

The Riverporter

ST IVES AWARD WINNING NEWSPAPER

Issue 78: 5 February 2021

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

St Ives to receive share of projects worth £2m

The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) has approved grants and partner funding for the Huntingdonshire Market Towns of St Ives, Huntingdon and Ramsey totalling £2.058,248

CPCA Board members unanimously voted to approve 14 new project proposals under the Market Towns Programme. The projects range from smart technology aimed at improving digital connectivity to new loos.

According to the CPCA these imaginative projects have active travel, greenspace, people and business centred ideas at their very

heart – ensuring a new way of safely welcoming people to town centres, supporting communities and their local economy.

This funding covers all three towns. At the moment there are no details and the CPCA have said that Huntingdonshire District Council, which was responsible for the St Ives Master Plan, should be able to supply that. However we have not

received a reply from HDC to our enquiries. It would appear that Town Councillors have also been left in the dark about the project's details.

It should also be said that the St Ives Master Plan received criticism from various people for its content and lack of consultation (Riverporter on-line issue 6 June 2020).

See the full list of the projects on page 2.

Stunning views of St Ives

Local photographer Alan Bennett has opened his exhibition of photographs titled 'A View Of St Ives', which despite the lockdown we can all see. The virtual exhibition displays some stunning pictures of our town in an on-line gallery.

Alan who is a professional photographer, specialising in commercial photography, has been taking pictures of the town for many years. He has often supplied great pictures for various events such as Santa and The Chief Snowman arrival and the plays on The Quay, but this exhibition

features a selection of images that capture the spirit of St Ives. The exhibition can be seen by going to: tours.mediaimagingolutions.com/views-of-st-ives

Below: Morning Walk



LONG TO RAIN OVER US

St Ives historical floods from our history correspondent Daniel Wiseman

Edmund Pettis was a St Ives shopkeeper who compiled a handwritten, leatherbound survey of the area in 1728, containing drawings of buildings, records of interesting events and the earliest known maps of the town.

Here's what he said about the great flood of the summer of 1725:

'June the 8th at nine in the evening no thoughts of a flood, but at 11 the water began to rise and so continued until nine the next morning, when 'twas so high that it almost touched the coping of the Wharf.'

(The coping are the stones at the edge of a quayside.) A greater flood is recorded just six months later, followed by a worse one the following September. This was 'bettered' in November 1823. November 1894 saw the highest flood of Queen Victoria's reign, one of the earliest photographed. Flooding in August 1912 saw Crown Walk leading to Warner's Park under water (see pic below). That month, Huntingdonshire recorded seven times the usual amount of rainfall, and on August 26th, known as 'Black Monday', two inches (51 mm) of rain fell in a single day, causing The Great Ouse to rise six feet (1.8 m) by the next morning.

In January 1940, the weather was the coldest since 1815 at -15° C, causing the river to freeze over. For the first time in 45 years, brave souls could walk and skate on the river again. But when the ice thawed in February, St Ives experienced the worst flooding for 40 years.

The worst floods of the 20th century were to follow only seven years later in March 1947. Again, this was caused by the thaw following a big freeze. Many parts of St Ives were so badly flooded that they served hot food and soup at the Corn Exchange for those who couldn't use their kitchens.

In more recent times, there was torrential rain at Easter 1998, flooding many streets and the car park in The Dolphin Hotel where car roofs were seen poking above the water.

Storm Bella caused more flooding at the end of last year and as I write this, the meadows are flooded yet again. It's probably no surprise that St Ives floods so often – we even have a pub named after them!

The top photo is West street in the 1912 flood. A photographers delight and no shortage of people, mainly children, happy to be photographed.

Sources: Victorian St Ives and Twentieth Century St Ives, Bob Burn-Murdoch. The Hunts Post, June 2012 and St Ives 100 Years Ago.



