

# The Riverporter

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## Is St Ives suffering from poor planners?

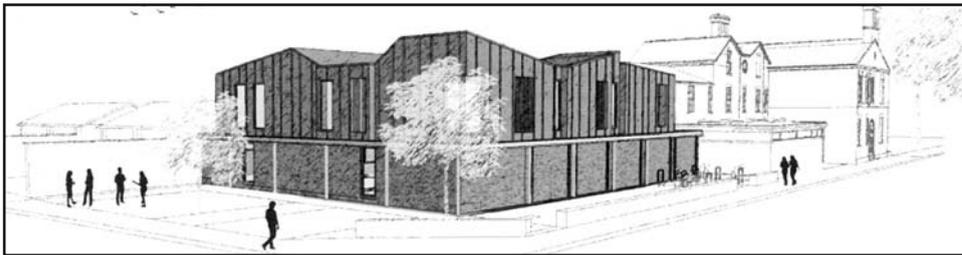
The Riverporter has spoken to several people in St Ives who have had 'planning issues' recently.

This is very annoying and often costly for developers who complain that HDC's planning department is not up to the task.

According to professionals reductions in planning authority budgets and staffing levels are self defeating. Planning is critical for the following reasons:

- meeting local housing needs
- for local economic growth

• social benefits that save money  
Less resource doesn't mean more 'efficiency'.  
Is this why the old cinema and the Robin Hood, both important listed town centre buildings remain closed after several years?



## Is this the best we can get?

Concerns have been raised about plans to add another floor to the Cromwell Surgery at the corner of Cromwell Place and Meadow Lane.

Although the general view is that there is no objection, in principle, to extending the surgery there are serious issues with the design and the plans submitted. The existing extension, built in the 1960s, has been an eyesore ever since and it is likely would not be approved by planners today.

It is therefore surprising that these new plans seem to be acceptable, certainly to St Ives Town Council (SITC), who have passed them with only minor comments. Once again HDC's planning department has been lackadaisical, failing to consult neighbours properly. No Site Notice was on display when SITC determined the plans and so local residents were unaware of the application, although a notice did go up after, on 12th March.

The Design Statement submitted by PiP Architects was clearly drawn up by a junior trainee as the errors in it are numerous, indeed laughable. These include: stating that St Ives is a large village, wrongly identifying the Parish Church as Grade 2 and not Grade 1 listed, referring to the Royal Oak as being at 14 and 16 Oxford Street (there isn't an Oxford Street in St Ives), referring to the private gardens in front of Cromwell Terrace as a children's park and even wrongly identifying the current town graveyard.

Of course none of this will affect the planning application, but it doesn't fill one full of confidence that the planning process is fit for purpose.

This is a very sensitive area, being so prominent and surrounded by fine listed buildings. There is also an opportunity here to improve the appearance of the old 1960's extension with a more sympathetic and less dominant structure than that proposed, which seems more suitable to a business park.

The use of contemporary materials and innovative design could be supported in this location but PiP Architects' design response has been to produce a scheme where the scale, massing and detailing would form a dominant feature in this location rather than a recessive one. Any design here should surely complement the setting of adjacent and nearby the listed buildings.

A 'green wall' is proposed at ground level, effective for softening areas of stark brickwork, but it could soon look scruffy as maintenance of planted areas is expensive. Another worry is the brown colour scheme, coupled with the massive scale of zinc cladding that will not enhance the neighbouring historic buildings.

Of particular concern is the effect on neighbours in Cromwell Terrace who will now be faced with a prison-like high wall directly outside their back doors.



### The Town Team announces the return of the Chapel Arts Season

Following on from last year's well received season of music concerts in the Bridge Chapel, the Town Team are holding eight concerts this year.

The Season will start on Friday 20th April with classical guitarist Daniela Rossi, left, and runs until late October.

Places are very limited so you will need to book early - tickets go on sale from 1st April. See details at: [www.theoldriverportstives.co.uk](http://www.theoldriverportstives.co.uk).

### St Ives Choral Society concert:

## Royal Rites of Passage

at the Free Church, St Ives on March 17th at 7.30pm.

