for landfill and so our offerings can only reflect what we receive. With the increased variety, customers to our fridge and larder are able to have a wider choice. We regularly have 600 to 700 visitors a month, including many families who rely on this facility to supplement their food shopping. With the continued increase of people living in food poverty, this is a resource much needed in Saltash.

Over time we have developed strong links with the 'Gleaning Cornwall Network,' this is a network of volunteer gleaners (harvesters) and drivers who salvage produce that would otherwise be left to rot in fields for a number of reasons; sometimes it is uneconomic to harvest all the fruit and vegetables, there may be a glut, the market might change and some are just not up to supermarket standards being wonky, too big or too small. The team of volunteers harvest this produce and distribute it to local community groups, including our own Community Kitchen and Fridge. We have benefitted from tiny cauliflowers, wonky carrots and much, much more. All this

produce is perfectly edible and so we use a proportion to cook hearty meals in No 8 and to distribute via the fridge.

Whilst we are here to support the PL12 community, we also appreciate how much support we receive in return. This year we are thrilled to be the recipient of the Mayor's Charity and the Co-op membership scheme. We are also supported in other ways, one of our valued DV members recently passed away, his widow donated the proceeds from his funeral collection to our Veterans group in his memory, Ashetorre has a collection tin for our DV group and one regular to the kitchen often gives us vouchers to spend at Martin Dean Butchers.

Our ovens, donated when No 8 opened, have long been inefficient and costly to run so we were delighted when HBH Woolacott gave us a generous deduction which enabled us to purchase new ovens that are now working well.

All these tokens of thanks mean a lot to us and motivate us to continue with our work.

Carol Emmets, our amazing DV Lead Volunteer, has been out of action for some weeks with a knee injury, she has just returned home after having had a knee operation so we hope she will be back to her boisterous self before too much longer. As usual our team of volunteers stepped up to make sure that all our groups could continue to run as usual.

Earlier this month our Singing Group was visited by a representative from the Alzheimer's Society. She is helping to run a programme called Time for Dementia which is designed to educate undergraduate healthcare professionals to improve their knowledge, attitude and empathy towards people with dementia and their carers. Plymouth University has joined the programme and she is looking for families to work with them to give students first hand experience of dementia. As always we are happy to support and promote such initiatives as they can only help to increase awareness of the impact of living with dementia.

Behind the scenes we are putting in a lot of time and energy to considering the way we communicate with each other, both formally and informally. Our volunteer base continues to grow and we need to make sure that we keep everyone 'in the loop!' (A tricky task!) We are planning a number of social events where volunteers from different enterprises can meet up, get to know each other and share ideas. As a directorate we are also looking at different ways of becoming more efficient and utilising the limited time we have for Board Meetings effectively. Together we are making progress.

As we approach the summer holidays all our enterprises will continue to provide the service that everyone has come to expect, come rain, shine or even extreme heat, our volunteers continue to turn up with a cheery smile and a determination to do a good job. Sunday 2nd July is the third National Thank You Day, a chance to say thank you for everyone and everything that makes our communities great places to live in and get connected with the people they live alongside all year round.

Whilst this is a fabulous initiative, we say thank you every day to all our volunteers who give so much to our community. Maybe this is an opportunity for the local community to say thank you too?

*For more information about any of our activities please check out our facebook and Instagram pages, our website or pop into No 4 or 8 to find out more.*

**'Together we can, together we do.'**  
**War-barth 'gan gallos War-barth 'gan gwul**

Jo Grail  
Chair CEPL12