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Cemetery lawn damaged



The Riverporter was contacted by The Mayor, Cllr Jonathan Pallant following damage done to the lawns at the cemetery on Hill Rise. He told us 'I was devastated to see the images of vandalism at the Cemetery on Hill Rise. The Cemetery is a special place in our town where we can mourn the loss of our loved ones and reflect upon their lives, and I am heartbroken that unidentified individuals could be so insensitive as to use it as a race track for their own entertainment. Doubly so at a time when so many of us are sacrificing so much to keep our loved ones safe. I hope that those involved are ashamed of their actions and I call on anyone who knows anything of this event to pass the details on to the Police. I do not wish to see additional infrastructure and restrictions at the Cemetery, but I will be asking the Town Council to look at our options to prevent this happening again.'

List of projects for the Market Towns strategy

Continued from page 1

Below is the list of projects and the funding. Of course this is good news, subject to the details. New public toilets, electric charging points and more bicycle storage are all welcome but does anyone know what a Parklet is? [It sounds like some form of cake from up 'North - suggestions to Erik Please - see 5th item below]. Items such as **Riverside Frontages** are pretty vague and as usual the devil will no doubt be in the detail.

Organisations such as The Ouse Valley Trust and local parishes should have the opportunity to be consulted on this before the work commences.

We assume that the Modern Waste Solutions mentioned, involving smart technology refers to the new larger waste bins already installed. We understand that they can be fitted with sensors to alert staff that they need attention, which may be a good thing ... or is it?

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	CPA GRANT	MATCH FUNDING
Market Trader Pop Ups	To provide 20 uniform 'Love Huntingdonshire' branded pop-up stalls for St Ives, Huntingdon, and Ramsey.	£35,000	£5,000
Modern Waste Solutions	To install smart technology within our town centres to create a safer, cleaner, and more welcoming centres.	£66,348	£7,000
Modern Street Furniture	To provide enhanced visual impact and generate a renewed sense of place by providing innovative ways to dwell and socialise to revitalise the town centres.	£45,000	£5,000
Replacement Public Toilets	To refresh the fabric of town centre installations to a high quality Public Convenience that supports Covid-19 requirements.	£260,000	£50,000
Parklets Beyond Barriers	To install a range of Parklets at key locations within the town centres, and to provide more space and amenities for people using the high streets and generate social and economic benefits.	£206,000	£20,000
Sites for SMEs	To install the provision of improved wayfinding and information to town centre-based SMEs at several locations in St Ives and Huntingdon.	£37,300	£5,000
Town Walks	To provide defined walks with key 'stop-off' points across market towns, enhanced through the provision of signage, benches and the appropriate 'way finder' information.	£34,000	£3,400
Places to Dwell	To provide spaces for sheltered social distancing at key town centre locations allowing people to catch up out of the elements whilst staying safe.	£55,000	£5,000
Bicycle Kitchen	To provide "fix it yourself" bicycle maintenance stands to enable cyclists to make basis repairs at accessible town centre locations.	£15,000	£13,500
Cycle Storage Infrastructure	To support the installation of 9x bicycle storage facilities at locations throughout the market towns.	£126,000	£12,600
Electric Vehicle Charging	To support the installation 17 Electric Vehicle Charging points within off-street car parks across the mkt towns.	£89,500	£9,000
Riverside Frontages	To enhance the physical infrastructure of urban green and strategic open space along Huntingdonshire riverside frontage for the benefit of the visitors and residents.	£565,000	£56,500
Smarter Towns	To deliver a standard based Low Power Wide Area (LPWA) network to create a rich data landscape to support businesses and com. groups to become more efficient.	£91,300	£20,800
Wayfinding and Information	To support the installation of digital screens/infrastructure appropriate St Ives, Huntingdon, and Ramsey.	£200,000	£20,000

Why do some British people not like Donald Trump?

I was sent this piece from a friend in California in answer to the above question, which appeared on the Quora social media. Nate White, described as an articulate and witty writer from England wrote it. However it was removed from their site with no explanation and there seems to be little known about Nate. Could he really be Nathaniel Martello-White, a 38 year old British Royal Shakespeare Company actor and writer who went to RADA, and appeared in the recent TV series 'Small Axe'?

