

The Riverporter

ST IVES AWARD WINNING NEWSPAPER

Issue 79: 19 February 2021

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Authorities want to hear from you!

HDC and the Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority (CPCA) would like to hear from you about two projects they are working on. It's your chance to have a say before any final decisions are made.

The Open Spaces Team at HDC has informed us that the District Council has secured funding to support and complement three of Huntingdonshire's local Market Towns including St Ives, through the installation of a programme of enhancements designed to create places and routes for people to enjoy them.

One pilot project will be the installation of Parklets (see right), which transform high streets or parking areas into small community spaces, effectively creating small scale parks with planting and seating. An interesting case study highlighting the impact of parklets can be viewed at www.livingstreets.org.uk/about-us/our-work-in-action/campaigning-for-parklets

Other enhancements included solar benches, covered benches and town walks. Now funding has been secured it is important that local organisations and people play a role in key decision making, such as location, design and signage. If you or your organisation are interested in taking part you can sign up to the initial session which will last around an hour and will be hosted on Zoom. There are three sessions, one for each market town. The **St Ives session will be on Thursday, 4 March at 5pm** While each session with focus on a specific town, all three will cover the same themes and talking points.

Sarah Wheale-Smith and the team from Pleydell Smithyman Limited will be undertaking the community and stakeholder engagement to support this project. To book a place at workshop session please email Sarah (research@pleydellsmithyman.co.uk) or text or call her on 07951 384 263 no later than Friday, 26 February 2021.



Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority sets up 'A141 Community' for users

Meanwhile people with an interest in how the A141 road is to be improved will get a platform for their views on possible options when Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority launches its **A141 - Have Your Say!** microsite later this month.

Mayor James Palmer, who leads the Combined Authority, will share the long list of potential options on the microsite and request comment on the pros and cons from as many people as possible who live near the A141 or use it. Mr Palmer said, *'No decision on the options has yet been taken and I'm keen that the people who know this road best feed in their views and insights to inform the final choice of what goes forward.'*

To help people get involved, the Combined Authority has created a Facebook hub, **the @A141Community**, where people united by an interest in the road can learn when the microsite goes live, and swap news and views about the A141 and stay in touch with progress of A141 improvement plans over the whole life of the project.

Councillor Pasco Hussain set to be the new mayor in May

Councillor Hussain (right) was elected to be the Mayor in May at last week's Town Council meeting.

Councillor Pasco, who is currently Deputy Mayor, has been working hard to support the current Mayor, Jonathan Pallant during this very unusual Mayoral year.



2017 and Mayor Pope hands The Stig his trophy at the Town Team's Mobility Grand Prix. Stig was in fact the current Mayor Jonathan Pallant.

Each year in February the Town Council select the councillors who will become Mayor and Deputy Mayor for the following year. Those elected assume the reigns in early May at the Mayor Making ceremony, usually held in the Corn Exchange. Last May this arrangement was altered due to Covid restrictions and as we reported (see issue 014 - 15 May 2020) some councillors tried to stop Cllr Pallant from taking the role. Fortunately this 'coup' attempt failed

and Cllr Pallant took over the Mayor role and with Pasco as his Deputy they have been doing a good job in difficult circumstances.

Normal service was resumed last week as Councillor Pasco Hussain was unanimously elected to be Mayor and Councillor Phil Pope was elected as Deputy Mayor for the year 2021/22.

Of course Phil was Mayor as recently as 2017, a role he has said he loved.

Delayed Fire Station plans approved

Last February (RP53) we reported that the Cambs Fire Service has wasted thousands of pounds and four years as a result of promises made by ex Police & Crime Commissioner Jason Ablewhite.

A year later, work on the new training facility in Huntingdon can begin following planning permission.

The project involves a modern, fit-for-purpose, training centre and new community fire station at St John's Park, north of Huntingdon. The facilities will provide effective, reliable

and realistic training for all operational firefighters and much needed capacity to train across the whole county.

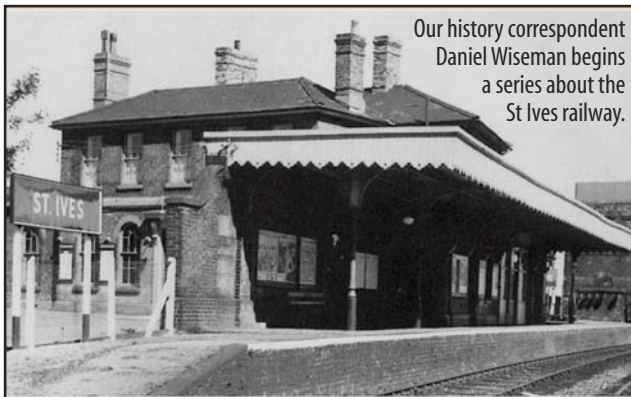
The larger facilities will also accommodate support staff from occupational health, health and safety and operational support group colleagues.

