



Hon Sheryll Murray MP  
The Parade  
Liskeard  
PL14 6AF

22<sup>nd</sup> February 2023  
Your Ref: ZA72429

Dear Mrs Murray

**Re: Tamar Crossing Tolls**

Thank you for your letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> February 2023.

I am encouraged by your commitment to discuss this critical issue with the Stakeholders and with the Secretary of State. I will pass that feedback on to our campaign members. As part of our efforts to assess the issue, we have put together some information that may be of use to you in doing so.

1. **Costs.** This data is based on feedback from our campaign members, both personal and business. All figures are from local Tag account holders. None of these are trivial amounts to hard pressed users who rely on these crossings for critical services. This is a study that continues as our reach extends and more companies talk to us about it.
  - a) Members of the public who cross by car irregularly, generally for leisure purposes only, face typical costs that are around £500 annually.
  - b) Members of the public who cross daily for work, also socially for leisure, face typical costs of £500 - £1000 per year. Sometimes more dependent on the frequency of their need.
  - c) Businesses can face costs running into the thousands per month. One advised us of costs of £8,000 for 2020 - 2021, £7,000 the following year. Another with larger HGVs spends between £3,000 and £5,000 per month.
  
2. **Impact.** Businesses report to us that they also suffer indirect impacts on their costs due to tolls (and increase in tolls). For example:
  - a) In order to be competitive with competition from Plymouth, they must reduce their pricing to account for the increased cost of their customers crossing the Tamar to use them.
  - b) The cost impact to residents of SE Cornwall is not only that of using the crossings, but also the cost that local businesses that they use pass on to their customers.
  - c) Businesses in S/E Cornwall must factor in staff recruitment and retention issues. More than one company has already reported to us that the increase in tolls has had an impact on their staff, or potential staff, travelling from Plymouth. Many are discouraged from accepting positions that involve them paying a crossing Toll as part of their commute.



3. **History.** Please see our attached Annex 1, it is list of former tolled crossings.
- a) The precedent for the abolition of tolls on roads and bridges was set long ago, as can be seen from the dates at Annex 1. Locally there were two Toll bridges in Plymouth (Laira Bridge and Stonehouse Bridge) and one toll road (Embankment Road). In S/E Cornwall there was an extensive network of tolled Turnpikes, including at least two Toll Bridges (Gunnislake Bridge and Callington New Bridge). It was recognised long ago that these were an impediment to trade with the burden of cost of their operation falling mostly on a small group of users. Despite the passage of time, the Tamar Crossings are no different in this regard. Toll collection on an industrial scale has meant that the local populous have funded significant infrastructure upgrades that are centrally funded elsewhere. It can be seen from the data at our attached Annex 2 who the major users of the crossings are from the data on the Tag account holders.
  - b) The A38 is a major trunk road that the Highways agency maintains at their cost save for the very short section of the Tamar bridge. Section 271 of the Highways Act already provides a method where this may be addressed, with maintenance taken over by the Highways agency.
  - c) The route the A38 now takes is not its original one. Originally the A38 Trunk Road was routed over the ferry via Torpoint. Torpoint developed as a town commensurate with this major road routing. It was not until the Bridge opened that the A38 was re-routed, but by that time Torpoint had developed in size to the point that it had become reliant on Plymouth for its critical services and in many cases, employment. Just as Saltash continues to develop today with another very large housing estate being constructed presently.
  - d) Within Plymouth and Cornwall over the last 60 years there have been many centrally funded infrastructure projects that have created the traffic flow that overloaded the Bridge. To the east, The South Brent and Ivybridge bypasses in the 70's, the Parkway in the 80's and Marsh Mills flyover in the 90's. To the West, Saltash Tunnel and Bypass, also in the 80's. It is these centrally funded upgrades that permitted traffic flow to increase to a level that the bridge and ferries needed to be upgraded. Why therefore were the Toll payers left to fund those necessary upgrades alone when the bridge needed to be widened to cope and new larger ferries constructed? As we highlighted in our last letter, similar infrastructure projects elsewhere have received central funding, yet locally we are left with another debt mountain to climb.
  - e) As can be seen at Annex 1, we have identified at least 120 former tolled crossings around the United Kingdom, though the reality is that if we were to closely study former Turnpikes, we would likely find a great deal more buried in the archives on them. For now we have limited our research to the ones that we have been able to identify and verify. Some statistics that stand out are:
    - o 28 of these former tolled crossings were over the Thames. Why was the Capital exempted from Tolled crossings so long ago whilst other communities must still tolerate them?
    - o Many of these former toll bridges began life as tolled ferries, to later be superseded by bridges that were eventually made free to use.
    - o As stated above at point 3 (a) five of them were in Plymouth and SE Cornwall.
    - o In addition to the free Woolwich car ferry over the Thames, there is also a free Passenger ferry across the Manchester Ship Canal. The history of this is interesting and, arguably, broadly comparable to why Torpoint is served by a ferry to this day



when a bridge would be more reliable and more cost effective. The ship canal ferry was established in 1885 by an act of Parliament making the Manchester Ship Canal owners responsible for providing a free ferry to replace a low bridge that had to be demolished to allow access for tall ships up the canal. One could posture that this is not dissimilar to the MOD requiring access up the Hamoaze for RN warships. Should the MOD bear some, or all, of the cost of the Torpoint ferry?

