

The Riverporter

ST IVES AWARD WINNING NEWSPAPER

Issue 53: 21 February 2020

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

St Ives out to Impress

St Ives girl, Flick West, appeared in the Valentine's day edition of the ITV2 show *Dress to Impress*

Pictured here with *The Riverporter's* very own Erik, Flick went on to win the Valentines edition much to the delight of her friends.

Flick spends much of her time living and working in London but is currently at home with her family and boyfriend here in St Ives.

Flick said appearing on the show was an amazing experience, and she enjoyed every moment.

The show was filmed here in St Ives and at the ITV studios in Manchester. You can still see the February 14 edition of *Dress To Impress* on ITV2 Catch Up TV.



A somewhat startled looking Erik had a brief cameo appearance on national television. Asked if the one second of fame had gone to his head and would put Erik off dealing with letters from Riverporter readers, Flick said 'I shouldn't think so, he loves the job too much!'

Conservatives retain seat in district by-election

Current St Ives Town councillor and ex-mayor Phil Pope missed out on being elected to the District Council last week by 66 votes following a low turn out at the polls of only 23.6%.

The District seat was being contested in a by-election, caused by the resignation of Jason Ablewight shortly before Christmas.

The seat was won by the Conservative candidate, Adam Roberts, who gained 558 votes to Phil Pope's 492 with Liberal Democrat Colin Saunderson and Labour candidate Barry O'Sullivan polling 109 and 103 votes respectively.

In 2018, Mr Ablewight had polled 758 votes, on a slightly higher turnout of 28.8%, over 200 votes more than the Labour candidate at the time.

Pope's result was much closer but still not enough to break the Tories reign, here which began in 1974, a mere 46 years ago.

The election not only highlighted the stranglehold the Tories have in the area but the low engagement of residents with the political process.

Executive leader of Huntingdonshire District Council, Cllr Ryan Fuller was quoted in the *Hunts Post* saying: 'I'm pleased to welcome Adam to the council and know that he will be an active ward councillor and a strong voice for St Ives East.'

The 28-year-old Mr Roberts, grew up in Ramsey and currently works as the campaign manager for the Huntingdon Conservative Association. This means that both at work and in the council chamber his boss is Cllr Fuller, who is in charge of Political matters for Huntingdon Conservatives and is also the Leader of the Tory District Councillors.

Kent Comes to The Old Riverport

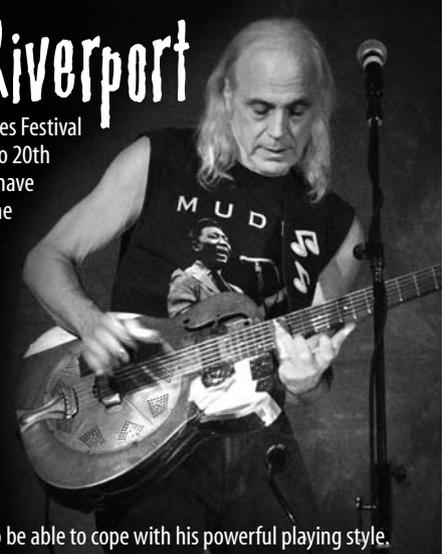
Plans are well under way for this year's Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival with some 26 FREE concerts over the 4-day Festival from 17th to 20th September. The organisers, St Ives Town Team, are delighted to have eight new acts confirmed and among them is Kent DuChaine the American Delta Bluesman.

DuChaine has shared the stage with many of the greatest Blues artists, including Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and John Lee Hooker.



The Sunday Times wrote about Kent's concerts as 'One of the 5 best Nationwide (in any music genre).'

DuChaine plays an 84 year old 'National Steel' guitar kitted out with extra heavy gauge strings to be able to cope with his powerful playing style.



The full Festival Programme should be available in March at www.theoldriverportstives.co.uk



Left: Adam Roberts, the newly elected District Councillor for St Ives East Ward.

