

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## Dying trees, acres of plastic tubes, litter and a collapsing river bank!

That's the reality of the new A14 according to The Great Ouse Valley Trust. Although nominated for BBC Countryfile Magazine's 'Conservation Success of the Year Award' in 2018, National Highways seemed to have got it all wrong since then.

Graham Campbell, Chair of the Great Ouse Valley Trust, is asking Big Questions of National Highways with regard to the serious environmental impact of the new A14.

And it's so not much about the road itself and the effect of HGV emissions on our air quality, but more to do with the vistas of failed trees alongside it, and the miles of abandoned plastic tubes and litter that damage our ecology and blight our landscape.

It's also about the bank erosion under the viaduct at Brampton (see below right).

At first glance (below) all looks well. But the trees are not. And look the other way (bottom), and it's a scene of utter neglect and a blot on our Ouse Valley landscape.

And this is just one emergency pull-off.

Five years later these trees should be beginning to make a real difference to the disturbed landscape. In fact, there is very little to show for this huge, costly project, the vast majority of the trees have died. National Highways say they now intend to replant 162,000 new trees this autumn to try and find a new solution.

### The Great Ouse Valley Trust asks

- How did they get the tree planting so wrong?
- When will they remove the old plastic tubes and litter?
- Will they get the replacement planting right?
- When will they repair the collapsing river bank?

**The Great Ouse valley is an important asset for St Ives - it matters!**

*It's also about the bank erosion under the viaduct at Brampton (below). Citing lack of funds National Highways have left it like this for over two years.*



A scene of utter neglect and a blot on our Ouse Valley landscape. And this is just one emergency pull-off. All photos GOVT. The Editor has regularly used the A14 since it opened, was amazed by the amount of litter that appeared from the very first day. It is easy to blame the authorities for the lack of litter picking, but the real culprits are those drivers who throw out the rubbish in the first place. This is, as the current popular phrase says, a societal problem.

## Not to be missed

On Friday 28th April there will be a very special Chapel Arts concert featuring two of the very best classical guitarists around.

Daniela Rossi and Cristiano Poli Cappelli will perform in the beautiful setting of St Ives Free Church. They are much sought after on the international classical guitar circuit and have had compositions dedicated to them by renowned composers.



Cristiano will start the concert with a programme including:

J.S. Bach, Suite BWV997, Valses Venezolanos 3 and 4 by Antonio Lauro and 3 Preludes by H. Villa-Lobos.

After a break Daniela will play works by Giulio Regondi, Francisco Tárrega, John Duarte and Dusan Bogdanovic including and arrangement by him of God Bless the Child by Billie Holiday.



**7.30pm St Ives Free Church**

Tickets £10 from: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents) or in person from the Riverport Café Bar

## The rest of this years concerts

- Friday 26th May **Johnny 'Magic Boy' Wright and Chris Newman**  
Guitar wizards
- Thursday 29th June **Dickie de Vere & The Dorchester Mavericks**  
Music of the 20's and 30's
- Friday 28th July **Max de Bernardi & Veronica Sbergia**  
Country & Western, Folk, Ragtime and Swing
- Friday 29th September **The Tapestry Singers.** A capella singing
- Friday 6th October **Danilo Vignola.** Ukulele virtuoso
- Friday 27th October **Lexie Green and Johnny 'Magic Boy' Wright**  
Americana, Blues
- Friday 24th November **Kimberley Rew and Lee Cave-Berry**  
Very popular music

All tickets cost just £10 and can be purchased online at: [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents) or from the Riverport Café Bar  
A TOWN TEAM EVENT

## Something for everyone

Plans are progressing well for the town's Coronation Big Lunch on Sunday 7th May. Tables and chairs will be available for over 300 people, but as it may be very popular, the organisers are asking people to bring their own if they have them. It has been confirmed that many of the town centre businesses will be open, where food and drinks can be obtained. As well as activities for children and fun games for all we have live music for all ages, from the modern sound of the excellent 29th Funktion to the sophisticated easy listening of Mark Burton, and Opera Babe, Karen England.