4. **Demographics:** Please see Annex 2 Showing account holder numbers by postcode, this information was sourced from the Tamar Crossings via the Joint Committee.
- a) The postcode location and numbers of account holders show that there are 22968 tag account holders in S/E Cornwall. This is 42% percent of the total number of accounts. Many of these households will have one Tag account, but more than one adult voter at elections. If based on 1.5 voters per tag account as an average, this equates to 34,452 voters (as an approximation).
  - b) There are 42,600 households in S/E Cornwall so based on these numbers, almost 54% have a Tag account. The other 46%, presumably, pay in cash when they cross. Both types of users are negatively impacted financially.

I look forward to hearing from you again with an update post your various discussions on the topic with the stakeholders and Secretary of State. Disappointingly, Cornwall Council yesterday voted 41-36 against an amendment to require them to apply to government for funding. This stance is not sustainable politically in this region.

Kind regards

Scott Slavin  
Vice Chair - Tamar Toll Action Group

Mel Priston  
Chair – Tamar Toll Action Group  
[www.tamartollactiongroup.org](http://www.tamartollactiongroup.org)

Encl:

- Annex 1: List of former tolled crossings. Note, the parent document to this contains hyperlinks to source information. Please advise if you would like this source document emailed through to your office.
- Annex 2: List of Tag Account holder numbers by Postcode

## Annex 1 to Tamar Toll Action Group Letter dated 22nd February 2023

See also the The Metropolis Toll Bridges Act 1877 to cover more detail on abolished Thames crossing Tolls

Former Toll Bridges include 28 Bridge crossings and 1 ferry crossing over the Thames

To date, Tolls have been abolished on 120 Bridge river or harbour crossings & 3 ferry crossings

4 Tolls abolished in the 18th Century (or prior)

57 Tolls abolished in the 19th Century

48 Tolls abolished in the 20th Century

7 Tolls abolished in the 21st Century

4 Tolls, date unconfirmed, likely 19th Century

3 Abolished tolls in Plymouth, Laira Bridge, Stonehouse Bridge & Embankment Road

2 Toll Bridges abolished in SE Cornwall (Callington Turnpike, Gunnislake & Callington New Bridge)

3 x Ferry crossing (Red text)



Bridge	River	Year tolls abolished
<b>A</b>		
<a href="#">Albert Bridge, London</a>	Thames	1879
<a href="#">Albert Bridge, Manchester</a>	Irwell	1803
<b>B</b>		
<a href="#">Bailey Bridge (Walton on Trent)</a>	Trent	TBC
<a href="#">Battersea Bridge</a>	Thames	1879
<a href="#">Bewdley Bridge</a>	Severn	1891
<a href="#">Bigsweir Bridge</a>	Wye	1879
<a href="#">Blackfriars Bridge</a>	Thames	1785
<a href="#">Blackfriars Bridge, Manchester</a>	Irwell	1848
<a href="#">Boughrood Bridge</a>	Wye	1934
<a href="#">Bridgegate, Chester</a>	N/A	1624
<a href="#">Bridges of York (various bridges)</a>	Ouse & Foss	last one toll free 1914
<a href="#">Brighthouse Bridge</a>	Calder	1875
<a href="#">Bristol Bridge</a>	Bristol Harbour	1793
<a href="#">Bubwith Bridge</a>	Derwent	1936

<a href="#">Bursledon Bridge</a>	Hamble	1930
----------------------------------	--------	------

## C

<a href="#">Caerleon Bridge</a>	Usk	1879
---------------------------------	-----	------

<a href="#">Callington Newbridge</a>	Lynher	<a href="#">1874</a>
--------------------------------------	--------	----------------------

<a href="#">Cavendish Bridge</a>	Trent	1888
----------------------------------	-------	------

<a href="#">Cawood Bridge</a>	Ouse	1882
-------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Chelsea Bridge</a>	Thames	1879
--------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Cleveland Bridge</a>	Avon	1927
----------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Cleddau Bridge</a>	Cleddau	2019
--------------------------------	---------	------