Dressed for the occasion *This family of Alpacas enjoyed the recent snowy conditions in Huntingdonshire, which seemed more like their natural home in the Andes.*



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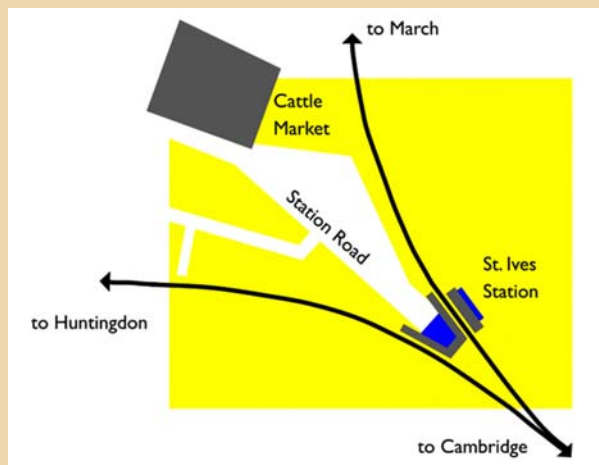
Our history correspondent Daniel Wiseman begins a series about the St Ives railway.

THE RAILWAY COMES TO ST IVES

In the 1840s, British investors thought they had found a new way to make money by building railways. In 1846, a mind-blowing 272 acts of parliament were passed setting up new railway companies, one of which was driven by local solicitor George Game Day. The act was for 'making Railways from Wisbech to Saint Ives and to Fenny-Drayton' and the first part of the 'Wisbech, Saint Ives, and Cambridge Junction Railway', from Wisbech to March, opened quickly in May 1847.

The other end of the line, from St Ives to Cambridge, with stations at Swavesey, 'Long Stanton', Oakington, Histon and Chesterton, opened soon after on Tuesday, August 17th, 1847, allowing passengers to travel by steam train to London. (Bishopsgate initially, and later, Liverpool Street.) The journey to Cambridge would take about 35 minutes.

Our station was located just the other side of what is now Harrison Way, where the guided buses cross into Station Road. The same station also served the new Ely & Huntingdon Railway, which began its service on August 17th. Its track headed west, cutting across the 'New Bridges' that leads to The Dolphin (red bricks show where this crossing was today), terminating at Huntingdon. But the station was actually across the river in Godmanchester, which means there was a station in St Ives before there was one in Huntingdon!



At the beginning of March 1848, the final part of the Wisbech to Cambridge railway was open to passengers, extending the St Ives line through Somersham, Chatteris, Wimblington, Doddington, March and 'Wisbeach' station. The line followed the curve that Harrison Way now takes but continued through the roundabout at Clare Hall/Longreach Lake and through what is now the industrial estate in Needingworth.

Huntingdon got another station on 7th August 1850, when the Great Northern Railway opened its London to Peterborough line to the public. The following year the St Ives to Huntingdon line joined the new GNR line. With the town now so well connected what would others make of us? The Eastern Counties Railway published an illustrated guide in 1851, which revealed a surprising fact about the line to Huntingdon that it ran for the East Anglian Railway...

'St Ives is a market town... and presents a very neat appearance, the houses being modern and well built, and the streets nicely paved and lighted. It is the seat of rather a considerable corn market, which is held on a Monday... It contains a population of about 4,000, and has a fine old church. From St Ives to Huntingdon there is a line of rails, on which the somewhat primitive method of pulling the train with horses is still carried on, very much to the interests of the Company, for it would be a heavy loss to work the line, which only supports one train a day and is but about four miles long, with engine power, involving as it would do a capital of some £10,000 [£1.4m today] sunk in locomotives. The line from St Ives to Huntingdon is the property of the East Anglian Railway, and therefore does not come immediately within our range.'

While connecting St Ives by railway was largely a success, some companies still had problems making money. More about that next time!

From our environmental correspondent Heidi N. de Tries

HEIDI LANDS A WHOPPER!

Well, I thought it was big.

