

Western Morning News

70p MONDAY OCTOBER 3 2016

THE VOICE OF THE WESTCOUNTRY SINCE 1860

DEVON



Your amazing
wildlife pictures

More great photographs - P20-21

Getting down
and dirty in
the garden

Judi Spiers - P11



SPORT

Plymouth Argyle continue to fly with another victory. Your local & national sport starts on P37

As Theresa May promises Brexit legislation, years of uncertainty loom, so now more than ever it is time to...

Back the South West



Western Morning News Campaign

Build an economy to match beauty

Clean beaches, sparkling seas and fresh air.

The South West has it all. But while the natural beauty of the region is incomparable, its economy too often lags behind.

As Britain prepares to leave the EU, the *Western Morning News* today launches a campaign to boost the financial fortunes of the region.

With the support of major

players in the business community, led by Pennon Group, owners of South West Water, we will be taking the region's demands to Theresa May's government with the message that, given the tools, the South West can really fly.

Our demands will be realistic, our aims achievable and the benefits will be felt across the region.

Support our region **PAGES 4-5**

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#BackTheSouthWest

Building a more prosperous Westcountry is in our grasp

We all know the Westcountry is a brilliant place to live and work. Across Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset we are blessed with outstanding beauty. Our cities are vibrant and our towns and villages are attractive places where people want to be.

Unemployment is generally low and we have strong industries such as manufacturing, advanced engineering, retail and tourism, farming and food production, financial and professional services and more.

There is been significant investment taking place, particularly in our cities and in recent years the region's economy has continued to develop.

The region is a long way from London. Wages remain low, we have a severe housing crisis, our rural connectivity is challenged and we are desperate for significant infrastructure investment.

Important as tourism is to the



COMMENT

by Bill Martin
Editor, Western Morning News

region, it helps to perpetuate our low-wage reputation. But we do have high-skill sectors – marine engineering, renewable energy, the creative industries, even the possibility of a space port at Newquay – and they are waiting for the right nudge to allow them to take off.

Less than 18 months ago the South West was at the centre of David Cameron and George Osborne's successful election campaign. Never had the South West seen so many senior

Government ministers – and never was so much pledged on investment in rail, in roads, in broadband, in new deals for our cities.

Yet following "Brexit", the vote to leave the European Union in the referendum in June, it seems much of that positivity is at risk.

So today the *Western Morning News* launches a new campaign – Back the South West – in partnership with the Pennon Group and its companies, South West Water, Viridor and Bournemouth Water.

Throughout the campaign we will be highlighting good news about the region, talking it up rather than talking us into a damaging recession.

And we are calling for action to keep the economy moving and to continue investment plans for the entire region.

Low interest rates mean now is the time for Theresa May's new Government to back the South West by spending on infrastructure projects

that will unlock economic potential, create jobs, and ultimately pay back the Treasury and then some in increased tax revenues.

The Government must commit to and bring forward projects such as to improvements to the A303. A significant and properly funded plan to bring faster and more resilient trains to the far South West must be agreed. Much more needs to be done to increase digital connectivity – in the case of broadband and telephones. This remains a region where many conversations end with the word "hello?" and even David Cameron had trouble with his mobile phone signal.

Business leaders in Cornwall have already written to the Government calling for an end to the uncertainty around EU funding. They say that uncertainty is in danger of damaging Cornwall's economy.

They named nine "at risk" EU-funded projects, including upgrades

to the A30 at Carland Cross, the next phase of the superfast broadband roll-out, and Penzance Bay-to-Bay.

Later this month our main sponsors will host the South West Growth Summit at the University of Exeter. Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government Sajid Javid will be the main speaker; but the organisers want participants in two discussions "Attracting and retaining talent in the South West" and "Boosting Investment in the South West" to help create the South West Growth Charter – a collaborative vision for the South West that will be presented to the Government.

We cannot leave it just to Government. We all have a stake in the success of the West country.

So we are urging businesses to invest too – in their people, products and processes – and for businesses in the region to work together, support each other and create energy, positivity and creativity.



