

# The Riverporter

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## In for a penny . . . or in for a copper?

**A** posting that appeared on a St Ives social media site attempted to shed light on what could be the PCC's thoughts on raising our rates bill to pay for additional policing in St Ives. An issue we touched on in *The Riverporter* issue 26.

The author of the piece suggested that the commissioner was trying to manipulate the funding via an article that appeared earlier this month where he sought to survey people for their views on what they are prepared to pay for our town policing. In the article the PCC asked for an increase of £24 a year for the police.

### It appears we had a choice . . .

We could face increases of £4, £24 or £120 per year (a zero increase was not an option given), however the social media post pointed out that the PCC cannot request more than the £24 increase without having to resort to an expensive public referendum.

It went on to say . . . If we opt for the cheapest £4 increase, in his survey Mr Ablewhite says there'll be a loss of 80 police officers due to 'unavoidable increases in costs, e.g. insurance'.

PCC Jason Ablewhite said 'It is important that I listen to people's opinions when making key decisions. Demand on policing continues to grow and whilst Cambridgeshire is a safe county, police now have to spend more time tackling 'hidden crimes' such as domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation, modern day slavery and helping those in mental health crisis. All of which stretches resources and added to that our county's population is set to rise by 20% by 2031.

A clear theme amongst respondents was that people were prepared to pay more if the money was spent on neighbourhood policing. Mr Ablewhite continued . . .

**'I can give my assurance that the additional money raised through this year's council tax will be used to recruit 50 new warranted officers.'**



By the PCC's calculations £4 would be a 2% increase in funding and with inflation currently running at 2% the article wondered how an inflation matching increase could mean a loss of 80 officers, effectively 8% of the front-line force?

### Result of the survey

As *The Riverporter* was going to press the PCC's office issued the following press release.

### Public support helps to increase Police Officer numbers in Cambridgeshire for the second year running

It went on to say . . .

2,030 people responded to the survey. The result was that 61% said they were prepared to pay an extra £2 a month for policing, 23% were prepared to pay a bigger increase of £10 a month, while 15% said they would not want to pay any more. 700 people also provided comments. (*Incidentally we could not find details of the responses given to the PCC's questionnaire or the 700 comments*).

The results of the survey were presented to the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Panel on Wednesday (see picture) who supported the proposal for an increase of £2 per month.

### What questions remain?

In speaking with town residents, *The Riverporter* has sensed considerable local support for improving our town policing. Recent spates of bag snatching and anti-social behaviour certainly focus attention on our very meagre police presence.

With last year's additional money for an extra 50 officers and Mr Ablewhite's assurance that this year's council tax will be used to recruit 50 more, one hopes that we will now see officers in St Ives, particularly as the demand for neighbourhood policing has been accepted. With our town meeting now set for next month, residents should perhaps consider what questions they may wish to put before the PCC who we understand has said he will be present at the meeting.

## HAS SPRING SPRUNG?



Check out mum feeding the baby Blue Tit in the picture – sweet! Photograph by Nigel Sprowell

From our environmental correspondent . . . Heidi N. D'Tries

Hi luvvies! Heidi here again. Did you miss me? I've been under the duvet – don't ask. Those lovely people on Holt Island Nature Reserve aroused me (no, not like that - they said I resembled a hibernating dormouse - nice) to ask me to mention their new Adopt-a-Box fund-raiser.

They have 28 bird boxes for all kinds of birds – see, it's not all about tits – and for a tenner you can adopt one! How lovely. Ask Julian for a form he'll send you all the information. It's a great family thing to do and you'll be helping the Friends meet the bird food bill for another year.

Contact Julian Limentani at [limentani@aol.com](mailto:limentani@aol.com) or on 01480 381342.

Visit the Friends at [www.holtisland.org](http://www.holtisland.org) to see their latest amazing new videos!

Love you all – byeeee. Heidi x

## Well that was fun . . .



A part of our town centre was brought to an abrupt halt on Monday morning when a very large builders merchants lorry attempted to make a delivery to the old ATS tyre companies' site in East st.

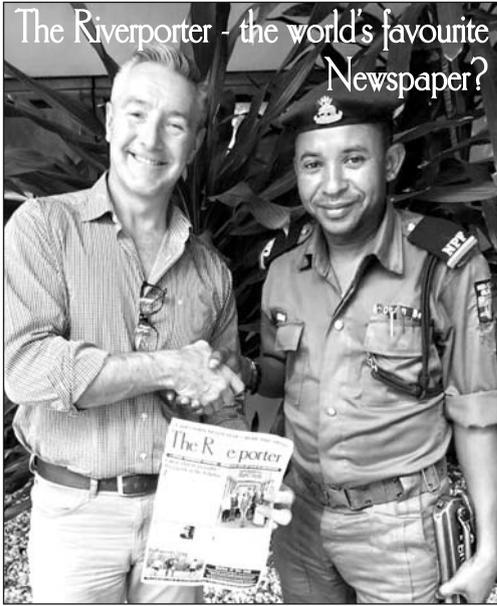
It seems as the driver swung across the road to turn into the site, the cab tractor unit buried itself axle deep in the mud leaving the trailer

blocking the entire street much to the dismay of a few less than patient drivers.

