

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

In this issue: Flouting the parking restrictions (p1); Corn Exchange re-opens (p1); St Ives Food Bank (p2); Sea Scouts new hut (p2); More controversy on-line (p3)

Parking restrictions ignored



Parking restrictions are regularly being flouted according to the Town Hall.

The Council has received several complaints from people frustrated by inconsiderate vehicle users who are moving the red barriers or 'hogging' the available parking spaces.

A number of cars that park in Market Hill outside of the town hall would appear to be there all day on a regular basis and are either workers or residents and not shoppers.

Of course the barriers were put in place to widen the pavements allowing shoppers to keep a safe distance apart, thus encouraging the public to feel safe and return to the town, supporting our local shops.

Parking in the town centre has been a contentious issue for many years and *The Riverporter* has frequently commented on it. One of the main complaints is that areas which should be mostly pedestrianised, such as Bridge Street, have had little enforcement of the regulations, which has resulted in the

public becoming accustomed to parking there. Our last issue pictured many people enjoying the 'Café' style dining now possible in Bridge Street without the cars, but it seems that some people are determined to park there regardless of the barriers.

The authorities are appealing to vehicle users not to move the barriers and use the car parks more while Covid restrictions are in place. It was rumoured that there may be plans to install concrete barriers to stop them being moved, although we cannot get an answer from the authorities whether this is true.

A blue badge holder, whose car had been legally stationary in a disabled bay for some time due to Covid isolation, and who had received criticism for parking there, discovered that after moving their vehicle that the disabled bay was used by three people, none of whom displayed a blue badge.

The Golden Lion wins Hotel of the Year Award

The Golden Lion picked up the Hotel of the Year Award from the Coaching Inn Group. General manager Neil Williams said: 'Everyone had worked extremely well together in all departments from front of house, through to bar and restaurant, housekeeping and the kitchen. There has been a great team spirit throughout the year and I am extremely proud of my whole team.'

Mr Williams (pictured far right) also said there had been a great local response to the group's decision to support the Government's Eat Out to Help Out initiative, offering diners 50 per cent off all food and soft drinks (up to £10pp) on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays during August.



Corn Exchange ready to welcome you again

The Corn Exchange has received help from a specialist community business adviser through the Hopkins Plunkett Communities Scheme to support its efforts to re-open with the safety of the public in mind.

The community centre was forced to close, along with thousands of venues across the UK in March. But the historic building has now reopened and is hoping to attract new and regular customers back so it can continue to play its central role in the town.

Ian Dobson (pictured above), Chairman of ACE, the Friends of St Ives Corn Exchange, said:

'The Corn Exchange normally hosts a huge variety of local organisations and events – from community groups, drama and dance groups and exercise classes, U3A meetings and classes, community cinema, comedy nights and DJ and live music gigs to public and private sector business hirings and family celebrations.'

It really is at the heart of the community.

'Our challenge has been to reassure existing users that they can come back, with the measures we have taken to ensure their safety – and also to do what we can to attract new organisations to come and use the facilities that we have on offer. That is what the Hopkins Plunkett Communities Scheme has helped with.'

Markets are now on

Christopher Davies, who runs the Monday Market and Saturday flea markets in the Corn Exchange wrote to us (well Erik actually) to let our readers know that the markets are back on. As September approaches it is hoped that other regular users will return now that social distancing measures are in place.

Free support available

James Hopkins, Executive Chairman and Founder of Hopkins Homes, said: 'Supporting community organisations to return to normality following the lockdown is one of the immediate priorities for the Hopkins Plunkett Communities Scheme.'

James Alcock, Chief Executive of Plunkett, said: 'We are delighted that we can offer this free support to community businesses across East Anglia thanks to Hopkins Homes. At this moment, as rural businesses are continuing to adapt to new health and safety measures or reopening after many months of closure, this support could not be more critical.'

DATES SET FOR NEXT YEAR

Next years Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival will take place from 16th to 19th September 2021.

A date has also been set for an exciting new Yukelele Festival next year to be held over the weekend of 2nd/3rd October 2021

Sea Scouts are getting a new building

The old sea scout hut, which has been a familiar sight beside the river for over 60 years, and has been used by generations of local boys and girls is at last being replaced.



