

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

There will be lights this Christmas

Following an article in last weeks Cambridge News, suggesting Christmas could be cancelled in St Ives due to the lack of funds raised, we can now announce that St Ives will truly sparkle this Christmas due to the generosity of its people and local businesses.



Last years town centre tree.

Organisers have said that they are incredibly grateful for every single donation made and for the sponsorship with this years headline sponsor Out Out Nightclub.

OutOut Nightclub's community-oriented sponsorship has bridged a funding gap, ensuring the much-anticipated Christmas Light switch-on event in St Ives will go ahead as planned. This sponsorship underscores OutOut Nightclub's commitment to fostering community spirit and celebrating local traditions.

Jon Hunt, the co-proprietor of OutOut Nightclub, expressed, 'We are beyond thrilled to contribute to a tradition that not only brightens our town but also brings the community together in celebration. It's about spreading joy, hope, and festive cheer, and we're honored to play a part in keeping this tradition alive.'

In addition to this a significant donation of £3,000 was made by the owners of The Dolphin Hotel.

The Christmas Lights Committee commented 'We have been blown away by the amount of money pledged from far and wide and to receive money to secure the event for the town has made this even more of a Christmas miracle!'

With live acts on stage from 11am, a festive market, special guests, the fair and a giant ferris wheel, the big switch on will really sparkle this November.

The market will open at 9am and run all day, with the switch on at 5pm. It will run alongside the Town Council's Farmers Market, and showcase our beautiful town.

9-11th October The Michaelmas Fair



The Mayor Phil Pope tries to win a prize having opened the three-day fair with the reading of the historic charter. This tradition goes back centuries although the current style of Fair probably started in the last century.

For more pictures see P2.

DIARY OF EVENTS

OCTOBER

Friday 27th - Free concert by the COSI String Ensemble St Ives Free Church 1pm.

Friday 27th - Chapel Arts concert with Lexie Green and Johnny 'Magic Boy' Wright. The Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from the Riverport Café Bar.

Saturday 28th - Celebrate Halloween at St Ives Corn Exchange Bars open at 7.15pm includes Halloween drinks offers! Tickets only £5.00!

NOVEMBER

Saturday 4th - Fireworks in Hemingford. London Rd, St Ives from 5pm.

Saturday 11th - Handel's Messiah. 7.30pm St Ives Free Church. This masterpiece is generally regarded as one of the finest examples of Handel's oratorios and is performed worldwide. St Ives Choral Society present it with full choir, four soloists and an orchestra of local professionals. Tickets available from www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society

Sunday 12th - Remembrance Sunday Parade. Market Hill 10.30am.

Monday 13th - Snowman Festival Trail starts.

A chance for children (under 12 years) to win a prize by completing the Snowman Trail available at participating stores.

Saturday 18th - Christmas Lights Switch-on. Market Hill with The Mayor and Father Christmas

Friday 24th - Chapel Arts Concert with Kim and Lee. Eurovision winner Kimberley Rew (Katrina & The Waves) and Lee Cave-Berry. The Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents.

Sunday 26th - On the Way to Christmas - an informal concert by Hemingford Ladies Choir. 3pm St Margaret's Church, Hemingford Abbots with refreshments and a retiring collection in support of the Church.

Sunday 26th - Fenstanton Christmas Market - 12-4pm, Fenstanton Church Centre, School Lane. Christmas gifts including Artisan Cheese, Spirit Distillery, Jewellery, Home Decor, Art, Floristry, Wax Melts, Cakes & Bakes plus Mulled Wine whilst you shop. Entry is free.

Friday 31st - Free COSI concert featuring violin and oboe solos. St Ives Free Church 1pm.

DECEMBER

Saturday 2nd - Mayor of St Ives Charity Concert with the RAF Wyton Band. The Free Church 7.30pm.

Saturday 9th - ArtsFest. Art, crafts and gifts for Christmas. The Corn Exchange from 10am. FREE entry

Saturday 16th - St Ives Choral Society Family Christmas Concert 6.30pm, Free Church, St Ives.

Saturday 16th - Sunday 17th - Two-day Santa and Snowman Festival. Games and craft activities plus a FREE Santa's Grotto. The Corn Exchange from 10am.

