

The Riverporter

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Is Scorchio making a comeback?



Early morning on The Quay with the sun scorched meadow beyond the river and bridge. The prolonged hot and dry spell makes fires more likely and dangerous. Photograph by John Souter

In the late nineties I visited Estoril, west of Lisbon, Portugal on business. As was my habit I tuned into local television and was surprised to see that a popular UK TV comedy show, *The Fast Show*, was on. Well actually it wasn't on, it was just the local weather forecast and everything was SCORCHIO.

I then knew where Paul Whitehouse and friends got the idea for their weather sketch. This year we are certainly seeing much more scorchio than cumulus nimbus and at the moment there is no sign of any change. This has been good for some businesses, such as boat trips and ice cream sales, although it may not be so good for mothers-to-be. Our first son was born in 1976 and my wife well remembers what it was like to be pregnant in a heatwave.

I never thought I would long for some decent rain so much, not just to water the garden, but to help clean the streets. Yesterday walking down town I noticed that the pavements are getting pretty foul. Regular summer showers normally help clear the pavements of discarded rubbish and food and all sorts of nasty droppings, which are now accumulating and looking decidedly unhealthy.

This leads one to wonder if this hot weather will become normal. A number of experts have been saying that one of the reasons it is even more extreme this time is that it comes on top of the effects of global warming, which has raised the average temperature by one degree.

This leads me on to *The Riverporter's* concern for the environment and in particular the overuse of plastic. Heidi, our environmental specialist came across a 'Fight The Plastic' questionnaire in the pretty Shropshire town of Bishops Castle recently. It seems

they are encouraging residents to be pro-active and try to use as little plastic as possible.

Affecting climate change dramatically requires governments to act, which is much more difficult now that leaders like President Trump refuse to acknowledge the effect is happening.

However reducing our use of plastic is something WE CAN ALL DO, as our *Riverport* articles showed.

There are signs that things are changing, but slowly and we can all do more. So we would be delighted to hear what our readers are doing to reduce our use of plastic. Unless ordinary people like us decide to do something little will change.

Here are 15 simple things we can all do:

1. Stop using plastic straws, even in restaurants
2. Use a reusable produce bag and wash it
3. Give up gum - it's made of a synthetic rubber
4. Use boxes instead of plastic bottles if possible
5. Purchase food, like cereal, pasta, and rice from bulk bins and use a reusable bag
6. Reuse containers for storing leftovers or shopping in bulk
7. Use a reusable bottle/mug for beverages
8. Take your own container for take-out food
9. Use matches instead of disposable lighters
10. Avoid buying frozen foods packed in plastic
11. Don't use plastic cutlery
12. Use cloth nappies
13. Make fresh-squeezed juice, not bottled
14. Pack your lunch in reusable containers
15. Use a razor with replaceable blades. ED

Beware the snatcher!

On the 20th July, police received reports of 3 robberies on Market Hill where purses have been snatched from shoppers in the area.

Shoppers are warned to keep purses and handbags out of easy reach of this opportune thief. If you leave a purse or handbag on a shopping trolley in easy reach, the thief will brazenly grab and run and it would appear that police are not equipped to do much to help.

At *The Riverporter* we get regular neighbourhood watch updates of crime in our town but the latest issue started with the following text ...

'I'm sorry that today's report is rather a



long one as there are quite a lot of items to mention. Unfortunately, there have been several thefts of purses and handbags in the town centre this week, as well as bicycle thefts, opportunistic burglaries and a robbery, amongst other crimes.'

In total 20 different crimes were listed, mainly opportunistic thefts and burglaries so we need to be careful, lock doors, keep valuables out of sight and make sure you report all suspicious behaviour to police by dialling 101.

THE Chapel Arts Season 2018

A series of concerts and events in the Chapel on St Ives Bridge

From Debussy to Titanic with harpist
Ruth Holden
Sunday 12th August
6pm for 6.30pm



Places are limited - Tickets £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives or

The Corn Exchange. For details

www.theoldriverportstives.co.uk

Screen St Ives DAWSON CITY: FROZEN TIME

Screen 2: Thursday 2nd August in the Tony Burgess Room.

Doors open at 7.30pm for all Screen St Ives shows and films start at 8pm. Refreshments are available before the screening. All tickets cost only £5, and are available online or in person at the Corn Exchange, St Ives.