<a href="#">Clifton Hampden Bridge</a>	Thames	1946
----------------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Clopton Bridge</a>	Avon	1839
--------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Coldstream Bridge</a>	Tweed	1826
-----------------------------------	-------	------

<a href="#">Cookham Bridge</a>	Thames	1947
--------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Connel Bridge</a>	Loch Etive	1966
-------------------------------	------------	------

<a href="#">Cross Keys Bridge</a>	Nene	1903
-----------------------------------	------	------

## D

<a href="#">Dean Bridge</a>	Water of Leith	1891
-----------------------------	----------------	------

## E

<a href="#">Eastham bridge</a>	Teme	1907
--------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Erskine Bridge</a>	Clyde	2006
--------------------------------	-------	------

## F

<a href="#">Ferry Bridge</a>	Portland	1894
------------------------------	----------	------

<a href="#">Folly Bridge</a>	Thames	1850
------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Forth Road Bridge</a>	Firth of Forth	2008
-----------------------------------	----------------	------

<a href="#">Foryd Bridge (also referred to as Voryd)</a>	Clwyd	<a href="#">Between 1927 &amp; 1937</a>
----------------------------------------------------------	-------	-----------------------------------------

## G

<a href="#">Glangrwyney Bridge</a>	Usk	1980
------------------------------------	-----	------

<a href="#">Grosvenor Bridge (Chester)</a>	Dee	1885
--------------------------------------------	-----	------

<a href="#">Gunnislake Bridge</a>	Tamar	<a href="#">1874</a>
-----------------------------------	-------	----------------------

<a href="#">Gunthorpe Bridge</a>	Trent	1927
----------------------------------	-------	------

## H

<a href="#">Halfpenny Bridge</a>	Thames	1839
<a href="#">Hammersmith Bridge</a>	Thames	1880
<a href="#">Hampton Court Bridge</a>	Thames	1876
<a href="#">Harrington Bridge</a>	Trent	1882
<a href="#">High Level Bridge, River Tyne</a>	Tyne	1937
<a href="#">Hillgay Bridge (also known as Ten Mile Bank Bridge)</a>	Ouse	1929
<a href="#">Hoarwithy Bridge</a>	Wye	1935
<a href="#">Holme Lacy Bridge</a>	Wye	<a href="#">Between 1927 &amp; 1937</a>
<a href="#">Hulmes Bridge Ferry</a>	Manchester Ship Canal	1885

## I

<a href="#">The Iron Bridge</a>	Severn	1934 (vehicles) 1950 (Pedestrians)
---------------------------------	--------	------------------------------------

## K

<a href="#">Kalemouth Suspension Bridge</a>	Teviot	<1900
<a href="#">Kew Bridge</a>	Thames	1873
<a href="#">Kingsferry Bridge</a>	Isle of Sheppey	1929
<a href="#">Kingston Bridge, London</a>	Thames	1870

## L

<a href="#">Laira Bridge (Plymouth)</a>	Plym	1904
<a href="#">Lambeth Bridge</a>	Thames	1924
<a href="#">Lambeth Bridge</a>	Thames	1879
<a href="#">Langstone Bridge</a>	Portsmouth Harbour	1960
<a href="#">London Bridge</a>	Thames	<1900
<a href="#">Lymington Toll Bridge</a>	Lymington River	1958

## M

<a href="#">Maidenhead Bridge</a>	Thames	1903
<a href="#">Monnow Bridge</a>	Wye	<1900
<a href="#">Mythe Bridge</a>	Severn	1850

## N

<a href="#">Nantwich Bridge</a>	Weaver	1835
<a href="#">Newburn Bridge</a>	Tyne	1947
<a href="#">North Bridge, Halifax</a>	Hebble	1867
<a href="#">Northam Bridge</a>	Itchen	1929

<a href="#">North Water Bridge</a>	Esk	<1900
------------------------------------	-----	-------

## O

<a href="#">Old Bridge, Huntingdon</a>	Ouse	1259
----------------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Old Dee Bridge (Chester)</a>	Dee	TBC
------------------------------------------	-----	-----

<a href="#">Old Exe Bridge</a>	Exe	1884
--------------------------------	-----	------

<a href="#">Old Walton Bridge</a>	Thames	1859
-----------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Ovingham Bridge</a>	Tyne	1945
---------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Oxney Ferry</a>	Rother	<a href="#">Between 1927 &amp; 1937</a>
-----------------------------	--------	-----------------------------------------

## P

<a href="#">Park Bridge, Aberdeenshire</a>	Dee	1962
--------------------------------------------	-----	------

<a href="#">Poole Bridge</a>	Poole Harbour	1926
------------------------------	---------------	------