Also the unique St Ives Coronation Mugs, that every primary schoolchild in St Ives will personally receive free from the Mayor, will be on sale. So there really is ... **something for everyone!**

# Popular refill shop, Ikigai wins national environmental award



Sponsor Andrew Dwerryhouse (centre) with Martin and Sarah Cooper of the St Ives refill shop Ikigai.

**The Refill Shop of Ikigai, based in St Ives, was crowned the Retail and Wholesale Activities Industry Champion at the Good Small Business Awards on Wednesday 22 March 2023 at the ceremony held at the Hilton Hotel, Liverpool.**

The event was the UK's first business sustainability awards with entry exclusively reserved for small businesses.

The judges were looking for small businesses that have shown progress in embedding sustainability strategies across the four awards pillars, Purpose-People-Planet-Profit, with applications backed up by verifiable evidence. Martin Cooper, owner of The Refill Shop of Ikigai, said: 'It was a complete surprise and a great honour to win the award.

'We have worked really hard to ensure everything we do has a positive impact on our planet, and that what we do can help others to do their bit for our environment too.'

The shortlisting criteria focussed on identifying evidence of business practices that take ongoing steps to ensure that their impact is good - for people and the planet.

The awards were founded by Garth and Claire Dallas, owners of Dallas Consulting. Small businesses make up 99% of UK businesses and account for around 48% of employment and 33% of turnover, and they must play a crucial role in achieving any national or regional sustainability targets.

Martin added: 'It was a truly inspirational event to attend, with so many people doing such great work to protect our planet and do some good for our world. And winning the award was the icing on the cake - a testament to the work we are doing to help our customers reduce their impact on our environment.'

**The Riverporter congratulates Martin and Sarah for putting St Ives on the environmental map.**

## BANDSTAND UPDATE

The refurbishment of the bandstand is almost complete and the finishing stages are being applied to the roof sections prior to despatch. It is a magnificent structure and the newly painted legs, finials and frieze have been collected ready for installation.

The work to install the bandstand will begin later this month and will be done in four stages, which should be finished in May or early June.

# Cambridge congestion charges

There has been a lot of debate about the proposed congestion charges for Cambridge which, like many cities in the UK needs to deal with increasing traffic and the problems of air pollution. The issue has led to public protests on both sides of the debate, and a public consultation had 24,000 responses. The Greater

Cambs Partnership that wants to introduce the charges said the funds raised could be used to improve bus services and cut traffic in Cambridge city centre by half. A spokesman for Cambs Against Congestion Charge said: 'Be under no illusion... the current poll standing is 81% against the congestion charge.'

### Proposed charges and exemptions

Category	Proposed charge levels	Category	Proposed discount / exemption
Cars	£5 per day	Emergency vehicles	Exempt
Powered two-wheelers (motorbikes and mopeds)	£5 per day	Military vehicles	Exempt
LGVs	£10 per day	Disabled tax class vehicles	Exempt
Vehicles with over nine seats (includes school minibuses etc) - except coaches and buses	£10 per day	Breakdown services	Exempt
Coaches	£50 per day	Dial-a-ride services	Exempt
Registered bus services	100% discount	Certain local authority operational vehicles, eg refuse collection vehicles	Exempt
Hackney Carriages (Taxis) and private hire vehicles	100% discount	Blue badge holders	Up to two vehicles get 100% discount
		People on low incomes	Tapered discount 25-100%
		Car club vehicles (official providers)	100% discount

**FENSTANTON - Lorraine 07568 444140**  
Tuesdays 5.30pm & 7.00pm

**ST IVES - Kathie 07772 868472**  
Tuesdays 9.30am  
Thursdays 5.30pm  
Fridays 9.30am  
Saturdays 8.00am & 9.30am

slimmingworld.co.uk

# Have you put your name down for the St Ives In Bloom 2023 Garden Competition?

The Garden Competition is back, with lots of advice for your garden available from our friendly expert judges. This year's closing date is Wednesday 31st May, and entry forms with all the details are available in the Town Hall - or get in touch with St Ives in Bloom on [siibinfo@gmail.com](mailto:siibinfo@gmail.com) or on facebook to have a form delivered to you. A visit to your garden will then be arranged during the week beginning 19th June.