A few things spring to mind. Trump lacks certain qualities which the British traditionally esteem. For instance, he has no class, no charm, no coolness, no credibility, no compassion, no wit, no warmth, no wisdom, no subtlety, no sensitivity, no self-awareness, no humility, no honour and no grace – all qualities, funnily enough, with which his predecessor Mr. Obama was generously blessed. So for us, the stark contrast does rather throw Trump's limitations into embarrassingly sharp relief.

Plus, we like a laugh. And while Trump may be laughable, he has never once said anything wry, witty or even faintly amusing - not once, ever. I don't say that rhetorically, I mean it quite literally: not once, not ever. And that fact is particularly disturbing to the British sensibility - for us, to lack humour is almost inhuman. But with Trump, it's a fact. He doesn't even seem to understand what a joke is - his idea of a joke is a crass comment, an illiterate insult, a casual act of cruelty.

Trump is a troll. And like all trolls, he is never funny and he never laughs; he only crows or jeers. And scarily, he doesn't just talk in crude, witless insults - he actually thinks in them. His mind is a simple bot-like algorithm of petty prejudices and knee-jerk nastiness.

There is never any under-layer of irony, complexity, nuance or depth. It's all surface. Some Americans might see this as refreshingly upfront. Well, we don't. We see it as having no inner world, no soul. And in Britain we traditionally side with David, not Goliath. All our heroes are plucky underdogs: Robin Hood, Dick Whittington, Oliver Twist. Trump is neither plucky, nor an underdog. He is the exact opposite of that. He's not even a spoiled rich-boy, or a greedy fat-cat. He's more a fat white slug. A Jabba the Hutt of privilege. And worse, he is that most unforgivable of all things to the British: a bully. That is, except when

he is among bullies; then he suddenly transforms into a snivelling sidekick instead. There are unspoken rules to this stuff - the Queensberry rules of basic decency - and he breaks them all. He punches downwards - which a gentleman should, would, could never do - and every blow he aims is below the belt. He particularly likes to kick the vulnerable or voiceless - and he kicks them when they are down.

So the fact that a significant minority – perhaps a third - of Americans look at what he does, listen to what he says, and then think 'Yeah, he seems like my kind of guy' is a matter of some confusion and no little distress to British people, given that:

- Americans are supposed to be nicer than us, and mostly are.
- You don't need a particularly keen eye for detail to spot a few flaws in the man.

This last point is what especially confuses and dismays British people, and many other people too; his faults seem pretty bloody hard to miss. After all, it's impossible to read a single tweet, or hear him speak a sentence or two, without staring deep into the abyss. He turns being artless into an art form; he is a Picasso of pettiness; a Shakespeare of shit. His faults are fractal: even his flaws have flaws, and so on ad infinitum. God knows there have always been stupid people in the world, and plenty of nasty people too. But rarely has stupidity been so nasty, or nastiness so stupid. He makes Nixon look trustworthy and George W look smart. In fact, if Frankenstein decided to make a monster assembled entirely from human flaws - he would make a Trump. And a remorseful Doctor Frankenstein would clutch out big clumpfuls of hair and scream in anguish: 'My God... what... have... I... created?' If being a twat was a TV show, Trump would be the boxed set.



having your say ...

The Riverporter

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



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

NEWS UPDATE

'Oanas' 'Drive Through' coffee shop

No sorry, it's not a new coffee shop in Bridge Street, although it does appear that someone thought it was!

Tuesday morning a black Audi car attempting to turn around in the street drove front first into Oanas shop front, causing substantial damage including broken glass and door frame and seriously cracked brickwork. Amazingly the driver who must have been very aware of the impact then reversed and drove off without leaving any details. Unfortunately for him the incident was witnessed, and the car registration has been reported to police and Insurers. If you were that driver coming forward may well help you to avoid a chat with a policeman.



'Nottingham Knockers' are here in St Ives - Take care!!



