

The Riverporter

ST IVES AWARD WINNING NEWSPAPER

Issue 76: 8 January 2021

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

2021 a year of hope?

There cannot be many people in the world who will not be pleased to see the end of 2020. Was it a year like no other? Whether it was or not we are sure that most of us will hope that 2021 will be the year when normality returns.

2020 can only be described as extraordinary. It seemed that everything we knew was questioned. Stability was a thing of the past, exacerbated by leaders who managed to give us a new adjective to describe this phenomenon - Trumpian.

If 2020 did one thing it showed us that our foundations were not as sound as we thought, not just economically but in almost every sphere of our lives.

Covid exploited the cracks and although devastating for many people it made us question how we live and in many instances brought out the best in many of us.

This was amply demonstrated on Christmas day when a group of people from various sections of our community gave their time to cook and deliver a hot Christmas dinner to over 50 older residents who were spending their Christmas day alone. Mike Baker, Chairman of the St Ives Volunteer Centre told *The Riverporter*...

'Because of Covid we could not organise the annual St Ives Christmas Lunch at the Free Church this year. So instead the Volunteer Centre made up



food parcels, with help from Waitrose, for the people who attended in 2019 and arranged to get them delivered.

Two weeks before Christmas we were contacted by members of the St Ives hub, who offered to cook meals at the Seven Wives pub on Christmas Day.

With the help of Deputy Mayor Pasco Hussain, the Town Clerk, members of St Ives hub, staff at the Seven Wives, Rotarians from St Ives and Huntingdon and a number of other volunteers, over 50 lunches were

Some of the team that helped prepare the meals.

Left to right: Mike Baker, Helen Dye, Brandon Bent (Landlord of the Seven Wives) with daughter Shannon and wife Hayley.

Photo Phil Pope.

delivered despite the flooded roads. It was a wonderful example of the community in St Ives coming together.



Mayor buries time Capsule

In what must have been one of the loneliest ceremonies carried out on the very last day of 2020, when Town Mayor, Cllr Jonathan Pallant, buried the Town's Time Capsules (see *Riverporter* 70).

Accompanied only by the Mayoress holding the camera, Jonathan performed the ceremony on-line. The capsules will lie in the Norris Museum Garden until New Year's Eve 2050. And what a year they will record in the life and times of the town, with contributions from groups, schools and individuals – plus *The Riverporter* of course (we want the record to be accurate!)

Talking to camera the Mayor first offered a summary of personal impressions of the passing 'difficult' year. He thanked the community for their concern and resulting actions for others during the ongoing pandemic. Despite the problems he was pleased to note that the Council had completed its eco audit of the Town Hall, and he was looking forward to now fulfilling the plans. He was also pleased that during the flood this Christmas, the town's defences coped well. However, he was concerned that house-holders in other parts of the town suffered damage caused by the failure of storm drains to cope with the deluge, and promised that these and ditches and culverts would now be reviewed by the Council.

He concluded by wishing all those

who had watched a happy and safe New Year.

The Capsules included contributions from: Houghton Primary, Thorndown & Wheatfields schools, Children of serving personnel at RAF Wyton, FESst and St Ives Town Team. There were various articles, including: the Air Ambulance during Covid, St Ives Eco action, the Snowman Festival, the Norris Museum - Life after Covid, Self isolating information, the Darby & Joan 71st Birthday and the Clerks Corner from *The Bridge* magazine. Photographs included those of the former Mace Bearer, John Smoothy; Jonathan Djanogly and VJ Day.

There were also letters from John Major, the RAF Wyton Station Charities Committee, COPE, Sue Limentani for Holt Island, Dorothy Cooke for the Acorn Cancer Group and Wyton on the Hill Parish Council. Larger items stored in a separate container included a book by a former Mayor, Michael Lynch, memory sticks and DVD's including *Rocking Ukuleles*, painted rocks, various publications and a filter mask made for extremely vulnerable people.

The Mayor's Charity funds also received £670 in donations.

Floods can't dim the lights on our Quayside



Is St Ives a vaccine free zone?