Improvements to connectivity vital to growth in South West

BY HANNAH FINCH

[Twitter](#) @Gardenerfinch

Connectivity is key to a growing economy, say regional business leaders.

The roll-out of superfast broadband, good mobile phone coverage and improved road and rail transport links have to be priorities for government spending if the Westcountry is to thrive.

Louise Pasterfield, managing director of Sponge UK, employs 70 people at her global digital learning business based at Plymouth Science Park.

She said that the company spends more than £100,000 a year on travel – second highest cost after staffing.

She said: "Infrastructure continues to be a major challenge for our region. If the region wants to boost international trade and attract out-

ward investment, we have to make rail travel, in particular, quicker and cheaper."

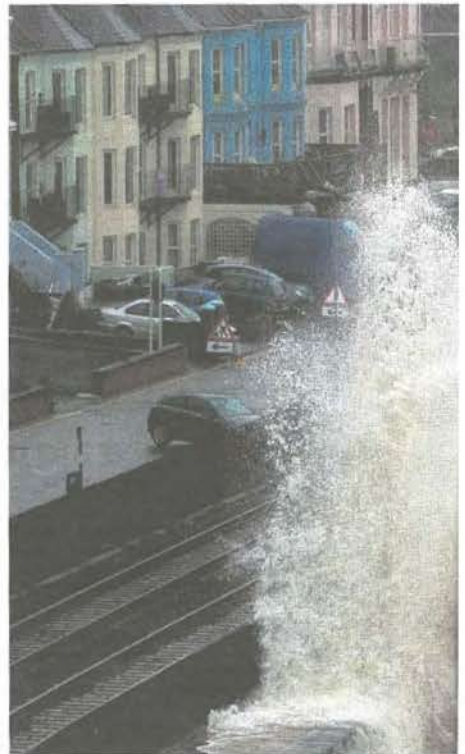
The rail network continues to be a major issue more than two years on from the now famous images of the Dawlish line hanging in mid air in February 2014.

'I am amazed when I get a 4G signal in Cornwall'

Patrick Langmaid

The Devon Maritime Forum has estimated that the economic impact on the South West could have been as high as £1.2 billion.

For the last year, the Peninsula Rail Task Force has been working on a 20-year plan which should be submitted to the Government this autumn.



Chairman Andrew Leadbetter, said: "Ultimately, we need the Government commitment and delivery on investments across the South West network so our railway can support the

needs of our communities, businesses and visitors alike." He said that the plan will form the blueprint for investment into the rail network to achieve a resilient railway with more



TOMORROW
The tourist industry is the South West's most important earner. Building on its success is vital

#BackTheSouthWest

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– just give us the tools

In the run-up to the referendum, many firms put spending decisions on hold. But with interest rates at an all-time low for many businesses, the time is right to invest in becoming more productive and more competitive.

They should protect their market share by investing in better services, marketing and products, showing their customers that they back themselves to succeed and inspiring confidence that will ripple through the economy.

With a weaker pound and new trade relations to be formed with nations around the world, there is a window of opportunity to grow exports for those who are bold.

Like businesses, many of us put personal spending decisions on hold too, worried now might not be the time to buy a car or move house.

The months since the Brexit vote have shown the new Government has little detail of what a world outside of

