

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Masterplan response delayed

The District Council has given more time for people to respond to the draft Masterplan for St Ives, but *The Riverporter* questions the whole process in light of the concerns raised by residents and groups in St Ives.

Without doubt St Ives needs investment and a strategy to deal with the changing nature of town centres and lifestyles. What seemed necessary and possible just a few years ago has changed following Brexit, Covid, the war in Ukraine and now rapid inflation.

Is there funding?

HDC and Tetra Tech made it clear that these plans were constructed in order to prove a business case and attract funding, which seemed to justify some of the proposals and the style of presentation.

However we were told that there is currently no funding for these plans so it is likely that any funding, that may have been available two years ago, will now be unavailable. If this is the case then all the effort and expense (probably £100,000 for St Ives) will have been wasted.

The process has been a failure from the start, when the Prospectus for Growth (PFG) document was launched in 2019 only selected people and groups were consulted and the PFG was adopted by HDC's Cabinet even though it was universally slammed as containing errors and being based on out-of-date data.

This second phase, the Draft Masterplan, appeared in August, only on-line and was extremely difficult to read. Consultation was only for councillors, but fortunately the Town Council eventually held a public meeting.

The company that produced the document were not present, their main man, Tetra Tech's Andrew Clarke contributed via zoom whilst in his car, a less than ideal arrangement, leaving the audience angry and frustrated (RP 120).

Commenting on the masterplan

Originally comments were to be received by today, Friday 28th October, but that deadline is now 14th November.

Again this process is less than ideal as anyone using the HDC website to make comments, as requested, has to fill in a form that asks a series of one-sided questions. In other words your responses are being filtered, which could easily be misinterpreted.

For example you have to put the five options in the plan in order before you can go to the next question. Does ranking them in order signify that some ideas are better than others? Or does it say that none are acceptable or all are

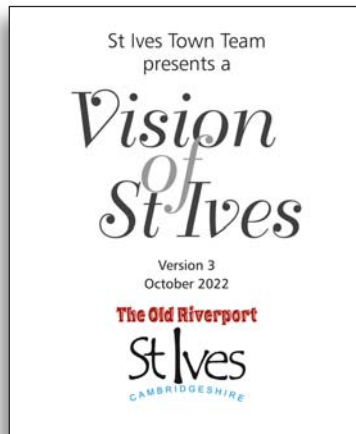
acceptable? Such a response can easily be used to justify parts of the plan when in fact the respondent may not like any of them.

This is a lazy way to gauge responses and could clearly give a misleading opinion.

What if you can't go on-line?

Anyone unable to go on-line was disadvantaged from the beginning and had it not been for the Town Team producing a large printed version for people to see in the Riverport Café Bar, many residents would have been ignorant of the plans.

Having a physical display is difficult and expensive but there is no shortcut when it comes to democracy, and the only way to gauge public opinion accurately is to listen to them.



Was any of this necessary

Three years ago St Ives Town Team produced a report called a *Vision of St Ives* which listed a range of improvements that could be made, based on a questionnaire (it appeared in Riverporter No13 in July 2018) that the public and businesses answered.

This report, which cost taxpayers nothing, was sent to council leaders at the time and was largely ignored. It covered many of the areas in the masterplan and more besides.

The Town Team have updated that plan and have sent it to councillors and relevant bodies in the hope that it can be used to start a sensible conversation on town improvements. **A copy a *Vision of St Ives* is also available in the Riverport Café and the Library for the public to see.**

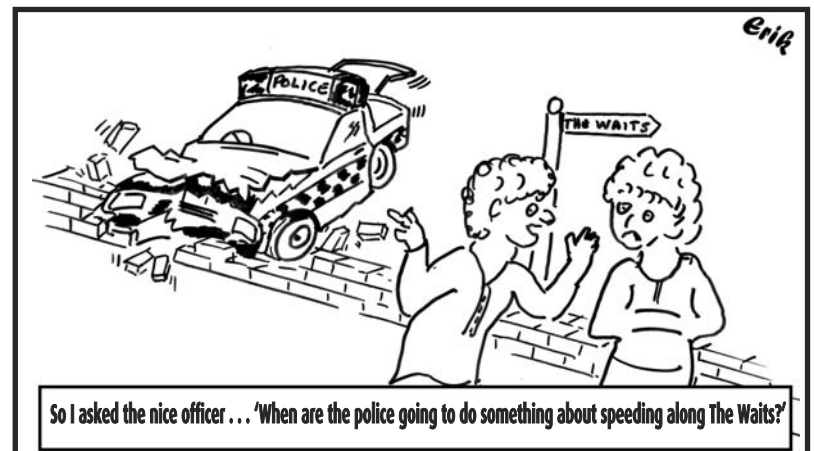


New Car Wash in town?

