

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Revealed: the true cost of the Tory run Council

The new administration at Huntingdonshire DC is grappling with some difficult decisions, not least the financial situation inherited from nearly 50 years of the Conservatives being in control.

For the past decade or more the Conservatives proudly boasted that council tax rates in the district have been kept low or not raised at all. An approach that persisted up until last May's elections. The reality is that this aim required the Tories to find £805,000 of savings and use nearly all of its reserves (£2.48 million) to achieve a balanced budget this year.

The current Executive Leader of HDC, Lib Dem Councillor Sarah Conboy, in her recent statement said 'Unless a rabbit pops out of a hat with a grant, or central government make a huge u-turn funding wise, we might be £3.285 million away from delivering a properly balanced budget as things stand.'

Difficult decisions will have to be made to find savings and this will undoubtedly impact upon the council's operational and strategic activities forcing HDC to scale back its ambitions in order to meet its purse next year. Cllr Conboy continued 'that seems fitting given the challenge our residents also face.'

So following two years of a global pandemic, a cost-of-living crisis and people facing more difficult times it seems that HDC may have to cut back services just at the wrong time. Could it have been so much better had the Tories made modest tax increases over the past decade ensuring that the reserves were available when really needed?

Meet your councillors at the market...

Tomorrow is Farmers Market Saturday in St Ives and you will have a chance to meet your local Town Councillors, who will be holding a surgery from 10am. They will be delighted to hear your opinion about town related matters, including the St Ives draft Masterplan which will be available to see on HDC's website from close of business this Friday.

You can also buy a T-shirt...

The popular Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival T-shirts will be on sale. Featuring a unique design, they are fabulous value at just £10. Every purchase helps provide the 21 FREE acts you can enjoy.

Geoff holds the key

Thanks to Geoff, of Terry's Heel Bar, the Town Team was able to replace the posters on the side of the, now empty, Poundstretcher store (see below). Following the comment from Stewart Denham about the sad sight of out-of-date posters facing people leaving the bus station in (RP 114), the Team contacted the agent who gave permission to replace the posters. The problem then remained was how to open the boards as no key was available. That is where Geoff came to the rescue. The first stage was to find a blank key that fitted the locks and Geoff had to try nearly every key in the shop before finding one that fit. He was then able to use his skill, and just a little bit of luck, to cut it so it worked. Well done Geoff.



The Quay looks 'Bloomin' marvellous



St Ives Quay was looking delightful during the past few weeks of sunshine as result of the hard work from St Ives Town Council Maintenance Team who have regularly watered the trees and flowers.

The weeks of sunshine have played havoc with the grass areas but the town floral displays have been exceptional this year thanks to St Ives in Bloom and the Town Council's Maintenance Team. The Town Team were responsible for planting the trees on The Quay

in spring, which has added to the display and it should be even better in the years to come as the trees reach maturity. Anglia in Bloom judges visited in July and their decision on whether St Ives has reached the Gold Standard again is due in September.

Calendar of events 2022

This is a busy time in St Ives with lots of events planned over the next few weeks. If you know of other events in the pipeline or are a member of a community group that wants to let us know what you are planning, please email: editor@theriverporter.uk

AUGUST

Thursday 25th - Treasure Island Family Fun Day at Holt Island and The Norris Museum.

Friday 26th - Chapel Arts @ The Corn Exchange Featuring Kimberley Rew & Lee Cave Berry. Tickets cost £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives or from The Riverport Café Bar.

Saturday 27th - Great Gatsby Casino and Music Night with Dickie de Vere & The Dorchester Mavericks followed by a disco at The Corn Exchange. Tickets £17.50 (includes casino money) from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from The Riverport Café Bar.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 3rd - The St Ives Show. A traditional town competition from 12.15 to 3pm in St Ives Corn Exchange, involving flower arranging, baking, crafts, photography, home brewing, produce and children sections. To enter go to www.stivesshow.org.uk

Thursday 8th - The Old Riverport Sailors Club raising money for the Jubilee Bandstand. St Ives Corn Exchange, 7.30pm. Tickets just £10 from: www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives or from the Riverport Café Bar. To see a video of a typical performance go to: www.facebook.com/theoldriverportjazzandbluesfestival.

Friday 9th and Saturday 10th - The Centre Players presents On Your feet. A charity cabaret in The Burgess Hall at 7.30pm. Tickets £10.84 from ticketsource.co.uk

Thursday 15th to Sunday 18th - The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival. 21 FREE concerts throughout the town. Go to www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk for details.

Sunday 18th - Civic Sunday Parade and Service. Leaves the Town Hall at 10.30 am, service at the Parish Church at 11am.