Among the criteria for judging are: the WOW! Factor of the floral or edible displays; the design and maintenance of your garden; and any features which encourage pollinators and biodiversity. There are additional awards for Best community or neighbourhood gardens, so you could get together with your neighbours and give it a go.

Or have you got a green fingered young friend, to try for "Best youth garden"?

**Why not take the chance to show off your lovely garden!**

## VOLUNTEERING ON MONDAY 8th MAY

Meanwhile, St Ives in Bloom volunteers will be meeting on The Waits outside the Norris Museum for a special VOLUNTEERING MORNING from 10am to 1pm on Monday 8th May. There will be refreshments in the Methodist Church available all morning. You could help us with weeding or deadheading the plants along the riverside, or go on a litter pick, or pop over to Holt Island for a walk before or after your coffee break. For more details, get in touch on: [siibinfo@gmail.com](mailto:siibinfo@gmail.com)

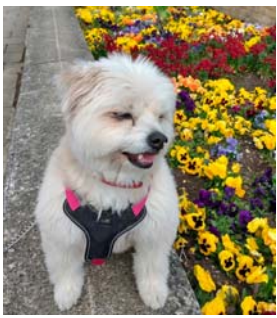
Contact us on: [siibinfo@gmail.com](mailto:siibinfo@gmail.com)

**St Ives in Bloom 2023 GARDEN COMPETITION**

**Are you proud of your garden, your community area or your business display?**

**Why not apply to be part of the St Ives in Bloom garden Showcase for Local Residents and Businesses?**

The criteria for judging the competition are itemised overleaf. If you would like to ask more about the details, email St Ives in Bloom on: [siibinfo@gmail.com](mailto:siibinfo@gmail.com) or ring/text Julie on: **07788 657568**



Erik will help water the flower beds



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

### Have you heard about the Future?

The other week I was asked by BBC Radio Cambs to comment on the new initiative from HDC called Huntingdonshire Futures Place Strategy. They had contacted me because they thought I would know about it and it was being discussed that evening's HDC meeting. I confessed I didn't know anything about it, but said I would read up about it and speak to them the next morning. You can see it on HDC's website and there is a 76 page document all about it.

I spoke with a few people, including councillors, and no one knew much about it despite it being launched last August. That night I watched the Council meeting on-line and heard Executive Leader of the council, Sarah Conboy, sing the praises of this strategy 'that will shape a vision for the future of the district by incorporating People, Place, the Economy and Environment'. In essence it is focus groups where local people are encouraged to join the conversation and explore the 'what ifs' that will define the area's future. Several focus groups took place last September and on the back of this the Place Strategy was produced.

**What does it say?** Well a lot, on many issues, and there is no doubt it has some very positive ideas that, if achieved, could make life for all in Huntingdonshire wonderful.

However I believe that much of this 'Utopian vision' is unlikely to happen, in my lifetime anyway. So on the radio I said that this initiative, to promote Huntingdonshire, as one of the best places to live in the country, which was fully supported by councillors, whilst a laudable aim, will distract from the work that should be done to transform our district now.

I am simply suggesting that Huntingdonshire would already be the best place to live in the UK if our local services worked properly and our environment was clean and safe and attractive (see article on A14 on the cover). If our town centres had easy access with a period of free parking, working toilets and the roads and streets were well maintained, clear of illegally parked cars that block pavements and if our planning department wasn't completely broken and causing additional costs and delays, then great opportunities might come as a result. Retailers will be more likely to thrive if footfall increases because our town centre is a nice place to be and this may prevent the continual decline in shops. Yes we need a vision for the future but practical steps now will help. Consultation is all well and good, but do we really need another survey to know what people want? Each year councillors are told this at our Annual Town Meeting. After all you can read what residents have been saying for the past 6 years in *The Riverporter*. (See all back issues at [www.theriverporter.uk](http://www.theriverporter.uk)).