Not quite sure how he did that!

Early on Saturday 15th October a car failed to negotiate the bend at the corner of Ramsey Road and The Waits. According to a resident... 'Two lads went through the railings from Ramsey Road. The Fire Brigade arrived at about 3 am to find them sitting on top of the car.'

Nigel Sprowell from the Friends of Holt Island (who took the picture right) said 'There are quicker ways to get on the island'. We print below a cartoon that appeared in Riverporter No.2 in February 2018 when a police car crashed into the wall. Some things never change.



FOLLOWING THEIR BRILLIANT CONCERT AT THIS YEARS OLD RIVERPORT JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL



FRIDAY 25TH NOVEMBER
Four Winds
 Saxophone Quartet
 Four exceptional saxophonists performing music from Bach to Gershwin.
 7.30pm the Riverport Café Bar. Tickets: £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/events/ives or can be purchased from the Riverport Café Bar.



HOW did this happen?

As we reported in our last issue developers of the HOW estate, that lies between Houghton Road and The Thicket, have fenced off a part of the riverbank with a view to constructing a landing stage, which has upset residents.

It appears that the developers, Stay New Homes, have put up a fence and cut down trees without permission.

Quick action by concerned locals, councillors and HDC's Enforcement Officer has resulted in an enforcement order, No. 21/00333/ENBOC, being issued to the HOW.

The officers visited the site and reported: 'A fence has been erected, which requires formal planning permission. In addition, we confirmed that two trees appear to have been removed from the area that would have required consent from the local planning authority.'

It continued: 'We have contacted the developers for The How to establish who was responsible for carrying out the works and whom they were instructed by. Once we have received this information a further update will be provided.'

The report also stated that although it was believed that the purpose of the works were to provide a private mooring for properties currently being marketed at the HOW development in St Ives, no mooring or pontoon was found to be erected yet.

Below: Marketing material for The How.



LIVING

The How itself is situated adjacent to the River Ouse with a short walk to the Thicket Path accessed via a private gate from the development and is ideal for cycling, running and watersports. The grounds themselves are perfect for early morning walks or sunset strolls through its beautiful mature gardens. Follow on with a walk through medieval ridge and furrow meadows bursting with wildflowers so rare, they've been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest.

EA answers questions

Whilst this seems good news for locals who want to see The Thicket remain as it is and bad news for the developers who are trying to add more value to their expensive houses, this doesn't end the matter, as these answers from the Environment Agency (EA) show:

Did the Environment Agency grant permission for the private mooring?

An application for a Flood Risk Activity Permit had been submitted for the erection of a mooring with fencing. We are determining the application, so no decision has been reached.

Does EA's permission incorporate the developer's erection of the structure?

No permit has been granted for works at this

location, so no works should have been carried out by the applicant.

Did the EA consult with Hunts DC?

It is not required to consult Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) on Flood Risk Activity Permit applications.

Was the developer entitled to seek EA permission for a private mooring given that his land does not border on to the river?

The developer stated within their application that they had ownership over the piece of land. We are currently seeking confirmation of ownership from the applicant.

Assuming any permission was not for 20+ homes as described in The How marketing materials, was the mooring permission sought for a commercial enterprise?

The requirement for a permit is concerned with the physical structure and its impact on the watercourse. Its use as a residential or commercial mooring is outside of the remit.

Is the conservation area it's in taken into account when the application considered?

Flood Risk Activity Permits fall under the Environmental Permitting Regulations - environmental protection is therefore a key driver in the process.

What next

At Wednesday's Town Council Planning meeting the matter was considered, although no more details were available. The situation is: There does not appear to be a planning application with HDC for a mooring;

that the enforcement officer is waiting for a response from the developers; and that the EA are still to determine a Flood Risk Permit.