The *Riverporter* has been contacted by people wanting to know how to get a Covid vaccination in St Ives. According to the Spinney Surgery no surgery in St Ives has the vaccine and the earliest they would be considered for being involved in a vaccination programme is January 11th, when the Astra Zeneca vaccine is available. The NHS will be starting to vaccinate the most at-risk groups, including over 80s and social care workers, in the hospital hubs when the vaccines are in place. Government guidance states that you should not contact your doctor but wait to be contacted by the NHS for an appointment.

Read on-line at www.theriverporter.uk or see our Facebook page. Email: editor@theriverporter.uk

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Fears for the Famous St Ives Market

St Ives is famous for its markets which are not only historic but have been, for many years, one of the main reasons for people to visit the town and do their shopping.

Whilst some shopkeepers have often suggested that their businesses don't benefit from the markets it is a fact that Monday market days result in higher footfall and busier trading for many businesses.

The Riverporter has been contacted by concerned traders, worried about the future of this once busy market and raising a number of issues. As a result we have spoken with many of the traders and also shop keepers within the town centre. There is a consensus that the market has been in decline for some time and too little effort has been made by Huntingdonshire District Council, who run the Monday and Friday markets, to keep them thriving.

The current location of the market in the car park is not universally popular and there have been reports of a rat problem in this location. Could the nearby Octagon (the green wooden building in the car park, which is used by HDC as a store for rubbish bins, be an ideal location for vermin

to live? Generally there is a great deal of concern that the market is in danger of declining to a level making it no longer viable.

We put these issues to District Councillor Marge Beuttell, who is the Executive Councillor for Operations and Environment, but four days later we have had no response.

No doubt the pandemic has exacerbated the difficulties but it was pointed out by market traders that other markets in nearby towns are flourishing still, despite restrictions and should the decline of St Ives continue it might be difficult for our market to flourish again, should life return to normal.

What do you think?

We would be delighted to hear from you about this issue. Do you visit the Monday or Friday markets and do you prefer the current location or not?

Let us know what you think, either by email to editor@theriverporter.uk or commenting on our Facebook page at:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Newspaper/The-Riverporter-521574161945805>



Inside the Octagon

From Santa and St Ives Rotary Club -

A Massive Thank-You

When we started this year's Santa's Sleigh we weren't sure what to expect. Owing to the Covid-precautions, we knew we would have to miss out an awful lot of the smaller roads that we traditionally visit. With only four elves, and with safety in mind, we couldn't knock on doors. Would people still come out to see Santa, and be able to maintain social-distancing?

Well the answer was a resounding yes, and we are hugely grateful to all in St Ives and neighbouring villages, who gave us such a warm welcome and the



fantastic amount of £4,788.50, which thanks to gift-aid we can make up to almost £6,000. Every single penny of this generosity will be used by us to support local charities and good causes and we shall tell everyone all about that on our Facebook page.

Wi-Fi helping to support Town's businesses

Free CambWiFi was originally set up by Cambridgeshire County Council and extended with funding from the Government's Super Connected Cities project to improve superfast broadband connectivity and expand digital connectivity in Cambridge and surrounding economic areas of South Cambridgeshire.

The Connecting Cambridgeshire programme is now working with Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority, local councils, and partners to increase free public access Wi-Fi provision in public buildings, open spaces and retail centres in cities and market towns, whilst increasing availability in

active village halls and community buildings in rural areas.

Throughout Cambridgeshire places with free CambWiFi include libraries, council offices, children's centres, sheltered housing, leisure facilities, community centres, Park and Ride sites, open spaces, city and market town centres, and village halls.

The Riverporter thought we'd check this out, so we wandered around town starting with the library. Sure enough if you go to the find Wi-Fi settings on your phone you can find Camwifi-public and clicking on it takes you to a fairly simple sign up process. So we wandered back via Sheep Market along Market Hill and