Ukulele Festival attracts players from far and wide



The third Old Riverport Ukulele Festival, held at St Ives Corn Exchange on Saturday 7th October proved a great success as 250 players from around the country enjoyed a day of strumming, learning and socialising. The Mayor, Phil Pope was on hand to present prizes including:

Left: Phil presents the prize of a brand new Maia UT-20 Tenor Ukulele to the best dressed Viking. Bottom left: Phil gives Danilo Vignola a certificate to recognise his contribution in bringing culture to St Ives and the Festival.

The Festival was the idea of Barry Reeves and Will Cowell. They were sure that there was a need ukulele festival in this area and they have

been proved right. In just three short years The Old Riverport Ukulele Festival is a firm fixture on the circuit. It attracts Uke groups from as far away as Market Harborough and Letchworth and the demand for places is increasing. The day includes workshops and a show by accomplished acts, which this year included A D Cooke from Lancashire and our very own group, new to the Uke circuit, The Lightwaves, who stole the show.

Next years festival is on Saturday 12 October and discussions about extending it across 2 days are taking place.

Below: *The Cambridge Ukes.*



Bad weather prevents Boat parade

The staging of an illuminated boat parade, with all goodwill and creative flair, is exciting! Despite the hard work, negotiating the red tape, pulling together a team, rallying the troops ...when it all comes together, it is a beautiful thing.



All was in place last Friday, for the much anticipated, biennial St Ives Illuminated Boat Parade on Saturday. Boaters were putting final touches to their boats, marshals briefed ... 'lights, music and go!' ... for what promised to be another brilliant parade ... when the heavens opened, and 'buoy' did it rain!

By midday, Saturday, the previously tranquil waters of The River Great Ouse resembled a chaotic scene from a Christmas jigsaw. Hire craft were drifting sideways on the current, whilst a vessel was

being rescued from the sluice gates and a brief encounter with the St Ives Bridge left another poor boat limping back to the marina, with a cracked top and windscreen. So, with high water levels, and a 'Caution' from the Environment Agency, it was an inevitable, if heartbreaking decision to postpone the event. A big disappointment for all concerned, spectators, organisers, and eager boating participants, who, after much enthusiasm and creativity were 'all dressed up, with nowhere to go'!

Grateful thanks and commiserations to everyone who had worked towards and prepared for the evening.

It was intended to reinstate the event as soon as possible, but this has proved too difficult in the short term; so, we plan to run the event again in a year's time on October 12th, when we hope it will be even bigger and better!

Here are some pictures of the wonderful creations dressed for the occasion that wasn't to be.



Blooming ambitious plans for cemetery

St Ives in Bloom is undertaking an ambitious new project to replace an overgrown area to the left of the main driveway with a beautifully laid out and fragrant garden.

The Royal Horticultural Society has provided a 'Connected Communities' grant to St Ives in Bloom which, with help from the Islamic community, has enabled the design and construction of a new contemplative garden near the Muslim grave area, a place for all visitors to the cemetery to sit quietly in nature.



The Build Team spend a day levelling the earth and putting in raised beds.

A central water feature, benches and arches will be part of the finished

garden. All that is needed now is some beautiful planting ... Would you like to help plant the fragrant damask roses, white tulips and narcissi, tall grasses and salvias? Come along on the Community Planting Day, Sunday 29th October from 10.30am - please bring a few gardening tools and St Ives in Bloom will bring the plants.

Get in touch on siibinfo@gmail.com for more details.



The raised beds are now built and filled, giving time for the soil to settle before planting day.



The overgrown area back in June.



Mehraj Ahmed cuts the bolts to size.



Phil Davies discusses the plan model with Shariqa Mokbul.

All the fun of the fair

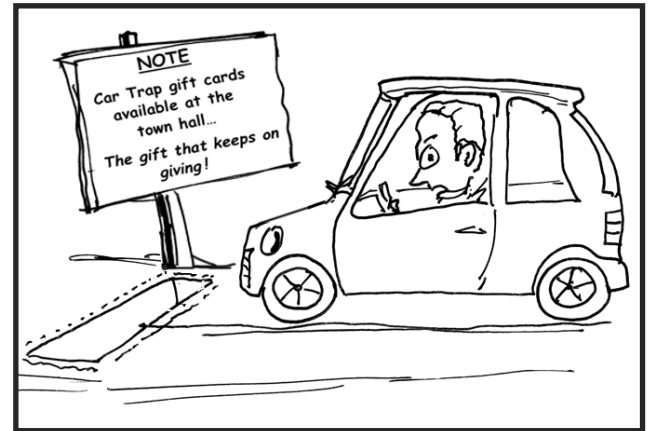


Pictured above: The Mayor, Macebearer, the Vicar and Town Councillors with Muriel Moore whose family ran the tobacconist and confectionary shop in the Broadway for over 70 years. So Muriel will have seen just about every Fair during that time.