In issue 51 of *The Riverporter* we said that Mr Roberts had declined to send us his election pitch. Actually when we first contacted him he immediately said he would be delighted to send us something and, a little later, confirmed he would. The following day he said he couldn't.

MACE BEARER STANDING DOWN

Our current Town Council Mace Bearer, Fred King (pictured right), has attended his last full council meeting and is standing down from his official role. The ceremonial Mace is still a symbol of the judicial authority of the crown and is carried ahead of the Mayor and councillors by the Sergeant-at-Mace, or Mace Bearer, in recognition of that authority at all full council meetings.

Fred took over the role in 2016 following the retirement of John Smoothy who had held the post for 20 years. Fred explained to *The Riverporter* that he had been honoured to be Macebearer but that other pressures required he stood down at this time. The new Macebearer is Mark Reid, ex Royal Engineer with 22 years' service reaching the rank of WO2 RQMS. The Town Clerk said 'I'm delighted to have Mark on board as part of the team and I look forward to working with him in the coming months and years.'



HEIDI ON TITS AND TIPPING

Well, where to begin? It's been so exciting this week. First, I need to ask you how you feel about tits?

Yes, I know that, but this is about the ever-popular Adopt-a-Box fund raiser on our lovely Holt Island Nature Reserve - such a secluded and luxuriant hideaway. Here the Friends group is looking for sponsors for their 28 bird boxes. For a mere ten pounds you can adopt a new tit family - it may be Blue or Great - I know which I prefer. Download a form from their website www.holtisland.org and you'll discover all the details. I hope you feel you can support them.



Photograph by Nigel Spowell



Then, an intriguing invitation from my current gentleman companion, Mr Edward Gasket, to accompany him on a country riverside walk along the Great Ouse Valley Way footpath. I accepted immediately - I am always open to invitations - and once again I donned my shiny wellies, ready as usual for outdoor adventures.

All went well to start with but after strolling across the meadows from Holywell we entered Meadow Lane. Well, to say I was shocked at the scene would be an understatement, and I've seen a few things down country lanes I can tell you.

'What was it Heidi?' I hear you cry. Darlings, it was piles and piles of the most awful rubbish - old tyres, furniture, tin cans, rusting bicycles - you name it, it was there and it totally destroyed my harmonious mood. Ed caught me as I swooned in a rage and after a long draught from his hip flask I recovered to consider what I could do.

Well my dears it was easier than I imagined. Once home and back on the chaise longue I discovered on the District Council website a new Customer Portal. Once registered I accessed 'Bins and Waste' and then 'Reporting fly-tipping', and before I knew it I had dumped it all on the local authority! Believe it or not, within a couple of days I received a confirmation and a promise that all that had upset me would be cleared. It didn't say when but I will let you all know. Want to use the portal? I thought you would: my.huntingdonshire.gov.uk

Byeee! Heidi

Photographs by Ed Gasket

New Facility Opens

A new fitness facility opened to members of the public last Saturday at the St Ives Outdoor Centre. The Training Shed was officially opened by the Leader of Huntingdonshire District Council, Councillor Ryan Fuller.



The event was supported by a number of special guests, including Neil Back, England Rugby World Cup winner; Frances Quinn, Great British Bake Off winner and marathon runner; Sam Smelt, British GT driver; and Gary Marheineke, England amputee football goal keeper.



Clr Fuller said: 'Huntingdonshire's ethos is to grow, expand and invest to improve our leisure offering across the district.'

One Leisure has partnered with the Training Shed to provide functional training aimed at improving individual fitness, performance, nutritional choices and injury rehabilitation.

Speaking with them *The Riverporter* was intrigued that The Training Shed can use DNA profiling to help with creating a programme to suit each person ... more of that in a later issue.

