

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Sometimes we just scratch the surface

An article in last Saturday's Guardian said the number of local journalists scrutinising councils, interviewing MPs and keeping track of local developments fell by 9,000 over the past 15 years, which MPs and experts have said is having a devastating effect on the scrutiny of local democracy.

A reader, who made us aware of the article, said it made them think of *The Riverporter*. Well it was one reason why we started this paper, as the other local papers were not reporting on events in St Ives. Of course it's quite difficult to always give totally accurate reports for a variety of reasons, including that some organisations want to keep some things secret and don't communicate with us and sadly some people just lie.

Over the past year we have reported on several matters involving the Town Council and councillors which have never quite been resolved.

One such matter was about the running of the Burleigh Hill Community Centre, that appeared in RP137 last June, when we reported on a Council Meeting at which Councillor Andrew Riddell gave a critical verbal report, that was later determined to be beyond the scope of the Council.

Last month (RP153) we reported that the Council issued an apology to Councillor Burke and Angela Dickinson, former Trustees of the Burleigh Hill Centre, because of the consequences of the June meeting that resulted in them being wrongly accused of improprieties.

The true effect of last June's meeting is now coming to light and appears to include unjustified criticism of Burke and Dickinson, the resignation of Councillor Craig Smith (see RP144), unhappy with what had happened, and since then the dismissal of the former Town Clerk, Matthew Price.

Eye taken off the ball

To some extent this created an atmosphere of distrust particularly between councillors and staff. The details of Matthew Price's dismissal have not been given, but there was obviously serious concerns about his behaviour that prompted the Council to sack him. This not only

proved costly but meant the Council wasn't able to function properly for some time. It is hoped that the appointment of an experienced Clerk, Libby White (RP153) will get the Council back on the ball.

Mud sticks

The Riverporter understands that some people still think funds disappeared from Burleigh Hill Community Centre, despite there being no evidence of this.

Lucky St Ives?

'The local newspaper has been dying for years... a very real problem for democracy,' said Jonathan Heawood, Executive Director of the Public Interest News Foundation. The Guardian article also said that more than 4 million people in the UK live in 'news deserts' without adequate local journalism. Not so in St Ives?

Well we try hard at *The Riverporter* to bring you the news even if we do overdo the idioms and metaphors!

A NEW 'NATIONAL LANDSCAPE'?

The Great Ouse Valley Trust pushes to get special status for the Great Ouse Valley and Washes.

In 2014 a submission for the Great Ouse Valley to be designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty failed. As the Government is now aiming aim to get 30% of our land area protected for nature by 2030 ('30 by 30' policy), Natural England is looking to designate new 'National Landscapes', within areas of the country where none exist at the moment (a 'levelling up' policy?) The Great Ouse and Washes is top of their list.

Graham Campbell, Chairman of the Great Ouse Valley Trust (GOVT) said: 'The Great Ouse Valley is one of the most beautiful areas in the East of England. It has unique landscapes, tranquil water meadows and a rich history of water mills since the Romans. It has twice as much water as the Norfolk Broads and extends into the vast wetland of the Ouse Washes. However, Cambridgeshire has fewer areas of land managed for nature in the UK and the least tree cover.'

GOVT is delighted to report that its change.org petition has received 550 signatures in just the first week, and on Wednesday Mayor Dr Nik Johnson and the board of the Cambridge & Peterborough Combined Authority offered their full support to help carry the message to Government. This step forward is heartening but GOVT say they need to keep the petition going. You can register your support also at <https://chnng.it/s9rzBLQ7Bc>.



Spring is Sprung . . .



And what better way to spend Easter than enjoying these FREE events

Good Friday 29th March at 7.30pm in the Corn Exchange with the 5-piece Clare Hayes Band.



Saturday 30th March from 11am Morris Dancing with Fenstanton Morris and Sutton Masque.



Easter Monday at 7.30pm in the Corn Exchange a dance with the 5-piece Elusive BLACK DOG Ceilidh Band.



DIARY OF EVENTS

Here are some events to look forward to this year.

