

# The Riverporter

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COVERING THE NEWS FOR ST IVES AND AROUND

Issue I69: II October 2024

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## Illuminated Boat Parade cancelled

For the second year running, the popular illuminated Boat Parade has had to be cancelled due to the high water levels making navigation on the Great River Ouse difficult and dangerous.

The illuminated Boat Parade is organised by FES (Festival Events St Ives) and GOBA (Great Ouse Boating Association) members for St Ives Town Team, supported with a grant from St Ives Town Council.

Getting the 'Flotilla' of boats decorated can take days and so the organisers felt they had to make a decision in advance to avoid disappointment, should the river levels not drop.

So on the 1st October, with even more rain forecast and the river approaching its all time high, the committee took the sad decision to cancel the event.

It is, of course, very disappointing and a stark reminder of the effects of global warming. It is also something that the organisers cannot control although they will be considering the date for next year - possibly bringing it forward to September, normally a dryer month.

Of course it needs to be dark for the illuminations to be effective so a summer event might be difficult as the



*As if to add insult to injury, as we went to print, due to a data glitch the BBC Weather forecast suggested even worse weather for St Ives this weekend!*

parade couldn't start before 9pm.

The Riverporter will keep you informed of any new date set for next year.

## Colin - definitely one of a kind

The Riverporter is sad to report the death of Colin Saunderson. A man who worked tirelessly for St Ives and for whom the often overused phrase 'a one of a kind' really seems appropriate.

Colin who died on Saturday 28th September had St Ives emblazoned across his heart, as he was always prepared to roll up his sleeves and do things for the benefit of the town. Even if you didn't know Colin you probably benefitted from his work, for he was often seen clearing rubbish from around the thicket path, unblocking ditches and painting benches.

The latter even got him a rebuke from the Town Council. In fact his relationship with the council in latter years might be considered adversarial, as he wasn't afraid to raise matters that he felt the Council were either ignoring or not doing properly.

Born in 1939 in Davos, Switzerland he was as an accountant, working in Kenya for six years before settling in Hemingford Grey with his first wife Mary, who sadly died in January 2023. They had two daughters, Helen who also died in 2023 and Fiona. I got to know Colin well since he retired from being an accountant. Indeed I should have known him sooner as I had interviewed Colin for

a job as a finance director. It is an appointment I wish I had made, for Colin was a man for detail.

At interview he didn't put his case for being selected as forcefully as other candidates and although that may have lost him an appointment, and me a good accountant, it was also the nature of the man.

Colin didn't do things to become popular; he did them because they needed to be done and before he became too ill to do so he was constantly out and about, helping improve the town for us all.

Colin was politically active, a member of the Liberal Democrats he did briefly become a Fenstanton Parish Councillor but his main contribution, which was typical of the man, was to be a willing helper, particularly delivering leaflets, something he was doing up to the most recent elections.

A member of St Ives In Bloom and an allotment owner Colin could often be seen deadheading flowers or sweeping up soil that had spilled onto the pavement. He just did these things, often without being



requested, because they needed doing. If only we had more Colins St Ives would be the smartest of towns.

Although Colin wasn't a born leader he wasn't afraid to speak his mind, something St Ives Town Clerks and councillors would have witnessed. He was particularly engaged with traffic matters - speeding and buses a constant concern.

It is also appropriate to use that other well used phrase about him, 'that he will really be missed' for Colin did so much for St Ives that was unglamorous and I wonder just who will do those things now?

Our thoughts are with Norma, his wife of over 20 years.

Colin's funeral will be held at Huntingdon Crematorium at 2.30pm on Monday 21st October.

**TONIGHT Friday 11th October**

**UPWOOD UKULELES**

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Doors open at 6.45pm. Concert starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £10 on the door or from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents)



### DIARY OF EVENTS

If you wish to inform us of your events please email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

#### OCTOBER

- Monday 14th** - Fifth East Anglian Festival Network Show Burgess Hall
- Monday 14th & Wednesday 16th** - *The Michaelmas Fair*
- Thursday 17th** - Kate Rhodes (Crime Writer) Talk - 10:30am at St Ives Library. £5 per person, book at the Library.
- Friday 18th** - St Ives Age and Dementia Friendly Awareness Day - see P2.
- Saturday 19th** - Hunts Philatelic Society Stamp and Postcard Fair at Corn Exchange St Ives 10am-3pm. Free admission. Contact 01480 468037
- Friday 25th** - Chapel Arts concert with 4 Winds Sax Quartet - Four exceptional saxophonists. St Ives Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 from the Bar or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents).
- Thursday 24th** - British Heart Foundation Quiz Night 7.30pm, St Ives Corn Exchange. 6 per table - £6 per person.