The choir and orchestra, conducted by Alison Daniels, will perform Baroque music composed to mark royal occasions, including works by Purcell, Handel and Bach. The soloists are Paula Downes, soprano; Hamish McClaren and Karl Gietzmann, countertenors; Louis Wilson, baritone and the orchestra is led by Julia Frape.

Tickets £12/£10 (accompanied children free) are available from the Fairtrade shop at the Free Church.



A full house enjoying the evening organised by the Town Team to celebrate the life of Jeffrey Day at St Ives Corn Exchange.

## JEFFREY DAY

The evening, about St Ives' own Flying Ace and Poet, proved very emotional, especially for Jeffrey's descendants.

Comments about the evening included:

- I was very impressed with Saturday night - it was so well written and performed!
- The evening put the sacrifice made by so many young men into perspective and Jeffrey, such a poetic soul, deserved special recognition.
- Thank you for such a wonderful evening. One we'll always remember.
- I cannot imagine how the family dealt with the emotion - it certainly touched me!
- I have fielded several emails from people who said how moving the

whole event was and were really surprised by all the use of visuals - several have mentioned the banners.

- A couple of friends who had grandfathers in the Australian Flying Corp or the Royal Flying Corps were particularly moved as they said they had never realised just how dangerous and suicidal flying had been back then.
- It was good to know also that someone who works at Duxford said how great the evening had been and how well done - so at least we didn't make any glaring historical errors!
- So once again thank you all for making it such a 'ripping' evening as Jeff might have said.

To contact The Riverporter email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

## Town Meeting and Community Fair a success despite No-Shows

The Town Council's attempt to improve attendance at their annual Town Meeting proved successful on Saturday 3 March when 21 community and support groups took stands advertising and promoting the service they provide to the people of St Ives.

Despite the awful weather 60 people attended the meeting and raised many issues with the panel, which comprised the Town Mayor and Town Clerk, along with Chairs of the Council's Standing Committees and local Police Sergeant, Andrew Street, who did an excellent job answering lots of policing related questions. Speeding cars and parking issues featured and Sgt Street confirmed his support for trying to sort out the signage, which it was agreed was confusing. He also confirmed that his officers had been issuing more fixed penalty parking tickets recently.

### Other issues raised

They ranged from consumer advice support and anti-social behaviour to floral displays.

Town Clerk, Alison Benfield, said: 'It was wonderful to have so many community groups involved with our annual event. The whole purpose of the Town Meeting is to engage with the people of St Ives and hear what they have to say about the Council's services directly. We got some very useful feedback which the Council will take on board.'

### Problems can only be solved by all authorities working together

The Riverporter will report in more depth on some of the issues as they unfold, but it became clear to the meeting that many of the matters raised needed **all** the local authorities to work together to make improvements. Dr George Smerdon asked if the Town Council

could arrange a joint meeting with all the relevant authorities such as County and District councillors so that many of the issues can be dealt with?

Town Cllr Jonathan Pallant, responsible for organising the event with Cllr Dan Rowe, replied that all local councillors and the Police & Crime Commissioner had been invited to today's meeting and he hoped they might attend the next one.

### Non attendance a mystery

The Annual Town meeting is a chance for *all* authorities to engage with the community. It seems a shame that so many of our elected representatives, although originally indicating they would take part in the debate, decided not to attend, highlighting once again their unwillingness to work with the Town Council.

There seemed to be a positive mood among the public to ensure that the town sort out some of the highlighted issues, before they become too difficult and expensive to fix.

### The groups attending were:

Huntingdonshire Volunteer Centre; St Ives in Bloom; Acorn Cancer Support; Cambridgeshire Police; Riverport WI; Friends of St Ives Corn Exchange and Corn Exchange CIC; St Ives Neighbourhood Cares; Friends of Holt Island; Magpas; Screen St Ives; Civic Society; RSPB; Macmillan; Tookeys Coffee Shop; Dementia Friendly; Carnival and Music Festival and St Ives Town Initiative; Cambridge and District Classic Car Club; Festival Events St Ives (FEST); St Ives Town Team.



### St Ives Electric Riverboat announces services for 2018

Their 14th season of Boat Trips starts on Good Friday, 30th March, and continues until 31st October between 11am and 5pm from The Quay.