Of course if you wish to inform us of your events please email: editor@theriverporter.uk

MARCH

Friday 29th - The Clare Hayes Band - Smooth country, blues, three-part harmonies and rip-roaring solos. A **Free event** at 7.30pm in the Charter Hall, St Ives Corn Exchange.

Saturday 30th - Morris Dancing with Sutton Masque and Fenstanton Morris in the Town centre. Watch or join in this fun and free event.

APRIL

Monday 1st - The Elusive Black Dog Ceilidh Band
A **Free event** at 7.30pm in the Charter Hall, St Ives Corn Exchange.

Thursday 4th - Beer Festival - St Ives Corn Exchange 5pm until late.

Friday 5th - Beer Festival - St Ives Corn Exchange 5pm until late.

Saturday 6th - Beer Festival - St Ives Corn Exchange. Noon - 4pm and 6pm until late with live music.

Saturday 6th - Greener Plants for a Greener World, Methodist Church, 10am to 3pm.

Friday 19th - Community Day and Annual Town Meeting, Corn Exchange from 10am. Town meeting starts at 6pm.

Friday 19th - Federico Pecchia - Argentinian Guitarist playing Tango's and more in St Leger Chapel on the Bridge at 7.30pm.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a free concert as we are unable to charge for concerts in the Chapel. However space is limited so please book at www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives to reserve a seat. You may make a donation if you wish.

Saturday 27th - Mayor's Ball - Burgess Hall. Details from the Town Hall.

MAY

Saturday 4th - Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Concert with Connor Selby - **UK's Blues Artist of Year nominee**. St Ives Corn Exchange from 7.30pm. Supported by Stella Hensley & Chris Newman. Tickets: £10 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or St Ives Corn Exchange.



Saturday 11th - Daniela Rossi - One of the finest classical guitarists around launching her long awaited recordings of the works of Giulio Regondi. St Leger Chapel on the Bridge at 7.30pm.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a free concert as we are unable to charge for concerts in the Chapel. However space is limited so please book at www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives to reserve a seat. You may make a donation if you wish.

Wednesday 8th - Mayor Making - St Ives Corn Exchange.

Thursday 9th - Sat 11th - GUYS AND DOLLS, the fabulous musical presented by The Centre Theatre Players. The Burgess Hall of One Leisure. Tickets £12 and £15 from www.ticketsouce.com/burgesshall or reception.

Saturday 11th - Cabaret Rhumba - A Night of Burlesque. St Ives Corn Exchange from 7pm. Tickets: £16 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents.

JUNE

Saturday 6th - Sebastian Pompilio and Justin Hyer return after last year's successful Amnesty International concert. St Leger Chapel at 7.30pm.

PLEASE NOTE: This is a free concert as we are unable to charge for concerts in the Chapel. However space is limited so please book at www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives to reserve a seat. You may make a donation if you wish.

Sunday 23rd - Picnic in The Park. Warners Park from noon. **FREE event**.

Thursday 6th - 80th Anniversary of D Day.

Saturday 8th - Repair café - Methodist Church.



Superb, intimate concerts in the comfortable Riverport Café Bar on the last Friday of each month.

Friday 31st May - The Lightwaves - Playing well known numbers.

Friday 28th June - Lexie Green and Johnny Wright - Americana.

Friday 26th July - COSI String Quartet - Playing a range of classics.

Friday 30th August - Huntingdonshire Guitar Ensemble - Seven guitarists playing a programme to suit all tastes.

Friday 27th September - GetNotGot - Contemporary jazz and funk.

Friday 11th October - Upwood Ukuleles - Having fun with Ukuleles.

Friday 25th October - 4 Winds Sax Quartet - Four exceptional players.

Friday 29th November - Chris Newman & Humfry Finkel - Ragtime.

All start at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 from the Bar or from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents.



yes you can
with
**Slimming
World**

**Would you love to
Socialise? Enjoy meals out. Go on holiday?
And lose weight?**

Find out how in one of your local groups!

