

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Is there a tragedy waiting to happen?

On Tuesday afternoon a 92 year old man was involved in an accident with a car in the town centre - at a place that has recently received many comments about illegal parking.



In a situation like this nobody could reasonably say that the warning was not given. (*Riverporter* *passim* issue 95 *Is it a matter of priorities?*) Police at the scene were reluctant to give details but confirmed that someone had been hit by a small Honda car outside Poundland at the junction of Crown St. and Bridge St. At the time *The Riverporter* was there, the badly injured person was in the ambulance being prepared for the dash to Hinchingsbrooke A & E.

Dashcam video requested

Following up the story we understand that police have issued a request for witnesses and anyone with video or dashcam footage of the incident to come forward.

We find it interesting that the incident occurred under the gaze of one of the town's new street cameras (below), which must have caught site of the incident.



So *The Riverporter* asks:

Why has a blind eye been turned on this possibly deadly issue?

Why are taxis allowed to flout the rules so blatantly every day?

Why can the police not immediately access the street cameras?

Is the council waiting for a fatality before acting?

Daily threat to pedestrians

While *The Riverporter* would like to offer our best wishes to the unfortunate victim and hope they have a speedy recovery, this incident highlights the serious threat of injury faced daily by pedestrians simply walking along Crown Street. Every day sees mothers and children having to jump clear as cars pass by (often at speed). We don't yet have details, but a reasonable deduction suggests the 92 year old did not run into the road chasing a football, which of course a child may do.

We must ask questions

As horrible as this incident is, we must ask more questions of our Council and Highways department.



For example : As cars drive into Crown St. they pass a sign (above) that clearly states they are entering a pedestrian zone between 8am to 6pm. There is no reason to drive into this area during the day unless you are a resident, disabled, or a commercial vehicle loading and unloading and yet, there they are, every day, blocking the road requiring passing vehicles to drive onto the pavement to get by.

The Riverporter has received many letters on this very issue. The latest

WAS FIREWORK DISPLAY TOO SUCCESSFUL?



COVERING THE NEWS FOR ST IVES AND AROUND

It sounds unlikely but was this event just TOO popular this year? The response to the annual Hemingford Firework display was either euphoria or anger, depending on whether you were able to get there to see it or not.

The thousands of people who did get to see the display were completely bowled over by the magnificent show.

Having seen several over the years the editor can say this was certainly one of the best as this fantastic photo by Alan Bennett of Media Imaging Solutions shows.

It was noticeable that many more people than usual were making their way to see the display at the official site and from the bridge, the causeway and the meadow.

However there were many hundreds of people who ended up watching the fireworks from their cars, as long queues formed on London Road and on the Low Road between Fenstanton and St Ives.

Local social media after the event was awash with comments

including some people who said they were turned away as the event was full to capacity, despite them having pre-paid tickets.

Some commented that the display started earlier than advertised and another that they sat in a two-mile tailback on the Low Road for 50 minutes so missed the display completely.

The problems didn't end there as it took over an hour for some to get out of the field after the fireworks, suggesting that there was no traffic management – *'A total nightmare with young children in the car.'*

Whether the higher numbers than usual wanting to attend is down to fewer people having their own Bonfire Night parties these days, or just the effect of everyone being able to get out again following Covid restrictions, is not clear.

St Ives has a reputation for putting on events and it was noticeable during the Illuminated Boat Parade three weeks earlier that people were coming out in large numbers again. It is not easy putting on events like this and the irony is that the more successful they become the greater chance there is of upsetting some people.

It is great to see so many coming out and enjoying the spectacle but there are real safety concerns when the numbers are so high and it is very difficult for organisers to know how many people might turn out.

We hope that the Christmas Lights Switch-on event organisers have taken precautions to avoid overcrowding at this year's event on Saturday 20th November, which will end with a firework display.

A strange twist of fate?

St Ives Town Council were presented with details of CCTV costs at Wednesday's Council meeting. Following the upgrading of the CCTV cameras the Town Council will be paying £23,538 per annum for the next five years, up from just over £15k p.a. for the past five years.

The Riverporter has asked the Council if they have discussed the benefits of the system, whether it justifies the expense and if so what does the Council consider the benefits to be? We await their reply with interest.

having your say ...

The Riverporter

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



Milly stands in for a hyperventilating Erik.