Fund raising has been taking place for a new hut for some time and Rob Taylor, Group Scout Leader of the owners, the 2nd St Ives Sea Scout Group, told *The Riverporter* that they are now able for the replacement to go ahead.

'There are only so many patches that you are able to put on,' said Rob. 'We have been raising funds for a number of years and now have sufficient for the project to move forward. The COVID-19 situation has provided us with the perfect opportunity for us to move this forward as we are currently not allowed to meet indoors. We have been authorised to meet outside with the provision of appropriate risk assessments in place and this is likely to be in place for a while.'

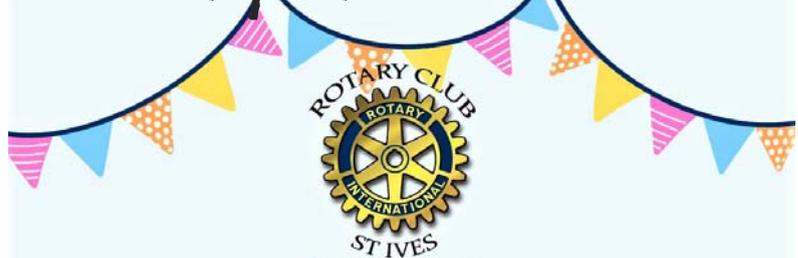
The hut is being replaced with a like for like replacement with some modern day equivalent materials being used, the idea being that we are trying to keep it as similar as possible to the original.'

The demolition work started last week, and we went along to see the old hut in its last moments. The demolition crew were a great bunch of guys who explained they were from MK Demolition & Reclaim a small well-established Chatteris company that has come along and given the scouts a special reduced rate to help the funds go further.

We look forward to seeing the new building for another 60 years.



The Rotary Fair Is All Set To Go



We've had an overwhelming response from local artists and craftspeople, all keen to book a stall for our first-ever Rotary Fair in St Ives, and every pitch is now booked. So you really don't want to miss out on what is going to be a terrific craft market on Sunday Sept 6th at Sleppe Hall Hotel, Ramsey Road, St Ives, from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm.

There is going to be wide selection of locally produced goods to buy, and the whole day will be carefully managed to fully comply with current Covid 19 safety regulations.

Further details will be posted on the Rotary Club of St Ives Facebook page, so keep watching and sharing. Please note that there will be no parking available at Sleppe Hall, so we would politely ask all those coming by car to park considerately, and the Globe Place Car park in North Street is only 5 minutes away. This is going to be a smashing market to visit and enjoy, and we would love to see as many people there as possible.

The *Riverporter* is published by Ron Westrip and John Souter.

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The giving culture - a warning

We've all been aware of the many acts of generosity since the Covid-19 Virus took hold. Groups have emerged, some helping to feed those in difficulty, but *The Riverporter* has learned that it may not always be the best way forward.

Food banks are not new. The world's first was in Phoenix, Arizona in 1967. The first UK food bank was in Salisbury in 2000, a Trussell Trust food bank. To many, food banks seem to indicate that our society is failing. The fact that there are now around 440 in the UK re-inforces this opinion.

Knowing little about this issue *The Riverporter* decided to find out what is happening here in St Ives and started by contacting our food bank. St Ives Food Bank started in September 2013 at the invitation of the then Mayor, Nick Dibben, who was concerned about a resident in St Ives who had to walk to the nearest food bank, in Godmanchester, and then walk back carrying the 26kg of food for his family.

there is a danger that if this is done without any diligence or research it can have a negative effect, as it permits, or even encourages, abuse with the end user free to spend any benefits on substances other than food and this should be discouraged at all times.

Some claims are ridiculous

Father Mark believes some claims about the amount of help being given are totally ridiculous. 'It simply is not possible for a small number of people to feed 300 people a day from their domestic premises as one group has claimed,' he said.

'These operations lack any integrity. In one instance I heard someone was given a bunch of out-of-date



The Mayor's Chaplain, Father Mark Amey, and the Parish Church were pleased to help set something up in St Ives and with the support of Churches Together started off by offering a hub facility for Godmanchester Food Bank, which provided the food parcels and did the admin. After three months it became clear that demand was great and the town needed its own food bank.

