

The Riverporter

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Two wrongs do not make a right as controversial plans are approved

On Monday the plans for an extension to the Cromwell Doctors Surgery were approved by District Councillors. Last month the application had been deferred due to the lack of an up-to-date ecology report.

Residents in Cromwell Terrace and Cromwell Place are dismayed by the prospect of what one person described as a 'metal shed' being erected in front of their listed buildings. Back in the '60s the Grade II listed building had a single story extension built which has been an eyesore for the past 40+ years. It was often said that it would not have been acceptable today - the planners wouldn't allow it!

Well think again, for councillors have just approved, what a well known person would have called a carbuncle.

The Riverporter first reported about this application back in March. Concerns were raised about the lack of consultation, the poor design, its scale and the use of zinc cladding. The Civic Society, neighbours, Historic England and even the District's own Conservation Officer raised objections, all of which have been ignored in order to get a quick approval.

In principle everyone agrees

At October's meeting Cllr Fuller implied that this area deserved a better scheme but it seems that good design has given way to the urgent need for approval to secure the funding from the NHS.

Chris Betts, architect and historic building consultant commented 'Generally a very sad state of affairs, partly caused by woefully inexperienced officers doing a job that they have not been properly trained to do. We were not against the principle, just the manner in which it was designed and the complete insensitivity and misunderstanding of what is important in a conservation area, sadly undertaken by an architect who has not successfully undertaken this type of work before.'

A comprehensive report from environmental specialist, Dr Tim Reed, concluded that the

ecologists did a poor job, that HDC hadn't followed procedures and their ecological adviser's decisions came without supporting evidence, was summarily dismissed. Cllr Fuller questioned whether this report was correct and Cllr Ablewhite remarked that if the Poundstretcher building nearby used similar materials in the conservation area, then he saw no problem with these plans.

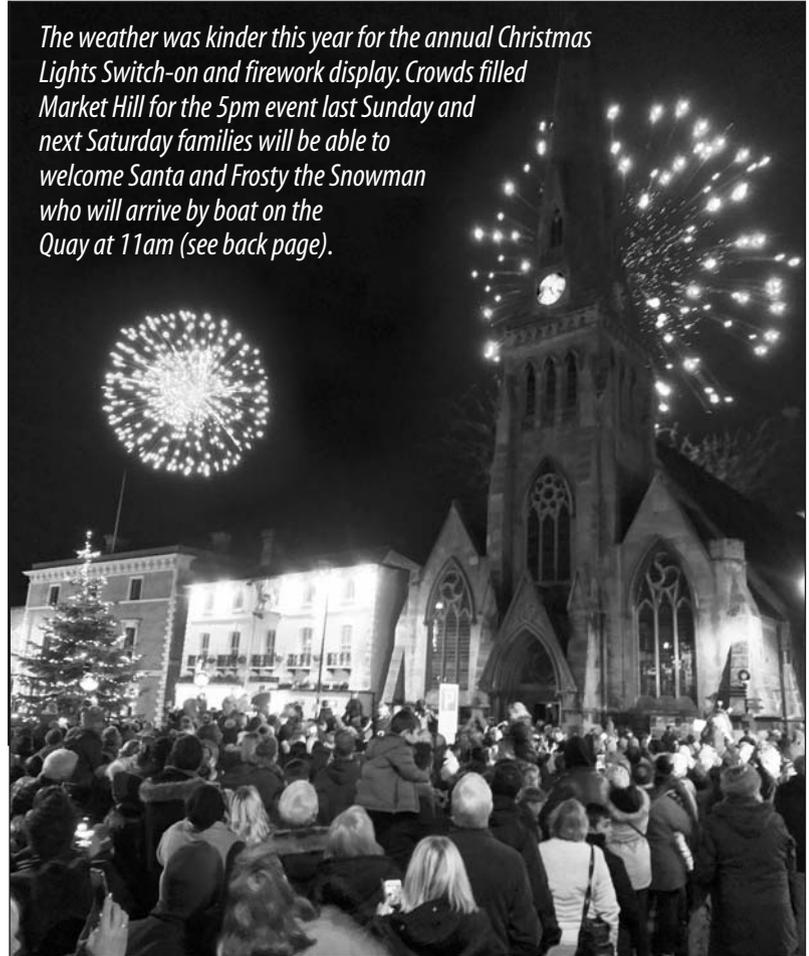
Comments that lead many residents to believe that the planning process has let the Town down. It seems support for an improved health facility has outweighed planning considerations and **the opportunity to right an old wrong has been wasted.**