The outdoor leisure centre has undergone a half a million-pound investment to enhance the existing athletics and sports provision. The 50 acre site has the following facilities:

- Full size 3G pitch
- Full size Astro pitch
- 2 Netball/tennis courts
- Cricket pitch
- 11 grass football pitches
- Athletics track
- Bar serving drinks and snacks
- Training Shed

The Centre regularly hosts , football, cricket, hockey, touch rugby, athletics, rounders, school sports competitions, netball, tennis, St Ives 10k race and motorcycle rider training.

New gym equipment in December

The St Ives Indoor Centre saw a complete makeover in December with a whole new range of equipment, making it one of the best equipped gyms around, as the picture shows.



Screen St Ives

Thursday 5th Mar 2020 Screen 2

DIRTY GOD

Director: Sacha Polak Netherlands | UK | Belgium | Ireland, 2019, 1h 44m

An unflinching portrait of a strong-willed yet immature young woman facing a radical change in how the world looks at her as well as how she sees herself following an acid attack, featuring a stunning film debut of actress Vicky Knight



Doors open at 7.30pm and films start at 8pm The Corn Exchange

The Riverporter Cartoons

It's not too late to pick up the collection of cartoons that have featured in *The Riverporter*.

Remember the 'Highlights' and 'Lowlights' of serious news reporting.



The Wit and Wisdom of Erik

is a great gift at just **£2.50** or 2 for a fiver! Available at Terry's Heel Bar, Just Cards and The Oliver Cromwell.

All profits go to the St Ives Christmas Lunch Charity.

Has the Fire Service been led up the garden path?

News broke last week that the Cambs Fire Service has wasted thousands of pounds and four years as a result of promises made by ex PCC Jason Ablewhite.

According to the Fire Service, 4 years ago agreement was due to be completed with St John's for land for a new training facility in Huntingdon. This state-of-the-art facility was urgently needed as the service has been so successful at reducing the number of incidents that fire fighters are unable to maintain their skills. At the time, PCC Mr Ablewhite was keen to take over control of the Fire Service and offered some land at Monk's Wood owned by the Police.

According to Kevin Reynolds,

who heads the Fire Authority, they agreed to the proposal in order to save money and then spent the past 4 years getting planning permissions, which proved costly due to the sensitive nature of the site. Now, at the last minute, the acting PCC has said the land is no longer available as it is needed by the Police. Leaving the Fire Authority out of pocket and back to negotiating with St John's for the original land in Huntingdon, and 4 years behind schedule, facing increased costs due to inflation.

having your say ...



Whilst Erik was on the telly Milly was getting to grips with the office, although she can't quite reach the seat yet!



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

The Riverporter

NEWS UPDATES

New Mayor and Deputy elect

This weeks meeting of the Town Council saw the annual decision on who will be the new Mayor and Deputy Mayor for 2020-2021. Current Mayor, Daniel Rowe, chaired the meeting and it was proposed by Cllr Nick Dibben that the current Deputy Mayor Jonathan Pallant (above left) should take over as Mayor from this May. It was also proposed that the Deputy Mayor should be Councillor Pasco Hussain (above right). Both votes were carried unanimously.



New Public Spaces Protection Order in place

As of this week, Feb 18th a new PSPO order is in place across St Ives. This may come as a surprise to some residents, but a real bonus received with thanks by many others.

The **Public Spaces Protection Orders** was applied to cover an area through the centre of St Ives from the top of Ramsey Road down to The Waits through town to The Quay and out to the bus station and all of Market Hill, plus the Warner's Park area.



The order increases the powers of the Town Council and police to prevent any form of anti-social behaviour including removing and barring of individuals causing problems in those designated areas.

The order came into place following extensive discussions and research done by local police officers Huntingdon District Council and town residents and the order has been put into place ahead of the (hopefully) better weather when the number of town visitors increases.

Commenting on the move, Sergeant Alice Draper said: 'The PSPO aims to encompass the various different types of anti-social behaviour (ASB) which affect St Ives and provides additional powers to both organisations to deal with ASB in specific locations of high demand. We hope that we can make a positive impact on the town and wider community with a firm but fair approach to dealing with ASB, and avoid some of the more problematic and ingrained issues which have previously been experienced in the town.'