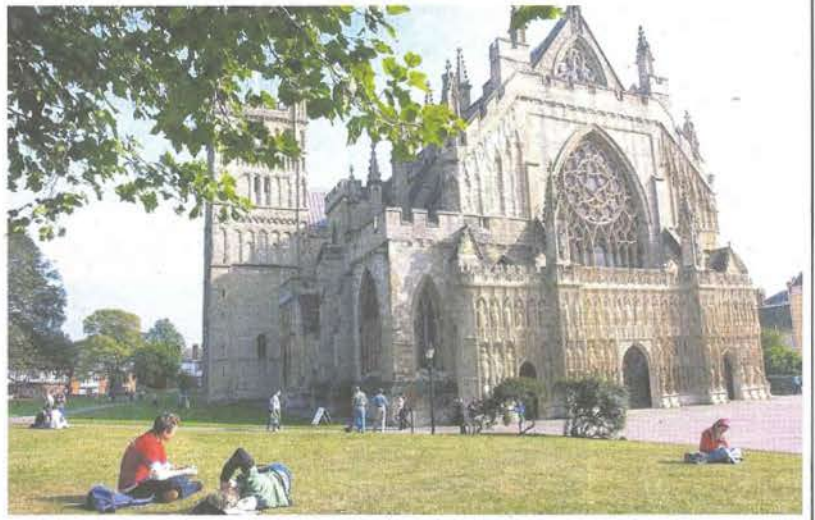
the EU will be like. But the process of leaving the European Union will take years.

How many of us want to put our lives on hold for that long?

Throughout this campaign we will be highlighting why the South West is such an amazing place to live – blessed with stunning scenery and wildlife, great career opportunities and first class places to go to eat, drink, be entertained and shop. Our coastline is second to none, and our tourism offer has become of a quality that will match many areas in the world.

These things which have made the South West great, didn't change in the early hours of June 24. Nor will they as the process of Brexit moves forward.

Whether you championed the case for Britain to leave the EU or argued passionately for us to remain, now we all need to pull together and back the South West.



capacity and faster journey times. He said plans to introduce new AT300 trains and improved signalling for Cornwall for 2018 were welcomed by the group.

Derek Phillips, vice-president of the Exeter Chamber of Commerce & Industry and chairman of the South West Chambers of Commerce, said the need to improve rail services and the long awaited upgrade to the A30 and A303 will be crucial to the continued growth of the city. He said: "The city has provided 30,000 new jobs in 15 years, with the highest productivity rise of any city in England."

"The Met Office's new 'super computer' will boost the fast growing big data sector, undoubtedly attracting relevant new companies and quality jobs to the city."

But tech businesses and creative industries rely on good broadband and mobile phone connectivity.

Less than a year ago, MPs warned that Westcountry rural areas risked languishing in the broadband slow lane unless more was done to improve high speed internet links.

And while many people are benefiting from the roll-out of the superfast broadband pro-

gramme in Devon and Cornwall, still more needs to be done.

Business leaders on Cornwall have already written to the Government calling for an end to the uncertainty around EU funding, arguing that the next phase of the superfast broadband roll-out could be out at risk.

Mrs Pasterfield said: "I'd also like to see a more audacious approach to connectivity. In the US, where I come from originally, peripheral cities have transformed their economies by offering hyper-fast fibre broadband to businesses. "The South West needs a

The vulnerable stretch of main line linking the South West to London is at Dawlish – regularly hit by heavy weather while the 'missing link' in the road links include this stretch (far left) of the A30. Both need urgent upgrades

similar ambition if it is really serious about growth." At Mother Ivey Bay at Trevoze Head in Cornwall, owner Patrick Langmaid said he is only able to offer a wi-fi hotspot to his guests supported by four copper telephone lines.

"We are well behind the cities and other regions and the UK is falling behind the rest of the world."

"I am amazed when I get a 4G signal in Cornwall, how pathetic is that? In Singapore, 4G is for the dinosaurs."

In Torbay, broadband is less of an issue and since the South Devon Link Road opened in 2015, journey times have been cut by around 30 minutes at peak times.

It has been a major boost for business, said Susie Colley, chairman of Torquay Chamber of Trade.

She said: "It has been brilliant but we can't be complacent, because it also means it's easier to get out. The key for us is to say to new and existing businesses, 'you are welcome, we will help you and in return you can live and work in a place that offers a great quality of life'."

Last week, Scymaris, a company that conducts environmental laboratory tests on new pharmaceutical or chemical products, said it would create 80 jobs over three years when it moves into the former Astra Zeneca site at Freshwater Quarry in Brixham. The move is being supported with cash from the Torbay Growth Fund and is the type of investment that the Torbay Development Agency is keen to attract in the wake of the £110 million link road.