This has raised the issue of how public money is being used and The Riverporter asked the surgery about the nature of the NHS grant. Louise Waller from the surgery said 'Cromwell Place surgery are delighted that the Council have approved the planning application, supporting Primary Care in St Ives. NHS England will partially be funding the project through the Estates and Technology Transformation Fund (ETTF). Exact figures have yet to be decided, but once done so will be freely available in the public domain.' (sic)

Our understanding is that the money will not be repayable and that the private landlords could be benefitting from millions of pounds of tax-payers money from ETTF funds.

Meanwhile neighbour, Mrs Betts of Cromwell Terrace will now have to look out at a towering wall of metal a few yards from her Grade II listed back door.

The weather was kinder this year for the annual Christmas Lights Switch-on and firework display. Crowds filled Market Hill for the 5pm event last Sunday and next Saturday families will be able to welcome Santa and Frosty the Snowman who will arrive by boat on the Quay at 11am (see back page).



Hiding behind the sofa!

Now I know that making light of any disability is a dreadful thing, but, having spent a lifetime in the creative industry the idea of publishing anything that sits crooked or wonky seriously offends my finely tuned OCD and only living a couple of hundred yards from this year's truly splendid town Christmas tree means I can't escape walking past it several times a day and being confronted with the fact that it's been erected wonky, in fact VERY wonky AARRG! And

it's looking like I'm going to have to live with it until January. So I'll be hiding behind the sofa until then, let me know when it's safe to come out!
Erik's Dad.



Argentinian guitarist, Federico Pecchia, performing in the Bridge Chapel earlier this month. It was the last concert in this year's successful Chapel Arts Season, a fitting end to a magnificent season.

Snowmen Trail blazers

Organisers of the Snowman Festival have been delighted by the response to the Snowman Trail which began last Saturday. It started of a full weekend of activities, something St Ives is becoming well-known for.

The Trail, for children under 12, has twenty-nine businesses taking part. Children, with their parents or carers have to visit each shop to collect a sticker to put on their Trail Map.

When all 29 stickers have been collected the Trail Map can be entered into a draw with a chance to win a £200 Townrow voucher.

Saturday was the first day of the trail which saw large numbers of families visiting the town's shops.

'We were expecting the Trail to be quite popular as over 300 families took part last year,' said Corrine Harwood of La Muse, one of the organisers, 'but we nearly ran out of stickers on the first day as over seventy children started the Trail.'

The Trail ends at midday on Friday 21st December, when the draw will take place in the Corn Exchange along with the trophy and prize for the Best Dressed Window, another new idea for the Snowman Festival.

A £200 cash prize is available for the Best Window Display thanks to the generosity of Ellis Winters Estate Agents. A prize it is hoped that will stimulate our shops to make the town even more attractive and, judging by some of the displays already up, it seems to be working.

The displays will be judged by The Mayor, Councillor Tim Drye, and Vicci Godbold, Head of Thorndown School, with two of her students. The organisers are indebted to the many people who get involved to give the Town its unique Festival. Many of the two hundred snowmen attached to lampposts were assembled by Thorndown pupils using hats and scarves knitted by customers of Star Dancewear.

Together, with all the businesses who get involved and the many children who enjoyed the free Craft Day in the Corn Exchange last Sunday, the Snowman Festival is truly a community event for all.



Above: A happy Evelyn enjoying crafts in the Corn Exchange.



