

The Riverporter

ST IVES AWARD WINNING NEWSPAPER

Issue 87: II June 2021

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Have your say about the roads in St Ives

**THE RIVERPORTER
FIRST WITH
THE NEWS AGAIN**

People eager for long-awaited improvements to the roads around St Ives have the chance to vote on their favourite scheme when the new Combined Authority mayor reveals the options for the first time on Monday 14th June.



The Combined Authority has set up a dedicated website mapping out a range of potential improvement schemes for residents and road users to consider and comment on.

In a video welcoming people to the Combined Authority's specially created 'Your St Ives, Your Say' website, Mayor Dr Nik Johnson encourages as many people as possible who live in or near St Ives, and who rely on the network of roads surrounding it, to choose their favourite option and share their views of the pros and cons.

The Mayor says in the video:

'These roads serve the community of St Ives and its neighbouring villages - and it's that community whose views count the most. There'll be no decisions on this or that option until we've heard what you think. I'm keen that you, the people who know the area best, tell us what matters to you so that your insight informs the final choice of what goes forward.'

'It's good to remember that roads are not for cars, they're for people. We want a road network which is greener and safer, that works for those walking, for those riding bikes or horses, just as much as it works for those driving cars, lorries, or agricultural vehicles. St Ives is an absolutely beautiful market town and we need to work together to make

sure that the community, climate action, and people's wellbeing are at the heart of any and all development.

'That means building better and cleaner public transport and more walking and cycling into our plans, so that people feel safer venturing out and about without their cars and can still get where they want to go.'

Peak time congestion is a major issue, with buses delayed, rat-runs through St Ives, and patchy, poorly maintained cycling infrastructure and footpaths within St Ives, which do not connect as well as they might to encourage active travel that can benefit health and the environment. The Combined Authority will use its Facebook hub, @capcamarketowns to keep people in touch with progress of the St Ives road improvement project.

Huntingdonshire District Council is working in close cooperation with the Combined Authority on plans to improve the A141. The two improvement schemes are expected to be developed in such a way as to link and complement one another. People wishing to assess and comment upon the various options are able to do so from Monday when the 'Your St Ives, Your Say' website goes live on Monday 14th June, 09.30am at this address: www.your-stives.co.uk

Tickets on sale for the Corn Exchange concerts



Tickets are now on sale for a series of concerts in the Corn Exchange's impressive Riverport Café Bar area. The café style concerts are taking place on the last Friday of each month until November between 7.30 and 9pm.

The first concert, in two weeks time, on 25th June, features the Martin Kemp Trio playing some jazz standards. Martin will be joined by John Cherry on guitar and Pete Hill on double bass.

Martin (pictured above in the Chapel in 2019), has often played at the Chapel Arts and The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival and always produces a perfect evening of sophisticated music to start off the weekend.

Tickets are just £10 and are limited to the first 30 people so you will need to book now to avoid disappointment. Attendees may be required to wear a mask on entering the venue, while the current Covid rules exist and there will be table service for refreshments to comply with the regulations.

The other five concerts, which include Harpist Ruth Holden, Dickie De Vere & The Dorchester Mavericks, Harpsichordist Robin Walker, classical guitarist Daniela Rossi and singer songwriter Solomon Smith are also available to purchase at:

www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives

After a period of little or no live entertainment it seems that once again there is suddenly 'a lot going on' in St Ives, which is how it should be.

For full details of these and other entertainment please visit the Town Team website at:

www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk



The view from the Meadow

The building on the left in the picture is the site of the old brewery with the Free Church spire in the centre and the mediieval bridge on the right.

**Riverporter
readers get
15% off**

A new shop has opened in Needingworth and you can get 15% off any purchase - see page 4 for details.

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Rockin' is their business



Bob, Chris and Mick make up this three piece Rockin' band, The Flyin' Leathernecks. Playing authentic Rock 'n' Roll and Rockabilly, they are based in Bedfordshire but gig across the UK, from Carlisle to the Ace Cafe in London and Southend to Bristol. Creating a rocking party with guests such as Chuck Berry, Gene Vincent, Eddie Cochran, Buddy Holly & Elvis is bound to get you up dancing!

The band comprises Bob MacDonald: raised on country music his Rockabilly roots grew early and matured during the 70's rock n roll revival when Johnny & The Roccos became a firm favourite, developing a love of live music. Unable to understand guitars Bob found his groove with the double bass. He started playing with Porky's Hot Rockin'. Later he joined Fat Sound, The Thunderbolts, The CC Smugglers and the reformed Whirlwind.