The Godmanchester Food Bank is run under the Trussell Trust but to do the same in St Ives would have cost a lot of money so it was decided to operate independently but to keep to the same standards as the Trussell Trust.

This means that food parcels contain ingredients for a nutritionally balanced diet and referrals are made through recognised agencies, which ensures that help goes to those genuinely in need and especially those who are trying to help themselves.

For example those with an addiction problem will be referred to an agency such as Addaction who specialise in this field and who will work with the client. This is then the only source of vouchers we will accept from that individual.

Another part of the St Ives Food Bank ethos is that they also have a responsibility to the many people who donate food so that their generosity is not abused.

No-one in need goes hungry

Father Mark was keen to point out; 'No-one in need goes hungry and therefore anyone can get a limited amount of support to see them through, until such time as we have identified and agreed a referral agency with them.'

The area of operation includes St Ives and the villages of Needingworth, Holywell, Bluntisham, Earith, Colne, Somersham, Pidley, Woodhurst, Fenstanton and Fendrayton. The Hemingfords fall into the St Ives and Godmanchester catchment.

Father Mark also said; 'Since the Covid 19 situation we have had numerous requests for help. Whilst we are happy to provide this service it is important that we signpost those requesting help to agencies that are in a position to aid them in their individual circumstances.'

At the moment we are aware of a number of independent operators, who claim to provide food to those in need. Whilst no doubt well meaning

flowers donated by a retail group. Although this is admirable and well done, to claim it as a food parcel is not comparable.'

He continued . . .

'We hold that a food parcel should conform to the Trussell guidelines and provide sufficient nutritionally balanced food to provide meals for the whole household for at least three complete days. Any thing less does not constitute a food bank parcel in my opinion.'

'We do have concerns about a number of these groups locally who are raising their profile and applying for grants, often successfully, from retail groups and some councils, to the detriment of genuine food banks such as ourselves who are professional and accountable.'

Grateful to local stores

We are particularly grateful to Waitrose and the Co-op who ensure that 100% of the food left in the collection points comes to us. Also Morrisons who at the peak of the crisis provided dedicated stock from head office for use by food banks and other charitable organisations.

Finally, and above all, thanks to everyone who donates or indeed helps as a volunteer. Please help in any way you can but, to ensure our future viability, we ask that your support goes to organisations that are genuine.

Please help us to eliminate those who are in danger of bringing the food bank movement into disrepute by means of unsubstantiated claims and indiscriminate giving. The long term needs of those in crisis have to be considered, not just their immediate situation. After all, who would not want unlimited access to free food!

There is a growing awareness that it might be only a matter of time before some opportunist group or individual, jumps on the bandwagon and sets up an exploitative operation for their benefit rather than helping those in need, resulting in adverse publicity that would not be helpful to genuine food banks. Your diligence can go a long way to preventing this happening in St Ives. Thank you!

Father Mark Amey, Chair of St Ives PCC (who run the St Ives Food Bank).

We try to be as transparent as possible and if anyone would like to know more please contact me at: vicar,stives@gmail.com.



having your
say ...

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

**Dear Erik,
Team Emeleus, Buckden to Ely, Great
River Ouse Paddle**



We are paddling from Buckden to Ely along the Ouse for CPSL Mind because to support the CoVid 19 appeal for mental health. We will be paddling through St Ives at lunch time on Monday 24th August. So please ask your readers to come and welcome as we pass by the Quay.

We as a family, know first-hand that the CoVid 19 Pandemic is affecting all of us. Harry (12), Henry (10), Corrine and I, would like to do something to help those who have suffered more than most. Most of us will experience mental health problems at some point, in our lives. CPSL Mind is a regional branch of the national Mind charity which supports mental health issues. On Monday the 24th August, Harry and I will be paddling from Buckden (our village) to Ely along the Great River Ouse, a distance of over 30 miles (I have not been paddling for over 30 years!). Henry, Corrine and Julius the cat! will be cheering us along and supporting us with food and drink along the way.

People can support by logging on to just giving at ...