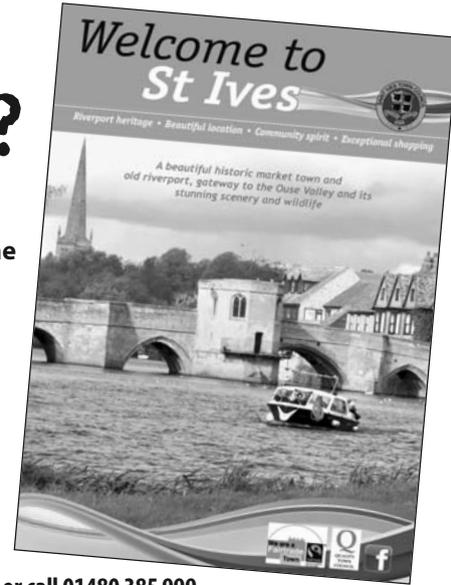
Above: Westfield School children entertain the crowds before the light switch-on.

NEW TO THE TOWN?

Not sure what's going on, what makes the town tick, or how to get involved? Then you need the **WELCOME TO ST IVES** pack, produced by the Town Team.

It contains the current issues of the Town Council magazine The Bridge and the St Ives and the Old Riverport Official Guide and Map, plus a whole host of leaflets from local organisations including the ever-popular Old Riverport Complimentary Guide with illustrated historic walk plus cycle maps.

To acquire a copy drop a line to townteam@theoldriverportstives.co.uk or call 01480 385 999.



The Old Riverport St Ives CAMBRIDGESHIRE

The Hobby Horse Hunt Returns

NOON • BOXING DAY • MARKET HILL



Come and join in the fun ...

Come and chase the fox around the streets and hostleries of this beautiful market town and old riverport. Each venue has a riddle to solve and prizes will be awarded to the best-dressed rider and horse, and to the team that completes the course with the most correct answers.

There is a small charge to enter and all funds collected will go to a local charity.

All you need is a Hobby Horse to take part ...

For details of this event and what else is happening in St Ives go to:

WWW.THEOLDRIVERPORTSTIVES.CO.UK

A book about St Ives' own First World War Poet & Flying Ace, Jeffrey Day now on sale



A fascinating read, the fully illustrated hardback book (£15) gives details of Day's exploits in the early days of flying.

You can purchase a copy at ARTSFEST in the Corn Exchange on 1st and 2nd December, or you can email: townteam@theoldriverportstives.co.uk

ST IVES CHORAL SOCIETY
6.30 pm, 15 December
Free Church St Ives

FAMILY CHRISTMAS CONCERT

GET YOUR TICKETS ONLINE AT
ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society



Tickets £5 (accompanied children under-16 free) from the Fair Trade Shop in the Free Church
Registered Charity No. 291440

Screen St Ives

Doors open at 7.30pm 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.

Thursday 6th December

ISLE OF DOGS Screen 2

PG



Director: Wes Anderson Germany | UK 2018 1h 41m

This terrific and original romp through the canine world is funny, romantic and poignant. A terrible disease rips through the pet pooches of a Japanese city and young Atari's dog Spots is shipped off to doggy exile. His devoted owner moves heaven and earth to find him before it's too late.

having your say ...

The Riverporter



Dear Erik PAWS FOR THOUGHT

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

We take it back!...

A couple of issues ago Erik was saddened to be informed that there would be no Christmas lights on The Quay this year.

So Erik was stocking up on candles and checking the bulbs on his fairy lights in order to make a solo effort, but at 10pm a couple of nights ago sure enough those nice men from the council turned up and installed lights!

Erik was beside himself!

So thank you Christmas Lights Committee we can get into the festive spirit and look forward to Santa's arrival here this weekend - Exciting!

Dear Erik, Can I say how much I like your newspaper, but I live in Offord and am not always able to get a copy. As I love St Ives and all the events going on, I was wondering if you have a mailing list? If you do, then could you please add me. I organise trips and outings for our WI and it's nice to know what is on in advance instead of finding out afterwards!