While Torbay is reaping rewards, other areas are yet to benefit. The business case for the A361 North Devon Link Road upgrade are yet to be submitted to the Department of Transport.

There are also calls to seize the moment with the A303 dualling programme since the Hinkley C project was given the go ahead.

ASBESTOS EXPOSURE

Talk to the legal experts

Exposure to asbestos can lead to a variety of adverse health conditions. Although these conditions often arise many years after you have come into contact with asbestos YOU may still be entitled to compensation.

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Western Morning News

THE VOICE OF THE WESTCOUNTRY

It is time to listen to us in the South West, Mrs May

The *Western Morning News* campaign, launched today, is unashamedly "regionalist" in its ambitions. Britain is a nation with too much wealth and power concentrated in London and the South East. Efforts to spread that around have failed to pay sufficient attention to the country west of Bristol.

Anyone involved in business or politics knows that—and has known for a very long time through successive political regimes and administrations.

It is appropriate to be launching such a campaign at the start of the Conservative Party conference. Although the Tories won power—albeit relatively narrowly—in May last year, Theresa May's premiership is in the first flush of youth and the government she has created looks different to the one she inherited from David Cameron.

Even more dramatically, the UK is coming out of the European Union. Article 50, which starts the process, will be triggered in the first three months of next year. If all goes according to plan, the UK will be standing alone, outside of the EU, by the summer of 2019.

That change brings challenges; but it also brings opportunities. The South West is a region very much bound up in the EU. We have a high proportion of farmers who are in receipt of European farm subsidy paid out under

the Common Agriculture Policy. But those same farmers are hamstrung by the often maddening red tape that comes with EU membership. Our least well-off areas have, over decades, received funding from Brussels—but they have also been bound by strict rules about the way that investment is used. Not everyone is convinced it has brought the benefits that it could. Exports too are important for our small and medium-sized businesses, while many of those businesses have made full use of migrant labour.

The value of our products to overseas buyers—and their desire to keep exporting to us—won't fundamentally change once we leave the union. And the skills and hard work for which our employers often look to migrants to provide is available in the UK, and may need to be utilised more fully once Brexit is complete.

The South West can achieve all these things and build a thriving economy outside of the EU. The business community is fully engaged. What we need to see is those MPs who were trusted by the people of our region at the last election really get behind this campaign too.

They must make sure Theresa May understands that the South West cannot be taken for granted. She has to earn our support by backing our region.



Chris Loughlin, CEO of Pennon, says the South West is, and will continue to be, a force to be reckoned with

Government needs to recognise the potential of our great region

Forget the Northern Powerhouse, back the South West, says **Chris Loughlin** CEO of Pennon

Over recent weeks, our Prime Minister Theresa May has been clear that regional devolution remains at the heart of the Government's agenda for this Parliament. We are used to seeing headlines about the "Northern Powerhouse", but the question we often ask ourselves in this part of the world is "what about the South West?"

The Northern Powerhouse is an ambitious vision, designed by northerners for northerners and backed by politicians from all parties, to create an economic power base which rivals London and the South East. It includes radical transport improvements, a focus on science and innovation and the appointment of directly-elected city mayors. It has been held up as a model for regional growth.

Here in the South West, we have an equally ambitious vision for regional growth, led by our Local Enterprise Partnerships (Heart of the South West and Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly).

During the 2015 General Election, former Chancellor George Osborne said that the South West would remain "as central to our nation's future prosperity as any other part of these islands", but since then the focus has been in danger of turning back to London and the North.

Fast-forward to Theresa May's new administration and with her broader vision for regional growth, backed by a clear industrial strategy, we have a unique opportunity to secure tangible government support for the region. Importantly, we have a strong foundation

on which to build. We have top universities, the University of Exeter, a leader in innovation and excellence, the University of Plymouth with its strong enterprise focus and GAIN initiative connecting business with the South West, not to mention Falmouth University with its specialist creative and multi-arts focus. Investment in wider educational opportunities is also evident with South Devon University Technical College (UTC) improving opportunities for young people.