The Bobby Scheme

If you haven't heard of it, you may want to pay attention!

Among the agenda items on this month's Town Council meeting was an application for a grant to support The Bobby Scheme so of course some councillors immediately asked ... **What is the Bobby scheme?**

The Riverporter too was caught unawares by this item and decided to look further into the organisation. In previous issues The Riverporter has issued and repeated warnings of doorstep and telephone scams being committed on older and more vulnerable residents of St Ives. These scams take many forms but always lead to trusting, unsuspecting people being tricked into either directly giving money or banking details to fraudsters. In recent weeks we have heard of people knocking on the door offering garden services for cash and then disappearing with the cash. And even a dating website where you pay £3 to join but it actually cost £241 when you get the bill. The fraudsters are everywhere and that's where the Bobby Scheme comes in.

The Bobby Scheme was set up by the Cambridgeshire Police Shirevalty Trust to help older and vulnerable people feel safer in their homes by improving security. Their two 'Bobbies' fit door chains, window and door alarms and other security devices as well as providing security advice and reassurance. If you are a victim of crime, over 60, the service is free. The council were generally supportive of the scheme and a grant application will be looked at in the new financial year.

The Riverporter says.. 'Bonafide banks, utilities and other legitimate services will never ask for your security details over the phone, so if someone asks you just hang up and seek advice and don't give cash to doorstep traders'.

01480 413311 info@thebobbyscheme.org



Dear Erik,

A couple of weeks' ago The Riverporter published our job advert for an administrator to help support our St Ives-based charity. I'm pleased to say that the advert has generated a lot of interest, with several application packs sent out as a result. The Riverporter does a great job of keeping local people informed about news, issues and events of interest to them – thank you!

Best wishes Tracey Hipson, Administrator CPRE Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

Dear Erik,

Subject: Wyton Airfield

Your item on the future of Wyton Airfield in Issue 52, 7th Feb was informative and the comment by Cllr Fuller encouraging. What was missing is what Jonathan Djanogly MP was quoted in the Hunts Post Wednesday Feb 5th as saying 'I do remain concerned at the potential negative implications'. Is there any chance of the MP enlightening the general public of his concerns.

Could it be that the Huntingdonshire District Council have other ideas for the airfield, surely not!
Regards Paul Davidson

As we were writing up this report The Riverporter heard of the following:

St Ives Police are investigating an attempted fraud in which a St Ives resident received a phone call on Tuesday 11th February from someone pretending to represent Amazon Prime, and was asked to go to their bank and transfer a large sum of money to a fraudulent account. The suspects had also managed to break into the victim's computer, giving them access to his on-line accounts and banking details. The incident has been passed to Action Fraud, the UK centre for cyber-crime and fraud investigation and reporting.

Wheatsheaf crossroads

The Wheatsheaf crossroads on the Somersham road was the scene last year of a tragic motor accident and there has been considerable debate on what can be done to calm traffic and reduce the risk at this dangerous spot. Our Town Council, once again, had this item on their agenda, this time to consider correspondence from Bluntisham Parish Council requesting that St Ives Town Council (SITC) join other parishes by signing a letter to Cambs CC requesting urgent action. However, Councillor Ryan Fuller requested that SITC should wait for further clarification at county level, as this issue was being taken very seriously by all the various authorities involved and the SITC decided on this course of action.



George Yard

An application has been made to the Town Council to consider the passage, known as George Yard, to be designated as a Public Right of Way. Various complaints have been received regarding the condition of the passage including overhanging trees, potholes and loose metal gratings, but it seems the Council cannot improve or maintain it without a modification order to have George Yard added to the town's definitive map. However at this time the Town Council decided to undertake further research before making any move on the issue.

