

The Riverporter

ST IVES AWARD WINNING NEWSPAPER

Issue 51: 24 January 2020

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Here we go again!

We wish all our readers a Happy New Year and it seems that 2020 will be just as interesting (news wise) as 2019 turned out to be.

We ended 2019 with an election and, for some of our residents, we start the new year with another election. This time it is a replacement District Councillor for the St Ives East Ward. There are four candidates standing in the seat held by ex Police and Crime Commissioner and past Leader of Huntingdon District Council, Conservative Jason Ablewhite.

As usual *The Riverporter* contacted all the candidates, to give them the opportunity to say why they wish to be elected, and as usual they all responded with the exception of the Conservative candidate (see page 2).

The Riverporter has no political affiliations and we always offer the same opportunity to every candidate. We understand that candidates, councillors and political parties do not have to communicate with us, it is their right. However it does give the impression that conservatives are so sure of success that they do not need to engage with voters.

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Sarah Johnston and daughter Florence study the scale model of a Fen Lighter, a common sight in St Ives a century ago.

Exhibition celebrates the historical importance of the river Great Ouse

St Ives Town Team, in association with The Norris Museum opened **The Port On The River Exhibition** at the Norris Museum on 11th January.

Town Team member Chris Lewis formally opened the exhibition, which was well attended and well received with over 35 of the colourful

catalogues (just £5) selling in the first hour.

Entry is free and it is open from 10am to 4pm Monday to Saturday until 14 March.

Right: *The life-sized model of Tommy Doo who owned the Island Boatyard, c1900.*



SNOWMAN FESTIVAL SMILES ALL AROUND



On Saturday 21st December the annual St Ives Snowman Festival came to a close with the awards ceremony at The Norris Museum. Over 250 families completed the Snowman Trail. The winner was 3 year-old Rose Newman shown above receiving her prize of a £200 Townrow Voucher from Joanne King. The Festival included a Snowman Rocks Competition this Christmas and the winner was Jodie Ann, pictured (left) with sponsor, Slepe Hall Hotel owner, Shammi Malik. Jodie and her family enjoyed afternoon tea for 4 at the Hotel.



Best Window Display

The town centre was brightened up by the large number of Snowman window displays. Sponsored by Ellis Winters Estate Agents the winners, who received a cup and a £200 cash prize, was Premier Travel. Seen above are Samantha Cox and Brian Gilbert receiving the award from Mike Ellis.

Runners up were West End DIY and Just Cards, who received certificates and chocolates.

The organisers of the Snowman Festival were delighted with the event and will be giving some of the money raised to local charities. Details will appear in the next issue of *The Riverporter*.



Screen St Ives

Thursday 6th Feb 2020 Screen 2

IF BEALE STREET COULD TALK

Director: Barry Jenkins USA, 2019, 1h 59m

Doors open at 7.30pm and films start at 8pm in the Corn Exchange, St Ives



FROM YOUR CANDIDATES

Below are statements from the candidates in the District Council By-Election St Ives East Ward to be held on Thursday 13th February

Passionate champion of people's causes

Barry O'Sullivan, the Labour candidate

has lived in St Ives since 2012 and his two children both go to school here. Barry works at the Cambridgeshire County Council where he answers queries and provides help to those who call into the Council. This work has given him an excellent understanding of council structure and the problems that people face. Barry is a passionate champion of people's causes having been a Unison Workplace Steward for the past 8 years. He helped fellow employees facing redundancy and also represented members facing disciplinary procedures. Since 2015, he has served as a member representative on the Cambridgeshire Local Government Pension Board sitting alongside councillors. He scrutinises decisions and makes sure that all rules and laws governing the pension scheme are followed. If elected as your Huntingdon District Councillor, Barry will use the skills he has developed over the years to be your voice on the Council and fight for your interests - be it housing needs, problems with parking or issues over bin collections. He is particularly passionate about the need to tackle the climate emergency at a local level.



Putting People Before Politics

Philip Pope the Independent candidate

I'm standing in this by election for the District Council because I care about our town and its future. We need a person who is free of party politics and all the divisions it creates, someone whose primary focus is putting you first.

As someone born and brought up in St Ives I have seen first-hand the challenges that local people face. I hope to be able to make a positive difference with your support.

Philip Pope should be well known to you as he was born and bred in St Ives attending the Ivo School. He served as Town Mayor from 2018-2019 raising £8,000 for local good causes and helping to improve the town.

As the proprietor of Floods Tavern he knows the challenges that small businesses face particularly with the recent increases in car parking charges in the town. He enjoys meeting people and discussing issues with local people something he does every day as a town councillor and publican!

Adam Roberts the Conservative Candidate declined to send a message.

Roberts worked for the Quay News before going to work for Jason Ablewhite as the Press Officer for the Police and Crime Commissioner and then becoming the Campaign Agent for the Huntingdon Conservative Association.