So here's the story. My lovely Friends (with a big 'F') on Holt Island Nature Reserve called and said, 'Heidi! The flood has gone down and trapped hundreds of fish on the island! Can you come?'. So, I said, 'Darlings, I can't, I'm researching the water quality of the river and Anglian Water's sewage pumping failures, but do go and tell me all about it'. (That surprised you didn't it?)

Anyway, you all know that this year's flood was big. So big that it carried huge numbers of fish overland to then

become stranded in ever-decreasing pools as the water receded. I had wondered why there were so many gulls on the big meadow day after day. Now I know – big feed time! So, the two valiant volunteer Friends - handsome heroes both of them - spent hours with their nets and buckets rescuing the poor fishes, and releasing them back into the river. For those of you interested (oh yes you are!) they included roach, rudd, dace, bream and a lovely plump perch – my whopper!

Byee! Heidi x



Heidi's whopper perch.



Roach (larger) and a smaller rudd

Brand new refill shop opens in St Ives

The Refill Shop of Ikigai, on White Hart Lane, just off the high street, opened on Friday 12 February as an essential store, selling food and household cleaning products, from a variety of local and eco suppliers, with covid security in place.

Shop owner, Martin Cooper said:

'Opening a refill shop has been something I've been thinking about for a while, so when I was made redundant in November after a 20-year career, it felt like it was now or never!'

The former engineer has set up the refill store to help people reduce the amount of plastic waste they accrue when shopping in supermarkets, as well as allowing people to buy the amount of products they need, which will help to reduce food waste too.

The word 'ikigai' in the shop name comes from Japan, but has no direct translation. 'Iki' means life and 'gai' means purpose or reason for being. Everything sold will be in a refillable or reusable container or a compostable and biodegradable bag - even their loyalty cards are made from seed paper and can be planted when they're finished with!

The shop will offer a 'served only' option when it first opens, and numbers in the store will be limited.

'I know opening during the current lockdown isn't ideal, but all measures possible are in place to ensure we are covid secure, and we hope people will see us as a great, environmentally friendly alternative to supermarket shopping,' said Martin. Hours will vary in the first few weeks, so customers are asked to check the shop's Facebook and Instagram pages @RefillShopOfIkigai or their website www.therefillshopofikigai.co.uk for weekly opening times.



Hospice to receive funds in memory of St Ives Footballer



Picture from Hums Post

Charlene Martin was just 34 when she died of bowel cancer at Sue Ryder Thorpe Hall Hospice in Peterborough last February. Now her friends and family are raising funds

for the Hospice that cared for her during her final weeks. Charlene who played football for St Ives Town Ladies was a wife and mother and was dedicated to fundraising and raising awareness about the condition.

Now her good friend Faye Jarman from Brampton, wanted to create a unique charity challenge in her memory. Faye came up with the idea of setting challenges based around the number 21, which was the number on the back of Charlene's football shirt. Friends and family are taking part by doing various

activities such as doing 21 star jumps, sit ups and squats, 21 laps of a football pitch, 21 minutes of dancing and a 2.1 mile run, all in the space of 21 days. Charlene's nan, Margaret, braved the cold weather to do a 21km ride on her mobility scooter.

Faye is asking people to set their own challenges over 21 days to support the Sue Ryder Hospice so that it can be there for all the people who need them.

You can join in with the challenge by going to www.justgiving.com/fundraising/faye-jarman.



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

Local police drugs raid

Our St Ives local police informed us via their neighbourhood report that they executed a drugs warrant in Granta Close, St Ives and arrested two people after class 'A' drugs, and thousands of pounds in cash and an imitation firearm were found. The Police showed a picture of some of the haul (right).



COVID19 Police update

Local police have issued a statement praising the general public of St Ives and our wonderful communities for following the government rules. But the report goes on to say that unfortunately, they have had to attend numerous reports of Covid breaches within the area of St Ives, including gatherings, businesses operating that shouldn't and people who have tested positive but are not isolating. There have also been incidents of people refusing to wear face masks in shops and being abusive towards staff.

Police say that having to pay rule-breakers a visit could cause delay in them reaching other people who really need help and therefore they urge people to adhere to the rules set out by the government to prevent the spread and save lives as well as reducing pressure on the amazing work of the NHS.

Council tax to rise by 7.7 per cent

The County Council's share of council tax will rise by 2.99 per cent. The Conservative controlled council promised an additional £29 million to be spent mostly on footpaths, verges and gulleys and roads over the next five years. The Leader Cllr Count said the Conservatives had not chosen to increase council tax by the maximum allowed by government rules - 4.99%. This, he said, was because the 'likely lasting damage done by the pandemic means we need protect our residents from the burden of extra taxation as much as is possible.'

