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Tamar Toll Action Group

1 message

Lee Lidstone - Treasurer, Tamar Toll Action Group <treasurer@tamartollactiongroup.org>12 October 2023 at
08:49

Dear All

Thank you to everyone who has replied to us previously.

Our membership is spread across Devon and Cornwall, including many members from South West Devon and North Cornwall. Plymouth is a hub that draws people in from far afield in Cornwall and though definitive evidence of this is difficult to source from the Tamar Crossings, we believe that the tolls disproportionately affect people resident on the Cornish side of the crossings far more than the Devon side. Many of those resident in Cornwall are reliant on them as vital/critical transport links for work, healthcare, leisure and other reasons. This is unlike those resident on the East side of the crossings who have immediate access to all of those in Plymouth without a toll. Thus, our belief is that the lion's share of the annual operating revenue (just under £15 million in the twelve months to July 2023, which equates to nearly £41,000 per day taken out of the local economy) is raised from residents and businesses on the West side of the crossings. The toll itself has a significant cumulative impact and cannot be disregarded as a trivial matter of "only £1.30 / £2.60" (as Luke Pollard expressed to us when we met with him earlier this year) as that presupposes that people only have to pay it occasionally. The truth is that many cross daily, some people multiple times per day. We have a haulage business local to me who regularly spend between £6,000 and £7,000 per month. A figure that does not have to be found by their competitors based East of the crossings. Some have made the argument that residents chose to live this side of the bridge and could move if it's affecting them that badly. This is over simplistic and takes no account of family roots or longevity of residence in Cornwall.

When funded from such a small cross section of local people and businesses, the financial burden is very substantial. However, if it were to be funded centrally (as now happens in every devolved nation of the UK) the cost spread across the nation would be trivial in the grand scheme of things. Even if in the interim pending that change, the government were to provide financial support by way of similar subsidies such as are provided to residents either side of the Dartford crossing and the Silver Gateway Bridge on Merseyside (areas that are both more affluent than here) the cost to the public purse would be a very small burden on general taxation; quite the opposite of the financial load it presents to people here currently when having to be funded locally. We feel that with Mr Sunak's cancellation of HS2 and the funding that releases, his stated commitment to "improving East / West transport links across the nation" and "funding to be taken from the Euston site and given to the rest of the country" there exists an opportunity for this Conservative government to win hearts and minds across the Southwest and right the injustice of Churchill and Eden's 1950's Conservative governments when they declined to build the Tamar Bridge centrally; instead leaving the communities of Cornwall and Plymouth with a now 62 year burden of every increasing costs and debts.

I hope the above illustrates why we need the support of every parish, town and city in Cornwall to raise this issue so that changes can be made.

The consultation document issued by Tamar Crossings is now out and we are holding a public meeting to discuss its contents. Please could I ask you to share the poster on your websites so that as many residents of Cornwall as possible have a chance to attend.

Thank you

Lee Lidstone
Treasurer
[Tamar Toll Action Group](#)



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