Chris Ashby was introduced to the drums at an early age by his father who played drums in dance bands. Having been introduced to Bob MacDonald by their retiring drummer he joined The Flyin' Leathernecks just over 4 years ago and there's been no looking back. When not on a stage Chris' other main interest has always been British classic cars.

Ian Martin started playing piano at the age of 4, bass at 13 and guitar at 16, and has been thrilled by Big Band, Jump/Jive, Rockabilly and Rock 'n' Roll for as long as he can remember. A founder member of the Metrotones and The Swing Kings, he's played almost every major festival and venue in Europe and Scandinavia.

THE FLYIN' LEATHERNECKS • THE SEVEN WIVES • SUNDAY 19TH SEPTEMBER 6PM



The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival Sponsored by Ellis Winters



SATURDAY 2ND OCTOBER

Another great act for The Old Riverport Ukulele Festival

The internationally renowned Opera-lele, which has rapidly established itself as one of the most innovative and exciting new acts in the world is coming to town. Opera-lele is a unique comedy music act specialising in performing music from opera and musical theatre accompanied by the emotionally powerful yet understated twang of their ukuleles! Having trained as singers at the Royal College of Music and Goldsmiths College in London, George Bartle and Amanda Harkett have gone on individually to forge careers for themselves as entertainers of the highest calibre.

In 2016, Opera-lele burst onto the music scene with a Main Stage festival performance. The audience was stunned and excited by what they saw and heard. Opera-lele received a standing ovation and were described by many as the hit of the festival.

Since then, Opera-lele has been collecting standing ovations at festivals, theatres, churches, castles and even private islands across the UK and overseas.

They have toured extensively around the UK and abroad and were voted 'Breakthrough Ukulele Artist' by the readers of UKE Magazine.

George & Mandi are delighted to be coming to St Ives and The Old Riverport Ukelele Festival.



Tickets for the day, which include the evening concert are just £12 and can be purchased at:

ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives

Opera-lele will also be holding a workshop on the day and tickets for that cost £10 and can also be booked at ticketsource.

From our environmental correspondent Heidi N. de Tries

HEIDI DROPS A CLANGER!

Oh dear, I'm in such a tizz. You must have thought I had lost my marbles in my last piece about my birdwatching exploits (I often think that – Ed). I got so carried away with my story and describing those four lovely birds now flitting all around St Ives, I completely forgot to send our lovely Ed three of the pictures, so you could see what I was talking about (flattery may get you somewhere but you are close to being fired Heidi. Get to the point – Ed).

Yes well, the three I missed were the Swallow (forked tail,

remember?), House Martin (white rump) and Sand Martin (brownish on top). And so here they are in these delightful illustrations by Noel Cusa.

Before I go though darlings, now that I have my birdy eye in, I want to tell you about some interesting behaviour I noticed while I was loitering outside The Dolphin Hotel this week. It's a good place to see all sorts of things (careful Heidi – Ed),

but on this occasion about 20 of the lovely House Martins were chattering with excitement as they swooped down to a muddy patch in those funny bricks in the car park. I



peered more closely and saw that they were scooping up mud and flying off to the eaves to start building new nests.

Wonderful! Now I know some people claim

they make a mess doing this and try to stop them, or worse pull down their nests, but my nerdy birdy friend told me this was against the law and can attract a big fine.

So, you heard it first from Heidi! Enjoy the birds!

Byeeee! Heidi xx

Volunteer Groups Message Forum

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 want to promote your organisation, you can email us at theriverporter.uk and we will include it on the Message Forum.

The St Ives Day Centre

St Ives Day Centre is based on Ramsey Road and we are open Monday-Friday 0930-1530. We offer a welcoming and safe environment for elderly people within St Ives and the surrounding villages, giving their families and carers some much needed respite. We are currently open on a very limited basis due to Covid regulations but are hoping that we will be fully operational again once social distancing is lifted.

We are currently seeking volunteers to help in the centre with serving refreshments and lunches and entertaining the members. We would welcome volunteers who can offer full or half days to assist in the centre and anyone who has a skill, talent or hobby that they would be happy to share with the members.