- Hourly on Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays and Mondays. Call for other days
- Every day throughout July and August
- NEW this year ... 1 boat set aside for self drive hire between the locks
- Spring Early Bird Trips - 6am til 8am - includes Breakfast at 8.15am on Saturdays - Apr 14th, 21st, 28th, May 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th
- Summer Flora and Fauna Trips - Sundays 2pm - 4pm on July 1st & 15th
- Later Bats and Astronomy Adventures - Fridays 8pm - 10pm on July 27th, Aug 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th, 31st, and Sept 7th.

Text or call us for details 07906 257308 or email at [riverboats@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:riverboats@hotmail.co.uk)

St Ives Electric Riverboat Co.

## POETRY FOLK

In the Dolphin Hotel

Tues 20<sup>th</sup> March 2018

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\* The Bridge Poets

\* New Poems on Springtime

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\* Folk Songs David Gardner + Others

Join Us - Free Entry - Buy Bar Drinks

## St Ives Corn Exchange the heart of the community



The Corn Exchange, which has been open for nearly eight years, offers many things to many people. Over the past fortnight it has been used for the Town Meeting, where many of the town's community groups were able to promote themselves (see above), the Jeffrey Day Celebration and around 30 regular events ranging from U3A meetings to Screen St Ives and the Indoor Markets.

The Charter Hall holds up to 300 people, and there are three smaller rooms upstairs, perfect for business meetings, workshops and tutorials. With accessible toilets, lifts, baby changing facilities, Wi-Fi, a professionally equipped kitchen and three fully-licensed bars, the building offers flexible spaces to meet every requirement and is easy to book.

### Indoor Markets

During the day on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays the hall hosts indoor markets and there is always a chance to have a drink at the café/teashop, and even a cake or sandwich. It's an ideal place to have a rest and meet up with friends and colleagues.

**So why not check out the goods on offer at next Monday's Market - open from 9am to 3pm**



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having your say ...

# The Riverporter



## Dear Erik PAWS FOR THOUGHT

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

## No ducking out of this one!

There certainly seems to be either a confusion over town centre traffic rules or a total disregard by a growing number of selfish drivers.

In recent times town residents have seen a considerable increase in inconsiderate parking but more alarming is the speed that some vehicles are driving in our designated 'Pedestrian zones'.

The Quay is one such pedestrian zone, cars and delivery vehicles are increasingly speeding along the Quay paying no heed to the ducks and swans that routinely wander the paved areas along with the many town visitors.

Children play on the Quay, people walk their dogs along this lovely stretch and so how very alarming and upsetting when a resident finds a duck crushed under the wheels of a delivery van that couldn't be bothered to slow down. In the recent cold weather the water birds spend



more time sitting out on the paved areas and it's at these times that we need to be a little more careful to look after our little friends.

## A chance to Register your opinion

You will have until Sunday 1st April to register your satisfaction or otherwise with the work of HDC's Operations Division who will be running their annual customer satisfaction survey.

The survey allows you to comment on their full range of services, including waste collection, recycling and grass cutting etc. You can do this online at <https://applications.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/forms/Operations/satisfactionSurvey.html>

Having heard many comments recently, about these issues, from residents *The Riverporter* hopes you will take the opportunity to fill in this easy but detailed form. **ERIK**

## REASONS TO BE SHUT PART 2



Because they lost their Friar?

And why is the toilet so crowded?

Hey, why don't they do chips in the Robin Hood?

Because They've only got a little John!

As told by Bob in the Olly Crom.



## Morrisons Preview Evening

Eric was invited to the preview evening at Morrisons last week and whilst looking for his favourite dog biscuits ran across two familiar figures - Town Mayor Philip Pope and St Ives' own Jazz singing teenager Ffion Rebecca. Ffion starred in last years Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival and is keen to sing again this year.

## To the editor

We reported in issue 3 that the Sailing Club wished to build houses by their lake, which it turns out is not strictly correct. Many thanks to Mick Burdett for the clarification. He writes ... 'The club has been at the site since 1976, it finally negotiated the purchase of the freehold of the lake during 2017. The freehold of the lake included access rights to all the banks but not their ownership. The purchase was made from St James Properties who still own all the associated land.