Happy to work for a better St Ives

Colin Saunderson the Lib Dem Candidate

has lived in the area since 1973 and regards himself as someone who gets things done.



In 2006 after I retired I joined the campaign to save the Corn Exchange and became a town councillor in 2008 and financial director of the Corn Exchange CIC in 2009. I managed to obtain grants totalling £35k to equip the kitchen and to buy a portable stage I was also a volunteer on Tuesdays and Fridays.

The same year I joined the volunteers on Holt Island and played a part in building the new board walk. In 2010 I was elected a district councillor for Fenstanton. My best achievement was to get the house builders Persimmon to hand over land designated for a junior football pitch that they had failed to do for nine years. In 2008 I became the Town Council representative on the St Ives & District Road Safety Committee. I remain a member.

When the number of town councillors for St Ives West was reduced to three I stood down and joined St Ives in Bloom and helped them win Gold medals for the last four years.

What do I want to help achieve?

Congestion on Harrison Way is a concern and road safety remains a priority. I, along with others objected to the plans to build 131 houses on land adjacent to the Old Ramsey Road. Very recently when the developer went to appeal I updated my objection. The parking problems in the town need addressing as does ensuring we get a decent bus service from Dews and Stagecoach and I will also be playing a part in helping combat climate change.

Co-op thanked for making generous donation



A massive thank you came from the Town Council to The Co-Operative in St Ives who very generously donated all the groceries that were distributed as part of the traditional Langley Bread ceremony in the Corn Exchange. The tradition goes back to the 1650s when Robert Langley died and left money for the purchase of bread to be distributed annually to widows and widowers who reside within the parish boundary of St Ives and are on the electoral roll.

Over the years' sugar, tea, butter and biscuits have been added to the bags, so this year the recipients received: jam, orange juice, bread, biscuits, sugar, butter and tea bags. Pictured above is Mayor Dan who handed out the gifts on 8th January.

Notice of death a little premature

A recent email letter to The Friends of the Norris Museum informed its members of the new exhibition, The Port on the River, (see cover).

However the letter continued to share the sad news that Jean Chandler, who was Chairman of the Friends from 1985 to 1997 had passed away peacefully shortly before Christmas.

Happily it turned out not to be the case as the obituary seen in the Hunts Post was for a Jeanette Chandler, a different person.

Note: Jean Chandler, can be seen receiving another donation for the BHF in this paper. When the Editor rang her to say he thought she had died Jean replied there's still some life in me yet!

From our Environmental Correspondent Heidi N. de Tries

HEIDI GETS HOT AND BOTHERED

Hello darlings,

Well, Christmas was fun. I hope like me you enjoyed the parties, the dancing and all the festivities. All those lovely snowmen up the lampposts - I leaned on a few I can tell you.

But this week my lovelies, your Heidi is upset, very upset. By what I hear you cry? By the state of our environment my dears. Looking forward to my New Year's Day walk I donned my new shiny wellies (one has to so keep up appearances) and headed for our wonderful meadow - I meet all sorts of people there. But before I could get there, at the bottom of our pretty little Bridge Street I

stopped in amazement at a derelict shop, full of rubbish and obviously abandoned. I couldn't believe it. What a dreadful advertisement for our beautiful town. Don't we have people who care about this sort of thing and do their best to find out who is responsible and make sure action is taken? Aren't they called Councillors? Somebody told me this dreadful scene has been like this for over a year. I'm normally an easy-going girl but now I was beginning to feel flushed.

But worse was to come. Over the bridge and round the corner I passed the Dolphin car park. Once again I faced a scene of

devastation - old settees lying in a pile in full view, sodden cushions in another clump and masses of flood debris, flotsam and jetsam as far as the eye could see including disintegrating straw bales. All of this was beginning to block up the recently restored brickwork arches of London Road. Forget flushed, now I was angrier than the time I tripped and broke my stiletto on the Merrylands pavement. And no, I hadn't just left the Nelson's Head!

Walk abandoned and all New Year bon hommie vanished, I stomped off home, opened the Pink Gin and lounged on the chaise longue. Slipping into a doze I had a vision

of a neat, tidy and proud town - alas it was a dream.

But seriously

Just quickly dears, I need to let you know that some important people at our County Council have let me know that they want to present a Climate Change and Environment Strategy and Action Plan to Full Council in March. This will affect us all and so they want to know our opinions - even mine! - on how they plan to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050! And they need to know before 31 January. This sounds important - it's in all the papers and on the news - so I think we should do it. Here's the link for you <https://consultcambcs.uk/engage/menthq.com/climate-strategy>. Do it for Heidi won't you?

Until next time Your Heidi x

having your say ...



Erik has been so busy he has taken on a trainee sub-editor. She's called Milly and will hopefully be house trained by the time Erik goes on his hols!



