

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Inspiring message from St Ives Policeman

Police Officer No. 7173 posted the caring and inspirational message on the Huntingdonshire Police Facebook page following an incident on Marley Road on 16th July.

The unusual incident involved a man suffering heart failure while driving with his young son in the car. The comment from the Police Officer titled 'I STAND IN AWE OF YOU' praised all those people who came to help with the difficult situation.

The Facebook post has now had 245 comments and 978 shares at the time of going to press. Many of those who commented were moved to tears over the emotional post and heaped praise on the officer and those who attended the scene. Other comments raised concern for the man and hoped he was recovering.

Below is the full post:

These were my thoughts during an incident I attended yesterday.

A male went into heart failure whilst driving along Marley Road, St Ives. Saddened further more in the knowledge the male is young and had his young son in the vehicle also.

To all the amazing angels, guided as Paramedics; Stabilising this male; watching you work with every fibre of your being to save him made me appreciate all that you do even more. To watch you communicate with each other, calmly, compassionately, respectfully and with unquestionable conviction is astounding to see.

To see you doing all this covered head to toe in very stifling and intrusive (but safe) PPE kit only added to my amazement of you.

I STAND IN AWE OF YOU

To the van driver and passenger who stopped to get out [of] your vehicle, to check if everything was ok, knowing that something didn't quite feel right when the car suddenly halted to a stop; whereby so many others would have just carried on manoeuvring around thinking it was just a guy who had broken down in his vehicle.

I STAND IN AWE OF YOU

To the couple who stopped unselfishly and started CPR without hesitation; for allowing your human and clearly good-natured instincts to kick in to help preserve this life, this husband, this Father, this brother, this son and to not even give it a seconds thought, despite living in this surreal world that is COVID19. You undoubtedly and unreservedly played a huge part in helping to save this life.

I STAND IN AWE OF YOU

To the nearby resident and daughter, who cradled the little boy and took him from this disturbing and chaotic scene. Who sheltered him in your home and arms. Occupied him, gave him snacks and put cartoons on for him during this time.

I STAND IN AWE OF YOU

To my colleague who fought back the tears, to protect the little boys unmistakable anxieties and reassured him that "everything will be ok" when she heard him crying for his daddy.

I STAND IN AWE OF YOU

To the medic who placed your reassuring arm around the wife of the male, who was now in the ambulance and updated her fully and honestly on the situation.

I STAND IN AWE OF YOU

We are living in a world at the moment, where there is so much uncertainty and understandable fear, but with all of the above, it just goes to show that humanity and kindness, I am happy to say will always prevail.

Thank you doesn't seem enough, but thank you to you all. You are what makes the world a good place. #7173



Today, I've taken the bus to the beautiful town of St. Ives

Mayor Palmer comes to St Ives

The controversial Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority Mayor, James Palmer, following a visit to St Ives to encourage us all to use buses more is in the news again.

Last week Mayor Palmer was spotted in St Ives and was reportedly telling market traders that he had money to spend on improvements for the town. This follows an article in our 12th June on-line issue on the Masterplan for St Ives, which reported that the CPCA has £1million available for each of the market towns in the area including St Ives.

A Youtube video from CPCA showed Mayor Palmer on the guided busway, extolling the virtues of public transport, especially to visit the 'beautiful town of St Ives' (see pic above).

Mayor warned to put his house in order

A recent article on the Hunts Post website claims that a leaked letter the paper obtained, shows the Government warned Mayor Palmer to put his 'house in order' following the appointment of Tom Hunt as the Chief of Staff at the Combined Authority (CPCA).

The Mayor was reminded of the Nolan principles in the letter from Simon Clarke, the Minister of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, which said 'It is essential that the combined authority becomes an example of best practice in relation to applying the Nolan Principles of Public Life, namely selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership'.

The article by John Elworthy included these comments in the letter from Mr Clarke, 'Given that Government is investing significant funding into the area, I would welcome clarification about immediate next steps on this corridor and how you and local partners will not lose momentum.' It continued by saying it was essential they work towards 'significantly improved local partnership working arrangements, built on a unity of ambition and shared purpose, and I believe that you, as mayor, are uniquely placed to lead such a change. This is the spirit in which devolution is intended

to operate across England and we really need to seek this in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough'.

In response Mayor Palmer blamed civil servants for the criticism, saying they were ill prepared for his style and pace of delivering key projects. He was quoted:

'We would not have been able to bring these developments forward at such breakneck speed without ruffling some feathers and challenging some old ways of thinking. Michael Gove gave a speech recently where he talked about the need to restore faith in Government by changing the structures, ambitions and priorities of the machine and demonstrating a willingness to break the mould of the past.'