CARNIVAL PARADE STEPS OUT

Blessed with great weather the Carnival Weekend brought out the crowds as well as some very strange people such as the Von Trapps, Noddy, Nuns and even a superhero.

Saturday's programme ended with a 'Proms' style concert with fireworks and Sunday was a day of music with a variety of bands entertaining the crowds. The event has become more of a music festival since it restarted around 6 years ago when it moved to Hill Rise Park from Warners Park.

The traditional carnival with a lot of community involvement seems to have declined with fewer floats in the parade.

Pictured right, enjoying the music on Sunday, is Lisa Winters of Ellis Winters Estate Agents, which was one of the sponsors and far right are some of the 'usual' revellers soaking up the atmosphere.



A Point of View

I'm very annoyed and I suspect I'm not alone. After all there are so many things to be annoyed about . . . Trump, Assad, Putin, Kim Jong-un, Love Island, Naked Attraction and Brexit to mention just a few.

What I am really annoyed about is that no one seems to care any more about the seemingly less important things that affect us all. While our politicians concentrate on Brexit everything is going to pot.

One of the main reasons I think people voted for Brexit was basically that things hadn't been going well in our country for a while. In some parts it's overcrowded and others deteriorating with fewer and fewer services. The source of my discontent goes back a way, when, looking after No. 1 took over from working for a greater community benefit, an attitude fostered in the Thatcher years that blossomed through the Blair decade and created 'Loadsamoney'.

A better Life?

I do acknowledge that most of us have a better and longer life now in many ways, largely due to technological advancements, but what annoys me is that it seems we have to accept the deterioration of so much as well.

Why is it that many people don't have a job that pays a decent wage and have to rely on food banks or even sleep on the streets?

Why is it that despite our wealth we can't get the streets cleaned, pot holes fixed and the pavements repaired?

Why do we accept drunks being sick and peeing in our streets and cars parked on roundabouts and blocking the town centre or driving over our bridge, hitting pedestrians?

Why do we accept that we rarely see a policeman, despite paying extra for them, and that local councils are unable to have enough staff to provide the services needed to keep our infrastructure going?

I won't even mention the appalling state of our education system or the failing health service but one thing seems clear to me, which is that had our politicians concentrated on running our country better, rather than looking after their own interests, we would not have had the discontent that led to a small majority voting for Brexit.

The blame for all our failings has been laid at the feet of the EU, in my opinion unjustifiably, and now we are likely to pay a heavy price. A situation that David Cameron created as he didn't need to have the referendum and he should have ensured that any result would have the clear support of the population.

A result with no clear majority?

Most ballots have to have far more than a 3% majority, to be statistically viable, and so Cameron walked away, no doubt with his PM pension intact, leaving the country divided and Theresa May trying to clean up the mess.

Perhaps now we are beginning to realise that there is no real alternative to us paying sufficient taxes to run our services properly and efficiently, preferably without interference from politicians, if we want a better and more equitable society. **Ed**

ST IVES ROOFTOPS



Photograph by John Souter

having your say ...

The Riverporter

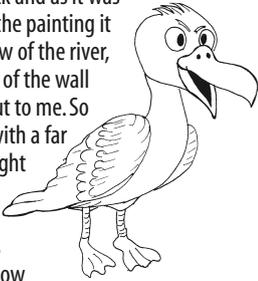


Dear Erik PAWS FOR THOUGHT

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

WHAT FUN

Dear Erik, As you know I spent some time recently painting the mural in Free Church passage. Whilst doing it I lost my camera, which was in my pocket available in case I needed to take pictures for reference. It had a picture of a gull landing, every feather of which I painted with care. However it looked like a bird in shock and as it was in the middle of the painting it destroyed the flow of the river, which the owner of the wall kindly pointed out to me. So I overpainted it with a far more pleasant flight of a red beaked something.



The good news is the camera has now been found, and you won't be surprised to know Erik, it was in the home of a cat! I had a curious incident whilst doing the painting. A man with toothache asked me how long the mural was. I asked him what he thought of it, but he seemed only to want to know how long it was and proceeded to lie down on the path saying that he was 6 foot tall and I could use him to work out the length of the painting!