One lady attempted to assist drivers to avoid the problem by standing outside in the cold by the car park redirecting the traffic and not always getting much in the way of thanks from some frustrated drivers . . .

You can't help some people!

The Riverporter - the world's favourite Newspaper?



Colin Gibson, a loyal *Riverporter* reader, recently visited Nigeria and presented his latest copy to his body guard. As yet we are unaware if the latest news of St Ives is of interest to the Nigerian Diplomatic Protection Squad!

## Fenstanton Morris raise £200 for Singing Café



Pictured receiving the cheque from Fenstanton Morris are from L to R, Jen Spencer and George Smerdon (Singing Café), Sheila Louth, Rose Desmond (Squire) and Sally Merson (Fenstanton Morris).

The Memory Lane Music's Singing Café is for people with dementia and their carers and takes place on the second Monday of each month from 10-12 at Crossways Centre in St Ives.

**Anyone wanting more information is welcome to contact George on 07725 588 145**

## 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.

### Friday 15th Feb 2019 Screen 1 EARLY MAN

Director: Nick Park USA | UK | France 2018 1h 29m

Set at the dawn of time, when prehistoric creatures and woolly mammoths roamed the earth, *Early Man* tells the story of Dug, along with sidekick Hognob as they unite his tribe against a mighty enemy Lord Nooth and his Bronze Age City to save their home.



PG

## Things that go bang in the night

Over recent weeks we noticed that the St Ives social media sites had several people complaining of mysterious loud bangs constantly going off in the area disturbing residents and even frightening pets. Residents investigations appeared to suggest that the loud noises were in fact automatic bird scarers in nearby fields.

Someone must have written to our local PCC and councillor, Mr Jason Ablewhite, because he gave the following response....

'I've been contacted regarding the bird scarer that is causing a noise nuisance to residents in the North of the Town. I have contacted HDC's

Environmental Health Department this morning to ask them to visit the Farm.'

His response went on to say... 'The use of bird scarers is not illegal.

They are however, deemed essential in protecting certain crops. If a farmer or landowner is using such

devices, they must ensure that they are not causing a statutory nuisance to others and that they are used in accordance with the code of practice produced by the National Farmers Union

As a general guide bird scarers should only be used where justified and not sound on more than four times an hour.'

Following on from Mr Ablewhite's intervention, social media carried a response from an environmental officer with the explanation...

'I can confirm that I have visited the farm that the miss-firing propane gas gun belongs to. The Farm manager has reset the propane gas gun now so that it operates under the NFU Code of Practice Guidance.

The reason for the malfunction was due to local youths tampering and vandalising the gas gun causing it to operate out of sync.'

The Riverporter would like to offer an alternative explanation!!

Okay guys .... No practice tonight....  
With a bit of luck they'll blame the farmer!



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## Dear Editor,

This could be another 'reasons to be shut'!

On The Broadway, at No. 29, is the old cinema which finished up as a snooker club/night club and closed many years ago. A company, T Dama Developments from Cottenham, took it over and the latest planning application, no.15/00054/LBC, was submitted in Feb and was approved by Hunts DC on 19th May 2015.

St Ives Town Council's planning committee welcomed the repairs proposed on 11 March 2015, but looking at the state of the door it hasn't been opened since! Regards P Davidson

Dear Mr Davidson thank you for your letter. We had noticed this building, like the Robin Hood and the old Molise restaurant in Bridge Street are eyesores. One of the problems is that being listed buildings the owners do not pay rates when they are empty. However we feel that their important town centre location should prevent them from being neglected and/or any rate relief being time limited to encourage building works to be finished in good time. ED

## Protestors target Tesco



Members of Huntingdonshire Vegan Activists held a peaceful protest on Saturday 19th January 2019 outside Tesco St Ives. The aim was to urge Tesco to stop using Hogwood Farm in Warwickshire as their pig meat supplier, following an undercover investigation by the charity Viva!, a campaign which featured on a recent Channel 4 Dispatches documentary raised awareness to the general public. Sainsburys have already stopped using Hogwood as their supplier, following the investigation.

Viva's investigation showed extreme overcrowding poor hygiene and unspeakable cruelty to the animal. The activists held placards and stood on the grass outside Tesco, facing onto the very busy roundabout hoping their message would reach hundreds of motorists.

## REASONS TO BE SHUT? PART 20



I spent many a happy hour in there years ago

Yes watching Errol Flynn and Michael Caine

Playing Snooker

And cutting shapes on disco biscuits!

having your say ...