Above: John Scarrott (right) whose family have been running the fair for most of the past 70 years with a large cuddly toy and The Mayor.



The story that keeps on giving



Snug opens in Free Church Passage

In the heart of historic St Ives' embrace, Down a cobbled alley, a secret space. A mere stone's throw from the River Ouse flow, Whispers of past tales, in the shadows they grow.

The Snug, a relic of a time long ago, When prohibition tales did echo and grow. St Ives bustled, a Riverport of yore, Tales of smugglers, mysteries, and much more.

Step inside, let the ambience entwine, Discover St Ives' finest craft beer and wine. In the heart of history, both old and new, The Snug awaits with ale just for you.



The Snug at night



The Snug is an Independent Micro Pub that is owned and operated by Matt (above), who lives in St Ives and also owns The Filling Station. Opening hours are 5pm until 10pm on Thursdays, 4pm until 11pm on Fridays and 1pm until 11pm on Saturdays.

You can book 1 of our 4 small tables for 1.5 hr slots or you can simply turn up and have a drink like a normal pub. All the details are on their website at www.snugstives.co.uk or on instagram at [page@snugstives](https://www.instagram.com/page@snugstives).



Erik loves your letters.

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

Neighbourhood Plan consultation underway

St Ives Town Council agreed at its meeting on the 11th October that they are happy for the draft St Ives Neighbourhood Plan (NP) can proceed to consultation, which will run for 7 weeks between Monday 16th October until Friday 1st December. The Council also agreed to fund a leaflet to be delivered to all homes in the town to help promote the consultation.

The draft NP has policies that protect the north of the town from new development, enhance green spaces, support better walking and cycling routes and sets out criteria for future changes in the town centre in response to the HDC Vision Document issued last year. This is an opportunity for the public and businesses to have their say before the plan is submitted to HDC for the final stages of the process. Once the report is completed it is put to a local referendum and if supported becomes part of local planning rules that developers have to comply with.

Copies of the NP and supporting documents will be on the Town Council's web-site: www.stivestowncouncil.gov.uk/Regulation_14_Consultation_Oct_2023_45793.aspx There will be paper copies available at the Town Hall and Library. There will also be a stall at the Farmers Market on the 21st October and on the 18th November for the public to talk to the NP team about the plans. The NP will also be discussed at the St Ives Civic Society meeting at the Free Church, St Ives on Friday 20th October starting at 19.30. Non members of the Civic Society are welcome to attend the meeting. Any comments should be sent by e-mail to np@stivestowncouncil.gov.uk or by post to the Town Hall by the 1st December. Comment forms are on the web-site or paper copies are available at the Town Hall and St Ives Library.

Erection of fence (Thicket Path) Update

The application for the landing stage (23/00123/FUL) has been withdrawn by the applicant and the fence in question has been removed. *The Riverporter* can confirm that the applicant has been cooperating with the Local Authority and has also agreed in writing to replant trees that were removed from the riverbank. We understand that HDC's Enforcement Officer will continue to monitor this site until the works have been completed to the Local Authorities satisfaction.

Arson at the How

A 47-year-old man from St Ives was arrested on Saturday (7 October) on suspicion of arson, conspiracy to commit fraud and possession of an offensive weapon. He has since been bailed to appear at Parkside police station on 6 January.



Picture: Media Imaging Solutions.

New Vision document described as poor

A detailed report about the new Vision, ex Masterplan document, pulls no punches as it condemns it as poor and almost a facsimile of the discredited Masterplan. The report says, 'It is a cut-and-paste of the Masterplan, even down to the retention of spelling errors.

It is unsurprising therefore that, amongst other problems are:

- No evidence is offered at any stage to support bland assertions.
- The case is based on data that are more than a decade old.
- Multipliers are based on the CAM which was scrapped in 2021.
- No data are cited from the 2021 Huntingdon Evidence Review. Instead, statements are made and unreferenced, with the same errors retained
- By cutting and pasting, the 2023 report has not reflected inflation and cost changes. Instead, the business case is based on imaginary numbers'.

Was it a waste of time and money?