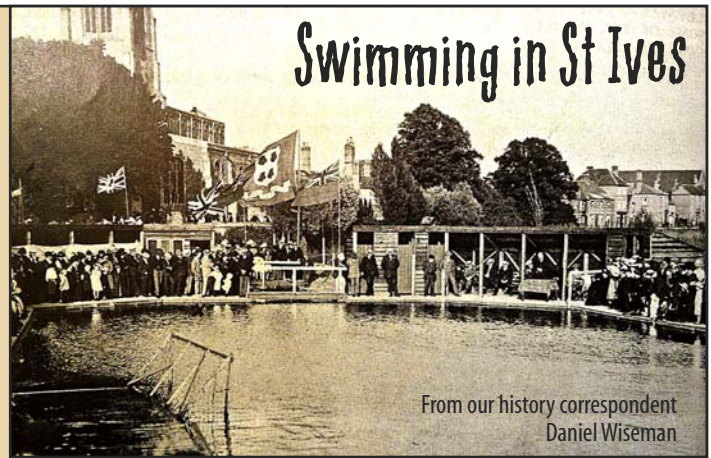
Once upon a time if you wanted to swim in St Ives and you couldn't afford your own private pool, your only option was the River Great Ouse. The most popular stretch of river for swimming was from the bridge to the staunch a flood-gate, crossing the river near Jones' Boatyard.

But swimming in the river can be dangerous. In 1909, a 15-year-old French boy, Robert Latour, who was attending St Ives Grammar School, drowned whilst trying to swim across the river near the staunch. The Town Council soon provided a safe place for people to swim when in June 1913 it opened a pool on Holt Island. The eight-sided pool was fed by river water. On the opening night, there was a water polo match.

The council closed the pool after a report in 1949 confirmed that the river water was contaminated. It wasn't until twenty years later that St Ives got its indoor pool, now part of the recreation centre.

Now we're back in lockdown the One Leisure pool is closed again and although the instructions are not clear if wild water swimming is permissible, swimming in the River Great Ouse is certainly not wise while the water is fast flowing and in flood.

Main source: Twentieth Century St Ives, Bob Burn-Murdoch. Picture: The opening of the swimming pool in 1913, St Ives 100 Years Ago.



Swimming in St Ives

From our history correspondent Daniel Wiseman



What? A load of rubbish!

Back in July (RP63) we reported that new rubbish bins would appear in town. They didn't, until recently. Whilst the aim of these bins is to recycle more is laudable, there are questions about them. Civic Society Chairman, David Stewart raised concern about the colour, shape and location of some and residents on the Quay are not happy with the siting of the bin there. They're three times larger than the old ones, do not blend in with the other street furniture and emptying them is not easy with bags of dog waste having to be separated by hand. We contacted HDC, who are responsible for them, to ask if waste was being recycled and other questions, but as usual we got no answer.

Every year it seems that from Boxing Day we're bombarded with ads for different ways to lose weight – something that most people have on their list of New Year resolutions!

Effective weight loss approaches encourage a sustainable combination of healthy eating, activity & developing new, long-lasting habits.

A miracle cure?

Perhaps not but these easy steps will certainly help put you in control of your weight loss journey and make for a healthier, happier you in 2021

- Take time out to meal plan your week.
- Try to vary your choice during the week - the wider the variety of foods, the greater the health benefit.

Our annual resolution

- Add extra vegetables to your meals and fill up on protein-rich foods.
- Aim to cook meals the whole family can enjoy!
- Make a list before you go shopping & stick to it - and never go shopping on an empty stomach!
- Keep hydrated, aiming for 6-8 mugs or glasses of fluid every day.
- A little bit of what you fancy does you good – even when you're losing weight! Try not to cut out any food group completely – but carefully control those high sugar, high fat treats and alcoholic drinks so that you can still enjoy them guilt-free.
- Choose an activity that fits your lifestyle and make time for it every

day. Walking the dog, running, exercise classes.

- Find ways to be less sedentary – taking the

stairs instead of the lift for instance, or parking the car further away from the shops – are good habits to get into. Even a small amount of daily physical activity can make a difference to your long-term success.

- Be kinder to yourself – don't see a 'blip' in your plan as failure. It's not, it's an opportunity to do something different in future.

Eating more healthily and making positive changes to our lifestyle shouldn't be seen as a punishment. Small, sustainable differences in how we shop, cook, eat and stay active will boost our health, our weight loss and our self esteem.

What could be better than that?

Council carries on with the annual Langley Bread ceremony despite Covid.

However, to adhere to government guidelines and social distancing, the Town Council decided to do it via delivery!