All of which means that anything could happen. If the Developers do prove they own the land this could help their case. And should a planning application be submitted it could be approved despite local opposition.

A further question remains

In the marketing video for the HOW it is stated that the developer has gifted 1.5 acres of woodland to HDC.

The video also states that HDC are installing made-up pathways on their land.

Are the two items linked?



An Update from STAR

The St Ives Against Rubbish Campaign continues to attract followers on its Facebook page with now nearly 240 members.

While we know that many people in St Ives do not use social media, and some don't have a mobile phone, we ask that if you do go out litter picking, either in a group, on your own, or just with your friends and family, that you please upload photos of your pick onto the STAR Facebook page, saying where you picked and roughly what range of grot (or treasure) you found.

This helps us to gather evidence, to identify litter trends and hotspots, and then do something constructive about it.

Tackling litter and littering behaviour is a complex problem with no single solution, and it is our aim to understand, address and tackle the causes of local litter issues as well as the symptoms. Our investigations are leading us to form strategies for addressing cigarette litter in



the town centre, and also looking at ways to work with St Ives Town Council to develop a sustainable cemeteries policy to tackle plastic litter in our local cemeteries.

Our next Climate Café on Saturday 19th November, 10-12pm at St Ives Free Church will have a litter focus, and we'll also be joined by HDC's litter minimisation expert. We'll be sending more information out about this soon and hope that many STAR pickers will join us to help to take the STAR Campaign to the next level in 2023.

With thanks to the ongoing efforts of our community of STAR pickers. The pictures below were taken at our regular monthly Saturday morning pick of the carpark, hedgerows, verges and play areas surrounding the Co-op, and the Ramsey Road Cemetery.



St Ives firmly on the Ukulele map

Over two hundred Ukulele players enjoyed a fabulous day of music at the Corn Exchange on Saturday 15 October.

Mayor Phil Pope (pictured right presenting the raffle prize of a quality ukulele donated by Matt Stead to Henry Lynch from Oakham) formally opened the Festival. He seemed to enjoy the show, staying to applaud the musicians. One of them, Danilo Vignola showed it is possible to gig in St Ives from as far away as South Italy using just public transport.

Danilo (pictured below) contacted the organisers to say he would like to play as he will be in Cambridge on the 15th. Danilo flew into Stansted, visited his appointment in Cambridge and then caught a guided Bus to St Ives to appear in the evening show. His performance, which can only be described as Flamenco on a Ukulele, stole the show as the audience sat in awe of his ability. Not content with that Danilo caught the bus back to Cambridge the next day and then via Stansted home to Italy.



The Festival, titled *Strum Like A Viking*, encouraged attendees to dress up - and dress up they did as the picture of The Cuckoos (below) from Hitchin shows.

Eleven Ukulele groups from as far away as Market Harborough performed throughout the day, which included two professional workshops. The evening show included Marc Gallagher, Plastic Jezus, Danilo and the Hedge Inspectors. Comments from attendees that came from all over the country, praised the Festival and *The lovely town of St Ives*, which is now well established as an event to go to for Ukulele players.



Milly gives the Editor the low down on the HOW river mooring!



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

St Ives lose to FC Halifax Town in FA Cup

On an afternoon when their historic cup run came to an end Ives can still hold their heads high as their barnstorming second half display came so close to earning them reward against their National League visitors. Sadly the hosts had shown their higher-level opponents a little too much respect in the opening twenty minutes. All of the early pressure came from the Shaymen who ran out 3-0 winners.



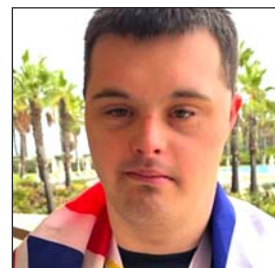
'Intense debate and poor behaviour' at CPCA

Board members at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority have been criticised for 'poor behaviour and political point scoring', its interim chief executive has said. Gordon Mitchell believes the authority needs to back decisions they have made and not send mixed messages to government. 'In recent months, the top of the organisation has fallen prey to intense internal debate, multiple investigations, public displays of conflict and poor behaviour and political point scoring,' he said. 'This has strongly contributed to a lack of focus on its responsibilities and, as a result, senior political and management capacity has been significantly diverted from the overriding purpose of the Combined Authority.'