The Riverporter understands that the Town must accept or decline these proposals as they are. HDC who instigated the 'Masterplan' have said that if none of the plans are accepted then there will be no funding and this document will simply be confined to history. The current District Councillors have had to go along with these proposals that were started by the former Tory led administration and whilst they wish to see improvements to St Ives, without funding and support from the public nothing will happen. Having spent at least £50,000 to produce a defective set of proposals, it surely was a total waste of money.

COPE's Zoom events continue this Autumn

These free online events offer participants a chance to share conversation and learn about a new, interesting topic. Our final Zoom events for 2023 will be:

Friday 10 November 1.30pm The Muddy Hoard. Discover the story of Cambridgeshire's largest ever coin hoard.

Monday 11 December 11.30am Scams and Fraudsters - how to avoid them. Nigel Sutton, Fraud and Cyber Security Advisor for Cambridgeshire Police, will lead the discussion.

Please register by emailing copetalkingtogether@hotmail.com or calling 01223 364303.

Town Council news

The Riverporter understands that the council will seek to adopt a replacement for Councillor Smith who resigned last month. Also that the Town Clerk and his nominated Deputy Nicola Riddell are currently on sick leave.

**Dear Erik,
Subject: Tidy up**

Good evening. Having picked up the latest edition and enjoying reading it I wish to share my views and thoughts about St Ives and its appearance. Regarding 'Great Job Guys' article which was welcomed I think it's about time The Broadway and Merryland drains had a spruce up. Certain drains along this stretch have been blocked for at least 5 if not more years. Fag ends etc., now here is an idea! How about when the fair comes to town and there are no vehicles about why doesn't someone go along the drains with a gully emptier whilst the roads are empty and clean the drains ... so if it does rain at the fair people are not going to get wet feet and premises may not get flooded. Regards **Andy**.

**Dear Erik,
Subject: Christmas Lunch**

I know its early but it would be nice if you could put together pubs, restaurants, clubs etc.. that will be doing a home delivery on Christmas Day and Boxing Day lunches as there must be a lot of OAPs/disabled that are alone.

Linda Fish

Dear Linda We have been in contact with the Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre (HVC) who have told us: The Christmas Day Lunch is being held in The Free Church this year after 3 years of lunches being delivered due to Covid and it is mainly for those who would usually be on their own on Christmas Day.

Also that HVC need volunteers to help. If you are able to volunteer for either Christmas Eve or Christmas Day at The Free Church or drive our guests to or from the Church please call them on 01480 301462.

**Dear Erik,
Subject: The Vision**

Surely rather than spend money on a pontoon at the Quay, (which is not an improvement) that will restrict some boats accessing the Quay, who bring money to the town, would it not be better to tidy up our town? Improve the pavements, potholes, encourage more businesses to fill the empty shops (by reducing rents?), tidying up the Dolphin site? Improve signage - That car trap?!

Yours sincerely **Diana Baldwin**

**Dear Erik,
Subject: COVID Vaccined**

Speaking as a pensioner who prefers not to drive, I sympathise with your correspondent Michael (RP 144) over the lack of readily accessible Covid booster venues.

I know my approach won't be for everybody, but since the booster programmes started, a couple of years ago, my preference has been to book at the Cambridge Grafton Centre venue, and use my bus pass on one of the regular Guided Busway services to be dropped off at New Square in Cambridge just by the Grafton. Costs nothing but time, and can fit in coffee, lunch and stroll around Cambridge.

As I say, not for all but a suggestion in good faith. Yours **Paul Higham**

**Dear Erik,
Subject: St Ives and bikes**

I despair!
Question: Having done myself, and the environment, a bit of good today by cycling into St Ives, what inane greeting awaited me?

Answer: Notices plastered all over the railings near Cromwell's statue stating 'Do not attach your bike to these railings'.

No reason or explanation given, of course ... Just 'Don't'.

Thankfully, approx 20 cyclists had already ignored the instruction, so I joined them. Why does the Council want to discourage cyclists from leaving their bikes securely in the town centre? None of the locked bikes were a hindrance or nuisance to others pedestrians and never have been.

There were no signs of anyone preparing to paint the railings (the only reason I could think of) so I just did my shopping and cycled off, irritated.

I would otherwise have stayed longer and, almost certainly, spent more money on non-essentials ...

So, who lost out? The town's traders, of course. Well done, St Ives Town Council!

Yours in bemusement **Reg** of the Hemingfords.

Dear Reg, It may not be the Town Council but the County or District who are responsible for the notices.