#### NOVEMBER

- Saturday 2nd** - Craft Fair. Saints Crafters Free Church 9:30am-FREE ENTRY.
- Sunday 3rd** - Sound Bath, The Corn Exchange 10.30am till 11.30am. Booking: [bookwhen.com/soulcentredsound](http://bookwhen.com/soulcentredsound)
- Wednesday 6th** - Engage Talk - Conserving St Ives - 2pm, Library
- Thursday 7th** - Kate Rhodes Creative Writing Workshop - 10:30am at St Ives Library. £6 per person, book at the Library.
- Sunday 10th** - Remembrance Parade.
- Saturday 16th** - Christmas Lights Switch-On
- Saturday 16th** - St Ives Choral Society 50th Anniversary Gala Concert. Free Church, St Ives 7.30pm Tickets available from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society)
- Saturday 23rd** - ArtsFEST - St Ives Corn Exchange 10 am to 4 pm.
- Friday 29th** - FREE LUNCHTIME concert Phoenix Players of St Ives 1.10pm at the Free Church. Mozart, Meybeer and Coleridge-taylor
- Friday 29th** - Chapel Arts concert with Chris Newman & Humfry Finkel Corn Ex/ 7.30pm. Tickets £10 w [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents).
- Saturday 30th** - Craft Fair. Saints Crafters at St Ives Corn Exchange 9:30-3:30-FREE ENTRY.

#### DECEMBER

- Sunday 1st** - Sound Bath, Corn Exchange [bookwhen.com/soulcentredsound](http://bookwhen.com/soulcentredsound)
- Wednesday 4th** - Engage Talk - An Introduction to Leatherwork with Paul Smith - 2pm, St Ives Library
- Saturday 7th** - Craft Fair. Saints Crafters, Free Church 9:30am-FREE ENTRY.
- Saturday 7th** - St Ives Community Choir concert Free Church at 7.30.
- Saturday 14th** - Santa Arrives at the Quay by boat
- Saturday 14th/Sunday 15th** - Santas Snow FES St Ives Corn Exchange.

#### JANUARY 2025

- Saturday 18th** - COSI Scottish Themed Winter Concert 7pm at the Free Church. Tickets £10, under 16s free, on the door or from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/chamber-orchestra-of-st-ives](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/chamber-orchestra-of-st-ives). Program includes; Macbeth Overture by Sullivan, Scottish Symphony by Mendelssohn, Scottish Highland Suite by Bantock, Scottish March by Debussy, Highland Scenes by Thiman and Coronation Scot by Ellis.

Read on-line at [www.theriverporter.uk](http://www.theriverporter.uk) or see our Facebook page. Email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

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## Festival Network Show comes to town

The Burgess Hall is the venue for the EAFN Show 2024, which starts at 9.30am on 14th October.

It's free to attend - people just need to register through the website at: <https://portal.offbeattickets.com/event/tes2024easepec>

The conferences and workshops include thirteen speakers at four sessions, covering Accessibility and Cultural Diversity, Sustainability, Technology and Working together to improve events. Exhibitors include Gofer Ltd, Electric Cat Promotions, BoMoJo, Vibrant Colour Print and Promotions, DCRS Ltd, Event Production Show/Access All Areas and Cap Trac Ltd.

There's also plenty of entertainment lined up with music from:

EIY Tree

Soloman Smith

Evy Frearson and

JUDVH.



Plus foolish antics from Foolhardy Circus Arts; the Amazing Anthony - Award Winning Magician, Mind and Tarot Reader; Silhouette Portraits and Caricatures produced by Master Scissor Artist John Thurman; and Storytelling from Marion Leeper, long time member of the Cambridge Storytellers.

