

**Milly Southworth**

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**From:** Trisha Hewitt <trisha.hewitt@tamarcrossings.org.uk>  
**Sent:** 10 March 2025 10:21  
**To:** Trisha Hewitt  
**Subject:** re Tamar 2050 project update and video  
**Attachments:** Next steps confirmed in delivering groundbreaking Tamar 2050 programme.docx

Good morning

Please see below and attached a copy of an update on the Tamar 2050 project which we will be adding to the TC website and social media and sending to the media later this morning. We have also produced a short video with interviews from Richard Stevens, the Joint Chairs, Les Allen and MP Luke Pollard to accompany the update and explain more about the project. Here is the link to the video

: <https://youtu.be/0-zqzmYWLbs>

Next steps confirmed in delivering groundbreaking Tamar 2050 programme

You can watch a short film about the Tamar 2050 programme here <https://youtu.be/0-zqzmYWLbs>

Last year saw the launch of Tamar 2050 - a groundbreaking programme aimed at securing the long-term future of the crossings by developing a new way forward for funding and operating the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry. An independent chair has now been appointed to take the programme forward to the next stage.

Richard Stevens MBE, Managing Director of Go Southwest, one of the largest bus operators in the region which includes Plymouth Citybus and Go Cornwall bus companies, took up his role as chair of a new Stakeholder Panel in December.

A very proud “Westcountry boy”, whose first job was as a bus driver in Penzance at the age of 20, Richard has worked in transport at local, regional and national level over the past 36 years. He also has extensive experience in the business, retail, leisure and economy sectors, having been Chair of the Plymouth Chamber of Commerce for over 10 years.

Other roles have included Chair of the Plymouth Area's Business Council, Chair of Plymouth's Growth Board, and Chair of Destination, Plymouth. He is currently a Director of the National Marine Park and Chair of City College, Plymouth.

Richard is very clear about the importance of the crossings to the economic growth of Cornwall and Devon as well as to the day to day lives of communities on both sides of the river.

Designed by members of the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry Joint Committee in partnership with Plymouth and Cornwall Councils, the aim of the Tamar 2050 programme is to create a sustainable future for the two crossings.

“The Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry are vital for the people and communities who rely on them to get to work, school, and access health, leisure and other services” said Joint Chairs Cornwall Councillor Martin Worth and Plymouth City Councillor Jon Dingle. “They also play a key role in supporting the local economy”.

“To provide long term sustainability we have to ensure that the crossings are fit for purpose and that they are supported and correctly financed.

Building on the work which has already been taking place to improve efficiencies and deliver savings, the Tamar 2050 programme is focusing on nine tasks:

- Review how the crossings currently function and identify further ways of improving efficiency to provide a transformed and efficient operation
- Optimise income by exploring potential commercial and marketing opportunities on both the Bridge and the Ferries.
- Grow and invest in local talent, with more apprenticeships for local people, and celebrate and expand Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics and Medicine (STEMM) events and activities
- Use technology to improve effective toll operations, including exploring the potential for 'card only' booths
- Increase political, business and local engagement by improving connections with stakeholders.
- Explore further ways of keeping toll prices as low as possible whilst providing greater certainty for regular users of the crossings – including continuing to lobby for financial support from the Government and progressing the adoption of indexation to help avoid big jumps in toll prices. In the meantime tolling is currently the only means to finance the crossings and our 'user pays' policy, will be focused to ensure the crossings remain one of the cheapest tolled crossings in the country.
- Investigate opportunities for introducing Open Road tolling on the bridge to improve capacity and help reduce journey times
- Investigate ways of making the ferries carbon neutral
- Improve Tamar connectivity and access by exploring opportunities for new crossings and wider transport and economic integration and sustainability, including developing stronger GWR, bus and ferry links.

Central to the success of the transformational programme is the development of the Tamar 2050 Stakeholder Panel which will bring together and give a voice to representatives of all the different groups and organisations which use or have an interest in the crossings.

This includes bridge and ferry users, cyclists and pedestrians, as well as businesses, transport providers, community organisations, local residents, schools and colleges, local councillors and MP's from both sides of the river, and key partners .

Sitting underneath the main Stakeholder Panel will be a number of sub-groups, each of which will represent a specific area of work or theme.

“We know that there are going to be some significant changes in road transport and the ways in which people move from one place to another over the next 25 years” said Stakeholder Panel Chair Richard Stevens.

”The panel has been given the task of identifying a plan to ensure that the crossings are still here for the future generations that will need to use them. This is not just about how we pay for these vital assets, it's about what do the next generation of ferries and bridge need to look like ?.

“I want to generate a healthy debate in which people are given the opportunity to not only speak but also to listen to the views of others, with everyone's opinions and suggestions given equal weight. “

A key area of work will be reviewing the efficiency and costs of the existing services and looking at ways of making them as fast, efficient and as socially friendly as possible.

“There is a real need to make progress on tolls and how much it costs to cross the Tamar “ said Plymouth Sutton and Devonport MP Luke Pollard, ”but to get the most out of the crossings we also need a clear vision for improving efficiency and cutting costs and carbon, as well as enhancing employment opportunities for local people.”

Work is currently taking place to confirm the structure and membership of the Stakeholder Panel and subgroups, with a report due to be discussed by members of the Joint Committee at their meeting in March.

“For me this is about making sure that there is a legacy for our children and grandchildren, and for the children that have not even been born yet, to make sure that they can have the facility of movement and access to great services “ said Richard Stevens.

“The crossings are vital infrastructure for our society and I think we owe it to future generations to get this right.

Ends





## Next steps confirmed in delivering groundbreaking Tamar 2050 programme

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## **Ends**

Notes to editors

Between them the Tamar Bridge and Torpoint Ferry carry around 18 million vehicles a year (16 million on the bridge and 2 million on the ferries), with the two crossings recognised as uniquely important to the economy and regional growth ambitions.

The Tamar Crossings are almost entirely funded by toll income, which is used to ensure safe operation, ongoing and proactive maintenance and considered improvement of the bridge and ferries.

