

The Riverporter

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Fancy a bit of a Gamble? Then park at The Dolphin

The Riverporter has been contacted by a number of people who have found parking at The Dolphin is not straight forward. The new parking regime began in November (as reported in issue No.23 of The Riverporter) and it appears the pay machine has been malfunctioning, as the following comments from some of our readers shows.

'If you are one of the many who have been caught out by the new method of payment - you will know that parking in the lower car park at the Dolphin hotel is anything but fine - for everyone but the parking operators.'

The writer received a parking charge notice from the Enterprise Parking Solutions Ltd (EPS) stating that he had not paid to park.

As someone who parks there 2 to 3 times a week, he appealed, saying that he had always paid the £2.20 fee. The response from EPS was *'We have carefully considered your appeal however after full consideration the appeal has been rejected as failing to obtain a valid ticket.'*

That might have been acceptable except it is impossible to prove you have paid if you pay by cash as the machine does not issue a ticket.

Another user had a similar experience. She also received a letter advising of a fine and when she appealed, she was told to show a

receipt as the collecting agents were not aware that the machine is ticketless.

It's not all pay pay pay though

Strangely enough it seems that the machine was even handed in its malfunction as one customer was stunned when instead of taking her money the machine paid out. In scenes reminiscent of a Las Vegas slot machine, around £20 in coins came out!

It seems unlikely many people will park there in the hope of milking this cash cow as the evidence suggests that the number of cars now using this has reduced dramatically.

If you have had a strange experience here we would like to hear from you.

When contacted the Dolphin said they are aware of the problems and have managed to cancel the fines issued in error and have a meeting with EPS on 17 Jan to sort it out.

Alice Draper - new Neighbourhood Police Sergeant in post

Sergeant Alice Draper (right) has taken over the Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT), following the retirement of Sergeant Street last July.

This follows a Local Police Review and speaking to St Ives Town Council last week Alice admitted that some things may change as resources are limited. She also said that The Police and Crime Commissioner is considering decriminalising parking (see parking report on back page), as the police do not have the resources to monitor it.

The Cambs Police website shows that the NPT consists of Alice and 7 Police Community



Support Officers (PCSO's) to police a large area stretching from the North of Ramsey, to Papworth Everard in the South, a population of around 85,000, more than a third of UK cities.

What can PCSO's do

A PCSO can give someone a fixed-penalty notice, e.g. for littering, demand the name and address of someone being anti-social, take alcohol off a person aged under 18. A PCSO can also ask a police officer to arrest a person.



St Ives Volunteer Centre celebrated a successful 2018 with some of their volunteers.

Could you become a volunteer driver and help your neighbours?

Funding for our Volunteer Centre is now secure for the next few years, so we are looking forward to expanding the Car Scheme. With everyone talking about New Year's Resolutions, could you help your community.

Life can be very isolated if you don't have access to a car, particularly if you are elderly or can't use public transport. The St Ives Volunteer Centre Car Scheme seeks to address this problem by matching passengers with volunteer drivers who use their own cars to take them to hospital appointments, shopping or even to visit friends and relations.

Passengers pay the drivers 40p a mile based on the driver's mileage, to cover the drivers expenses, plus a £1 booking fee, payable to the office to cover administration costs. Could you become a volunteer driver and help your

neighbours in this way?

Even if you can only offer one drive per week, this would be a help, and there is no obligation to accept a drive. No experience is necessary, just common sense and a sympathetic attitude.

Support and guidance is always available from our friendly office. Please note that all applicants will be subject to a DBS check and satisfactory references will be required.

Contact the office on 01480 301462, opening hours Mon-Thu 12.30pm-3pm

Bull meets Stag ... see result on page 2



Quotes of the week

'You cannot have one foot in and one foot out.' - Jean-Claude Juncker, October 2016

'My appeal is this: get your act together and tell us what it is you want.'

Message to UK Government from Jean-Claude Juncker, November 2018

'I urge the UK to clarify its intentions as soon as possible, time is almost up!'

Jean-Claude Juncker, Wednesday 16 January 2019, after May's option defeated.