## Dear Erik PAWS FOR THOUGHT

Get it off your chest, email *Erik* at: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

Dear Erik,

I note your banner:

### INDEPENDENT • UNCONNECTED

However your article on the Brexit Wall does not seem to me to reflect the opinion of the people of St Ives.

To say that there was: 'overwhelming support for staying in the EU' does not seem balanced. If the organisers had counted the number of people that just walked past, without signing it (the silent majority?), they might (or might not) have been able to have made that claim! I would say I look forward to reading and enjoying your news every fortnight.

**Steve Moller, a resident of St Ives for 48 years.**

PS. On the 'load of rubbish' article I suspect the business has a contract with a private operator, for a commercial collection. They need to increase the number of bins, or not overfill them. Or change their contractor.

Dear Steve,

Thanks for the letter. Of course *The Riverporter* had nothing to do with the Brexit Wall other than to print a picture and comment supplied. We would have done the same for any other group who might contact us. **Ed**

Dear Erik,

### The incredible shrinking market!

What is happening to the popular St Ives Monday market?

Last year I overheard someone on the large bread and cakes stall, tell a customer that they would be there every Monday. I haven't seen them for the last six weeks.

Where is the man who sells magazines on a stall outside the Swan and Angel? I think I last saw him in November!

Now I understand that the man with the rug stall is giving up. St Ives used to have a good, thriving Monday market.

What's going on? **Alan Munro**

Dear Erik,

### More Parking problems at Dolphin

I recently came across your newspaper at the Riverside Cafe in St Ives. the article re parking at the Dolphin Hotel caught my eye as I too received 2 letters of non payment of charges when I parked there (as I have done so for over 20 years!) I was in town on the 6th December and parked there as usual only to find these new machines, which apart from being a nuisance as it meant I had to pay upfront as opposed to on exit at the barrier. They were such a nightmare to use as having paid my £2.20 I could not see how to confirm my payment which the machine was asking me to do. Having spent over 10 mins trying to work this out I had to go as I was already late for my appointment and there was a queue forming behind me, the couple directly behind me also had the same trouble. Having now received these letters accusing me of non payment and demanding now a fine of £170, I am outraged as the machines do not issue tickets so there is no proof of payment.

So I was pleased to see from your article that I am not alone in receiving these fines. It has caused me so much stress that I will not be parking at the car park again. Sadly the council should be doing all they can to encourage people to come into St Ives and provide adequate straight forward parking facilities rather than now discouraging people, I for one, to use this car park again.

Thank you so much for sharing this article and I hope the meeting on the 16th Jan resulted in all fines issued during this period being scrapped.

Kind regards **Monica Barton**

*Sorry to hear of this Monica, we've been aware of more people caught up, including a visitor from South Africa, which doesn't help the efforts to attract visitors to our town. Of course this is a private car park and you could contact the Dolphin direct. We don't know the result of their meeting with the parking company. Ed*

## Swanning about and ducking problems

Our river dwelling friends often have their little health problems, so it's good to know that with the care of local people and the expertise of local wildlife sanctuaries that help is on hand.

Over the past couple of weeks our friends at the Whittlesey based 'Unity wildlife rehabilitation centre' have been called to assist on several occasions. In one incidence a young swan was noticed to have a broken wing and was rescued away to a special sanctuary as it was discovered he would never fly again.



*Derek the duck gets released back to his friends with both legs working*

# The Riverporter

COUNCIL AND OTHER NEWS

## Council tax rises being agreed

**A**s we reported in the last issue of *The Riverporter*, councils and authorities in Cambridgeshire are formulating their budgets for the coming financial year. It is likely to be quite a hike once they have all been agreed.

We know of some increases and the County Council will confirm theirs soon, likely to be in the region of 5%. If the overall increase is around 5% a Band D property will attract an extra £88 per year.

## Update on the River Ouse Bridge

**The Bus Operations and Facilities Manager of the Guided Busway has advised:**

We will be carrying out some maintenance on the Guided Busway bridge on Sunday 17th February between 07:00 and 17:00. This will mean that the maintenance track will be closed between these times and there will be no access between St Ives and Fen Drayton Lakes along the maintenance track. The main tracks will also be closed in this section which will mean the Fen Drayton lakes stops will be closed. These are the only stops affected and all services will operate standard diversions.

## New Screen for Screen St Ives

**The Corn Exchange are installing a new screen which will make showing films much easier for Screen St Ives - our local cinema.**

The screen will be 6.5 metres wide and can be lowered and raised at the flick of a switch so it will further enhance the fun of the 'Big Screen' experience.



*A young swan rescued from St Ives quayside happily sits in his own private bath during rehabilitation.*

On another occasion a duck was discovered to have seriously injured leg and was taken in for care, the good news is that all is well now, and they are released back into the wild.