Mr Mitchell presenting his assessment to the Combined Authority's Board said there is no expectation that the leaders of the councils will agree on every single issue they come to debate; there will be different points of view. 'The challenge for them coming into the Combined Authority Board is how to balance the local interests with interests for the wider area'. He believes all members need to support the majority decision for the benefit of their area.

William wins 3 medals

William Roberts of St Ives Swimming Club (SISC), travelled to Albufeira in Portugal last week and won two bronze medals and one silver medal at the Down Syndrome World Swimming Championships. The silver medal was achieved in the 4x200m relay, with William's leg a personal best. The bronze medals were won in the 4x100m freestyle relay and 4x50m relay. The head coach at St Ives Swimming Club, Andy Hunter, said: 'This is a fantastic achievement for William, Team GB and his parents. SISC are hugely proud of William's achievements.' William also achieved a personal best 100m backstroke time, placing him 9th in the world. Twenty-three countries and 163 swimmers participated in the championships, with Team GB prevailing as the winning team. Team GB collected 50 medals; 18 gold, 22 silver and 10 bronze in a very successful outing, with William playing a pivotal role.



Dear Erik,
This is appeal I would like to be inserted into the next edition of The Riverporter

CAN YOU HELP?

**THE SACRED HEART CHURCH,
NEEDINGWORTH ROAD, ST IVES.
WE ARE LOOKING FOR A VOLUNTEER
TO PLAY THE ORGAN FOR US ON A
REGULAR BASIS.**

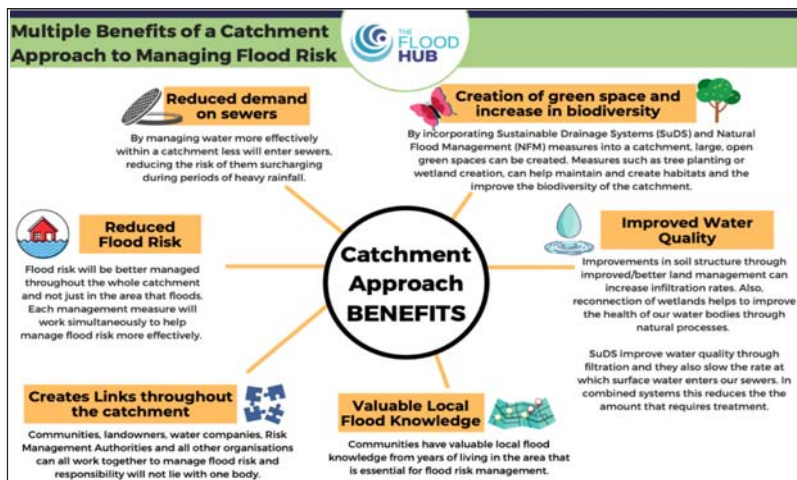
FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
james.howe@cantab.net

Thank you Angie.

Dear Erik,
**Please can you announce the following?
3 p.m. Sunday November 27th
Hemingford Ladies Choir invite
you to join us in
Music for an
Autumn Afternoon**

AT ST IVES FREE CHURCH WITH REFRESHMENTS
There will be a cash only retiring collection.
In support of St Ives Free Church.
Thank you Viv.

A Catchment-based approach to flood risk management - Is this something we can all get behind?



Our monthly Climate Cafés at St Ives Free Church on the 3rd Saturday of each month provide regular opportunities for us all to talk together about what's on our minds. At a recent Café we got talking about a catchment-based approach to tackling natural environment issues, which in particular helps to address flood risk.

A catchment is the area of land from which water flows into a river, lake or reservoir and in our case this is the River Great Ouse. This approach engages people and groups from across society to help improve their precious water environments. It has been developed by communities living in river catchments in the North of England working in partnership with the Environment Agency and other key local agencies and stakeholders. In the discussion, we began to consider what some of the benefits to taking this approach might look like for us here in St Ives (see image above).