If you would like more information, please contact one of our friendly team on 01480 463444 or email daycentre25@googlemail.com

New COPE programme

A new series of Talking Together, COPE's popular programme offering telephone-based discussion groups, starts on 21 June. There are still a few places available and some enticing topics to discover.

Join us to discuss the Power of Books - perhaps discover a new favourite. Hear fascinating stories of Young Americans in Britain during WW2. Meet local poet Liz Williams at Poet's Corner to look at words in a fresh way. Listen to Classical Music through the Ages, led by Mark Liversidge, a presenter on Classical Cambridgeshire or Explore Kettle's Yard, a beautiful and unique house in Cambridge with a wonderful collection of 20th century art.

Previous Talking Together participants tell us that they particularly appreciate this opportunity to discover new areas of interest, listening and enjoying the fellowship of like minds and likeable friends. And all from the comfort of their own home! Participation is free, but registration is required by 14 June. Email: cambridgecope@hotmail.co.uk



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

St Ives Drug bust

Police stopped a suspicious silver Audi car in White Hart Court after a short pursuit, on Sunday evening, 30th May. The driver attempted to run off but was caught by officers who then carried out a search. In the car officers discovered a quantity of a herbal substance believed to be cannabis, together with scales, grinders and other drug dealing paraphernalia. One person was arrested on suspicion of possession with intent to supply drugs and taken into custody. Police say that investigations are continuing.

Other police matters notified this week include yet more reports of catalytic converters being stolen from local cars in broad daylight and in public shopping areas. The report this week speaks of two new cases in Meadow Lane and in Cattle Market.

A catalytic converter is simply part of the cars exhaust system and looks similar to a silencer box. A thief can cut one of these items away from the car within a couple of minutes with a minimum of fuss. We are advised that a catalytic converter contains a fair quantity of rare metals including Palladium, Platinum and Rhodium and there is a very open, ready market for these items openly traded on the internet. A typical stolen unit can be worth hundreds of pounds and the price is based on the stock market trading prices on the day. Replacement cost to the vehicle owner can be as high as £1000 and in older cars insurance companies have been known to prefer the option of scrapping the car rather than face the expensive repair, defence against this crime is not easy as we all have to leave our cars somewhere but well lit busy areas may well help deter these thieves.

Is this an alternative to Amazon?

In issue 80 of *The Riverporter* we wrote about a new venture in Huntingdonshire called *Click It Local*.

The relatively simple idea being that you can go on-line and buy from your local shops and get it delivered to your door that day.

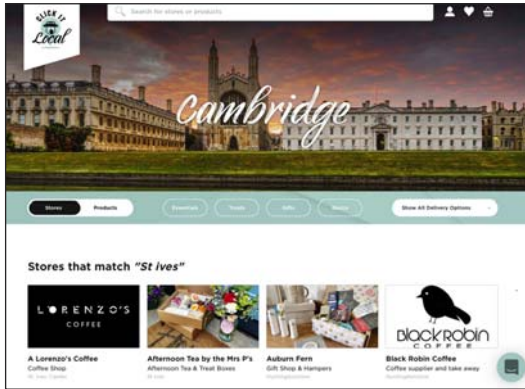
Like most simple ideas the actual workings are a bit more complicated as the shopper can buy from a number of different suppliers and get it all delivered by one courier at a modest cost.

The company doing this, *Click It Local*, has now been operating for a year, they started in Cambridge and has just launched a nationwide service. This means that you can buy from just about anywhere in the UK through them.

(I guess a same day delivery isn't possible ED.) In our March article we asked if this type of service would help save our high street, which was then mostly shut to customers. We thought that it would be good to see what the situation is now that shops are once again open. So we spoke at length with Nathaniel Mahoney, the Cambridge Area Marketing Manager of *Click It Local* to find out how the business was faring in our area.

The company has regular meetings with HDC, who assisted with the launch of the local service, to look at the progress of the scheme. It would seem that the increased volume of on-line purchasing, which the lockdown hastened, is continuing despite shops now being open.

We spoke to a couple of St Ives businesses which are on the website and got a mixed response. One company had not had a single order, but as that business had been open throughout the pandemic they still saw



customers in person.

Another business had some early response and custom from outside of St Ives but that had tailed off since their store had reopened.

Click It Local admitted that some stores had stopped using the scheme since reopening, believing that it wasn't needed now.

They also said that it takes time to develop this concept and that developing the national delivery was likely to help some local businesses. They described how a shop, selling an extremely nice range of clothing goods was suffering low sales until they were able to attract customers from much further afield.