**ST IVES - The Burleigh Hill Centre
Constable Road, PE27 3ER**

**Tuesdays 9.30 am
Thursdays 5.30 pm
Fridays 9.30 am
Saturdays 8.00 am
& 9.30 am**

**Kathie 07772 868472
Vikki 07955 155215
Kathie 07772 868472
Kathie 07772 868472**

THE OLD RIVERPORT JAZZ & BLUES FESTIVAL 2024 Introducing Brooks Williams & Aaron Catlow

This combination of a superb guitarist/songwriter and one of the best fiddle players around, will provide a concert you will not want to miss. January 2020 marked thirty years since Brooks Williams' first album came out. After twenty-eight recordings, countless international tours and festival appearances, and miles on the road, when it came time to put together an album reflecting songs from across those thirty years, Williams immediately thought of fiddler Aaron Catlow. The two met on a tour in The Netherlands in the snowy winter of 2019.

'I loved his tone and vibe immediately' says Williams, 'the breadth of styles under his fingertips reminded me of how I think about my music and I thought he'd bring a great sound to the project and tour.'

And so he did and they have continued to please audience ever since! The interplay was instantly, and intuitively, present.



Aaron Catlow is half of the Bristol based duo with Kit Hawes. Their take on acoustic and folk music is fresh and inventive. They re-shape traditional music as well as write their own songs. Songlines calls Catlow *'Fleet fingered'*, R2 Magazine remarks on his *'dexterity, energy and passion'*.

You can see them at the Golden Lion Hotel on Thursday 12th September at 8pm.

Nominated for Blues Artist of the year at the UK Blues Awards 2024

Connor Selby

Saturday 4th May
St Ives Corn Exchange
Concert starts at 7.30pm
with support from Stella Hensley and Chris Newman.
Tickets: £10 from the Corn Exchange or from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents

Sound Baths come to St Ives

A new relaxation and wellbeing initiative is launching in St Ives on April 7th.

Musicians Sue Szymanski and Jo Gregor of Soulcentred Sound have been holding relaxing sound baths in Bury St Edmunds for almost three years and are delighted to be bringing their offering to the Corn Exchange this Spring (see page 4). Using sound for wellbeing has its roots in both eastern and western traditions, and ancient and modern

practices. Jo and Sue co-create vibrational soundscapes in the company of their incredible instruments - hand beaten gongs, singing bowls, percussion, voice, drums and more - each sound journey being uniquely sculpted in the moment.

These sounds occupy a busy mind, taking you on an internal journey in a similar way to meditation, allowing the body to fully let go and receive precious time to relax and restore whilst lying in comfort. Previous

attendees of their sessions report a wide range of benefits including reduced tension, fatigue, anxiety and depression; pain reduction, as well as improved sleep, increased creativity, and feeling of calmness and bliss. The session offers a beautiful and nourishing opportunity for time out from a busy world to enjoy some deep rest and transformation.

The Sound Baths will be held monthly on the first Sunday of the month upstairs in the Corn Exchange from 10.30am to 11.30am, and cost £19. Booking is essential at: bookwhen.com/soulcentredsound

The Riverporter

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



having your say ...

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



Not long now for Erik to enjoy the Morris Dancing.

Dear Erik, Oh my goodness look what happened this morning? I think spring arrived on Saturday.



Woof! Luka That

Dear Erik, Following on from the picture on your issue RP154, 8th March, another sign that sprung up, on Green Leys, pointing along the footpath to One Leisure incorrectly lists it as The Outdoor centre instead of The Indoor centre. How to waste money and confuse people. Dave



Dear Erik, Just curious to know how many other car owners like me, unlucky to have an 'A' as the first letter in their car reg number, are wandering between the St Ives ticket machines on every visit trying to find a machine that will accept the letter 'A' when logging in? Stewart Denham

Dear Stewart, The Editor also had the same problem in a Huntingdon car park. HDC told us 'We are aware of an issue on two pay and display machines in St Ives and are replacing the keypads on them, as they become available from the manufacturer, with a version designed with an extra layer of protection to prevent damage. Where we are aware of an equipment issue, if members of the public omit a character in the vehicle registration number then no enforcement action will be taken as a result of the omission.'

GREENER PLANTS for a GREENER WORLD

Everybody is invited to call in to a free 'gardening for wildlife' event in the Methodist Church on The Waits in St Ives, being held on Saturday 6th April from 10am until 3pm.