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

OTHER NEWS

Man who cut off his mother's head sentenced

Ernest Grusza, 41, cut his mother 59-year-old Wieslawa Mierzejaska (right) into 11 pieces, in her flat in St Ives, the Cambridge Crown Court was told.

'Ernest wrapped her body parts in cling film and then put them in a fridge and a cupboard' said judge, the Honourable Mr Justice Fraser. He said: *'One of (Grusza's) most compelling delusions was that his mother was the devil; he was told by God to kill her, and dismember her body, in order to destroy the devil. He was convinced she would resurrect if he poured holy water and blood upon her dismembered body parts.'*



Describing the case as *'extremely tragic'*, he said the two Polish nationals were both hard-working people who had lived in the UK for a number of years.

Grusza's mother had sought help from a GP, the police, social services and first response services to have him sectioned under the mental Health Act but tragically she paid the ultimate price as a result of no one providing the support she required.

Left: Ernest Grusza. Photos courtesy Cambs Police.



Erik wants to share a tip

Hi all,

I admit it, the sound of fireworks terrifies me. Made the way I am my hearing is a bit more sensitive than most humans and to me a big firework is what I imagine it's like to be in a major car smash over and over again.

I do understand that humans enjoy fireworks so I THOUGHT I'd share a little idea that may help out some of your dog companions.

This year I found myself on the floor hyperventilating and trembling so badly that I couldn't move. But I found that tying a scarf around my head, which holds down my ears, muffles the sound and allows me to slow my breathing and relax just a little. It's not tight but just enough to reduce my hearing to more like yours. **Poor Erik, Ed.**

In support of grey

I was at a Halloween party the other evening dressed as Rasputin. What at my age? I hear you say. Well in fact everyone was dressed scarily and I wasn't even the oldest there!

Anyway to get to the point of this missive, after about two hours, during which we had consumed a fine four-course meal, I was feeling a little warm in my witch's hat and the two long multi-coloured wigs about my head and neck. I decided to remove them and loosen the top of my Gallebaya, (a black tunic I bought on a Nile cruise).

My slightly deaf and poor sighted friend opposite seemed to approve of me revealing an inch or two of my torso but it didn't last long. Both my wife and my friend's wife immediately said it wasn't a good look and I'm sure I heard one of them objecting to the sight of some grey chest hair. Now I know I'm no George Clooney but my top half isn't that bad as I've recently spent quite a lot of time sawing and doing building stuff which required quite a lot of physical exercise for my upper body. Okay I don't have a six-pack, it's more like a 'Party Seven' but I'm not sure I ever had a rippling stomach after the age of twenty five.

As for a hairy chest, well it was completely hairless until I reached my thirties and then only some fluffy down appeared until I started to go grey. From my mid-fifties that grey chest hair seemed to blossom, occasionally requiring a trim to stop it exploding out from the top of my shirts, as it tried to unite with the hair on my head. Like many men of this age, for some totally inexplicable reason, the hair on my head stopped growing, as if the chest hairs were pulling it back from the inside.

So according to my wife, Miss Havisham for the evening, the sight of just a millimetre or two of my chest was a turn off, whereas the sight of a millimetre or three of hers was not, if the reaction of my friend was anything to go by. Could it be just the grey hair? Which of course my wife doesn't have on her finely sculptured chest. Grey is something she is wrestling with at the moment, whether to let her hair go au naturale or to keep using the dye. Now grey doesn't bother me much. I have known men who dye their hair but it never seems to look at all natural. I find myself staring at their unnaturally dark mop, completely distracted and never hear what it is they are saying.

On the other hand I know many men who look very handsome in grey. They look mature and have gravitas that other men envy, especially the unfortunate men who might love to be grey if they hadn't gone bald already. Of course I fall into both camps now as my grey hair is gradually wearing away to the point where it seems sensible to accept the inevitable and keep it very short rather than see half a dozen long hair strands wafting about in the wind.

To be a really hip older man is to look like an old rock musician. Having the same long hair that they sported when in their prime, only grey. It says look I've still got what it takes and I've been around the block. I've seen and done it all, oh and buy the way I'm not one of those old blokes who has not only lost his hair but has probably lost his libido as well!

The other day I was sorting through a life-time of photographs and my wife, who saw a picture of us in our twenties, said she still felt that she was still like that in her mind. Four children and forty-five years later it probably explains why my grey-haired body is now a turn off. **Ed**



Neighbourhood Plan Update

A review of the answers given by the public about the Neighbourhood Plan has provided some interesting answers to the following questions.