'This is what I am trying to do, and what this letter is evidence of resistance to in the civil service. The culture of government is hostile to risk and experimentation, and decisions in the civil service are geared towards risk aversion.'

'Civil servants are constantly questioning our processes rather than our results, which means my officers have to spend hours defending our policies rather than implementing them.'

He added: *'I was elected on the basis that I would do things differently, so that we could deliver for the people of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough where so many others before had failed. I would rather be judged on whether I have delivered on my promises, and if we have been able to improve peoples' lives.'*

Ed's comment: It's good that Mr Palmer wants to be judged on results and he is clearly keen to want quick results.

However as our report on the Masterplan (RP 12 June 2020), which highlighted its flaws, showed that a quick result is not necessarily a good one or the right one, especially when the evidence for change is out of date or plain wrong and proper community consultation hasn't taken place.

See further info on page 3.



HEIDI UP THE CREEK!

Now listen up dearies. You'll never guess where I've been this week! I got an invitation to join a small select and intimate group of Pennywort Pickers.

Now do I look like the kind of girl who would leap on a boat and go upstream without a paddle? You bet I do.

If you've followed me from the beginning [and many people still do Ed.] you may recall that in the very first issue of this organ (snigger) my inaugural piece was about the immigrant Floating Pennywort plant – such a pretty name, such a pernicious pest. In the summer it spreads like crazy and clogs up all the backwaters I love to go and relax in with Mr Gasket in his punt. You can lay full length in a punt you know, but you do need cushions. I'm so sorry, I am so easily side-tracked.

Well, a wonderful bunch of volunteers, under the guidance of the Environment Agency, set off each fortnight in the summer to pick the Pennywort before the clumps get too big. It can grow enormously quickly . . . that always impresses me.

I had such fun I thought I would tell you about it because you too might like to try it. All the equipment is supplied – canoes, bags, life-jackets – and you will be very well looked after. Each trip is for about two hours on a weekday morning every fortnight, and we can easily socially distance – difficult for me normally but I'm making an effort now.

Do get in touch with my editor (lovely man) on this paper if you fancy coming along [Email: Editor@theriverporter.uk].

I do so admire him – he lets me ramble on about all the things that take my fancy . . .

So here are the pictures to give you an idea of what happens.

I'd love to meet you up the creek some time!

Byee!
Heidi x



Natalie's Sewing Service



As from today, Friday 24th July, facemasks are required to be worn in shops as well as on public transport and in NHS facilities. If you are looking for a facemask with a difference then try Natalie's Sewing Service in Merryland.

She is doing a great job selling bespoke masks in ladies, men and childrens sizes and has a great stock of interesting patterns. The masks are extremely well made and double lined with a pocket, should you wish to insert a filter.

Natalie also does clothing alterations, curtain making and pretty much any sewing job such as adding zips, pockets and hole repairs.



Erik noticed that a new defibrillator has appeared on the wall at the side of Nuts Bistro. Good to know if one is needed in a hurry. He doesn't know who put it there but here are his pictures of it.





having your say ... The Riverporter

NEWS UPDATE

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

Hi Erik, Milly and Heidi,

Ref: Tuesday's short triangle hobble on the Meadow (my right paw's still giving me gyp). On the meadow there was not much colourful flora left to spy - mainly yellow and blue vetch and a bit of lady's bedstraw. On the riverbank there was much pink-purple great willowherb and some purple loosestrife. But about 5 yards from the Dolphin fence there was the delight of a solitary orange balsam just coming into flower. The highlight of my hobble was not on the Meadow, rather beside the Dolphin car park where the Causeway starts - a huge and glorious display of bright purple loosestrife and at the town end of it a substantial patch of vivid pinkish-purple marsh woundwort. Ah, the pleasures of summer at home in sunny St Ives.

Doberman

Are our markets as good as they could be?

One of our readers sent us this email. *We went over to Ely last Saturday. I chatted to the bratwurst guy while ours were cooking. Twice in the last three years he has applied to HDC for a stall on our Monday Market. Twice he received zilch reply. Ely Saturday Market now incorporates their Farmers Market and is busier than it ever was - and the atmosphere was both relaxed and sensible but, importantly, the market was free from all the obsessive Pandemic Paraphernalia. It was delightful, unlike our now sad and sorry Monday, Friday and Saturday markets.*

Due to the Covid restrictions the markets have been moved to the Cattle Market car park, which seems to have received good and bad comments.

Over the years there has been a mixture of comments from shopkeepers about the markets. Some have considered that their businesses suffer on market days and others that without the markets there would be fewer shoppers in town. Recently a shop owner noted that they had been less busy with the market held in the car park, which is further away from the town centre and therefore deters shoppers from browsing in the shops.