THE NORRIS MUSEUM
Wherever Your Curiosity Takes You

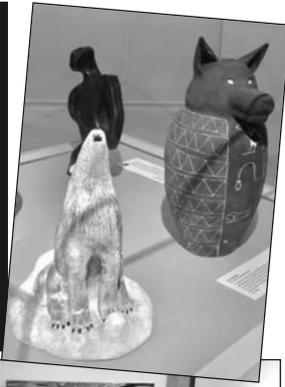
The Norris Museum is proud to present

the Artists of the Future

An exhibition showcasing GCSE Art Work from St Ivo School

At The Norris Museum until 23 March 2019

10am-4pm Monday to Saturday
FREE ENTRY



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 7th Feb 2019 Screen 2 A FANTASTIC WOMAN

Director: Sebastián Lelio Chile | Germany | Spain | USA 2017 1h 44m



15

A story of love, loss and the trans sexual experience set in Santiago, Chile. Marina's older lover dies suddenly and she is plunged into a world of suspicion and prejudice, but she finds her own strength as she strives to keep alive the memory of lost love.

Radio station looking for local charities to promote on air



Huntingdon Community Radio is on the lookout for guests from local charities and community groups, to promote themselves for free on air throughout 2019.

Over to You (OTY) is HCR104fm's flagship community outreach programme, which focuses on a different local charitable or non-profit organisation each weekday evening between 7 and 8pm. 'We normally invite guests directly to come in and have a chat with our OTY presenters on air,' explains the show's Senior Producer, Tara Daynes. 'But there must be plenty of local groups and charities that we don't know about, who would love the opportunity to raise their profile on the radio, so we want them to come

forward and let us know so we can get them on the programme!' 'I always give our guests full details in advance, and our presenters have a chat with them before going on air so they know exactly what to expect - and everyone says afterwards how much they enjoyed the experience,' says Tara.

'The only criteria to appear on Over To You is to be a not-for-profit organisation operating in the Huntingdonshire/Cambridgeshire area, and to be able to share their passion and enthusiasm for their good cause with our listeners!'

Anyone interested in taking part in the programme or needing more information should email Tara Daynes at: studio@hcrfm.co.uk

Bulls start the new year with a bang



How many Stags does it take to stop a Bull? 8 it appears!

A second half performance delighted a large crowd at St Ives on Saturday 5th January, as the Bulls slaughtered local rivals Huntingdon Stags. In a match of 12 tries the Bulls scored 40 points without reply in the second half. As was to be expected, the game was a tense, cagey affair during the opening exchanges. Both sides were determined to stifle opposition attacks but gradually the Bulls pulled ahead at half time, leading by 24-7pts. The brilliant second half display saw St Ives Bulls beat Huntingdon Stags 64-7.

Last Saturday, 12th Jan, St Ives travelled to Long Buckby, a ground the Bulls have never won at, and sadly history

repeated itself as they lost by 29-12pts. However St Ives retain their 3rd place in the league, an impressive record for a team new to the league this season.

Position	Team	Played	Points
1.	Olney	13	57
2.	Market Harborough	13	51
3.	St Ives (Bulls)	13	47
4.	Bugbrooke	13	37
5.	Belgrave	13	37
6.	Coalville	13	36
7.	Stewarts & Lloyds	13	34

Hot Pants shut motorway

The A14 was closed for 10 hours in both directions last Friday when a lorry full of underwear caught fire as it passed Fenstanton. The fire began around 10.30am and the road was reopened at 6.30pm. Fire teams from Cambridgeshire and Suffolk attended the blaze.

GOVERNMENT WARNINGS TO MINIMISE DISTRACTIONS ON UK ROADS



REASONS TO BE SHUT? PART 19



CCTV Upgrade

Concerned about a report that the CCTV cameras in St Ives had been out of action, *The Riverporter* contacted the CCTV Manager of the service run by HDC and Cambs City Council.

Mr Eddy Gardner confirmed that there had been some issues in November, but explained they had been resolved and coverage in December had been at 100%.

The good news is that HDC has invested in a completely new digital system of cameras being installed to replace the old analogue equipment. St Ives Town Council pay 50% of the costs of the town centre system.

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

It's that time of year again on The Waits
WINTER 2017 **WINTER 2018**



The Town Council are hoping to get joint funding from the County Council to improve road safety in this part of town.

having your say ...



Dear Erik PAWS FOR THOUGHT

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

Dear Erik,

I picked up a copy of your newspaper at the Corn Exchange. Two things to be glad for then; the Corn Exchange and the newspaper.

I learned a lot from the newspaper, good luck with it.

Chris Butterworth

Apology

We would like to apologise to Pat Abbott, for calling him Tony in the LOOKALIKES.

We must have got him confused with his sister Toni!