A lost brush

One other thing, I also lost the presentation brush, given to me by the Mayor when he unveiled the mural. You may remember seeing the brush in the picture published in *The Riverporter* (see above), it was pink and had my name on it and disappeared soon after. I was wondering if perhaps a dog had run away and buried it. What do you think Erik? Anyway I would be grateful if anyone finds it and if they do, could they return it to Erik at 3 The Quay, who has promised not to chew it! A lovely post script to this saga is that a pretty woman came up to me and gave me a hug and kiss and thanked me for cheering her day with the painting. She said she could remember me reading a children's book that I had written called 'Flossie the Pigeon and the Theatre' to pupils at Hemingford Grey CP School nearly 20 years ago. It has now been arranged that I should read it again next term to the new generation of pupils. What fun.

Denny Gaudin

There are many sides to an Octagon

Dear Editor,

Four years is an eternity in politics. When an application for a bar licence for the Octagon near the Bus Station went to Hunts District Council (HDC) in 2014, many feared the worst. With a proposal to alter the building, open a bar and promote live and recorded music into the early hours, it seemed another case of the 'vibrant night-time economy' of St Ives potentially winning out.

The scale of the voluntary campaign by Save the Octagon (STO) surprised HDC, especially as it included a well-reasoned case for local groups using the building for community benefit. With STO's business case offering an alternative to the storage of bins and external resources to renovate and then lease the Octagon - HDC had a problem. Initially HDC seemed supportive, but began dragging its feet - more so when STO got a substantial award to help renovate the building, install basic services and begin a positive use for the building. HDC's prolonged failure to answer correspondence and confirm earlier assurances of a minimal-costing lease led to STO returning its grant and other offers of cash and in-kind donations and withdrawing in June 2016.

Remarkably, as STO withdrew, HDC and the local district councillors trumpeted that they had 'saved the Octagon' (actually from themselves, as it is an HDC property). Instead, HDC paid out £50,000 of tax payers money for partial re-cladding and re-roofing, and marketed it for commercial rent in Autumn 2016. By June 2017 it was under offer. One year on it remains under offer. No lease is agreed. In the meantime, HDC continues to store market refuse inside what is a cleaner building.

Where now for this historically important building?

Two years on, HDC has no rent, weeds are growing on roofs, the bins remain, and two District councillors continue to claim they saved the Octagon. In the meantime HDC staff leave decorative piles of bin bags outside the building and it still awaits its first tenant! Name withheld.



We are sorry but there was not enough space for Reasons to be Shut this issue. We do understand the Robin Hood may remain shut for about a year but we would love to hear from the owners what is planned for this important town centre building.

On Ilkla Mooar Baht'at

Town Mayor, Tim Drye revealed that at the recent Mayor Making ceremony he had his 'famous' cloth cap nicked!

Now Mayor Tim pays great attention to his cap and has been keen to wear it, especially when being photographed.

Our sources have been cautious as to pointing blame for the misdemeanour and a spokesperson from the Derby and Joan group were unavailable for comment, however, it has been suggested (outrageously) that our beloved news hound Erik is not above making the news as well as reporting it.

We are pleased to report that Mayor Tim has several of the aforementioned caps so business is as usual. So tell us Mr Mayor... Where do you keep your ferret? (only joking).



Mayor Tim Drye (right) in his 'famous' No.2 flat hat with his minder.

Well actually it's really Deputy Mayor Dan Rowe, looking like a minder before the start of the carnival. I suspect if he was minding anything it would have been the white Bentley they rode in!

CROSSING BLOCKED



Dear Erik,

The main pedestrian crossing with dropped curbs in the town centre (see above) goes from M&Co to the Free Church and is the best route for Mobility Scooters, Wheelchairs and for mums with pushchairs.

It has been blocked by benches for over two weeks now, presumably they were put there for the Freedom Parade on 30th June. Requests for the council to rectify the situation have so far been ignored. Pro bono publico.

Bunting forever?

Dear Erik, Union Jack bunting was put up for Armed Forces Day and was supposed to be taken down a few days later. Unfortunately this piece was left in a tree on the Sheepmarket when, whoever took them down, couldn't untangle it so just cut it either side and left it, presumably for the next national event! Gordon Walker



Dear Gordon, I think if you look carefully there are still Christmas lights in the tree! Erik

Metal Detecting Ban

It has come to *The Riverporter's* attention that 'detectorists' have been damaging Warners Park. The Park, famed for its mediaeval ridge and furrows is now covered in unsightly dead patches, which as well as looking a mess are dangerous and could develop into holes.