Dear Erik,

Why does the council get so many complaints about long grass? Are we all programmed to mow all the wild flowers down, keep them trim!! 'They look untidy'.

The concept of a 'lawn' developed in 17th century and allowed sports to be played. But why trim all roadsides and every inch of the park into a barren sports field. I love a lawn for sports but leave the rest of the park alone or at least leave some circles of wild area. If we leave it to grow we could just trim walkways and enjoy the flowers as much as the butterflies and bees....

I wrote a poem too:

Get it mowed! it's looking longer, hateful weeds are standing stronger. daisy, dandy heads are peeping cut it now before they're seeding.

Get it mowed! make it neater, use the sit on by the litre, trim it, shape it, use the nitrate. thin the weeds increase the cut rate.

Get it mowed! I pay my taxes. I'll get it done, 'til lockdown relaxes. Those pesky bees are taking over, feeding on the four leaf clover.

Get it mowed, contact the council, The height of this is proper woeful, Poppys, cornflowers, thistles, red champions all a graceful rare phenomenon

Get it mowed? well maybe not, give the butterflies a shot grow the grass, feed those bees keep them pollinating seeds.

Beccy Morgan

Another concern mentioned was the commitment of HDC to the market. District Cllr Angie Dickinson said 'We are a market town. They [the markets] are what the town has been built on. I will absolutely support them', but she could not say at this time whether they will return to their previous locations, or in what form.

Finally the state of the Farmers Market Banner at the entrance to the car park has been mentioned to us as being in 'a pitiful and sorry state. It has looked like that for month after month'.

So come on Town Council, how about a nice new banner for our Farmers Market, which was voted the best in the country back in 2015.

How was our money spent?

In our article about the St Ives Masterplan (RP 12 June 2020) we raised the question of how had the £150,000 of taxpayers money been spent on creating the plans for Huntingdon, Ramsey and St Ives. When we asked HDC to tell us, we were told that we had to make a Freedom Of Information request to know the details. So we did, and last week we had a response from the Information Management Team which confirmed that Huntingdonshire District Council was awarded funds by the CPCA to develop masterplans for the districts' towns. It said:

As you have correctly identified, the Masterplan project in Huntingdonshire was a piece of work conducted across three market towns, not simply in St Ives in isolation.

We can confirm how the money was spent. Metro Dynamics were commissioned by Huntingdonshire District Council to support the production of prospectuses for growth for the three market towns of Huntingdon, St Ives, and Ramsey. These were produced over the course of a year, which included detailed data analysis, multiple stakeholder engagements, and the production of the reports, which were agreed at District and Combined Authority board level.

The value of this work was £139,150, billed across a year in four chunks.

Of course this left us wondering what happened to the £10,850 not accounted for. So we asked where has it gone? We are awaiting a reply.

Was this value for money?

The most important concern is - was this expenditure value for money? According to the comments of many people who have read the St Ives plan, the answer is no.

The reply received stated that these plans were produced over the course of a year, which included detailed data analysis, multiple stakeholder engagements, and the production of the reports. What is clear is that all of the data used [ref St Ives] was out-of-date and no new data was collected. The stakeholders were mainly councillors and no attempt was made to include important local groups such as the Civic Society. On top of that the report was poorly written, contained errors and repurposed data and ideas that had been only half thought through.

Covid-19 cases higher in Huntingdonshire

Public Health England data for positive tests, as of July 6, shows there were 872 cases in Huntingdonshire, compared to 318 in Cambridge; 469 in Fenland; 191 in East Cambs and 343 in South Cambs. The number of deaths recorded by the Office for National Statistics, from March 27 to June 26, (includes homes, hospitals, care homes and hospices) was:

Huntingdonshire 172; Cambridge 82, East Cambs 50; Fenland 72 and South Cambs 60.

On July 14 Cambridgeshire County Council's General Purposes Committee was told that as of July 6 the cumulative rate of Covid-19 cases in Huntingdonshire was 'statistically significantly higher' than the national rate. Cllr Lucy Nethsingha told the meeting: *It's really quite concerning that information is only coming to us now, and I think there are huge concerns about the way the Track and Trace system is working and the speed at which lockdown is easing in relation to how quickly that information is coming down to councils'.*

Has the virus increased public good will?

There seems to be an increasing number of acts of kindness from kind-hearted people and, as one person commented, there is a lot of good will in the community. Our lead story confirms this. One area which demonstrates this, is the delivering of food parcels. Whilst we have been living with food banks for some time, well before Covid-19, there has been an increase in the number of groups helping to deliver food parcels to families struggling to make ends meet.