The Riverporter

COUNCIL NEWS

Council tax rises expected

Readers of *The Bridge* will have noticed in the latest issue that the Town Council will be raising their part of the council tax bill by 6% (an annual increase of £6.02p for St Ives households).

The final figure we will have to pay is likely to rise as the District and County Councils are also under pressure and may seek increases. The Fire Service are proposing 3% more and the Police and Crime commissioner, Jason Ablewhite, is surveying the public with three options (+2%, +12% or +60%), to see just how much we are prepared to pay for policing. He added £12 per household for additional officers, last year but there has been little sign of these extra policemen in St Ives (see article 'New Neighbourhood Police Sergeant' page 1).

Also in *The Bridge* was confirmation of this year's annual Town Meeting, which once again is being held in The Corn Exchange with a Community Fair promoting some of the groups that help make St Ives the thriving community it is. **The event will take place on Saturday 2nd March**, with the Community Fair opening at 3pm and the 'Question Time' meeting starting at 6pm (the official rules state they should not start before then).

Your chance to have your say

It has been confirmed already that District Council Managing Director, Jo Lancaster and Police and Crime Commissioner and District Councillor, Jason Ablewhite, both St Ives residents, will attend along with The Mayor, Councillor Tim Drye and the Town Clerk, Alison Benfield.

Normally town councillors attend, it's their meeting after all, although not all do. There was some criticism last year that several of the town's District Councillors didn't attend. One reason given for not attending was concern that Ed Goodman, the compare, was biased. That seemed a rather odd comment as those who attended saw an impartial and well hosted meeting.

It is noted that Councillor Ryan Fuller is due to attend this year, in his position as the District's Deputy Executive Leader and hopefully the other three St Ives District Councillors will attend as they are also town councillors.

The meeting is the one opportunity that the public have to ask questions of those people who manage our important services and plan for the town's future. It is a critical time for St Ives, which has had little investment this century and councillors are due to develop a new Master Plan that will be effective over the next decade or more.

As *The Riverporter* has frequently reported, policing is a major issue, so this is your opportunity to question the Police and Crime Commissioner on these matters.



Roberto Zancanato and Daniel Laycock with their Brexit Wall on the Market Square on Saturday 12 January. There was overwhelming support for staying in the EU and a People's Vote. Time will tell if either of these options will surface now Theresa May's plans have been defeated. Incidentally St Ives' MP, Jonathan Djanogly, voted for the May deal.

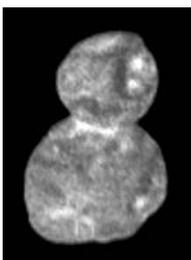
New Dolphin Parking Meter



LOOKALIKES ULTIMA THULE



CHILL BILL



British Heart Foundation receive £745



Following on from the fantastically successful Hair of the Dog Party at the Nelson's head on New Years Day, some of the band members got together again the following Sunday to present the cheque for £745 to the lovely ladies from the British Heart Foundation shop on the Sheepmarket. Pictured are Andrew Lowson, Landlord of the Nelson's Head (front left), Paul Dodson, organiser of the party (centre left) and Jean Chandler and Helen Hunter of The BHF (holding the cheque).

New Business Rate set by Government's Valuation Office

Our local markets are having to pay a new Business Rate - a tax which goes direct to the Government.

Following the article 'Strange Goings on in Town Hall' (*Riverporter* 25), we have been able to discover that following a new rating assessment made in 2017, the Sheepmarket paved area was designated as rateable.

A bill of £2,838, paid by St Ives Town Council covers 2 years, 2017 and 2018, and will increase to £1,500 per year from then on. HDC's markets are also affected, as well as other markets, such as those at St Neots.

It seems that central government is yet again burdening our local councils with additional costs in order to raise money. At a time when our town centres are struggling, this may make our important markets less viable. Fortunately it is unlikely to affect community groups who use these areas, as the rate liability only applies to regular users.

It is possible to appeal against rate charges and, as this is effectively another charge on council tax payers, one would hope that our local councils and councillors would pursue that option.

What a load of rubbish



Our beautiful Quay blighted by bin fiasco. Residents and businesses have been struggling to get bins collected from the Quay, resulting in these ugly sights on a regular basis.

What is going on?

MORE PARKING NEWS

DISTRICT COUNCIL ANNOUNCES CAR PARKING INVESTMENT

HDC confirmed that it is to consider a detailed proposal on car parking investment, which will result in a number of major improvements, affecting the council's off-street car parks, such as Glebe Place and The Cattle Market in St Ives.