Developers drop their bid at RAF Wyton

700 new homes, business space and community facilities on part of RAF Wyton's redundant airfield, has been dropped by developers, Engie Services Ltd. Planners for the company said the decision had been prompted by HDC's refusal to accept more information, although they also said they will be back with a new application later in the year.

A spokesperson for HDC, said: 'The council continues to be in ongoing conversation with Engie and has consistently highlighted that there are important significant issues regarding the proposed development of this site, in particular its location and sustainability.' St Ives Town Council has said that although it would accept development on the airfield, it wanted to know how the proposed scheme would fit in with future plans for the rest of the site.

Mayor says bus plans should be halted immediately

The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) has been stripped of its powers to proceed with the Cambridge to Cambourne busway by the 'controversial' Mayor of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority, James Palmer. The balance of power of the county's transport infrastructure plans, shifted to Mr Palmer with the statement. The GCP said it was 'astonished' to hear of the Mayor's decision, and rejected his claim that its plans did not fit with Mr Palmer's plans for the Combined Authority. The acrimonious discussions saw the GCP board demanding an urgent meeting with the Mayor to discuss the issue in an effort to avoid further delay to improving public transport in Greater Cambridge.

Can training continue for Cambridgeshire's fire fighters



HYPERION

Entries Invited for Our Spring Fine Art & Antiques Sale on 14th March



To include a Good Collection of Jewellery, Silver, Coins, Records,
Local & International Art and Antiques

Sold In Our Last Fine Art Sale



A Impressive 18ct White Gold Diamond
Set Tennis Bracelet 10.80ct Sold £9500

Collection of Assorted Records inc. The Police,
Talking Heads, Bowie etc Sold £500



Cased and boxed 2015 2oz Perth Mint
Australian \$200 Dollar Gold Coin Sold £2200

Next Antiques & Interiors Sale: Saturday 29th February starting at 11.00am

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



Snowmen give to CALMtown



Last week Corrine Harwood-Davey of La Muse presented Rachel of CALMtown St Ives with a cheque for £50 from The Snowman Festival. Corrine, who had the original idea for the Snowman Festival, is keen that it not only helps attract shoppers to the town but it also benefits the community as a whole. The Festival has become a popular fixture and it's success has enabled the organisers, The Old Riverport Retail Group, to donate to local charitable groups. CALMtown St Ives works hard to connect the people of St Ives to develop a community-led approach to mental Health. If you are struggling with mental health issues you will find contact details for CALMtown St Ives on their Facebook page at calmtown.org

ADVERTORIAL

UP, UP AND AWAY!

Mike Ellis of Ellis Winters explains ...



GREAT NEWS, the year has started off at a sprint with viewings up 78% this January compared to January last year, viewings translate in to offers, offers translate in to sales!

However we often come across buyers with an unrealistic expectation of what their budget will buy in the area where they're looking. They realise, quite quickly, the need to either increase their budget, look for something smaller or look further away from their ideal location.

This is a perennial question with experienced as well as first time buyers having to face-up to this dilemma on a daily basis. In a busy market, and its certainly looks like its heading that way, it's imperative to act quickly or

miss out and have to pay more. Our advice is simple - sort your budget out in advance, know what the costs are, know what deposit you'll need and how much your solicitor is going to charge and also what mortgage you can afford. Armed with this information, start looking on one of the main property portals, like Rightmove, Zoopla or On The Market, to see if any properties match your criteria. If you can't find anything, widen the search area by five miles and look again. Keep increasing this search area until you do find something within your budget. Once you find a few properties, go and look at the area, look at the local amenities, shops, schools, doctor's surgery's etc. Drive to your place of work to

gauge the commute time and what the traffic is like at different times of the day. Visit at the weekend to see how many cars are parked outside and to see who is around and how busy or quiet it is, in other words to find out all the information you need before deciding whether to offer or not. There's nothing worse than buying a house only to realise the day after you move in that the neighbour breeds dogs!

Happy house hunting!



ellis&co winters

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