Saturday 17th - Heritage Open Day - A chance to visit some of St Ives' historic buildings.

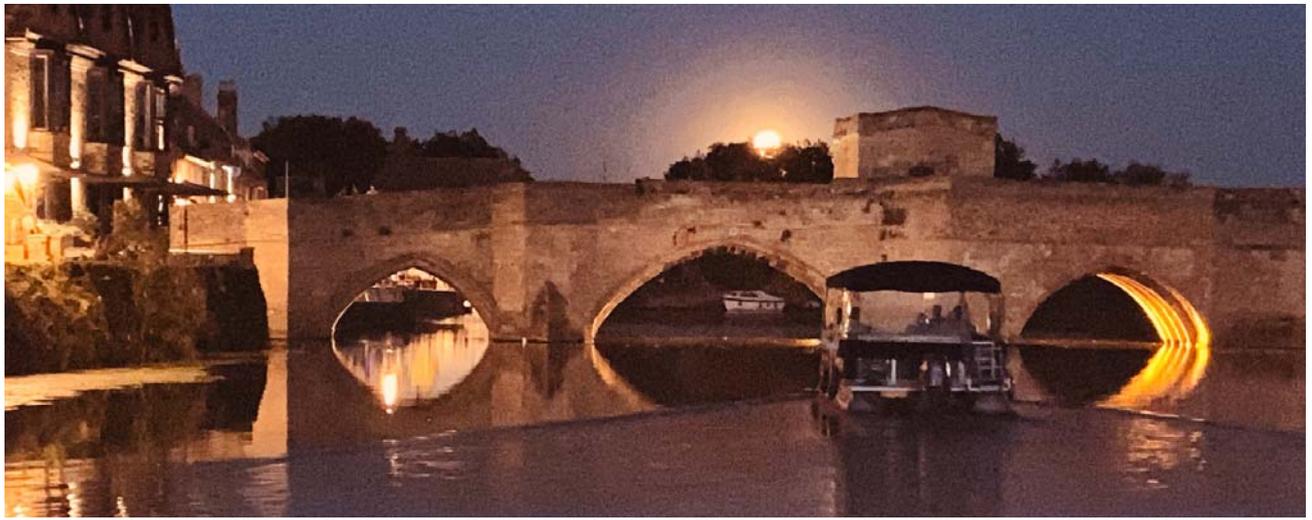
Friday 30th - Chapel Arts @ The Corn Exchange Featuring Harpist Ruth Holden. Tickets cost £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives or from The Riverport Café Bar.

OCTOBER

Saturday 15th - Strum Like a Viking - The Old Riverport Ukulele Festival at the Corn Exchange. Tickets are £10 at: ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives. Details: www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk

Friday 28th - Chapel Arts @ The Corn Exchange Featuring the amazing guitarists Johnny 'Magic Boy' Wright and Chris Newman. Tickets cost £10 and can be obtained at www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives. or from The Riverport Café Bar.

The final Super Moon of the year rises over our mediaeval bridge, a scene that may often have been observed over the past 380 years!



The Old Riverport Ukulele Festival
Sat 15th October
St Ives
Corn Exchange



A day of strumming from 9am to 8.30pm

Two Workshops

10am - *Song Writing* with the Hedge Inspectors

11am - *Chord Melody* with Marc Gallagher

www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives



FRIDAY 26TH AUGUST

Eurovision winning musician and songwriter



Kimberley Rew & Lee Cave-Berry



FRIDAY 30TH SEPTEMBER

Harpist - Ruth Holden

All concerts start at 7.30pm in the Riverport Café Bar. Doors open at 6.30pm, Tickets: £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives or can be purchased from the Riverport Café Bar.

A Town Team Event.



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TREASURE ISLAND
Family Fun Day

at Holt Island Nature Reserve and
The Norris Museum

Thurs 25th August - 11am to 3pm



Free to drop in!

Crafts, trails, games and more
Complete your activity passport to earn a parrot prize! Pirates welcome



having your say ...

Get it off your chest,
email Erik at:
editor@theriverporter.uk

The Riverporter

Voted Best local newspaper of the year 2019/20 in the
Cambridge Building Society's Community Magazine Awards

OTHER NEWS

Temporary Town Clerk leaves early

The Riverporter understands that Philip Truppin (right) who took up the post of Locum Town Clerk on 4th April (see RP 106), is on gardening leave after councillors gave him notice.