Are there any new facilities that should be provided in St Ives and where should they be located? The most common reply was to have facilities and new developments, North of St Ives (above Ramsey Road). A running theme was one of pedestrianisation in the town centre and adopting a more community targeted centre for its buildings and spaces.

Other possible facilities being considered include: an outdoor gym on the existing green space between Burleigh Hill Park and Wheatfields Park (North of St Ives) and a community orchard. Many commented that all developments should try and meet the Climate Action Plan 2050 agreement.

Should the St Ives NP support the provision of extra hotel accommodation within the Town and where would it be located? The most common response supported the idea of having additional hotel/b&bs and the most popular location was near the Park & Ride or the Town Centre.

Which Particular Improvements would help you make more journeys by foot or cycle? Many commented on cycle routes not joining up and having to cross busy roads. Much of the Marley Road area of the town is not connected to any cycle network that lead to the town centre. There is also a requirement to have wider paths that are clearly marked to segregate cycle and walking and independent of the roads.

Other points raised included: pot holes, overgrown hedges and shrubbery restricting safe viewing, inconsiderate and speeding cyclists were mentioned especially when walking and cycling with young children as was illegal parking in the town and in Bridge St. The need to pedestrianise the centre, the width of path and being segregated from busy roads, negotiating illegally parked vehicles all featured.

What should be prioritised to improve nature in your neighbourhood to enable you to 'embrace your space'? It was clear that the majority of the public would like to see more trees, green spaces, woodlands, waterways etc. Encouraging wildlife to the area seems to be popular as well. Traffic management was also a hot topic with support for pedestrianising at least some of the town centre.

Other common points made include: plant more trees, green/woodland areas/improved waterways (prioritised over housing). More wildlife/wildflower areas and cut hedges to allow birds to nest. Install bird/bat boxes and also try and encourage more bees and butterflies etc

Are there any other subjects that should be covered in the Neighbourhood Plan? Topics mentioned included: flood protection, traffic calming and pedestrianisation, traffic congestion, improving the alleyways with lighting, reduced litter and better surfaces.

Interestingly some issues raised, such as encouraging new businesses, poor parking, expensive parking charges and protecting the Octagon are deemed to be dealt with by HDC. Particularly mentioned was HDC's Town Centre improvements plans which included items such as an Innovation Centre. The Riverporter is somewhat concerned that these plans, which were discussed under the title of Prospectus For Growth nearly 18 months ago, were never satisfactorily concluded. Various items such as the Parklets have been announced since, but no serious consultation has taken place and it seems that Town Councillors are still in the dark about the extent of 'Growth' that HDC rare committed to.

HYPERION

Entries Invited for Our Next Fine Art Sale on 4th December



Sold in our Fine Art Sales this year:



19th Century French Napoleon III Cave à Liqueur Mother of Pearl Decor Sold £1000

1ct Diamond Set Solitaire Ring Sold
£1500



A Graham Sutherland 1903-1980 Ceramic and Tile brass mounted coffee table Sold £2250



Darwin (Charles). On the Origin of Species Sold
£1500



Fine Ruby & Diamond Bracelet
Sold £5500



Yong Mun Sen (1896-1962) Malaysian. 3 Malaysian Junks against Shoreline, Watercolour Sold £3100



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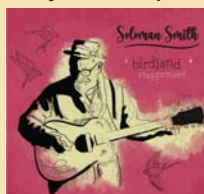
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Calendar of events

If you know of other events email: editor@theriverporter.uk
NOVEMBER

Monday 15th - The Snowman Festival starts. Snowmen appear.
Friday 19th November - The Folk Sessions with Frank Burkitt and Kara Filbey. 7.30pm The Cromwell Room, Golden Lion. Tickets £9.50 in advance from www.bit.do/novembersessions or £12 on the door.
Saturday 20th - Christmas Lights Switch On. 5pm in Market Hill.
Saturday 20th - The Children's Snowman Trail starts.
Sat 20 and Sun 21st - British Heart Foundation, Candle Lighting, Bridge Chapel, 10am-4pm and for 3 weekends.
Friday 26th - Chapel Arts @ The Corn Exchange 7.30pm.