Just before we went to print last issue, we received a notification from our local police of an influx of so called 'Nottingham Knockers' here in town, these are individuals who will knock on your door and claim to be part of some prison re-habilitation scheme and they will offer to either sell household goods or their labour at highly inflated prices but far more sinister is that their primary reason to hold you at your doorway is to get a look into your home. Strangely even as I read the police notice I received a knock on the door and there was a youngish fella offering me to take on work around the house and showing me a very dodgy fake id card. When I said no thank you, he attempted to hold me in conversation while admiring various items he could spot in the house. Residents should be aware and police request you call 101 and report any sightings at first opportunity and they also confirm there is no prison rehabilitation scheme running at this time.

Dear Erik, Gravity of the Black Hole in Primary School Science [The Periodic Table Ed]

Thanks to my great great grandmother Lu C.Y. Os Ge Rb Y (born 1829), Some of the 92 building blocks of The Universe can be presented to Primary School children, and some comparisons can be made between common metals.



Lucy now lives, both as an entry in the Family Bible and also in physical form, represented by samples of elements. She can be found in: Photodynamic medicine, Life's Molecules, Lasers for cutting steel and correcting vision, catalysts for special cancer medications, semiconductors and Global Navigation. Not bad for a 191 year old lady.

The underlying Table Mat should be given to all 11 year olds on completion of Primary Education, in preparation for introduction to Physics, Chemistry and Biology at Secondary School. At least children would gain a feeling for more of their environment. **Philip Noble**

Ex St Ives factory girl hits 100

As we were preparing for print this week this story appeared from the Hunts Post. It's such an amazing achievement we hope they won't mind us repeating it for our St Ives readers.



Great-grandmother Lucia Cece celebrated her 100th birthday last Wednesday. Described as still as 'bright as a button', Lucia moved here in 1962 from Castelnuovo Parano, just outside Rome, in Italy. Born on February 3 1921 she was one of four children who saw the devastation of the Second World War before meeting her husband Giuseppe Cece. Lucia and Giuseppe married in 1948 and had two daughters, Toni and Lina, and the family decided to make the move to England in the early 1960s to start a new life. Lucia worked as a factory girl in St Ives, while Giuseppe also found work nearby, thanks to relatives already living in England. Lucia has six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Rumours Abound

Following criticism about queues of older people having to stand in the cold on East Street to get their Covid vaccination, a reader told us that some things need looking into ...

We were asked why local surgeries were so slow to start rolling out vaccinations? And why has the Burgess Hall or Corn Exchange not been set-up as a vaccination hub? So we tried to find out the answers to these questions.

We contacted the Communications and Engagement Team at the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group (CPCCG) who told us the following ...

'We are on track to offer the vaccine to all top four priority cohorts as set by government by the middle of February. If you are registered with a GP practice in St Ives, you will be offered the vaccination when it is the right time for you to come forward.

'Getting your COVID-19 vaccination is one of your most effective defences against the virus, so if you are invited to have your vaccine please act on this.' They didn't answer directly the question of why

the Burgess Hall and Corn Exchange were not used. We do know that the management of the Corn Exchange did offer their building as a vaccination centre to The Primary Care Network but we cannot say why the offer wasn't accepted.

Why the Burgess Hall, with adequate parking and good accessibility, is not being used is unknown. The rumour that the Burgess Hall wanted to charge too much was deemed inaccurate by MP Jonathan Djanogly who had been advised that all local authorities are working together to ensure the vaccine deployment runs as smoothly as possible.

The CPCCG did tell us that the NHS local and regionally proposed sites [were] based on a combination of geographical alignment to local health systems to ensure coverage, and the likelihood of the sites being ready in a timely fashion. In some cases, selections were made on population density within the region, and in other cases there was consideration given to the number of existing vaccination services currently open and expected to open shortly in that area.

'This delivers a fair and equitable distribution of sites across the country.' They told us.