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/peter-harry-buckden-ely-paddle?>

Peter Emeleus

Dear Erik,

A poem

The Magpie and The Squirrel

A luscious, green grassed lawn
One bright, sun-drenched morn.
Softly bedded down, not at all shy
This lone, lithe and svelte baby magpie.
Each blue-white wing in turn fanning,
Simply basking, scanning.
No chatter - no matter,
Still and quiet,
No thought of shiny things to steal, not yet,
Calmly he turns his head first this way then that.
Slow not fast.
Does he see a thieving grey squirrel skip past?

Doberman



Dear Erik,

I couldn't help notice a letter sent to another local newspaper asking who you call when you are flooded, as happened these last few days to many people as a result of the torrential rain. The writer had obviously suffered and I do not wish to add to his pain, but I couldn't help notice that he lives in Lakefield Avenue!

Wendy Rainstops

Still no Bins?

Despite contacting the council *The Riverporter* has been unable to find out why the new 'eco' rubbish bins [see RP65] have still not appeared in the town centre. HDC once again will not reply to our enquiry and will not tell us why!

More controversy on-line

In the on-line world it is much easier for people to have their say and just as easy for people to say almost anything, even if it isn't correct. Sometimes it is hard to know what is fact and what is fake. Recently the website 'St Ives Matters' claimed under the headline: IT'S OFFICIAL! ST IVES TOWN CENTRE HAS MOVED TO A ROUNDABOUT ON HARRISON WAY.

The piece went on to quote Conservative leader of Huntingdonshire District Council and Independent St Ives Town Councillor, Ryan Fuller of saying 'It makes more sense to site St Ives town centre here. With the recent opening of Aldi, the roundabout is surrounded by all the latest shopping developments and there's loads of free parking.'

NOW THIS WAS CLEARLY NOT TRUE and was strenuously denied on a local Facebook page by Cllr Fuller, although several people seemed to agree that the town centre should be moved!

Sometimes social media is a force for good

On another facebook group several people have been saying how hard it is to get to the new Aldi store. Aldi were given permission for the new store under the condition that a Toucan crossing would be paid for by Aldi making it easier to cross the busy road. The on-line discussions resulted in complaints to Cambs CC who have received the money from Aldi but as yet have not put the crossing in place. Several people have stated that there could be a serious accident before the crossing is installed, which may take years to get built. One comment was that surely it should have been built to coincide with the store opening!

The Riverporter

Voted Best local newspaper of the year 2019 in the Cambridge Building Society's Community Magazine Awards

NEWS UPDATE

On yer bike!

Since our last issue it's good to see St Ives shops and businesses opening up and getting back into action. It's even better when we see new businesses opening up and taking over empty premises. So congratulations to Phil Latin for his new bike sales shop 'Phil's Bike Rescue' opening up in Cromwell mews.



Phil's idea has taken off selling and repairing a whole range of second-hand bicycles just at the time that the government recommends this is a great way to keep up our exercise and use as an alternative to our cars. If the Covid period gave us anything it showed us how quiet and peaceful the town could be without so many cars so now Phil's new business can help us get our old bikes back into a useful new life... Good luck Phil!

Oh dear!... Can you hear running water?

During the recent heavy rain many of us will have noticed the odd unexpected leak, certainly the author had a few nasty moments with rainwater flooding down an interior wall last weekend. But take pity on the staff off WH Smiths who discovered a great gush of rainwater flooding through the back of the shop damaging stock. Due to the layout of the building they had no access to the upstairs area where the water was coming from and could only stand by as the water poured through their stock.

Oddly while the rain resulted in water running inches deep along our town streets the traditional flood plains, such as the Dolphin car park remained relatively dry. Forecasters warn that there may be more to come.



Seven Wives is stopped playing music

As if the problems of Covid-19 were not difficult enough for our businesses the Seven Wives Public House has had to stop playing live music due to complaints from their neighbours. Brandon, the landlord of the pub, in an effort to improve his business was trying to have a band playing at weekends in the garden of the pub, as the new regulations allow. The pub is a well-known venue for live music, which normally takes place inside the building, however the outside stage means that the sound is much greater. This and the fact that no music has been played for months means that the neighbours have become used to the silence. Brandon feels that the shock of the loud music may have caused the complaints even though the music stopped early in the evening.