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

Dear Erik

Robin Waters was absolutely right to point out the damaging effect of the proposed How development on Hemingford Meadow. Hemingford Meadow forms part of the iconic St Ives Necklace Walk. Anything which threatens the beauty, tranquillity and ambience of this ancient and lovely route should be very strongly resisted. Currently the section running through the Hemingfords is threatened by a proposal for a massive recycling and waste handling site. What you do not defend you may very well lose. We need to keep a weather eye on this and any other proposal threatening this beautiful part of our environment. With kind regards **Tony Jackson**

Dear Erik

Further to your December article Little boxes on the hillside... Huntingdonshire District Council planners have several justifiable reasons to refuse application. If they give approval, however, they will be flying in the face of the Government's Planning Inspectorate which stated that: 'The road link to land to the west shown on the layout drawing shall be constructed up to the site's boundary with the property known as The How before development commences in phase 2'. The Planning Inspector clearly foresaw that the How land would come for development. The complete closure of the access to The How from Houghton Road and routing all How traffic through adopted roads in the Barratt development is the only viable solution to the traffic problem on Houghton Road. **Peter Law**

Dear Erik,

You may recall I sent you a similar photo last year where the market team cannot seem to sensibly reposition the benches when the market is finished. Despite the Amenities Manager stating that she would instruct the team to avoid this, 'Benchgate' has returned - **Alan Burt**



Dear Erik,

I'm on a mission to make some amazing improvements to our lovely Hill Rise Dog Walking Area. I want it to be one of the best dog walking and enrichment parks in the area! **St Ives pooches deserve the best!** St Ives Hill Rise Park is a regular spot for dog walkers. However it is looking a bit sorry for itself and has been for some time. We have some nice green areas in and around town but not all these areas are ideal for every dog and owner. I want to bring forth The St Ives Dog Park. I'd like to see a number of improvements such as new fencing, adding more gates/double

Dear Erik,

I'm sure we all agree that in January we want to look forward to the New Year and its challenges in our town - and with optimism. And we want to be encouraged to do so by our local Council leaders - those who know more than we do and especially how to get things done. On turning to the New Year messages from the local Mayors in the Hunts Post we learn that in Godmanchester there is understandable concern for the environment and plans to tackle climate change, in Ramsey there is excitement for the Market Town Strategy, and in Huntingdon there is pride in the new sub-committee dedicated to reducing the town's carbon footprint.

What about St Ives?

Don't hold your breath. There are references to 'less positive memories' (depressing), to 'an opportunity to regroup and explore new opportunities' (yes, but what are they?), a few 'fun facts' (do we really need to know Toy Story 3 is ten years old?), and finally a prediction that 'challenges' and 'things beyond our wildest predictions' lie ahead (unspecified). I don't know about you Erik but compared to our neighbouring towns it sounds like St Ives has nothing for us to look forward to, and if this is the best our Mayor can do to inspire us I despair of this Council. Come on Mr Mayor, tell us your plans to improve our town, stimulate us and give us some hope for the future. You could start by telling us what the Council is doing about the Molise disgrace in Bridge Street, the even greater mess in the Dolphin car park (that's two long-standing eyesores in our town centre), and the threat to what must be our greatest natural asset - the view of the river and trees from Hemingford Meadow that will be ruined for ever by the housing proposed on the old golf course (see Riverporter 50). Erik, can you go and bark at the Town Hall please? **Ed Gasket**

The Rotary Club of St Ives thanks to all those who helped them raise £10,812.57 over Christmas. A fabulous amount that will make a real difference to many of their local charities and good causes.

gates, a footpath for when its muddy, drying station with shelter, putting in a water station (water bowls and tap) and lots more. I've been overwhelmed with positive responses from the community so far. We have our very own Canine Central Grooming Parlour in St Ives who is an avid sponsor and has also donated money to the cause. The District Council is keen to support our efforts and our first goal is to raise just over £3,000 to fix the fencing. There's plenty to be done - it is an ongoing community project. To get involved go to https://www.facebook.com/Hill-Rise-Dog-Park-105037277653144/?modal=admin_todo_tour **Thanks Gemma Saunders**

The Riverporter

NEWS UPDATES

High Water nonsense



A couple of weeks ago the Observer newspaper published an impressive front-page picture of St Ives from the air, claiming that the Great Ouse river had burst its banks and floods were all around us. However, the picture as dramatic as it was, was met with derision by many residents posting on social media that it was a completely non-story. The flood defences in and around our town are designed to allow water to expand over the flood plain and many observed that the system works pretty well. From a high point in the quayside area we looked like a seaside town with flooded fields as far as we could see. The Environment agency did warn people not to stand too close to the fast moving waters as when the water is this high, the currents can easily sweep a person away should they fall in.

The Hair of the Dog pays off again!