## MP Ben wades in ...



MP Ben Obese-Jecty visited a flooded Whitecross last week and spoke with residents, promising to liaise with the County Council regarding a solution to prevent the road from flooding in the coming months.

Despite requests from *The Riverporter* to keep us informed of his activities our new MP favours using a local Facebook page to announce what he is doing. It is the modern way to get a message out to a lot of people and does indeed fuel debate, although that isn't necessarily always positive, as the Cromwell Cone affair showed. One can't deny Ben has put himself about, as one person said 'Hats off to you Ben, you've been more active in 3 months than Djanogly was in 13 years.' [Actually it was 23 years!]

This latest discussion also showed that years of poor maintenance and little dredging of the river have been contributory factors to the recent flooding. Of course some people

pointed out that for the last 15 years this was under Conservative control.

There then followed a little spat between Ben and our local Town and District Councillors, both Labour members. Showing that despite the issue being one that might only be resolved by all layers of government working together, that could still be a little way off.

### Serious repercussions of flooding

Not so well known is the effect on some businesses, especially those engaged with the river. Our own Electric Riverboat company has had to contend with several days of no trade and some of the boat hire companies further away have had boats stranded, unable to return to their yards. This not only makes rehiring the boats difficult if they cannot get back to the boatyard, but can also result in compensation to holiday makers stranded.

## Is this a sign of things to come?

Last Wednesday Town Councillors chose a new member following the resignation of Chris Morgan. There were four potential candidates who all gave written resumés, but only two appeared in person.

Two candidates chose to appear online and one of those, Sajjad Ahmed Khan, was selected for the position.

This and the greater use of 'Zoom' at council meetings has prompted *The Riverporter* to consider whether all council meetings could be held online and if so what it could mean. The ramifications are potentially frightening and with AI featuring more and more how will we know who we are dealing with?

Here is a brief comment from the four candidates.

### Martin Gill

I have lived in St Ives since 1994 after posting to RAF Wyton during my 30 years service in the Army. I am an IT Project Manager and will soon retire, which will afford me the opportunity to dedicate my time in serving the town's community. My forte is planning and organising.

### Sajjad Ahmed Khan

Having lived in St Ives since 2012 I have developed a deep love for our community. My aim is to bridge the gap between the council and residents, ensuring that all voices are heard and valued. I am a former member of the Cambridgeshire judicial bench and recently served as a Magistrate and I am particularly passionate about advocating for high-quality education.

## Friday 25th October FOUR WINDS SAX QUARTET



Four Winds Saxophone Quartet make a welcome return to St Ives with a programme ranging from the Baroque to Bebop. Latin rhythms abound in pieces by Piazzolla and Albeniz, alongside more soulful melodies, and perhaps the most famous jazz tune of all time - Take Five. They are: Paul Woodin (tenor), Phillip Brunton (soprano), Karys Staddon (baritone) and Paul Arnold (alto).

Doors open at 6.45pm. Concert starts at 7.30pm.  
Tickets £10 on the door or from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents)



### Martyn Sibley

Born and raised in St Ives I believe my personal and professional experiences make me well-suited to serve the council.

In particular, my role as co-founder and CEO of a successful disability marketing agency has allowed me to collaborate with both public and private sectors, develop strategies for inclusion, and drive social change.

### Dai Rhys-Owain

I was employed by Doncaster Cables for 4 years, before I had to leave on sick grounds. For the next 13 years I worked through agencies, mainly in traffic management, where I achieved qualifications. I am a qualified Master Herbalist. At 65 I feel I am not yet ready to give my brain a rest, therefore I would like you to consider me for a councillor.

## St Ives Age and Dementia Friendly Awareness Day

The day is designed to help attendees find who to talk to with two Introductions at 10.30am and 12.30pm when St Ives Cares will introduce all participants. There will be demonstrations downstairs in the Charter Hall and talks from various groups upstairs. Between 1.00pm until 2.00pm there will be an Arts & Crafts networking time and of course Shirley's coffee shop will be open with all proceeds going to Kidney Cancer UK.