HDC officers attended the pub and issued Brandon with an abatement notice but the good news is that they will be monitoring the sound levels to determine if the music can be kept to an acceptable sound level. If it can then hopefully live music will be able to take place again in a marquee in the garden until such time as normal service can be resumed.


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 12th September starting at 11am**

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



THANKS FROM HEIDI



I know what you'll think. You'll think that girl is obsessed with many things and among them are paddles, creeks - and Pennywort. Well yes darlings, I am. Do you recall my account of a lovely trip up the backwater I had with some Pennywort-pickers a month ago? Of course you do.

Well I offered the experience to others and guess what - a splendid couple from Hemingford Grey contacted this paper and joined the merry band this week. I was thrilled that my words had reached so far and produced a result. I'm preparing myself for other approaches (no change there then! - Ed).

But wait, what a disaster - it rained and rained and rained. Poor things, they were drenched. But do you know what? They absolutely loved it and are coming back for more. Now that's Heidi speak! Bless them and thank you to them. And of course to all the regulars. Here's a picture of the team unloading the beastly plant that day.

Bye! Heidi x

ADVERTORIAL

We're celebrating the 1st Anniversary of our brand Exclusive & New Homes!



As we come up to our 1st year anniversary for our Ellis Winters Exclusive brand I'd like to take a look back over that year and share with you what made us do it in the first place and what the results have been. There have certainly been some difficult times, getting ready in the first place, decisions over the branding itself, the effect on our "normal" brand and how to make the brand stand out. It's been a year of many tremendous highs but also one of challenging lows.

When Ian Winters and I started in 2001 we just wanted to earn some money doing what we knew - selling houses. We quickly realised that it wasn't as easy as just opening an office with a few pictures in our window and hoping the phone would ring, there were too many very good estate agents already in the town, we had to do something a little different. We embraced new technology like floor-plans and were one of the first local agents on Rightmove, these were "just out of the box" and they proved to be an instant hit. Since then a lot of hard work has gone in to recruiting staff and keeping up with the ever-changing property market. In 2004 we bought our

second office and went into rentals. We learned a lot very quickly and brought our marketing knowledge and were one of the first companies in the area to market all of our rentals with floorplans, internal photograph and room sizes, it's has since become the norm.

We now manage nearly 800 properties locally.

Since 2010 Ian and I have been looking at the competition in the Exclusive/Prestige market place and realised that the "big-players" like Savills didn't want to come out of Cambridge thinking that the St Ives area was a little too far for them to venture out and that the local agents offer nothing more than larger pictures and a different coloured board or were charging a fortune because they could. And so the seed was planted, we've been researching new tech and have found the perfect solution. Great marketing, better than all the other local agents, using the most experienced staff with lots of extras as standard.

It took us longer than we thought to put all the marketing together and to learn the new technology, the builders took longer than they said to refurb our new office on Market Hill in St Ives and the months slipped by, with other delays it took us six months longer than we thought. But in the end it was all worthwhile and we finally launched the new brand in August last year. As will all new things it took us a while to get going because there were already other established companies doing a good job. However,

the telephone started to ring and over the next few months we were invited out to value the larger, exclusive homes where owners wanted more than what the standard agents offer. And we haven't looked back since, the phones are busy, not just with sellers but buyers looking for their next home, its been great. The highest price we've achieved so far has been £1.4 million pounds, the owner had been on with other agents before deciding to market with us and was so pleased when we secured a buyer within a month.

We were worried that people would think that we were only dealing with that part of the market, but far from it, look around the area and you'll see our boards all over the place, we not only have a team dedicated to the Exclusive properties but we also have a team dedicated to our "Normal" brand and this is the busiest we've been in the last ten years. Obviously Covid19 has dealt a tremendous blow to everyone's lives this year but since the lockdown restrictions have been eased and the stamp duty holiday has been announced the market has been booming.

If you have an exclusive home and are looking to sell, we have an experienced team dedicated to you who have the tools to make your home stand proud and be noticed.

Call us to see what we have to offer, I can guarantee we will surprise you. **Mike Ellis**

**ellis&co
winters**