The Wildlife Trust, the Hill Rise Allotment Association, the EcoFaith group and St Ives EcoAction have joined together with St Ives in Bloom and Cranbrook Plant Nursery to explain and encourage the best way to garden to create both a beautiful display and the perfect habitat for wildlife to thrive.

This year's theme of Britain in Bloom is 'Friendship'. All the community groups do their best to increase friendship within their environment towards both people and pollinators (and even encourage a more positive attitude to the slugs and snails!).

If you would like more details of the event or are able to help on the day, please get in touch on siibinfo@gmail.com or visit the St Ives in Bloom website, where there is also a donations page for this year's fundraising - **Donate/St Ives in Bloom**

Help at Home Volunteers Needed

Help at Home volunteers provide vital practical support in the homes of families caring for children with life-threatening conditions.

This practical support ranges from things like gardening, decorating or any other tasks the family needs doing like, dog-walking; cooking; cleaning; shopping; sibling support and DIY.

This kind of support offers EACH families a needed reprieve and allows for more time to spend together. See the website for further information.



OTHER NEWS

Riverporter says thanks

Firstly thanks to Bridget Flanagan for bringing this volunteer to our attention and thanks to Alan Munro (right) who has single handedly cleared the whole stretch of the Harrison Way footpath/cycle way at least twice. From the waterskiing lake to the Guided Bus crossing. He is now doing the area near the crossing at Jones' Boatyard. The pathway was so overgrown that it forced users closer to the road and the lorries and traffic. He has done a very good job. Not part of any group such as the St Ives In Bloom, just a quiet volunteer - like many others out there. Thanks Alan.



Rescue Centre urges dog control



Two dogs attacked a cygnet near the River at St Ives at about 08:30 GMT on Monday last, The Waterfowl Sanctuary said. Graham Porter, from the charity, said the incident lasted 'several minutes'. The RSPCA said dog owners had a legal responsibility to keep their dogs under control in public places.

The bird was being treated with antibiotics at the rescue centre in Godmanchester for the bites that went through the skin and tore a bit of the muscle. Mr Porter said: 'A week rarely goes by when I don't have to patch up an attack by a dog on a swan.'

A Cambridgeshire Police spokesperson said it was contacted shortly after the attack in London Road and added: 'The owner of the dogs put them back on leads and left the area.'

Composer announces Charitable Live Album

St Ives local, Edward Piniger releases new live album with all proceeds going to support the charity Shine in Spring 2024. Shine is a leading charity providing specialist advice and support for people with spina bifida and hydrocephalus across England, Wales, and Northern Ireland and supports thousands of families annually.

'My ambition is still the same as it ever was, to create music that moves people. Having a personal connection to the charity Shine, I decided to donate all proceeds from the live album as my way of thanking them for their work,' said Edward. Surfacing (Live) will be distributed worldwide by CDBaby on the 11th March 2024. For access to artwork and audio please visit <https://edwardpiniger.hearnow.com/>.



County Council latest news

Regarding the Broadway scheme - Cambridgeshire County Council have asked us to let you know about the drop-in event they will be hosting about **The Broadway walking & cycling scheme on Wednesday 27th March between 4 and 6.30pm in St Ives Town Hall.**

Please come along to find out more about the project, the changes being proposed and how you can feed back your views.

The County Council also said. 'Overall, it is envisioned that the changes will create a more pedestrian environment, rather than the existing vehicular/carriageway one, whereby making The Broadway more inviting to pedestrians. [Hopefully] footfall will increase, and new businesses will be encouraged to move to the area.' The draft Order, together with a map showing the roads and lengths of road concerned and a statement of the Council's reasons for proposing to make the Order, may be examined via: <https://consultation.appyway.com/huntingdonshire>, and select the Order "CCC Various Roads St Ives Waiting Restrictions Street Parking Places Order 202-".