Thanks to The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and all the volunteers that helped achieve this. 100 bags were prepared and delivered on 5th January to the widows, widowers and orphans that live within St Ives.

A huge thank you went to The Co-operative St Ives, for providing the staple food that was delivered. It was very much appreciated by the council and those who received it.





having your say ...

The Riverporter

Voted Best local newspaper of the year 2019/20 in the Cambridge Building Society's Community Magazine Awards

NEWS UPDATE

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

Dear Erik,

Thank you for your wonderful publication
A quick question: Is the Council going to finish the road resurfacing? Many of the streets I walk down (Elm Drive, Cedar Road, Wheatfields, etc) have drains either completely or partially covered by the new road surface. The yellow lines are also missing about a car's length at the Ramsey Road end of Wheatfields, as a taxi was parked there. Thank you **Mrs FizzCrick**

Dear FizzCrick, We spoke to Colin - a man who might know! It turned out that for at least four weeks he had been complaining about the state of Cedar Road and on 23 December a team came and finished the job. Sadly he reports that other areas have not yet been touched, possibly because the County Council didn't get enough complaints.

The main question is ... did this affect the flooding St Ives had over Christmas? **Ed.**



Dear Erik, Ref: St Ives Day Centre

The President of the Rotary Club of St Ives, Adrian Acton, came into the Centre this morning with his colleague Ron Riding to present a very generous cheque for £450 and six bottles of sherry for the members which were all very much appreciated.

Photo shows Adrian Acton and David Blair, Chairman St Ives Day Centre.

Kind regards **Gill**, Duty Manager

Dear Erik, Subject: What to do in '21!

Having just moved back to St Ives after 62 years, and noticing the predominance of eating establishments, the recent demise of the hotels, the whole retail and service business needs reviewing.

2021 will be the 70th anniversary year of 'The Festival of Britain', a time when 6 years after the end of WW2, and with rationing still in existence, the country shouted to the world that we were still very much in business. St Ives had a week of celebration from 1st to 4th July in 1951. It concluded with a pageant focused around The Broadway, and schools and societies played their part.

I was one of a Medieval Tumbling display from the North Road Boys school (aged 11). Look back over those 70 years and show what St Ives has contributed to the world, including the first electronic pocket calculator!

The digital world has changed the way of life, as a tool, but sometimes we are allowing the tools to control us! As Stephen Hawking said 'Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change'. Covid has forced us to seek opportunities. Let St Ives innovate in 2021 and enjoy it!

Philip Noble

SPOTTED ON THE STREET

By Luka That



Someone on The Waits was ahead of the game! Luckily it was not needed, but it came close.

On Christmas Eve The Waits backwater did look threatening. The EA flood gates must have helped.

What is this man doing? Underwater metal detecting? Fishing for freshwater shrimps? Nope. He's feeling his way along the edge of the HI boardwalk because with one slip he'll be in up to his chest!



So, on Boxing Day what did we all do? Go flood watching of course!

Bless those folk from the Dementia Friendly Community, assisted by Shades of White, for bringing back the Memory Stars.



Could someone please offer the Town Hall staff some notice board management lessons? Number 1: Make sure what you pin up can be read. Especially location maps!



A stunning welcome to the New Year from Just Cards in Bridge Street! Now, if only we had a party to go to ...



IT'S ALL OK
The answer is in The Broadway.
And there's no queue. Amazing.



'Recycled' Snowman Festival Prizes

The best dressed window prize of £200, which was donated by Ellis Winters, was won by La Muse. Pictured is Corrine Harwood receiving the cup from Mayor, Jonathan Pallant. Corrine, who was instrumental in starting the popular Festival has decided to share the money. She said, 'I will be splitting the money between the two old peoples care homes in the town. They have a very hard time during COVID so I thought it might be nice to give it to them.'



Second place went to Dinky Dot Photography



and third place to The Courtyard.



St Ives community joins to tackle litter and littering with the launch of STAR

January 2021 was to see the start of this ambitious town-wide campaign to tackle 'waste in the wrong place' but Tier 5 has delayed the start.

Helen Dye one of the organisers has said that 20 people have already signed up on the Facebook page where you can find detail of STAR at:

www.facebook.com/groups/stivesagainstrubbish/



Town Council - has lots to do ...