Everybody who uses the Park should be aware that nobody is allowed to use a metal detector there and they should report anyone doing so to the council.

Swan and son?



TRUMP DEMO



Dear Erik,

I had a great time at the anti Trump demo on Friday. What an amazing display of posters/ outfits/ etc. Such diversity in age groups and ethnicity there, contrary to the disgusting reports in the Daily Mail we were not rent a leftie but united against the negative and fascist ideology of Trump. What an amazing carnival of celebration we experienced together. Glad to be a part of this historic occasion. Marilyn Zanconato



Sign spotted at the Thames Traditional Boat Rally on Sunday.



A public consultation event about the development of Houghton Grange took place this week. If you would like information on the project you can contact the developer at: houghtongrange@aecom.com The consultation period closes on 13 August 2018.

Amore for



Morning coffee and
fabulous Danish pastries

•
Light lunches

•
Afternoon tea and
delicious cakes

•
Evening dinners with the
finest Italian food and wine

•
in our restaurant
overlooking the
wonderful Quayside

4 The Quay, The Old Riverport, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 5AR
Telephone 01480 700204

There's a Flea on the Quay!

This coming September 9th St Ives Town Team are organising a Flea market on the St Ives Quay. The Sunday morning event, if successful, could well become a regular feature. Stallholders will offer a range of antique, curio, and art and craft items on the beautiful Quayside setting. So come on down and grab a coffee and see what's on offer. If you would like to be a stallholder please let us know and drop an email to ... editor@theriverporter.uk



Darlinks!

Oh I do so love a shady nook down by the river, and I've just heard a whisper from those nice folk that look after the gorgeous nature reserve on Holt Island.

They are planning a special guided walk on 4 August. It's really for their members, but Heidi's hot tip is that for a donation anybody can tag along, subject to numbers.

Remember you heard it here first. All you have to do is let them know you want to come. I'll see you there – hope they have a hammock!

Byeeeee! Heidi xx



FRIENDS OF

HOLT ISLAND NATURE RESERVE

ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE A

MEMBERS GUIDED WALK

ON SATURDAY 4 AUGUST 2018

from 11 am to 1 pm - meet on Holt Island bridge



Marney Hall, local naturalist and Committee Member, will reveal the nature of the island habitat and its secrets in all its summer glory, show you the work of the Friends group and answer your questions. Call 01480 385999 to book.

Members free, non-members donation requested



Music on the Waits concerts remain as popular as ever despite the hot weather. FEST provide lots of cover, as this picture shows, when around 200 people enjoyed listening to the Manea Silver Band.

There are still 5 more concerts to be held every Sunday afternoon in August from 2.30 to 4 pm.

We are always pleased to support community groups by including details of their activities. Businesses may advertise for as little as £15 - email: editor@theriverporter.uk

ADVERTORIAL

ON-LINE or TRADITIONAL?

Mike Ellis of Ellis Winters says now there is a choice to make between on-line or traditional estate agents ...



**ellis
winters
&CO**

Estate agency is evolving and there is now a choice to make between selling 'on-line' only or through a 'traditional estate agent'. Both have their merits, but we think there is a better way and at Ellis Winters we have invested a significant amount of time and money developing the best of both worlds.

Most on-line agents want to be paid upfront and of course, the problem with that is, once they have your money there is NO incentive for them to work hard to sell your property. Their customer service leaves a lot to be desired as customers who have used them are now finding out. They may have made some of the process easier through technology such as booking viewings and receiving offers but they expect you to carry out your own viewings and to see

the process through to completion, often the most difficult part of any sale.

Traditional agents on the other hand only get paid on results and are usually excellent at helping you through the selling process, guiding and advising the best course of action as issues arise. However, their IT and on-line activity can often be sadly lacking and in this age of smart phones and tablets some of them are still in the dark ages.

At Ellis Winters however we use an innovative user friendly on-line system, backed up with our traditional way of working to make the customer experience of selling their most valuable asset far more transparent and easy to understand.

From booking a valuation or viewings on-line, to having a record of all viewings and feedback at the touch of a button, our trained sales team are always on hand to offer guidance when needed and of course you only pay us at the end of the transaction when we sell your house.

The best of both worlds!

To see how we are doing things differently at Ellis Winters please contact us on 01354 701000 or 01354 694900.



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