They may have granted an option to a company that build lakeside properties similar to the floating ones at Hartford Marina. If built they will be between the western side of the lake and the bypass, backing onto the bypass. I hope this has been some use and has clarified the situation.'

## Science is a wonderful thing

The loss of such a great mind as Stephen Hawking's creates such a great void in human understanding of how the universe works and this publication stands with so many others in paying tribute to our near neighbour in Cambridge.

However, St Ives Town Council last night paid a very special tribute to the great man by finally confirming the greatest mathematical question of all time ...



## 'How many councillors does it take to screw in a light bulb?'

The initially answer was 15, plus the Town Clerk, Macebearer and Town Mayor's Chaplain. However it was considered the equation unproved and the issue was referred for further investigation. In the past St Ives has proved itself as a seed bed of modern innovation and it appears may again be on the verge of another breakthrough.

**NOTE:** Meeting of SITC, Wednesday 14 March, Town Hall. Agenda item C219.01.

To consider the motion that SITC reinstate the light at Green Leys Garages precinct.

After approximately 40 minutes of earnest debate the issue was referred back to the Town Clerk to establish whether the electricity had been cut off or if it needed a new lightbulb! **Ed**

## Could this be the solution to stop bad parking?

*The Riverporter* was sent a link to this rather drastic solution for protecting our crumbling pavements from vehicles driving over them.

The advert says:  
**Catclaw: Ultimate pavement protection for people - bursts car tyres in seconds**



## Does anybody from the council visit The Waits on a regular basis?

I doubt it!

I take my dog for a walk to The Waits almost every day and today I felt I had to say something.



With the view of the river and Holt Island this is one of the jewels of St Ives but is being spoiled by neglect. It is now almost 5 months since a police dog van destroyed part of the wall and fence and nothing has been done!



The wall at the church end is dangerous and on the verge of collapsing and the footpath sign has recently been destroyed by one of the mindless m - - - s who unfortunately inhabit our town. Finally somebody has put up a banner advertising a commercial event in Huntingdon which has nothing to do with St Ives! Come on St Ives Town Council start to care about our lovely town. **Gordon Walker**

**NOTE FROM ED:** We understand repairs to the fence is scheduled to be done in the next week.

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## Old Riverport exported to Canada

Canadian Michelyn Lockman (left), who will soon be returning home, wanted an Old Riverport sign to remind her of the wonderful time she's had living in St Ives for the past 4 years.

She is pictured holding the sign, supplied by the Town Team, which will soon be advertising 'The Old Riverport' in Canada.

## Party Girl Makes Bid For Freedom

One of Chill Bill's family has been enjoying her winter break for longer than the rest of St Ives' Snowmen.

Party Girl, dressed in her finest 'party gear', defied the curfew to extend her frolics on the Sheepmarket. Snowman Festival organisers, alerted by the public, eventually caught up with her to put her in the summer hideaway.



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ADVERTORIAL

# Children receive up to £30,000 from parents

Mike Ellis of Ellis Winters gives some tips on financing your first home.



Cash strapped young people are leaning on their loved ones to tackle the UK's housing market, yet the majority are hesitant about doing so.

Increasingly high house prices are driving some young buyers to either borrow over £24,000 from their parents, or receive a gift of an average £29,132 towards a deposit.

Just one in five millennial buyers agrees a monthly plan to settle their loan - paying back £500 a month to their parents for an average of four years, but 23% later renegotiate their repayments. Over 80% of parents said they were very keen to help their children reach their property ambitions, and one in six first time buyers are entering longstanding loan agreements

with family members to get on the property ladder.

However, many young buyers are far more likely to be reluctant to borrow the money, mainly because they want to maintain a good relationship with their parents.

The majority of parents are so relaxed about the arrangement that they don't worry about formalising their financial support, and just 16% consult a third party, such as a solicitor. Measures to protect parents' own finances include

organising either a deed of gift - a legal agreement to give land or property to someone, without charging them any money - or a letter of intent, confirming the money is non-refundable and is an unconditional gift.

If you need advice about how to get on the property ladder, call our team of experts today 01480 388888!



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