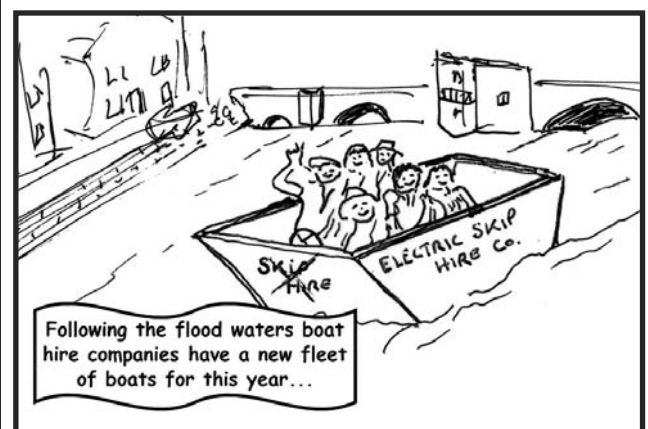
## FOR SALE

A modern TOWN HOUSE set within a private gated courtyard in the heart of St Ives town centre. This spacious accommodation has been very well finished and includes two double bedrooms, en-suite, bathroom, cloakroom, kitchen and lounge/diner.

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Erik loves fairground rides.



having your say ...

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

**Dear Erik,**

Has anyone else reported the Seal that popped his/her head up in the river outside Floods the weekend before last? Such a surprise, as was the lovely sunshine, but absolutely brilliant.

**Bill & Jacqui**

**Dear Bill & Jacqui,** The seals are regularly seen in the area and sightings are more often during times that the river levels are high. **Ed**

**Dear Erik,**

Over the past 2 years, the word 'Resilience' has come to the fore, especially with regard to the flooding we have experienced along The Great Ouse. When considering the use of the word 'Resilience' in a policy concerning the community, one must first define resilience. It concerns, not just the elasticity (rebound, springiness) of the physical material of the object or structure, but it is also the elasticity of the human mind that can be affected (in withstanding shock, disappointment, suffering) i.e. Anxiety.

As a result of first providing emergency services, one is starting from the wrong precept. Emergency Services are not a defence, but a 'sticking plaster' to cover the result of accident, forgetfulness, or bad maintenance. The human mind cannot effectively be repaired with a 'sticking plaster'. In effect, neither can a flood. **Philip Noble**

**Dear Erik,**

What a sight we had last week with the no expense spared refurb of one end of The Broadway with all the new double yellow lines which somehow seems to make no difference to people parking on the monument roundabout. The contrast at the other end could not be more stark with the flood water completely over the road, drains blocked and chaos ensuing. Money well spent? I think not. P.S. Sadly other roads in town were badly affected by flood water but we saw no sight nor sound of any drainage engineers. **Anon**

**Dear Erik,**

Fawley Towers did it very well, but the local traffic signs on St Audrey Lane (right) have some way to go but are still amusing. **MickB**

**Thanks** for the letter Mick. Ron, a Fawley Towers fan, immediately labelled this picture (below) he took during the floods.

Of course one is left wondering who wrote the message above. Three errors in six words!



**Dear Erik,**

Could anyone in the council explain why [the] Corn Exchange could not get planning permission for solar panels on the roof, which could not be seen from the ground. But the Robin Hood, also in a conservation area, manage to receive permission to change their windows to something completely out of character with the town.

There is another business in town who wanted to replace their windows with double glazed ones but were refused permission. Is it a case of who you know. **Regards PaulD**

**Dear Paul,** I think not in this case. One of the reasons that the Robin Hood, soon to be called Whisky Café, has been closed so long is the time it has taken to get planning permission agreed. It is a listed building, as is the Corn Exchange, but when work started, an old roof was found under the outer one. This was considered to be very old and had possibly survived the fire that destroyed many buildings in 1689. As a result the restoration has been long and costly. It turns out that the windows of the Robin Hood were not very old and probably of no significant value from a heritage point of view, so permission was eventually granted for them to be replaced.

Although the Corn Exchange was told that solar panels might not be acceptable no application was made for them. Partly due to the cost of the work the Town Council did not pursue the solar panel option. In light of the approval for solar panels on the roof of Kings College Chapel an application for the Corn Ex may have succeeded.

