



16th Jan 2023

Tamar Toll Action Group

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to you to seek your help and support in furthering the interests of **The Tamar Toll Action Group (TTAG)** which is supported by local people and businesses, and has the collective aim of **abolishing ALL TOLLS** currently imposed on traffic using the Tamar crossings.

The Tamar Bridge is part of the A38 arterial Trunk Road, a nationally important route and a vital strategic link in the South West. There is no practical alternative to entering Cornwall from the Plymouth area or vice versa. We believe that **it is fundamentally wrong that its upkeep and maintenance is funded by local councils imposing a toll; a toll that places an unfair financial burden on local people and businesses on both sides of the river.**

Along with the above toll, the toll booths create a bottleneck that can be hazardous and causes **unnecessary delays**. The queuing also contributes to **pollution**, and both are **additionally detrimental to local businesses and residents**.

You will be aware that **the Tamar Bridge is 'linked' to the Torpoint Ferries via the Tamar Bridge Act** and that **both crossings are owned by Cornwall Council and Plymouth City Council and operated via the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee (TBTFJC)**. Whilst this coalition was instrumental in the building of the bridge over 60 years ago, we believe that the two councils should not be forced to meet this cost indefinitely, especially in view of the fact that other crossings in the UK are now Governmentally funded, such as the Severn Bridge.

You may also be aware that **Tamar bridge users are significantly subsidising Torpoint ferry users each and every time they cross the bridge**. This is due to the TBTFJC failing to establish an alternative and more appropriate funding model for the ferry. Though this is clearly unfair to the residents and businesses of Saltash and surrounds, **we would like to emphasise that our group's aim is to abolish the tolls on both crossings**.

Recent increases in tolls have brought this long-standing issue to a head. From January 2023, the toll to cross the Tamar Bridge will be the most expensive crossing of its type in the country. This has come at a time of unprecedented economic downturn. The financial impact **on local people** is increasingly affecting the lives of individuals and businesses across the South West, and the TTAG's position is that:

- **The toll places an unfair additional financial burden on locals – especially to those who have to use the crossings daily to attend work, hospital, school etc.**
- **It impedes business development.**
- **It disadvantages residents on the Cornwall side who are charged additional delivery costs.**
- **It deters visitors and tourists to the area, reducing the benefit of their custom.**
- **Collection of the toll creates delays, inconvenience and an increase in pollution.**

The TTAG's aim is to ensure that **this 'unfair financial burden on local people' gets the publicity it needs** until the crossings are centrally funded. We will also lobby all parties of influence to assist our goals. Our group was incepted only a few months ago and **our numbers already exceed 2000. We continue to grow as others learn of our existence and what we are trying to achieve.**

As one of our Councillors representing the people of Cornwall, TTAG are seeking your endorsement and support. We would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you to discuss how we might be able to work together to achieve this aim. We would also look to share your response with all our members.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melanie Priston". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Dr Melanie Priston, Chair
For and on behalf of The Tamar Toll Action Group

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