**Dear Erik,
Subject: The Masterplan**

I have recently read *The Riverporter* Issue 144: 29 September 2023.

I know all of the questions below are rhetorical and have probably been said before. But I just felt I had to contribute.

What is the point of the St Ives Neighbourhood Plan? We are told it is consultation 'to inform planning decisions regarding development proposals.' Which in theory is great as it is local residents considering local requirements. So then comes the 'Masterplan' which can dismiss and bypass all of that? What happened to democracy?

I agree with the resident who stated it would be better to have nothing than the ridiculous proposals for a pontoon extension on the Quay. No thought or consultation given by this 'body', to the individuality of the town.

It seems very much like a bullying attitude to me. It also sounds like too many levels of bureaucracy as a way of redirecting and potentially wasting, money which could be used more thoughtfully.

Perhaps a totally 'independent council' is the answer? Where the value of contribution listed on our Council Tax notification is paid directly to the local Town Council. Who then allocate accordingly any improvements suitable for the Real Local Community and infrastructure.

Yours sincerely **H McConville**

Dear H, Please see the article right. It is a very shortened comment of a long list of errors in the Vision, as it is now called, which is unlikely to ever be realised due to lack of funds.

HYPERION

Entries Invited for Our Next Antiques & Interiors Sale on Saturday 4th November



Sold In Our Last Interiors Sale



Boxed Tag Heuer Formula 1 wristwatch with diving strap with papers CAZ1010
Sold £500

Collection of Boxed and unboxed Corgi & Dinky Super toys and Major
Sold £500



A Good Collection of British Coins. 2 Folders of Coins to include Edward I Penny, Silver Three Pence pieces, Half Crowns etc
Sold £200

Hyperion Auctions, The Salerooms, Station Road, St Ives PE27 5BH
www.hyperionauctions.co.uk 01480 464140



The Art Studios

As many of you must have seen, the empty space that Just Sharing left in the Free Church, has slowly been moved into by The Art Studios. It is a space for three creative professionals to work on their art and profession, and give opportunities to local artists to display and sell some of their art.



The three artists

In the office we have Art therapist Claire West, she will be in three days a week. More information can be found on her website www.clairewestcounselling.co.uk

In the retail space we have Carol Law, who does illustrations, children's books and ceramics. She will also be in for three days a week and is more than excited to offer the opportunity to buy some of her art in the form of cards, prints and ceramic items. <https://www.carollawillustration.com>

And lastly, we also have Chaja Verkerk, a multi media artist with a focus on textile art. She has several poems, cards and prints for sale from her last exhibition about Loss. She will be in most Wednesday afternoons and weekends. www.chajanadiaverkerk.com

Alongside that we have art from local artists, and art books from River Port Books. If you are a local artist and would like the chance to display and sell your own art, or you would like to host a workshop please get in touch with Chaja via theartstudios.stives@gmail.com.

St Ives & Music - Don't miss . . .

FRIDAY 27TH OCTOBER
Lexie Green and
Johnny 'Magic Boy' Wright

7.30pm in the Riverport Café Bar. Tickets: £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from the Bar.





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BARBIE

Thursday 2 November 2023
Screening starts at 7:30pm
Doors open 6:30pm
Tickets £7
Director: Greta Gerwig
114m, Cert: 12A

Barbie is an American fantasy comedy film directed by **Greta Gerwig**, from a screenplay she wrote with **Noah Baumbach**. Based on the Barbie fashion dolls by Mattel, it is the first live-action Barbie film after numerous computer-animated films and specials. The film stars **Margot Robbie** as Barbie and **Ryan Gosling** as Ken, and follows the pair on a journey of self-discovery following an existential crisis.



A MAN CALLED OTTO

Thursday 7 December 2023
Screening starts at 7:30pm
Doors open 6:30pm
Tickets £7
Director: Marc Forster
121m, Cert: 15

A Man Called Otto is an American comedy-drama directed by **Marc Forster** from a screenplay by **David Magee** and stars **Tom Hanks** in the title roll. When a lively young family moves in next door, grumpy widower Otto Anderson meets his match in a quick-witted, pregnant woman named Marisol, leading to an unlikely friendship that turns his world upside down. The film is a remake of the 2015 Swedish film **A Man Called Ove**, based on the 2012 novel by **Fredrik Backman**.

Tickets £7 from screenstives.org.uk or in the Corn Exchange