What is certain is that the local conservation officers seem to nearly always say no before saying yes. I was told only last Monday that planning can take forever in Huntingdonshire, whilst in Norfolk there is better consultation and a willingness to deal with matters in reasonable time.

## Dobbies to close by the end of the year

Dobbies in Houghton & Wyton is one of 17 branches of the garden centre chain earmarked for closure by the end of the year. The company announced the plans as part of cost-cutting efforts last Tuesday. The company has described the outlets it plans to close as 'unprofitable' and explained that the move would help to 'address historically uneconomical rent costs'. Alongside 11 main garden centres, such as the Huntingdon and Kings Lynn branches, six Little Dobbies will shut. This will impact nearly 13 percent of the chain's workforce - 465 out of 3,600 Dobbies employees.



## Police anti-social behaviour patrols



Neighbourhood officers have had a busy week on anti-social behaviour patrols, including issuing multiple parking tickets in St Ives and St Neots. This included Bridge Street, London Road and New Road for parking on double yellow lines and in a loading bay.

They engaged with lots of residents about their anti-social behaviour concerns and stopped a vehicle trying to cross the town bridge showing the driver the signs about restrictions on the bridge. As the driver wasn't from the area they provided him with directions on how to legally leave St Ives.

If you have something that you would like your neighbourhood teams to focus on, pop along to the next 'Coffee with a Cop' event in St Ives Library (to be arranged). Alternatively, you can pass information to them via their community survey here at: <https://s-url.co/RpsWAA>.

## Hundreds of new jobs could be created...

So developers of a proposed new business park on a field off Somersham Road have claimed. The developer, Barnack Estates, said its plans to create Trinity Business Park will provide a 'major boost to the local economy' and create hundreds of new jobs.



The business park is proposed to provide 13,350sqm of commercial floorspace. In the planning application the developer said: 'This would be a high quality business park. It would have a carefully designed landscaped frontage, which would wrap around the development, enhancing the character of Somersham Road, and complementing that of the landscaped Compass Point Business Park to the south.'

The District Council approved a previous application back in 2022 to build a smaller business park of up to 8,400sqm. However, the developer said these plans were no longer financially viable and claimed building a bigger business park would make 'more efficient use of the land'.



Most critical will be flood mitigation measures as shown by this picture (left) of the field now. As one person said, 'So will the staff working there catch a boat to work?' Another said, referring to a positive Flood Risk Assessment produced for the project, 'Fantasy land. It shows if you pay a consultant enough they will produce the answer required.'

## GOVT screening of 2nd environmental film

Following the successful showing of SIX INCHES OF SOIL at Screen St Ives in June, the Great Ouse Valley Trust now announces the showing of PURE CLEAN WATER on 31 October.



This time the focus is on the pressures from Government for more businesses and associated housing in the Cambridge area, and the difficulties of the water companies to supply this growth with pure, clean, water without damaging the environment. Hard to believe we have a water shortage - but we do! Come and find out why.



Tickets from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents)

Doors open 6.30 pm.

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### Perfect Days

Thursday 7 November 2024 at 7:30pm

Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7

Director: Wim Wenders, 125m, Cert: PG

**Synopsis:** A Japan and Germany co-production, the film follows the routine life of Hirayama (*Kōji Yakusho*), a public toilet cleaner in Tokyo where he feels content with his life as a toilet cleaner. Outside of his structured routine, he cherishes music on cassette tapes, reads books and takes photos. Through unexpected encounters, he reflects on finding beauty in the world.

### The Holdovers

### The Holdovers

Thursday 5 December 2024 at 7:30pm

Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7

Director: Alexander Payne, 133m, Cert: 15

**Synopsis:** A Christmas comedy-drama film directed by *Alexander Payne* and written by *David Hemingson*. Set in late 1970 and early 1971, the film stars *Paul Giamatti* as a strict classics teacher at a New England boarding school who is forced to chaperone a handful of students with nowhere to go on the Christmas break. *Da'Vine Joy Randolph* portrays the school cafeteria manager, and *Dominic Sessa* plays one of the students who stays on campus.



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

  
**HYPERION**

## Hyperion Auctions

Fine Art & Design Sale 2nd November, 10am



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