Lib Dem leader Lucy Nethsingha criticised the Conservatives for only releasing their final budget plans a few days before the meeting and suggested that failing to raise the tax over many years meant that the Council had not been able to fund routine cleaning of drains and gulleys - resulting in hundreds of people having had their homes flooded this winter.

Following the increase in council tax, from April the new annual costs will be:

Band A: £933.18; Band B: £1,088.71; Band C: £1,244.24; Band D: £1,399.77; Band E: £1,710.83; Band F: £2,021.89; Band G: £2,332.95; Band H: £2,799.54

Love and happiness at a price

Well what price would you put on it? When we receive an official police report that is headed 'Romance Fraud' you can be certain we are going to take a close look with our first thought being to see how close to April 1st we are. But no it's serious and it seems people are actually falling for people whom they have never met that call and promise undying love and happiness, but you need to send them lots of money first!... Really?

The report goes on to say that people have lost up to £7,000 with this latest cruel scam. Now the police describe how this is being achieved and give advice on how to spot these hoaxers but at *The Riverporter* we thought we'd be just a little more direct. ... Don't give bank details or any other item of money value over the phone! ... **EVER!**

But if you or anyone you know may be having concerns over someone they have met online here is a very useful link. ... For more advice on romance fraud, visit: <https://bit.ly/3rKv91W>

Dear Erik,

Thank you for the info about the drains in the last issue. I was very concerned about the length of time they were out of use when the weather was so bad. Let's hope that Chestnut and all the other streets are finally finished with all the drains working. Mrs FizzCrick

Dear Erik,

Yes the new drains have been sorted, however due to the road being resurfaced by the contractor the water will not flow to the lovely new drains. I sent a picture to the Cambridgeshire Highways and the reply was a brush off after all we are only the Council Tax payers what do we understand about such matters. The main junctions Kings Hedges and Garden Walk with Burstellers have the same problem with large puddles due to the road surface now below the height of the new drains. We will just have to by new gum boots.



The picture attached shows that although it had not been a heavy rainfall the water cannot escape to the drains.

Keep up the good work. Jim Morrison BEM

Dear Erik,

Subject: Terracycling

Why doesn't St Ives have a terracycling centre? This would save so many products (pet food, laundry, handwashing, etc, etc) from going to landfill and generate some income for the town. It would make sense for the Council to promote such a scheme.

Caroline a St Ives resident

Dear Caroline,

We sent your query to Helen Dye who is working hard with the Eco Action Group to make the town carbon neutral.

She responded in her latest newsletter with this piece: 'I received an email from the Editors of *The Riverporter*, which asked why doesn't St Ives have a terracycling centre?'

A great suggestion, and perhaps these facilities could be located in schools, one of the refill shops, or even the Town Council. I say go for it, and while every little bit helps, let's not lose sight of the transformative change required in our consumption and lifestyle habits if we are to begin to make a dent in our carbon emissions significant enough to achieve net zero by 2030.

There are two TerraCycle centres nearby. One at Holywell C of E School and the other is in Houghton & Wyton's community shop. Ed

Join the conversation

There are still some spaces for Talking Together, COPE's free programme offering weekly telephone-based discussion groups, which starts again on Monday 22 February. There will be lively discussions on topics plus an exciting new group for people with visual impairment. If you would like further information, please call the COPE office on 01223 364303. We are here in the morning from Monday to Friday.

SEWAGE IN ST IVES

The Riverporter has learned that the EA agreed a number of Local Enforcement Positions (LEPs) which will enable Anglian Water to pump sewage with very low ammonia levels into the watercourse when their systems are overwhelmed. Do the residents of St Ives want sewage, even dilute, in our watercourses any more than they want it coming up their loos? It would be interesting to hear from Anglian Water on this. We know that The Great Ouse Valley Trust is concerned about recent reports of the poor quality of the water in our rivers, including our own Great Ouse, so the last thing needed is for Anglian water to exacerbate this. Could not their resources be put to better use by investing in improved sewage pumping stations that can cope more efficiently with conditions like those we recently experienced. After all, they will surely be repeated in due course.

County Council appears in Private Eye's Rotten Boroughs again

POKE IN THE EYE

BACK in November, *Eye* 1534 reported that Tory Cambridgeshire county council had got itself into the same sort of pickle as Labour Croydon - lending a huge sum to its own wholly owned house building company, which then could not keep up with the loan repayments because it wasn't making any money. Solution: to lend the housing company, This Land, even more money to cover the interest, and to sell off land to developers to bring in at least some dosh.