This is generally a good thing, however these acts of kindness can raise issues of concern or unintended consequences. These range from the lack of supplying a balanced diet, to some recipients becoming dependent on food parcels, or even the possibility of someone exploiting the number of sources of free food for their own gains. Time will tell if this level of good will will continue - when and if the pandemic ends.

St Ives lady thanked on BBC's The One Show

Michelle Laing was nominated for The One Show's 'One Big Thank You' by her friend and Morrisons Community Champion Denise Gable.

Michelle, who opened Morrison's new community room, was thanked by Nicky Byrne of boyband Westlife and surprised by the St Ives Community Choir singing a Westlife song, 'You Raise Me Up', outside of the store.



Photo Denise Gable.

Michelle was chosen to open the facility due to her work with a Facebook group 'Helping The Homeless', which collects donated food and supplies to distribute to the homeless and families struggling to feed their children.



HYPERION

Entries Invited for Our Fine Art & Antiques Sale on 29th August

To Include a Good Collection of
Silver, Coins, Ceramics, Furniture, Local & International Art
Sold In Our Last Fine Art Sale



1796 Curved Sword with scabbard marked
and engraved figural decoration to the blade
'Hussar' Sold £1700

Martiros Manoukian (Armenian, 1947), Mixed
Media Original Painting 36 x 30cm, Hand signed
with certificate of Authenticity Sold £600



Blonde Elm Ercol Sideboard of 3 drawers
above cupboard base Sold £420

Next Antiques & Interiors Sale: Saturday 1st August starting at 11.00am

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



First-ever Green Party litter pick in St Ives

On Saturday 18th July 2020, Huntingdonshire Green Party held its first-ever litter pick in St Ives. There was an excellent turnout with 17 local residents and Green Party members joining the event. In small groups, the team tidied up the area surrounding All Saints Parish Church, the Thicket Path and the St Ives Park and Ride. John Parkin, a Green Party member who lives in St Ives, said, 'It was great to see so many people from St Ives, from children to adults, come together to help look after our local environment. The enthusiasm of those who came out on a Saturday afternoon shows how much local people care about making St Ives such a fantastic place to live.'

Following the success of the litter pick, the Huntingdonshire Green Party will be holding another litter pick on Saturday 12th September to coincide with Keep Britain Tidy's 'Great British September Clean'. If you have any ideas about where else we should do a litter pick, please let the Green Party know on their Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/HuntsGreenParty/>).



Inset: John Parkin (left) and James Goodman, Co-ordinator of the local Green Party, along with some of the bags of litter after the event.

ADVERTORIAL

STAMP DUTY HOLIDAY



Chancellor Rishi Sunak has announced a Stamp Duty holiday, raising the level at which the tax is charged to £500,000. That means that you could now save thousands of pounds when purchasing your next home - the holiday extends from 8th July to 31st March 2021, making it the ideal time to buy. We expect this to boost activity in the housing market. Buyers and sellers will be motivated to complete transactions in advance of the March 2021 deadline. House moves prompt spending in many areas of the economy.*

What is Stamp Duty?

Stamp Duty is a lump-sum tax that anyone buying a property or land costing more than a certain amount must pay. The rate at which you pay the tax varies depending on the price and type of the property (i.e. residential or commercial).**

HOW WILL THE STAMP DUTY AFFECT YOU – IF YOU ARE A BUYER?

The stamp duty changes will help you to save thousands of pounds in costs on your new, main home or second home.

A main home buyer or investor at £350k will save £7,500, and a first-time buyer £2,500. In the case where a buyer purchases a house valued at £500k, savings of up to £15,000 are envisaged.

In 2019, almost 90% of all sales were under £500,000, which means the vast majority of transactions will not be liable for any stamp duty until March 2021.

HOW WILL STAMP DUTY AFFECT YOU – IF YOU ARE A LANDLORD OR A SECOND HOMEBUYER?

Landlord and investors benefit most. If you are a landlord or a second home buyer, you will pay only the 3% surcharge up to £500k, until March 2021. In this new scenario, the property industry is once more a great investment option to consider, whether you are a landlord or an investor.

HOW WILL STAMP DUTY AFFECT YOU – IF YOU ARE SELLING YOUR HOUSE?

Selling your house could be quicker than ever before, with many first-time buyers looking for their dream home and investors looking to increase its portfolio. Buyers could also consider changing their preferences to spend a bit more, and be a bit keener to make a better offer - which for sellers means a higher chance of getting the asking price!

*Source: Dataloft, GOV.UK and UKHPI

**Source: Rightmove

ellis&co
winters