Apprenticeship numbers are growing and companies are investing. Pennon is a major British business with 4,800 people across Viridor, South West

Water and Bournemouth Water and one of the largest employers in the South West, so we know the key role business has to play in driving and contributing to this growth agenda. Across our businesses alone, we expect to spend £1.4 billion between now and 2020 on environmental infrastructure, the bulk of it in the South West.

We are seeing construction on the South West's major transport routes starting to improve links with the rest of the country, and superfast broadband benefiting many areas, particularly within the growing digital industries. Sectors such as tourism also continue to thrive as investment is made in the environment.

But at the same time, there is a great deal more work to be done and there is widespread concern about the impact of Brexit on our region, which could well be the worst affected by any loss of EU funding. Devon and Cornwall have both benefited significantly, with the current programme worth over £500m to Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly.

There is now far less certainty on how this could be maintained post-Brexit. Add to this the regional issues we face such as low productivity, skills shortages, rural poverty and graduate 'brain drain' and it is clear that the region's economic future is far from certain.

Yet the spirit of this region

is to stand up and be counted, not to be a victim of circumstances. It is in this vein that Pennon is hosting the upcoming South West Growth Summit at the University of Exeter. In conjunction with the *Western Morning News* and the region's Local Enterprise Partnerships, we are bringing together businesses, MPs, MEPs, academics and local government leaders for a morning of debate and discussion on how best to further economic growth in the South West.

Key topics to be discussed are: how the South West can attract and retain talent and what can be done to boost investment in the region. How do we guarantee there is a pool of talent for the future

at a time when two-thirds of graduates in Cornwall are leaving to find jobs? How do we increase skills and enhance productivity? How do we achieve a sustainable balance of activity and investment? How do we ensure our businesses are resilient and agile enough to cope with the changes and challenges ahead?

The South West has always had strong sense of both individualism and community. The Summit will provide an opportunity for businesses, government and academics to come together around a shared vision for regional growth and economic progress.

Following the Summit, we aim to develop a South West Growth Charter, backing our Local Enterprise Partnerships with a strong business voice to complement the work being done by local government leaders. This will be presented to government ahead of the Chancellor's Autumn Statement, where he will set out the government's economic plans.

The South West is seizing the opportunity to amplify its voice at the highest level, making it clear that the government must provide both the clarity and commitment essential to our region's future.

Northern Powerhouse aside, the South West is, and will continue to be, a force to be reckoned with #backthesouthwest.

The South West Growth Summit will be held at University of Exeter (Freed Hall) on Friday, October 21 (9am-1pm). For more information or to register to attend, visit www.southwestgrowthsummit.co.uk

We want to hear your views

Write to us at: Studio 5-11 Millbay Road, Plymouth PL1 3LF
Email wmmletters@westernmorningnews.co.uk

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On this day

- 1226: St Francis of Assisi, founder of the Franciscan order, died.
- 1888: The first performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Yeoman Of The Guard* took place at the Savoy Theatre.
- 1906: SOS was established as an international distress signal, replacing the call sign CDQ.
- 1929: The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was renamed Yugoslavia.
- 1941: The aerosol was patented by L.J. Goodhue and W.N. Sullivan.
- 1952: Britain's first atomic weapon was exploded in the Monte Bello Islands, off Australia.
- 1956: The Bolshoi Ballet

appeared at Covent Garden for the first time.
1959: The postcode, required in the addressing of mail for mechanical sorting, was first used in Britain in Norwich.

Birthdays

- Steve Reich, composer, 80
- Chubby Checker, singer, 75
- Lindsay Buckingham, musician, 67
- Tommy Lee, rock musician, 54
- Gwen Stefani, singer, 47 *pictured*
- Neve Campbell, actress, 43



Thought for the day

Job 19:25 - I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.