Mr Truppin had come out of retirement to be the Town's temporary Clerk, while Alison Benfield remains away from her post on sick leave (see RP113). The Council has been without a full-time Town Clerk for over 2 years. The previous Locum Clerk, Nicci Sewell, who was doing an excellent job, left in March, as she was appointed to a full-time post at another authority. We understand that the situation with Town Clerk Alison Benfield my soon be resolved, allowing the Council to advertise for a full-time Clerk. In the meantime Matthew Price, who is the Amenities Manager, has assumed the role of Locum Clerk and will be receive training to allow him to become a qualified Town Clerk. A clerk's role is very important as they are the officer who advises councillors on the correct procedures and like many other professions there are a shortage of trained clerks available. Clerks are trained in all aspects of the role, including a knowledge of the law affecting local authorities and this can be very complicated in this day and age. The majority of the current Town Councillors are new to the role and will rely on the advice of the Clerk.

Bandstand fund nears total but more needed

The good news is we have had offers from local companies to help with transport and materials needed for installation, significantly reducing our costs and the appeal is regularly receiving pledges. The total now stands just short of £35,000. However we are still a little way from the target of £44,000. You can help by making a pledge, which is easy to do (see below), or you can enjoy an evening at the The Old Riverport Sailors Club (also below) where every penny of profit will go towards the bandstand.

You can make a pledge (from £25 upwards) by sending your contact details (address, email and telephone number) to: townteam@stivescambridgeshire.co.uk, stating the amount you wish to pledge. Alternatively you can give details at The Town Hall between 10am and 4pm Monday to Friday. Your pledges and donations will be recognised. Every person or company that donates to the bandstand will be inscribed on a panel (unless they wish to remain anonymous) so that future generations will see the people who contributed. Please note: contact details you send us remain confidential.

Enjoy an evening of rollicking good fun and help raise money for the Bandstand



The Old Riverport Sailors Club

at St Ives Corn Exchange, 7.30pm on Thursday 8th September. Join the large mottly crew of Old Time Sailors for sea shanties, dancing and in what promises to be an evening to remember.

To see a video of a typical performance go to:

www.facebook.com/theoldriverportjazzandbluesfestival

Tickets just £10 from: www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives or from the Riverport Café Bar.

Dear Erik,

Subject: Hemingford Ladies Choir

Please could you publish the following?

On Wednesday, 7th September, Hemingford Ladies Choir will be resuming singing all sorts of music from Bach to the Beatles every Wednesday morning from 10am to 11.30am in The Free Church, St Ives!

We are a friendly, traditional choir who, over the course of 25 years, have been singing for fun but also for concerts for local charities.

Perhaps you have recently retired or have flexible working arrangements and would like to join us. We particularly need Alto voices but all are welcome. If you are interested, please contact Viv Oxley on 01480 417927 or vivienneoxley64@gmail.com. Thankyou Carol Jennings

Dear Erik,

Subject: Houghton Road - Unacceptable Bias

Has anyone else noticed that the only queues caused by the roadworks on Houghton Road are coming into St Ives? Amazing that all the lorries accessing the site don't have to wait. It took over half an hour to pass the roadworks from the St Ives side of Houghton.

Frustrated

Dear Erik,

I agree with Peter in your last edition r.e. cars jumping the lights.

It happens all the time especially cars coming into town. I spoke to Colin S, with his road safety hat on and he spoke to the police who apparently said not a problem, every one does it. I have even seen a police car not flashing do it.
(Another) Peter

Dear Erik,

Subject: COPE - digitalisation

The reliance on computers and more specifically apps is taking over. Waitrose has special offers to holders of its MyWaitrose card but you need either a mobile phone or printer to use them - they have been saying for months that they are looking into the issue. I think that the Co-op member offers require mobile phone hence my shopping at Sainsbury's which print out coupons tailored to your buying when you shop. So much faster through the tills than all the QR codes.

Penny Saver

ST IVES CHORAL SOCIETY NOW RECRUITING!!

We are waiting to welcome new singers, especially gents (basses and tenors). The Choir have exciting times ahead and would like you to be part of it.

Rehearsals are fun, sociable and good for your physical and mental health. Even if you can't read music but feel you can sing and contribute to this great group of people then come along down to the Methodist Church in St Ives on Tuesday 6 September at 7.30pm for our new season's rehearsal - you will learn as we go along.

Our Musical Director, Charne Rochford, will give you all the encouragement you need. Last year we ended up during lockdown singing in the car park of BBC Radio Cambridge for a live performance of Christmas Carols; we have sung in the rain to a most appreciative audience in St Ives Cattle Market car park so who knows what lies ahead?

We do sing some 'serious stuff' but even that is good humoured. Think it's not for you or you might not be able to do it - just give us a try. Hope to see you in September!

Dear Erik,

I hope you and the Editor enjoyed your holiday and came back refreshed.