The Nelsons Head in Merrylands once again hosted the New Years Day fund-raiser, organised by local musician and impresario Paul Dodson. The party event aptly named 'The Hair of the Dog Band' brings together a motley crew of local musicians to entertain a packed pub and keep the New Year festivities going while raising money for the British Heart Foundation. The latest event raised an amazing £650 which brings the total monies raised by these events to over £2,000 within the last year. The picture shows Jean Chandler (safely resurrected from her coffin, see p2), receiving the cheque from Paul Dodson for the British Heart Foundation, surrounded by a few of the band members.



A COMMANDING VIEW



Local researcher and author Bridget Flanagan has written a new book on the historic houses and gardens of Houghton Hill. Published by the Great Ouse Valley Trust (GOVT). This organisation was set up to promote and protect the wonderful landscape of the Great Ouse Valley. The quality of the landscape between St Ives and Houghton is one of the most beautiful parts along the whole of the Great Ouse. 'Commanding View' is available at the Norris Museum, St Ives and the Houghton Village Community Shop, price £10. All profits to go to the Great Ouse Valley Trust.

LOVE TO MOVE & The Norris Museum Reminiscence Session

Love to Move is the first cognitive enhancement exercise programme of its kind in the UK. It has demonstrable benefits in the physical emotional and cognitive aspects of older people especially those living with with Dementia. **There is no need to book, just come along and a welcome cuppa is provided.** Monday afternoons 1.30-3.30pm (except the 2nd Monday of the Month) at Burleigh Hill Community Centre, Constable Road, St Ives PE27 3EQ. For more info: phone 07731097236 or 07721068606 or email jane.thomas@britishgymnasticsfoundation.org



The investigation into the Cambridgeshire PPC case is due to end in February 2020.

 HYPERION

**Next Auction:
Saturday 1st February
at 11.00am**



To include a good collection of
Ceramics, Silver, Jewellery Picture and Furniture and the Modern
Items



Filmed last Summer in St Ives at Hyperion Auctions catch us on BBC
iPlayer for Celebrity Antiques Road Trip with David Harper & Louise
Gostelow and Celebrities from Holby City
Rosie Marcel & Bob Barrett

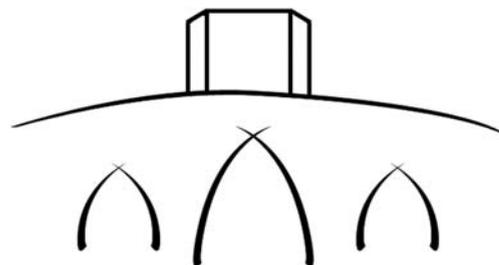
Highlight from the Last Sale!



An Impressive 18ct White Gold Diamond Set Tennis
Bracelet 10.80ct total approx. comprising of 46 Round
Brilliant Cut Diamonds **SOLD £9000**

Next Fine Art Sale: Saturday 14th March starting at 11.00am Consigning Now

Hyperion Auctions, The Salerooms, Station Road, St Ives PE27 5BH
www.hyperionauctions.co.uk 01480 464140



St Ives Adult Learning and Skills

Why not join us on Saturday 1 February?

*Meet new people, gain new skills, make
wonderful things to take home!*

- Cake Baking - Victoria sponge, chocolate cake, muffins
- Indian Stuffed Breads
- Reflexology
- Dieting Mindset
- Calligraphy – Gothic Script
- Fused Glass Jewellery
- Painting with Confidence - Acrylics

All take place at St Ivo Academy

High Leys, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 6RR

Telephone 01480 495717 or visit
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ADVERTORIAL

Selling your House in a Hurry?

Mike Ellis of Ellis Winters explains ...



The speed you want to sell your property should determine the price you ask for it. But if you do your research, price competitively and realistically, the odds of selling rather than sitting on Rightmove for a year, are more likely to be in your favour.

To help improve your chances of selling and increase your property's appeal you could think about refitting the kitchen or bathroom or if finances are a little tight re-arrange the layout, re-decorate in neutral colours, give the place a good spring clean and don't forget a garden makeover.

If there are more serious or costly works required such as wiring, heating, rising damp or a new roof, then it may be best to look at reducing the price to allow for those items.

Get your agent to make it clear on viewings that you have priced accordingly, so the buyer does not try to knock down the price again.

Getting detailed feedback from every viewing and listening to your estate

agent's advice will help you decide the best course of action.

Tel: 01480 388 888 to get the best advice.



Mike Ellis presents Maureen O'Connell of Just Cards with a runner-up certificate in the Best Dressed Window competition sponsored by Ellis Winters Estate Agents.

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Ellis Winters (St Ives) Ltd 14 Market Hill, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 5AL Tel: 01480 388 888 | Email: info@elliswinters.co.uk | www.elliswinters.co.uk

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