Next week will be another busy Town Council meeting. On the agenda for Wednesday 13th January is the co-opting of a councillor to replace Lynn Davies. The choice will be between three candidates, Craig Smith, Brandon Bent and Tomasz Rakoczy. Discussions about the flooding with an opportunity for residents to speak to the Council about their experiences. A report about the adoption of George Yard, which could take several years to happen and the acceptance of a grant of over £49,000 from Cambs CC for the work of St Ives Hub in caring for older adults and people at risk of loneliness and isolation.

Drains cause flooding

Pictures of St Ives flooded meadows filled national papers, however it wasn't the river that caused the problem but drains which couldn't cope with the excessive rainfall. Concern has been raised that the Environment Agency's monitoring was inaccurate and that the levels didn't exceed the highest ever. In fact the flood defenses, put in some years ago worked well. That was no compensation for businesses like Compass Cars which lost around 35 cars in the flood. The owner David Davies was keen to let readers know that the van hire part of his business is operating normally, so if you need a van you know where to go.



HEIDI SCORES!

From our environmental correspondent Heidi N. de Tries

Now you see it! Now you don't

Well I never darlings. Remember in Riverporter 74 I reported a collision between a young cyclist and a metal pole (left) on the busway? Golly, it was a mercy the poor dear was not badly hurt.



Well look right - IT'S GONE!

I am so pleased my little rant may have had some effect by drawing attention to the hazard which seemed to have no practical purpose. It would have nice to have heard back from the Guided Busway Management team but never mind, as far as I'm concerned it's a result.

Heidi rules OK! Bye x



The COURTYARD

St Ives

Open-air boutique market, run by independents

We would like to thank all our customers that have supported the courtyard on its first year.

Our 2 Suppliers of Food and Takeaway Coffee are open 10am – 4pm Monday & Friday Market Days and for Farmers Market Saturdays in St Ives



Happy Earth Refills

the Eco friendly, Zero waste Refill Shop. Vegetarian, Vegan High-Quality Foods, Cleaning, Toiletries and more. Helping reduce plastic pollution for a cleaner planet



Need a coffee break? Lorenzo's Coffee

Serving Coffee, tea and hot chocolate. We also sell our coffee beans which can be ground to your specification to enjoy within your own home



We are inviting New Dealers for our expanding Courtyard ready for coming out of Lockdown, please call 07983 527733 or [f @hyperioncourtyard](https://www.facebook.com/hyperioncourtyard)

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Nadine lost 2st 2lbs in 11 months, read her story here

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ADVERTORIAL

WHAT WILL 2021 BRING TO THE HOUSING MARKET?



A NEW NATIONAL LOCKDOWN has begun, which means COVID 19 will continue to impact the property sector. But as we go into LOCKDOWN 3.0, the housing market remains strong. In fact, the whole sector has shown good resilience over the last 12 months, despite two national lockdowns and a third just underway.

The most recent Dataloft consensus house price forecast, based on the average from five leading commentators, expects 0.9% growth in 2021. It is worth noting that the published forecasts for 2021 range from mildly negative to strongly positive. For example, Rightmove forecast a 4% rise in

2021, whereas Zoopla 1%, Knight Frank 1%, Savills 0% and JLL -1.5% are less positive.

There is no doubt that 2021 will bring host to a lot of changes, and deadlines will impact transaction volumes and house prices. For example, the stamp duty holiday deadline, changes to Help to Buy, potential changes to Capital Gains Tax, 2% surcharge for overseas purchasers.

The property mini-boom following Stamp Duty Holiday announcement on July 2020 will continue to have repercussions across the first quarter of 2021. We think it will keep our offices busy until the deadline next March. We were extremely busy during the second lockdown last November, when activity levels were also higher in those areas where average property prices were the highest.

On the first six days of the second lockdown, demand went up by 49% compared to the same period of 2019. We expect an increase in buyers looking for properties online as the office remains open and people can still book viewings, get valuations, etc.

Ellis Winters were delighted to be associated with St Ives Recycled Snowman Festival 2020 and thank everyone involved for their continued support and participation especially in this very difficult year



Anne Dellar

See the Snowman Festival article on page 2

ellis&co
winters