It will include a change in parking time periods; enabling customers to only pay for what they use, greater convenience in payment; allowing for quick and easier payment, and the promise of delivering greater 'value for money' parking facilities; with charges kept lower than those in comparative areas.

The *Riverporter* will be interested to see the details and whether this will include a period of free parking, which the Town Centre needs to encourage shoppers.

Decriminalisation of Parking

The Police & Crime Commissioner's office has confirmed that decriminalisation of parking is still something the Commissioner would like to progress with strategic partners. Could this mean that St Ives Town Council could control parking?

What does decriminalisation mean?

The Road Traffic Act 1991, permitted local authorities to apply for the legal powers to take over the enforcement of on-street, as well as off-street, car parking regulations from the police, in return they would be allowed to keep the proceeds.

This option has become popular because of the increasing problems of town centre congestion and the demand for on-street parking, coupled with the pressures on police resources and the low priority given by some forces to the enforcement of parking.

In areas where DPE has been granted, parking offenses cease to be criminal offenses.

Without DPE, only the police can issue parking tickets and the income is passed directly to central government.

With DPE in place, the local authority retains the income generated from parking penalties to finance parking enforcement and certain other activities such as local transport measures.

Local authorities have been able to charge for on-street parking since 1958, but without the effective enforcement provided by DPE, such charging was of limited effect.

Local authorities adopting DPE generally employ contractors to run their scheme.

The powers granted by DPE to deal with parking offenses include:

- The issue of a Penalty Charge Notice - a parking penalty which can be paid or contested by appeal
- The immobilisation of the vehicle - usually by clamping until a release fee is paid
- The removal of the vehicle from the street.

Should decriminalisation go ahead it could transform parking in St Ives. Of course if parking regulations are going to be enforced it is vital that HDC's reforms to off-street parking will help motorists to park easily and cheaply or the town centre could see even fewer people visiting the shops.

Optimum Health & Beauty  £10 off

Choose a relaxing Elemis or Guinot facial from our extensive selection.

Tired skin after the Christmas period?

Try the Guinot Hydra Peeling treatment.

Skin looking a big dull?

Why not book the Elemis Superfood Pro-Radiance facial.

EXCLUSIVE OFFER

If you book & pre-pay a facial to commence in January 2019 you will receive £10 off any retail product (this does not include gift boxes)
Offer T&C: Treatment to commence in January 2019. Not valid for online bookings. Booking must be pre-paid. One £10 off voucher per customer. Subject to availability.

TEMPTED? WE DON'T BLAME YOU!

Call 01480 466346 to book.

The Mayor of St Ives, Cllr Tim Drye, would like to invite you to the Mayor's annual Charity Quiz at the Corn Exchange St Ives, on the 1st February 2019.

The Bar will be open, and the ever popular Fish'n'Chip Supper is included.

We do hope you will be able to join us for what always proves to be a fun night for all, pitting your wits against the Quiz Master.

All funds raised go to supporting the Mayor's Charities.

Teams of up to six are welcome, as are couples or anyone attending unaccompanied.

If you would like to attend, please complete the form obtainable from the Town Hall and return it by the 21st January.

ADVERTORIAL

GET A SECOND OPINION

Mike Ellis of Ellis Winters explains sellers should get more than one opinion



You would have thought that it would be usual for sellers to get the opinion of several estate agents before deciding to market their homes, but you may be surprised to learn that figures suggest that 50% of people contemplating putting their house up for sale only ask one agent out to give them a valuation.

There are many benefits to getting other opinions, not least the prospect of a little competition between the agents to get a better fee or service.

In a market that's getting more challenging, it's increasingly important to get the right information, not just on the price of the property but also on how well an agent is performing in the area.

It may surprise you to know that some agents are taking more than 26 weeks

to get buyers whilst a few, like ourselves, are taking on average just 16 weeks. So, while it may appear attractive to go with an inflated price or a really cheap fee, in our experience you always get what you pay for and it really pays to shop around.

Experience needn't cost the earth and by getting a second opinion, you can make an informed decision on what's right for your family when it comes to choosing the best estate agent to be working for you.

They should show you comparable evidence when valuing, have a plan for marketing with regular reviews and should make it easy for you to see what activity your property is getting on Rightmove, when viewings are taking place and then give you the all-important feedback

afterwards. This isn't rocket science - it's just about choice!

If you're thinking of moving and would like a second opinion on the best way forward, call one of our valuers for an informal chat - it doesn't cost a penny and we may just surprise you.

For more information, please call our team on 01480 388888



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