It is probably too early to say how successful this way of buying will be. More businesses are signing up and *Click It Local* have made progress with a second round of investment, allowing them to handle everything in house, including deliveries.

At the moment the company receives over £400 a day in orders locally, which wouldn't threaten Amazon but only time will tell if *Click It Local* will be a regular part of the St Ives shopping scene. One thing seems certain, which is that local shops may need to be on-line as well as open to shoppers, to attract sufficient business at the moment.

You can meet Nathaniel and the *Click It Local* team at the St Ives Monday Market on 5th July.



We are open... Yay!



While we patiently wait the Prime Ministers decision on the 21st June, local St Ives town centre visitors can now take a moment to relax in the Corn Exchange's new 1st Floor Riverport Coffee shop and bar, which opened last Monday.

First visitors were treated to great new fresh coffees and hot chocolate and some of the best cakes ever made supplied by local bakers 'Mrs P's' (well we thought so). Monday saw a gentle flow of customers discovering the new comfy sofas and air conditioning and if you haven't seen it yet the Riverport Café Bar is open every morning from 9am to 2:30pm

Are You the next Lloyd Webber? Auditions



We're looking for the next Lloyd Webber

The Riverporter has received notification of a call out to those who are interested in involvement in a new musical production.

With the 'new look' St Ives Corn Exchange seeking to take a more active role as an arts and cultural hub, it aims to pursue a number of projects across different arts genres. One of these is to work in association with local author Mark Fryday and musician Chris Lewis, who have created a new stage musical to be offered as a 'product' which can be performed by any group, be it professional, amateur, or enthusiastic performing arts students, who might want to present it.

It is a contemporary piece about a 'Home Counties' family with a cast of only five. There are two acts, 12 scenes, and 16 original musical numbers. Mark Fryday and Chris Lewis have written the initial book, script, lyrics, music, and orchestrations. The next stage is to 'workshop' the piece to see what works and what may need more attention. This is all prior to casting, with a view to a first production in 2022.

The writers are therefore keen to hear from volunteers with acting and singing talents and who would like to be involved in this 'workshop' process, or the project in general. If that's you, please contact Mark Fryday at contact@markfryday.com, preferably before the 1st. July 2021. For further information contact either Mark or Chris at chris.lewis@dial.pipex.com

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INTRODUCING

PEBBLE & PIER

Overcote Lane PE27 4 TW

Pebble & Pier is a unique little gift shop located by the picturesque
Pike and Eel Hotel and Marina. They offer a rich variety of gifts for
anyone who likes a unique item. You can also pick your free range
eggs, jams or muesli for a tasty breakfast.

Kaja, from Pebble & Pier told
The Riverporter . .
*'We collaborate with local
artists and businesses to offer a
unique range of handmade and
high quality items that can be
personalised too!*
*You can also shop for essential
fresh produce and cleaning
items in an Eco Refill station.*
*We're open Mon - Sat from
11 - 6 and Sundays 12 - 5.*
*Come for a browse, chat or a
walk in the area.*
**Mention you saw this ad in
The Riverporter and get
15% off your purchases
until end of July.**



ADVERTORIAL

Stamp duty holiday ends soon

Mike Ellis explains about the current stresses of moving home.



As the stamp duty holiday comes to an end there's
mounting pressure at solicitor offices up and down the
country as they scramble to dot the i's and the cross t's
on the property contracts ahead of the deadline.

This pressure has been mounting since June last year
when we were all caught by surprise when the property
market took off like a rocket.

Solicitors had made staff redundant or put them on
furlough, they were then unprepared for the increased
activity and as a result the time it takes for the legal
transaction to be completed is now taking almost four
months instead of the usual three. And there seems to
be no let up, with properties coming to the market and
selling within weeks if not days of being instructed.

If you're going through the buying or selling process at
the moment we know how stressful this is likely to be,
our advice is to email your solicitor first, it is sometimes
easier for them to respond when they get a few spare
minutes, they're taking rather a lot of calls at the
moment and this takes them away from the work they
need to do.

If they haven't come back to you within a couple of days
give them a call and contact your agent, sometimes the
agent is able to get through to a secretary or office
manager.

The other problem of course is trying to book a removal
company or hire a van, we've heard that many are
booked up already, do your ringing around NOW before
it's too late, good luck with your move!

ellis&co winters