Town Council co-opts a new member

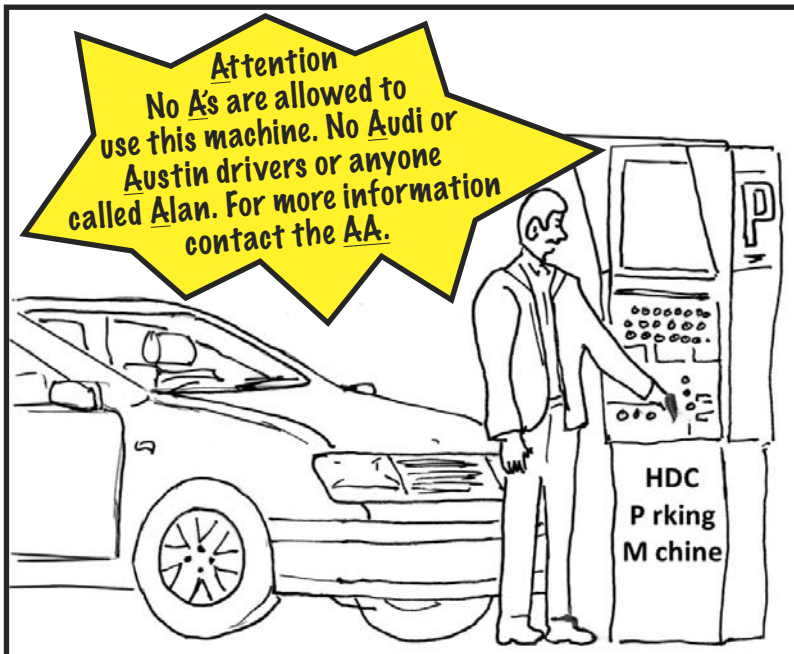
On last week's council agenda, councillors were asked to consider co-opting someone for the South Ward vacancy, created when Monica Mallol Wright resigned in January. There were two candidates a Mr Martin Gill and Mr Martin Page. Mr Page, a Chartered Town Planner who has lived in St Ives since 1984 and worked for HDC and Barfords was selected by councillors.

Old faces mentioned in dispatches

Long-time readers will remember two people who made the headlines in past issues of *The Riverporter*. For different reasons they cropped up again in the news. Jason Ablewhite's name sprung to mind when the Government's new Cyber-flashing law saw it's first conviction.

Meanwhile County Councillors Stephen Ferguson and Alex Bulat discussed the role of County Councillors on a video link. Although they thought the £11,000 allowance was not enough to do the role properly, referring to Ryan Fuller (who has allegedly moved to Thailand) Councillor Ferguson said it was outrageous that Councillor Fuller only attended two meetings a year (the minimum to get the allowance) and only stayed for half of those meetings. He suggested that every single person who voted for him or lives in his Division should be offended by that.

Ed's Note: Ironically this week I received notice of my old-age pension for the year. It will be slightly less than Cllr Fuller's £11,133 allowance for attending less than 6 hours a year at Shire Hall! Cllr Fuller did attend Tuesdays County Council meeting, his first this year, and avoided being kicked off the Council. A cheap return flight to Bangkok is around £600.



Sound Bath

First Sunday of the month

Starts Sun 7th April 2024 10.30am - 11.30am

The Corn Exchange, The Pavement,
St Ives, Cambs, PE27 5AD (upstairs)



With Sue and Jo from Soulcentred Sound
Come & take refuge from all of life's busyness & chill
with the sounds of gongs, singing bowls, chimes, etc

2024 dates - all first Sundays 10.30am - 11.30am
May 5th, June 2nd, July 7th, Oct 6th, Nov 3rd, Dec 1st

To book:- bookwhen.com/soulcentredsound
advance booking essential | numbers limited | £19
For more info contact Sue 07917 624381 or
email soulcentredsound@gmail.com
Event details facebook.com/jogregor.soulcentred

ST. IVES COMMUNITY DAY

Friday 19th April 2024 at The St Ives Corn Exchange

Come and find out more about local organisations and community groups

10am-2pm COMMUNITY COLLECTIVE



The Annual Town Meeting will be after from 6 to 8pm

For any questions then please contact Jane on stivescares@stivestowncouncil.gov.uk or 01480 388929

HYPERION

Entries Invited for our Fine Art, Antiques & Sales



Ethnographic Wooden Headrest with Leather wrapped support

Sold £900

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www.hyperionauctions.co.uk 01480 464140