Dear Erik,

This is one of the drains in Wheatfields - it looked like this this morning. Very effective. **Mrs FizzCrick**

Dear FizzCrick,

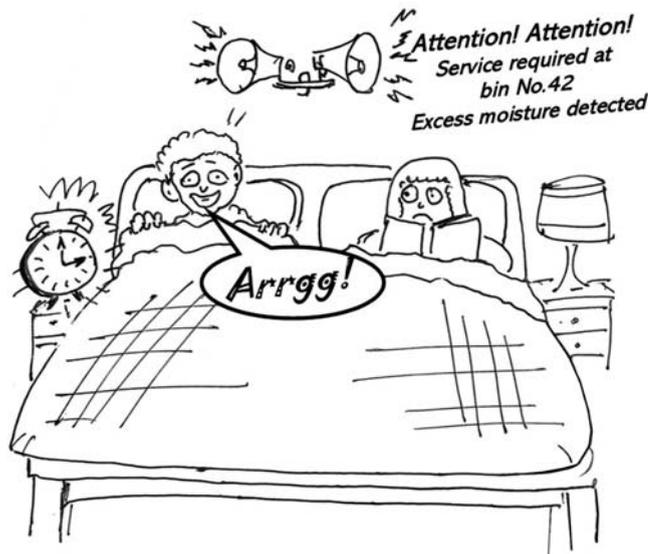
Our Mole has informed us that after the road resurfacing has been done, another small team come round and dig up a bit around the drains and refill with a different sort of tarmac. I can say that he now thinks all the drains have been uncovered. **ED**



New Smart Bin Technology comes to St Ives Town Centre

Erik takes his regular early morning exercise along Bridge Street

Result - HDC's Litter Minimalisation Operative receives Smart Message



HYPERION

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Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Flood and Water Partnership formed

The County Council, HDC, Anglia Water (AW) and most importantly the Environmental Agency (EA) are getting together to analyse the problem areas which were affected by flooding recently.

The Riverporter understands that this group is chaired by a County Councillor Tim Wetherspoon, who has been sent the details of the St Ives incidents collected by the Town Council and County Councillor Kevin Reynolds. Cllr Wetherspoon was also sent comments by Peggy Seamark who contacted us with the following observations about the flooding. She listed some of the causes:-
Blocked below-ground water courses: A big problem for St Audrey Lane, Needingworth Road, Harding Way and Somersham Road - in fact the whole East of St Ives - is where the water courses go underground and they need to be regularly cleaned of debris.

Fuller flood meadows: Peggy suspects that much more water is now being held back by the EA in the St Ives flood meadows than was usual until very recently and that Fen Drayton and further downstream has a bigger part in the local system than it used to have. This means that our in-town watercourses have nowhere to empty themselves.

Peggy asks if there should be a St Ives community flood prevention committee and if anyone would like to give her a phone call on 01480 497384 she will be happy to help.

Further down stream there is not enough water!

One of our team came across this comment about the Fens drainage system at Denver, where rather surprisingly boats are currently grounded through lack of water! It would seem that this is caused by silting. Ben Jones from Jones Boatyard, who knows a lot about these things told us ...

'I think that the EA lower the river levels at Denver to create capacity for the flood water coming down stream when they are worried that the water coming will flood Cambridge. This is all part of the process but the EA's ability to do this is very much effected by the tides so they struggle when the incoming tide is high and holds the flood water back. Sadly the failure to dredge or scour for decades now means that dredging would be a very expensive option.

It strikes me that the EA need to first address the failing man-made structures that are really slowing the flow down and holding the water back. Just here for example, at least 3 of the 7 sluice gates at St Ives lock don't open and haven't for as long as I can remember.

Also worryingly at AWG meetings in recent years they have frequently discussed stopping using the lock pens (used for navigation) for flood discharge for health & safety reasons. I imagine this would reduce the amount of water passing through by conservatively 20-30%, so I agree that this cannot be done without repairing the sluice gates.'

Is this another good example of everyone working together for a common cause? We hope so and also that all the comments will be assessed so that positive action is the result. It is really about getting the EA and AW spurred into action and of course that will rely on ensuring that the EA in particular receive enough funding to do the job they are set up to do.

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*The solicitors we recommend also offer a "No Sale No Fee" option.

Speak to any member of our team for more information and get FLP.

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