### Tories vote against Djanogly selection



Jonathan Djanogly has failed to be selected as the Tory candidate for the new Huntingdon seat, following boundary changes. Losing by 12 votes to 9, local committee members said the recent revelations about the treatment of the Djanogly's housekeepers was the last straw. Mr Djanogly has not been the most popular of MPs, surviving the previous selection by just 2 votes.

### Another ex-councillor resurfaces

Jason Ablewhite, one time Conservative Police and Crime Commissioner and District Council Leader, has entered the political arena again. Having put his name forward as parish councillor for Benwick village near Chatteris, he will be elected as not all the seats are contested.



Readers will recall that Mr Ablewhite resigned from his PCC role in 2019, following revelations that he had sent a picture of his 'truncheon' to a woman who had visited the Police Headquarters (RP50). *The Riverporter* was surprised that Mr Ablewhite was not prosecuted, instead the woman involved was criticised by the Criminal Prosecution Service (CPS) solicitor (RP On-line issue 3). A search of Mr Ablewhite's house at the time revealed that he had live ammunition illegally stored (RP89). The CPS again decided to take no action. That is why he has no criminal record and can resume his political career.

### Waste incinerator set for approval

The 132 page Cambs County Council (CCC) report on the Woodhurst Envar application recommends approval. St Ives Town Council's objection was based on lack of demand, but the report shows that some waste travels a long way to Kent and Birmingham so there could be benefit of dealing with it locally. In respect of the health concerns, CCC commissioned an independent assessment of the air quality/health issues, which confirmed that they are unlikely to result in adverse impacts on health, via food or water. It appears that CCC have considered people's concerns and independent checks confirm an acceptable impact.

### Police rescue woman who fell off bridge

Saturday night quayside residents and Tap Room visitors were alerted by shouts of help from the old bridge as a woman fallen into the river from the old bridge and with the river running both very high and very fast she was swept away down stream very quickly. Emergency services were notified and swiftly on scene. Residents praised their efforts working in the pitch dark. This week police have issued the following statement ... 'Just after 1am last Sunday we got a call from concerned members of the public to say a woman had gone into the River Great Ouse in St Ives. Sometimes our work isn't just about making arrests and chasing criminals, it's about helping people and doing our best to save lives.'

Dear Erik,

**Subject: Noble's Field AGM**

I'm just writing to let you and your readers know that we at Noble's Field are having our **AGM on Thursday, 20th April at 7.30 at St Ives Rowing Club.**

Noble's Field is an often overlooked treasure of St Ives. It's a four-acre river meadow situated along the Thicket Path, not far from Holt Island, Copley's Scout Centre and the Burgess Hall. It is a wonderful scenic riverside spot, regularly used by boaters, walkers, picnickers and fishermen. Some generous benefactors in the early '70s purchased the Field to be held in trust for the recreation of the people of St Ives. We will also have a talk by Graham Campbell on 'The Work of The Great Ouse Valley Trust'.

Thank you very much,

**Tim Thomas**, Secretary, Noble's Field Trust.

Dear Erik,

**Subject: Station Road car trap**

Surely despite the signage warning of the guided busway 'No Entry', an easy solution would be to put a concrete barrier block low enough and wide enough for the busses to drive over, but high enough and wide enough to stop cars in their track.

Wouldn't cost the roadways department the earth.

Kind regards **Bruce Hobday**

*This letter was not sent to Erik, It appeared in the latest COPE News. The Riverporter has reported on the problems people face who are not on-line and this story about a St Ives surgery perfectly illustrates the issue.*

**Re the article 'The Rush to Digitalisation' February- March edition of [The Cope] news letter.**

I heartily agree with all that is said in the above article. I am affected by this problem 100% with everything being on line, which I don't do, and the elderly are without doubt being frozen out of modern life.