After our story appeared, Cllr Mark Goldsack (chair of Cambridgeshire CC's commercial and investment committee, via which This Land reports to the council) told councillors at Soham town council, who had raised concerns, that our story was "unwarranted, non-factual and quite frankly false" - without specifying in what way. He had taken advice from the council's lawyers, he said, and been told that it was difficult to sue the *Eye* because after every issue the company is dissolved and a new one formed! A glance at free Companies House records would have shown Cllr G that the *Eye* has been published continuously by Pressdram Ltd, a private company, since its incorporation in 1961.

After at least one local reader pointed out that he'd been talking nonsense, Cllr Goldsack (sort of) apologised in an email copied to all the councillors he had misled with his porkies: "I was guilty of reporting informed [sic] facts about *Private Eye* and not checking them myself for validity. This is a mistake I will certainly look to avoid in the future." Good to know taxpayers' millions are under the stewardship of a man with such a firm grasp of the facts.

Do you know where the items you donate go to?



Valentines Day Message Scam



**Entries Invited for Next
Fine Art & Antiques Sale
on Saturday 10th April
2021**



After an Auction reaching an international client base we saw a record sale with many prices over double estimate!



Large Butterscotch Amber Necklace of Oval and circular form **Sold £700**

Royal Crown Derby Old Imari 1128 XL Comport/Tazza **Sold £1000**



Collection of assorted Valves inc. National Union, Tungsram etc **Sold £800**

Next Antiques & Later Sale is Saturday 27th February, we are consigning now with booked deliveries and collections



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

Volunteer Groups Message Forum Can you use this Space?

We were contacted by Geoff, a member of The Rotary Club of St Ives who suggested that the many small volunteer groups that help various sectors of our community could possibly achieve more with increased interaction between them.

He wondered if *The Riverporter* might have a role in helping groups to share their experiences and challenges.

We thought this sounded a good idea as one of *The Riverporter's* aims is to promote the good work of the Town's voluntary groups.

So we have come up with this idea - a regular **Message Forum**, which groups can use to highlight their work and message interested groups.

So the question is... **Can you use this Space?**

If you are a member of a community group that wishes to let others know what you do, or needs specific help, or or just wants to promote your organisation, you can email us at theriverporter.uk and we will include it on the Message Forum.



The organisers of the St Ives Illuminated Boat Parade are hoping to be able to run this popular event on 16th October 2021. Places for this Halloween themed event will be limited, but if you would like to enter your boat details will be on the website from April

www.stivesboatparade.co.uk

Please note that the organisers hope that COVID restrictions will be lifted by October, however the event will be subject to any restrictions in force at the time.

ADVERTORIAL

How to sell your property: TOP TIPS TO SELL YOUR HOUSE



KERB APPEAL

Buyers form an impression within seconds of pulling up outside your property and you'll never get a second chance to make a good first impression. Give your home "kerb appeal" by painting the front door, tidying the garden and planting those hanging baskets.



DE-CLUTTER

Buyers need to picture themselves living in your property and it can be difficult to see past all the family photos and other "stuff" that's just hanging around, so de-clutter and make your home as neutral as possible.



BE ACCOMMODATING AT VIEWINGS

Be as accommodating as possible with viewings, try to see them at their convenience, make sure pets are out of the way and leave the viewing to the agents, they know what to do and say.



BE VIEWER READY

Viewers turn up just when you don't want them to, be ready. Ask the children to tidy toys away, wash those dishes, you never know when the agents going to call.



LISTEN TO YOUR AGENT

A good estate agent will offer their impartial advice on how best to stage your home, take this on board when preparing your home for sale and chances are you'll find a buyer in no time.



CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE

It's a cliché we know, but the smell of freshly baked bread, fresh coffee and flowers makes a big difference in making your home stand out.



DON'T BE GREEDY

Ask a price that will entice interest, over-valuing can mean extra months sat on the market. Buyers know the market well, they set alerts to see everything that comes available and soon realise when a property is at the wrong price.



HAVE ALL YOUR PAPERWORK TO HAND

Planning permissions, building regulations, insurance, utility costs, have them to hand, you're likely to be asked about them.



INSTRUCT A GOOD SOLICITOR

Engage with a good solicitor, even prior to agreeing a sale. Talk to us about who we recommend locally.

ellis&co
winters