Would it be possible to include in the next issue an item for the Huntingdon and District RAFA Battle of Britain Band concert in the Free Church on 17th September.

Regards Paul Davidson

Dear Erik,

Ref: Gin 'n' Sin

This autumn Booze in the Pews and Gin 'n' Jazz are again invading the sacred space of All Saints', the Grade I Listed Parish Church of St Ives.

Springing to mind are a few better suited names for these now frequent spectacles of indulgent intemperance and insobriety. Like 'Gin 'n' Sin'. Or 'Booze Abusing the Pews'. Or 'Booze and Schmooze in the Pews'. In a nutshell there should be loud Boos for Booze in the Pews.

What ever happened to priorities at All Saints' - like services and the care of souls - a sacred place that was kept sacred by the church-going of many thousands of St Ives families over many centuries? It is a sad, sad world when plying ales and gin to townsfolk for profit is the fundraising norm at All Saints'.

Doberman

RIVERPORTER SPECIAL EDITION

We are producing a book, which will contain a copy of every issue from Jan 2018 until the end of 2022.

If you wish to have a copy of this unusual publication, a record of St Ives over the past 5 tumultuous years, please order your copy by emailing your details to: editor@theriverporter.uk

Copies will cost £15 and will be available from 16 December.

Over 35 individual businesses

The COURTYARD

St Ives

Open-air boutique market, run by independents

Opening times:
9am-5pm Mon-Sat
11am-5pm Sun



The Courtyard is a vibrant, sociable, boutique marketplace where independent traders sell their crafty gifts from individual pods. There is something for everyone!

Halloween items have started coming in for sale.

Lots of new traders have moved in, expanded or got new stock so pop down for a browse and a cuppa tea.

- ❖ Retro clothing
- ❖ Watch repairs
- ❖ Handmade jewellery
- ❖ Upcycled furniture
- ❖ Book barn
- ❖ Handmade glass ware
- ❖ And much, much more!!!



Awarded the 'Business in the community award' from the Mayor of St. Ives



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'Supporting Huntingdonshire Communities through volunteering'

Calling all drivers in the St Ives areaplease can you help?

Life in a rural community can be very isolating if you don't have access to a car, particularly if you are elderly or can't use public transport, even more so now with Covid in our lives.

St Ives Community Car Scheme seeks to address this problem by matching passengers with volunteer drivers who use their own cars to take them to their hospital appointments, shopping or even to visit friends and relations. Passengers pay the driver 45p a mile for the drivers mileage, plus a £1 booking fee which is payable to the office to cover admin costs.



Could you become a volunteer driver and help your neighbours in this way?

We understand that as a volunteer you may be concerned about how much time you can commit. Even if you can only offer one drive per week, this would be a help, and there is no obligation to accept a drive. No experience is necessary, just common sense and a sympathetic attitude. Support and guidance is always available from our friendly office which is based in the Town Hall, Market Square.

Please note that all applicants will be subject to a DBS check and satisfactory references will be required.

In addition, other volunteering opportunities are available via:
<https://doit.life/huntingdonshire-volunteer-centre> or ask to be added to our mailing list to receive our monthly volunteering newsletter.

For more information about our Car Scheme service please call the office on: 01480 301462 which is open Monday to Thursday 12.30 – 3pm or leave us a voice message.

If you would like to discuss becoming a volunteer driver please contact Debbie on: 07990 477552 or Email: stives@huntsvc.org.uk **We look forward to hearing from you!**

ADVERTORIAL

Record property prices continue to rise this summer in Cambridgeshire



The price of property coming to the market during July was up for the sixth consecutive month, reaching an average of £369,968.

Whilst the number of new sellers coming to the market is up 13% compared to this time last year, stock levels are still down some 40% compared to June 2019.

This imbalance between supply and demand continues to underpin price rises and is likely to continue throughout the rest of the year.

The school holidays often bring some respite to the property market, however, we have seen little slow down in the number of homeowners booking a valuation and buyer enquiries continue to flood in.

Whilst interest rates have adjusted to the new Bank of England base rate, buyers have not been deterred from offering the asking price or higher to secure their purchase.

Those lucky enough to have an offer accepted now have the task of navigating the legal conveyancing process.

With good organisation and the right guidance they should be in their new home for Christmas, however, the window to make this possible is closing.

At Ellis Winters we have dedicated sales progressors to help advise and guide you through your sale or purchase. All our sales are dealt with in-house, by an experienced member of our team.

If you're thinking of moving, perhaps would like to be moved by Christmas, we would be delighted to provide a free valuation and advice on your best step forward.

Call Ellis Winters on 01480 388888 today!

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