Soloman Smith and Chris Newman will wrap up this season's Chapel Arts @ the Corn Exchange series. Soloman's thoughtful lyrics are expertly accompanied by the superb musicianship of Chris, creating a beguiling evening of entertainment. Influenced by folk, soul, blues, jazz, funk and country his style isn't easy to pin down but it is genuinely appealing. A great way to start the weekend in the comfort of the Riverport Cafe Bar.

Tickets are still available at www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives.

Saturday 27th - Norris Museum - Let's get ready for Christmas! Family Workshop. Booking essential at: <https://the-norris-museum.arttickets.org.uk/>
Saturday 27th - Saints Crafters Christmas Fair - Corn Exchange.

DECEMBER

Saturday 4th - ARTSFEST, 10am – 4pm, St Ives Corn Exchange. Also Santa and Chief Snowman arrives The Quay at 1pm.
Wednesday 8th - Huntingdonshire Arts Society lecture: The Art of Snow and Ice: How Artists Transformed The Winter Landscape. 2:30pm Corn Exchange, Guest fee: £5.00.

JANUARY

Wednesday 5th - Langley Bread, St Ives Corn Exchange. 10am – 12pm.

Saturday 8th - COSI Winter Concert

7pm. Details on Facebook or email: gillianatherton@aol.com

Wednesday 12th - Cinderella Pantomime, The Centre Theatre Players (runs until the 16th), Burgess Hall. Tickets: 07555 394697.



ADVERTORIAL

Five ways to brighten up your winter garden



With interest in the property market remaining high and as we move into the colder winter days, first impressions are still very important. Here are five ways to bring a splash of colour to your winter garden. And as a bonus, you'll also be helping the birds and lots of other garden wildlife.

1. Plant a small tree

All of these shrubs will grow in large pots if you want some colour to liven up your doorstep or walkway:

Holly: the bright red berries of this evergreen are a Christmas classic. Choose a female variety if you want to see those bright red berries, and a self-fertile variety such as *Ilex aquifolium* 'JC van Tol' will guarantee you a crop (they're also not as prickly).

Spindle *Euonymus europaeus*: in autumn, bright pink lantern-shaped flowers cradle a bright orange seed.

Crab apple: varieties such as *Malus x robusta* Red Sentinel burst with gorgeous red fruits all the way through to January.

2. Decorate your fences

Fences are a perfect blank slate for welcoming winter colour. Here are some top tips for decorating fences and walls:

Sweet Briar *Rosa rubiginosa*: this beautiful plant bursts with pink open-headed roses in late spring, as well as apple-scented foliage and abundant red hips in winter.

Winter jasmine *Jasminum nudiflorum*: a sweet-smelling scrambler with bright yellow, star-shaped flowers that bloom from January to March.

Common ivy *Hedera helix*: an evergreen that flowers from September to November and then produces fruits from January until May.

Native honeysuckle *Lonicera periclymenum*: this has beautiful scented flowers in spring and summer which are much loved by moths, and in autumn it will be festooned with bright red berries, loved by birds such as blackbirds.

3. Build a bulb lasagne

Planting bulbs on top of another in a 'lasagne' means they pop up one after the other, bringing colour from late winter through to spring.

Try out this 'recipe': Layer 1 (at the bottom): allium with bold globes of purple.

Layer 2: honey garlic with pendulous cream and pink heads.

Layer 3: grape hyacinth with gathered blue trumpets.

Layer 4: (at the top) – crocus, whose purple, yellow and white cups will be the first to flower in February. A final scattering of cowslip seeds on the ground will give a bright yellow contrast to the bulbs in the second year.

4. Provide a bird bath

What could be more colourful than a goldfinch spreading its wings with their band of gold? Or a robin sporting its iconic red breast? A great way to attract birds to your garden is to provide water. Birds need water both for drinking and for cleaning their feathers, so by putting out a bird bath you'll soon attract them to your garden. Make sure it's no more than about 5cm deep and provide some grip with stones or gravel if the bottom is slippery.

5. Feed the birds

Another way to attract birds to your garden is to put food out. In winter there are often fewer natural food sources available, and birds need extra calories to stay warm. You may even get a visit from migratory birds, such as a flock of redwings, fieldfares foraging on fallen fruits, or you could even spot the yellow and black stripes of a siskin.

These simple ideas may just make the difference to you finding a buyer over the next few months. For more information about the property market call our sales team on 01480 388 888.

ellis&co winters