We'd really value your thoughts and comments, with a view to running a workshop with St Ives Flood Action Group on how we might develop the Catchment Approach for St Ives further. We think it's something that will help to prioritise the importance of the issues of river health, flood attenuation and waste water management and health of our community.
email: stivesecoaction@gmail.com



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Calendar of events 2022

NOVEMBER

- Saturday 5th Hemingford Firework Display** - Gates open 5pm, Display 6pm.
- Saturday 5th Saints Crafters Fair** - The Free Church 9.30am - 3.30pm, Free admission.
- Saturday 12th November - St Ives Choral Society Concert** - Ein Deutsches Requiem at 7.30pm, The Free Church. Tickets from the Fair Trade shop: Adults £15 and £12 (concessions), accompanied children under 16 free.
- Monday 14th The Snowman Festival** - Snowmen begin to appear in the shops.
- Sat 19th Sun 20th St Ives Christmas Market** - Lights switch-on Saturday 5pm.
- Friday 25th COSI Lunchtime concert** - Ermine Streets Winds - a French programme (1pm).
- Saturday 26th Saints Crafters Christmas Fair** - St Ives Corn Exchange 9.30am - 3.30pm.

The power of NOW magazine

The Town Team has issued an apology to the Corn Exchange for the problems they faced on Tuesday 18 October when a number of people turned up for a meeting about the Masterplan for St Ives that was cancelled.

The statement continued... *We are aware that around twenty people did not get the message that the meeting had been cancelled and although a cancellation notice was posted at the Corn Exchange entrance a number of individuals decided to disrupt the running of the Corn Exchange and express their anger.*

We are saddened that this happened and that Corn Exchange staff were so rudely treated, which was completely unacceptable, and that as a result one person was permanently banned from the Corn Exchange.

Please be aware that neither the Corn Exchange or the Town Council were responsible for the meeting or for it being cancelled. The meeting was set up by the Town Team, which is a community group of volunteers who work hard to promote St Ives. The Town Team has no statutory role in these matters.

The Riverporter had announced the cancellation in issue RP119, which said:

NOTE: As the Town Council has now organised a meeting for the whole town, The Town Team has decided to cancel its Draft Plan meeting of the 18 October.

The people who turned up had seen the meeting advertised in NOW magazine.

NOW magazine comes out every two months and had gone to press before the decision was made to cancel the meeting. The Town Team had also put the cancellation notice on several local social media pages but it seems that this wasn't enough.

The Town Team said... *We were aware that several people had seen the cancellation notice as we received a couple of emails requesting to know why it was cancelled and we are sorry that our efforts failed to reach everyone.*

CUT OUT AND KEEP



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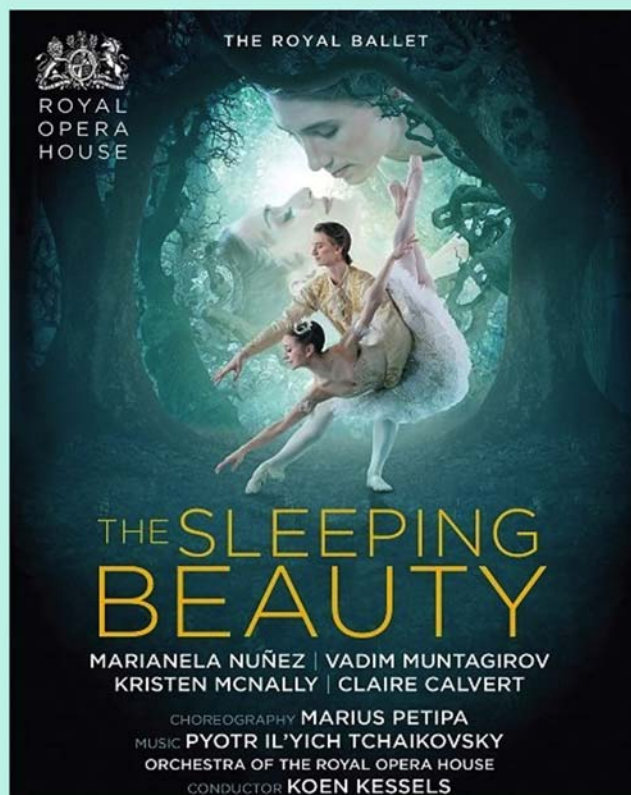
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At the
Corn Exchange

And, subject to
availability, on the
day at the
venue