**If readers would like to support the work of Unity or report a wildlife concern you can reach them on ...**

**<https://unitywildlife.typeform.com> or call 07565 489462.**

Below is a report from Ross at Unity about the care given to

### Derek, the Mallard

The duck was assessed on entry to have a minor issue with his ankle, which caused swelling and discomfort around the joint. As ducks are quite heavy birds, and not particularly agile on land due to the webbed feet, this would have affected balance and support, which (as you guys observed) the bird was reluctant to move much on land, and would lay down for longer periods than usual. The treatment was to medicate with an anti-inflammatory (meloxicam) which also has pain relief properties, and is a common

medicine used in veterinary applications. We also prescribed 'cage-rest' which involved keeping the duck in a small container to limit the ability to move and stand, and thus exacerbate the injury further.

Obviously, cage rest can accelerate the symptoms of capture myopathy, which is a state of stress induced by being contained. So its always something we have to monitor frequently, and after 4 days, we determined that the duck was showing signs of depression (e.g going off his food, holding his head low, etc) so it was decided at that point that it was better to send him back to his friends and hope that we had given him sufficient time in treatment to be able to be returned.

Normally, an injury like this would have been 5 days of treatment, followed by 2 days observation in a bigger space to assess the bird for normal mobility both on and off the water. However, when we returned the bird, we were happy that the four-day rehabilitation proved to be enough and the bird seemed much happier to be back on the quay with the other birds.

## A POINT OF VIEW

### What chance of success for Sir David

Before Christmas in Poland, near one of the largest coal mines in Europe, nearly 23,000 delegates met to discuss saving our planet from ecological disaster. As Sir David Attenborough stated we only have 12 years left to prevent our climate spiralling out of control.

A few countries, some of the worst polluters, including the USA, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Russia and Kuwait delayed the conference from simply agreeing an important scientific report that says temperature rises should not exceed 1.5 degrees celsius over the next twenty years.

On current targets, the world is set for 3°C of warming from pre-industrial levels, which scientists say would be disastrous, resulting in droughts, floods, sea level rises and the decline of agricultural productivity.

### Is tourism to blame?

Obviously the world's governments need to agree on measures to stop too great a temperature rise, but having just visited Egypt, whose economy survives on tourists using copious amounts of plastic I am of the opinion that any agreement for all nations to behave in a certain way will only have modest success.

One of the ironies about Egypt is that the very thing it's economy survives on, namely tourism, is also the very thing which is destroying its environment. Nile cruises are very popular but as a result of the huge numbers of large boats travelling its course the Nile is pretty dirty. The air is polluted with fumes from the massive engines powering the boats and plastic bottles are everywhere giving the tourists their drinking water.

Large numbers of people in the world live hand to mouth, unable to amend their lives or worry about the environment. Feeding ones family takes priority over how power is made, rubbish is disposed of, or our wildlife protected.

Sadly Sir David did not see our world leaders agree to take the action requested but delegates did agree rules for the new climate regime, due to start in 2020. Although saving the entire planet requires nations cooperating we can all do our own bit, locally. In the end, success will happen only when enough of us as individuals, here in St Ives or Cairo or anywhere else take pollution seriously and do all we can to limit non-recyclable waste.

### Quotes of the week *Not new but still appropriate ...*

*'Politics is the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month, next year and to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn't happen.'* Winston Churchill

*'If you don't know where you are going every road will get you nowhere.'* Henry Kissinger

*'There cannot be a crisis next week. My schedule is already full.'* also Henry Kissinger

*'It always seems impossible until it's done.'* Nelson Mandela



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**Next general auction - Saturday 9th February.**

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## ALL THE WORRIES IN THE WORLD!

Mike Ellis of Ellis Winters explains it's not all doom and gloom.



It's really easy to listen to everything you hear on the news or read in the newspapers and think that the whole world is coming to a grinding halt, but don't believe everything in these news reports because it's not all doom and gloom.

As a company we've had a great start to the year, from 1st January both the number of valuations we've booked and the number of viewings have gone up compared to the same period last year.

Now there may be some areas around the country where things are different, but certainly in Cambridgeshire things are buzzing.

With Brexit taking centre stage and nothing else getting a

look in, all the property market pundits have been predicting a flat year for prices, but that doesn't mean the property market will be quiet.

People move for a variety of different reasons and if there is a need to move, as long as you sell and then buy at the same time, you shouldn't be affected by any price fluctuations.

Indeed, when you look around the property "hotspots", Cambridge prices have been consistent and we predict that this isn't likely to change.

The growth in the area, the local job market, Hi-Tech companies being attracted to Cambridge, the guided bus, and the up-grading of the A14 have all resulted in

bringing more people here and there is still a shortage of houses.

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