<a href="#">Prince Street Bridge</a>	Bristol Harbour	<1900
--------------------------------------	-----------------	-------

<a href="#">Putney Bridge</a>	Thames	1880
-------------------------------	--------	------

## R

<a href="#">Radcot Bridge</a>	Thames	1810
-------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Redheugh Bridge</a>	Tyne	1937
---------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Richmond Bridge, London</a>	Thames	1859
-----------------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Rotherbridge</a>	Rother	1800
------------------------------	--------	------

## S

<a href="#">Sandwich Toll Bridge</a>	Stour	1977
--------------------------------------	-------	------

<a href="#">St Ives Bridge</a>	Great Ouse	1916
--------------------------------	------------	------

<a href="#">St John's Bridge, Lechlade</a>	Thames	1831
--------------------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Scotswood Bridge</a>	Tyne	1907
----------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Second Severn Crossing</a>	Avon	2018
----------------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Selby Toll Bridge</a>	Ouse	1991
-----------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Severn Bridge</a>	Avon	2018
-------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Shard Bridge</a>	Wyre	1993
------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Shillingford Bridge</a>	Thames	1874
-------------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Shoreham Toll Bridge</a>	Adur	1970
--------------------------------------	------	------

<a href="#">Skye Bridge</a>	Loch Alsh	2004
-----------------------------	-----------	------

<a href="#">Small Hythe Bridge</a>	Rother	<a href="#">Between 1927 &amp; 1937</a>
------------------------------------	--------	-----------------------------------------

<a href="#">Southwark Bridge</a>	Thames	1864
----------------------------------	--------	------

<a href="#">Stonehouse Bridge (Plymouth)</a>	Stonehouse Creek	1924
<a href="#">Sutton Bridge, Oxfordshire</a>	Thames	1938
<a href="#">Swarkestone Bridge</a>	Trent	<1900

## T

<a href="#">Tal-y-Cafn</a>	Conwy	<a href="#">Between 1927 &amp; 1937</a>
<a href="#">Tay Road Bridge</a>	Firth of Tay	2008
<a href="#">Tees Victoria Bridge</a>	Tees	1820
<a href="#">Trent Bridge (bridge)</a>	Trent	TBC
<a href="#">Trent Bridge, Gainsborough</a>	Trent	1932
<a href="#">Tullibody Old Bridge (Clackmannanshire)</a>	Devon	<1900

## U

<a href="#">Union Chain Bridge</a>	Tweed	1885
------------------------------------	-------	------

## V

<a href="#">Vauxhall Bridge</a>	Thames	1879
---------------------------------	--------	------

## W

<a href="#">Walney Bridge</a>	Walney Channel (Cumbria)	1935
<a href="#">Walton Bridge</a>	Thames	1870
<a href="#">Wallesey Pool Bridge</a>	Wallasey Pool, Merseyside	<a href="#">1930 - 1938</a>
<a href="#">Wandsworth Bridge</a>	Thames	1880
<a href="#">Waterloo Bridge</a>	Thames	1878
<a href="#">Wearmouth Bridge</a>	Wear	1885
<a href="#">Wellington Suspension Bridge</a>	Dee	<1900
<a href="#">Whitby Swing Bridge</a>	Esk	TBC
<a href="#">Wilford Toll Bridge</a>	Trent	1969
<a href="#">Windsor Bridge</a>	Thames	1897
<a href="#">Woolwich Ferry</a>	Thames	1889
<a href="#">Wye Bridge</a>	Wye	<1900
<a href="#">Wylam Bridge</a>	Tyne	1936

## Y

<a href="#">Yar Bridge</a>	Yarmouth Harbour	1934
<a href="#">Yealm Bridge</a>	Yealm	1888



Annex 2 to Tamar Toll Action Group Letter dated February 22nd 2023

<b>SOUTH EAST CORNWALL</b>			
PL10	Rame, Millbrook, Dowderry	1,085	1.99%
PL11	Torpoint, Antony, Shevioc	3,505	6.44%
PL12	Saltash, Landrake, Tideford, St Mellion, Trerulefoot, St Dominick, St Germans, Hatt	8,894	16.35%
PL13	Looe, Polperro, Widegates	1,726	3.17%
PL14	Liskeard, St Clear, St Neots, Duloe, Pensilva, Dobwalls	4,215	7.75%
PL17	Callington, Kelly Bray, Stock Climsland	2,382	4.38%
PL18	Gunnislake, Calstock, St Ann's Chapel	892	1.64%
PL22	Lostwithiel, West Taphouse, Lerryn	167	0.31%
PL23	Fowey, Polruan	102	0.19%
<b>S/E CORNWALL POSTCODES TOTAL</b>		<b>22,968</b>	<b>42.23%</b>