The most recent, and most alarming, is that my GP surgery in St Ives will only book an appointment request on line. When I queried this I was told I could go to my surgery and someone would do it for me.

I pointed out that if you are ill and needing an appointment to see a doctor the last thing you would want is to go to the surgery early - 8am, to have a member of staff request an appointment for you on their tablet, you then go home again and then go back again if you are given an appointment.

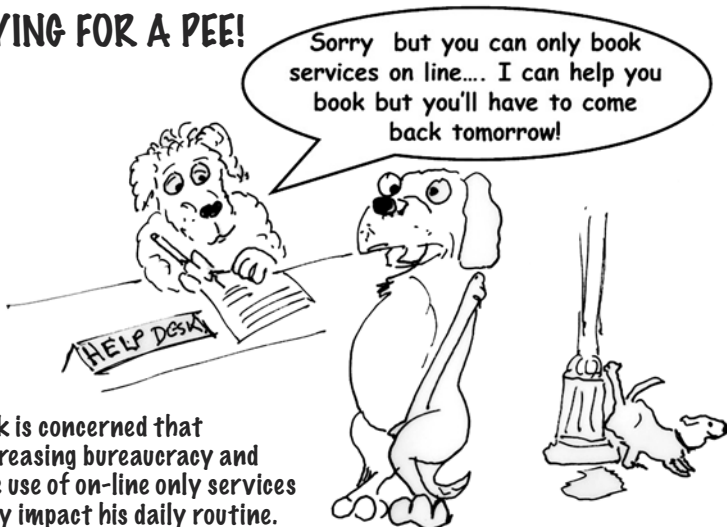
This is an appalling system created by them 'to make it easier' for patients!

How can that possibly be easier for patients? Easier for them maybe and ignore the inconvenience of the patients.

I don't have a computer and only use my mobile for calls and emails. I would be very interested to hear your comments on the above. Many thanks **Mavis**

**Dear Mavis, Erik is also concerned!**

### DYING FOR A PEE!



Erik is concerned that increasing bureaucracy and the use of on-line only services may impact his daily routine.

Entries Invited for Our Next  
Antiques & Interiors Sale  
on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> April



Sold In Our Last Interiors Sale

Silver Two handled Trophy London 1928 960g  
total weight  
Sold £500



9ct 19thC Gold Watch chain with  
rotating oval carnelian fob with  
carved crest  
Sold £480



Chinese Blue & White Jardinière with Flora and  
Fauna Decoration  
Sold £600

Hyperion Auctions, The Salerooms, Station Road, St Ives PE27 5BH  
[www.hyperionauctions.co.uk](http://www.hyperionauctions.co.uk) 01480 464140



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Working Mon/Wed/Fri - may include extra hours for  
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You would be leading a small staff team of caterers,  
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Good people skills are essential.

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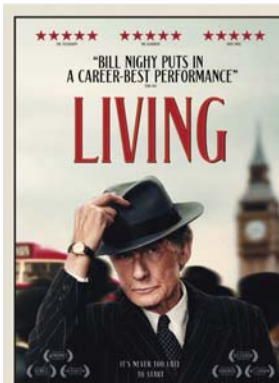
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**MADAME BUTTERFLY**  
Opera Special Screening  
Sunday 16 April 2023  
at 2:30pm, doors open 1:30pm

Royal Opera House  
1h 42m, Cert: U  
Tickets: £10



**LIVING**  
Thursday 20 April 2023  
at 7:30pm, doors open 6:30pm

Director: Oliver Hermanus  
1h 42m, Cert: 12  
Tickets: £5



**THE LOST KING**  
Thursday 4 May 2023  
at 7:30pm, doors open 6:30pm

Director: Stephen Frears  
1h 48m, Cert: 12  
Tickets: £5

After our screening of The Lost King,  
Screen St Ives will be taking a break for staff  
holidays. We will be back later in the summer.  
Please keep a look out for the date of our return.

Future films will include:  
*She Said* and *Tàr*

Tickets from [screenstives.org.uk](http://screenstives.org.uk) or in the Corn Exchange