Thank you Marion Warden

Dear Marion you can always see The Riverporter on-line at www.theriverporter.uk

Erik

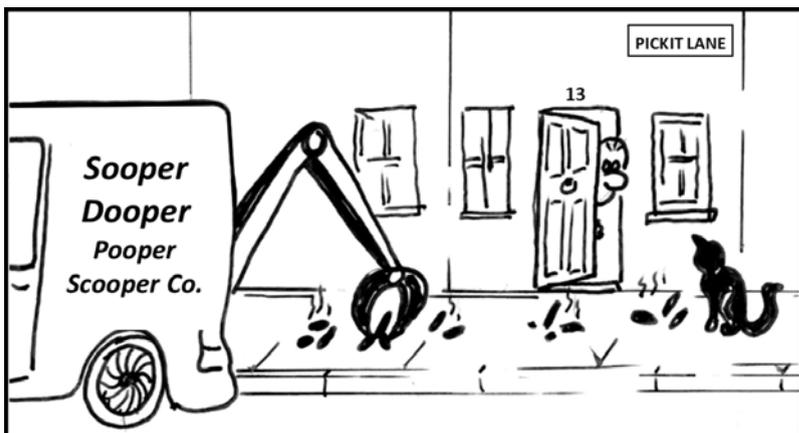
The Curious Incident

Dear Erik,

Residents of Church Street woke-up last week to discover that one of your canine friends had left several large calling cards along the street. Discussions among the small crowd that assembled, when daylight revealed the deposits, concentrated on what beast could have done this. Comments included ... 'Well it certainly wasn't a Chihuahua' to 'It looks like it had probably just eaten a Chihuahua' and 'I didn't notice anyone walking a Camel this morning'.

Anyway later on ... Much to the residents delight the deposits disappeared and it seemed that whoever had done this had even washed the pavements down. Residents are keen to find out who the 'Phantom Pooper Scooper' might be, not only to thank them but to let them know which other streets need their services.

Enda Matether



Comments Noted

It was mentioned to us recently that some people think that *The Riverporter* is politically biased and so they are reluctant to engage with us.

Well I have to agree. We are biased because we try to seek the news behind the headlines and this can be very uncomfortable for politicians. It can be especially uncomfortable for those politicians who run our local authorities, who often do not like being asked questions about their actions.

So let's not beat around the bush - we will continue to ask difficult questions and be critical of anyone who we believe is not disclosing all the facts, or is incompetent or biased, regardless of what party or organisation they represent.

Readers should know that councillors are not obliged to answer questions and often their views are not represented because it is their decision to remain silent.

Santas Grotto

Saturday and Sunday
from Noon until 3pm for
the next 3 weekends.
Entry is Free and each
child receives a gift.

You Poop We Scoop!

Emergency
Clean up service

Contact:

Charlie Scrapper

At

No. 2 Wash Lane
07789 123456



Brexit!... so what do you reckon?

Last Sunday The 27 EU countries signed off on the UK's leaving deal and Teresa May had arm wrestled her cabinet to issue a statement of agreement, the big test now will be, will parliament agree to the deal and finally seal our fate for the 29th March?

Many national newspapers are urging us ordinary people to write to (or lobby) our local MPs to express our views on how we want them to vote. So here at *The Riverporter* we thought you may like to know that our local MP, Johnathan Djanogly, said in a recent interview with the Hunts post. 'I don't think it is the best deal or the deal I would like to see, but people have to realise that this is a compromise. A compromise for all those concerned, including the EU. The Prime Minister has spent two years negotiating this and we will be leaving Europe in March next year. We will go out, our money will be separate, our jurisdiction and our courts will be separate, our immigration policy will not be reliant on the EU. We will be making our own way.'

So, there you have it, do you agree with our local member? *The Riverporter* will always choose to report local news from a non-biased standpoint but we'd love to hear your views, The next week or two will be crucial to the Brexit outcome and possibly the last chance for us little people to be heard. Write to ERIK here at editor@theriverporter.uk and let us know how you would like Mr Djangly to vote.

A big change to parking at the Dolphin Hotel



It seems that our town parking issues continue to grow. We learned this week that the Dolphin Hotel has raised its parking charges as a result of a complaint from a nearby resident about the noise of the existing parking exit machine.

The complaint which was escalated to the Environment agency has led to the Dolphin management having to install a new ANPR system operated by a private company under contract, resulting in a substantial uplift in the cost of parking as a result.

A member of the Dolphin team, Kyle Easton, posted an explanation on Facebook as follows ... 'Due to a complaint that escalated as far as the environment protection agency. We were forced to act or face significant fines, sorry for any inconvenience caused,

however the new system has cost £10,000 but we have tried to maintain a fair price in the area and have actually lowered the fee to £1.10 for up to 2 hours! (SIC) We have also added a yearly parking permit, which you can contact the reception about!'

Until this change local residents and town visitors had been able to leave their cars there and pay a £2 fee on leaving however not that long ago the fee was only £1. The new charges are listed as £2:20 per day and while still perhaps reasonable for visitors and shoppers' many local residents will find this a real blow.

The announcement by the Dolphin States that parking will remain free to hotel guests and restaurant visitors however bar visitors will no longer receive car park tokens and will be required to pay.

REASONS TO BE SHUT PART 17

It's good we have so many companies interested in using this unique building.

Yes and it hasn't cost tax-payers hundreds of thousands of pounds, only the £50,000 we spent tarting it up and possibly another £60,000 on putting in a water supply and proper electrics.

In 2017 Hyperion Auctions contacted Ward Councillor Angie Dickinson about their bid to use the Octagon. It was turned down as they were told that someone else was going to use it. *The Riverporter* has tried to find out what is happening as it remains empty (apart from HDC's rubbish bins) so we spoke with Cllr Dickinson who said 'I am not involved with the decision making regarding the letting of the Octagon. I do not recognise your version of events'. Fair enough. So we spoke with Steven Power of the letting agents, Barker Story Matthews, who said that he wasn't prepared to be drawn into a conversation about it, but did say it was no longer available to rent. Last August HDC Leader Cllr Bull said it's future should wait until after the town's Master Plan has been completed but there is no sign of that happening soon. Finally HDC told us that the building is still operational as a bin store ... **so now we know it's a bin store!**

Busy weekend for FESt



It starts with Santa and his chief snowman arriving by boat at 11am on Saturday 1st December 2018 to be welcomed by the Town Mayor before walking to his grotto in St Ives Corn Exchange. The Mayor and the children gather to welcome them and make the walk through town together to Santa's Grotto. The grotto is on from noon until 3pm Saturday and Sunday for the next three weekends. Entry to the Grotto is Free and each child receives a gift.

Also on is ArtsFest which is the annual free Art and Photographic Exhibition in the Corn Exchange where you can buy those special Christmas Gifts. There is also a coffee shop.



The world of Travel is coming to Over High Street

Ponders Travel is opening a new Travel Agency on the 7th January 2019.

Opening hours

Monday – Friday, 9.30am – 5.30pm
Saturday, 9.30am – 4.00pm

Pop in and see our brand new shop at The Gallery, 25 High Street, Over

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ADVERTORIAL

PRICING CORRECTLY

Mike Ellis of Ellis Winters says it's all about pricing correctly.



**ellis
winters
&CO**

Before instructing an estate agent most sellers ask the same three questions

1. How likely are they to sell my property?
2. Will they achieve the best price?
3. How long will it take to sell?

All these questions should be answered in the same way - it's all about pricing correctly.

We have recently valued a property at £385,000. All comparable properties point to this figure, however it's just gone on the market for £425,000 with another

agent. When we've checked this agent on Rightmove, we can see that they have their properties for sale far longer than anyone else and they have more price reductions than anyone else.

Three more relevant questions should be:

Is the valuation achievable and where's the evidence?

How good are they at keeping a sale together?

Do you trust them?

Honesty, integrity and enthusiasm is all you want from your agent and that trust should be earned.

There should be a marketing program in

place from the start with regular meetings to discuss results and a plan for going forward as well as advice on subjects like the best way to present your home and listening to viewing feedback.

For more information, please call our team on 01480 388888



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