

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Are our traditions under threat?

Recently in a survey of 5,000 people, St Ives was ranked the 3rd happiest place to live in Cambridgeshire, behind Histon and Newnham. That might sound good. BUT third in Cambridgeshire! Come on! Surveys come and go and St Ives often features in the top three or even higher. They always mention the river and quaint buildings but as we residents know there is more to St Ives than that. We still have a welcoming community and fine traditions, but it isn't clear if they will survive today's society.

In July the Parish Church received a letter from a resident, who said that his wife had not had more than 15 minutes sleep since moving here owing to the bells. His letter said *'We are disappointed that the comfort of those who sleep soundly through the bells is considered more important than the well-being of those who are genuinely sleep-deprived by the nightly chiming. We appreciate the historical significance of the bells, but respectfully suggest that modern residential realities also deserve consideration.'*



Subsequently a letter received from HDC's Environmental Health Officer informed the Church that they had received a complaint regarding noise from the Church Bells. Bells that have been chiming in the same way for over 100 years. The Officer explained that he was obliged to investigate the complaint, but he couldn't say who had complained. It's pretty common these days to complain or blame someone else for your discomfort but we are not sure that 'residential realities' have changed that much in 100 years. Presumably the thousands of residents who have lived in earshot of the bells over the past century managed to cope okay! Talking of coping - today we are told that one in five working adults are off work for a long time, due to stress and ill health. With today's 'mental health' epidemic we are a long way from the Dunkirk Spirit.

A festive concert with a difference

St Ives' All Saints Church is hosting **Bedford Gallery Quire**, which has for more than 20 years been dressing up and bringing back to life the occasionally irreverent quires of ordinary town and country folk who provided the music in churches during the 18th and 19th century. Such local groups preceded surpliced choirs and organs, which Victorian vicars could better control.

So if you wish to see a band of happy musicians and singers play their instruments (some of which are genuine antiques - the instruments that is) and enjoying a fun evening concert to raise funds for the church go to ticketsource.co.uk where tickets are just £10. Tickets bought on the door cost £12.



The Riverporter To double its circulation

As readers of this paper know it can sometimes be difficult to get a printed copy as we only print 1,000 copies. We intend to double the numbers printed in 2026, thanks to sponsorship from Field Lodge Care home and Simon Townend. Beverley Tyrrell, Customer Relations Manager at Field lodge, and Simon, recognised that *The Riverporter* is popular, but residents often couldn't get a regular copy as they quickly run out. Although the paper is available online many readers prefer a printed copy and so from today more are available. As a result you may notice it is a slightly smaller format to accommodate the longer run, but it will still contain as much news and will now be available in more places. We will list the places you can get a copy in our next issue.

DIARY OF EVENTS

Please email: editor@theriverporter.uk
There is much to do this Festive Season

NOVEMBER

Sunday 9th - Remembrance Sunday 10am Market Hill, St Ives.

Saturday 15th - Christmas Market and Lights Switch On.

Saturday 15th/16th - BHF Candle Lighting in the Bridge Chapel. Light a candle for a loved one. 10am to 4pm both days.

Saturday 15th - Bach Christmas Oratorio, St Ives Choral Soc. 7.30pm Free Church. Tickets www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society.

Friday 21st - Civic Society - The Story of Wing Commander Baker DFC DFM. 7.30pm Free Church. Members free, visitors £3.

Saturday 22nd/23rd - BHF Candle Lighting in the Bridge Chapel. Light a candle for a loved one. 10am to 4pm both days.

Saturday 22nd - ArtsFest exhibition. St Ives Corn Exchange, 10 am to 4 pm - to exhibit contact Pat-stivesnow@hotmail.com.

Saturday 22nd - Table-top Sale of New and Pre-loved items 10am - 4pm Free Church. Tables £10. Free entry for buyers.

Saturday 22nd - White Dove - Paul Dodson and Carla Gray, singing songs from the show. 7.30pm St Ives Corn Exchange, tickets £10.

Friday 28th - COSI lunchtime concert - featuring a clarinet quintet. A free concert, 1pm St Ives Free Church.

Friday 28th - Chapel Arts Concert - Stella Hensley's Magical Colours St Ives Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents.

Saturday 29th/30th - BHF Candle Lighting in the Bridge Chapel. Light a candle for a loved one. 10am to 4pm both days.

Saturday 29th - Creative Christmas Decorations 7pm. Free Church. Tickets £10 include materials, wine/soft drink and nibbles.

Sunday 30th - Christmas Craft Fair Burgess Hall 10am to 4pm.

Sunday 30th - The Amazing Technicolour Concert - St Ives Community Choir. Free Church. 6.30 pm. Tickets £9 adults, £5 children.

DECEMBER

Wednesday 3rd - St Ives Foodbank. 2pm St Ives Library. Donations.

Saturday 6th - Christmas Charity Concert The Free Church 7pm.

Saturday 13th - Family Christmas Concert, St Ives Choral Soc. 6.30pm. Free Church - www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society

Sunday 21st - Santa Arrives by Boat 11.30am The Quay followed by **SnowFEST** in the Corn Exchange with Grotto and Giant Snowdome.

Monday 22nd - SnowFEST continues in Corn Exchange 10am to 4pm.

Rotary Quiz prize winners celebrate



The ever-popular Rotary Club of St Ives Charity Inter-Pub Quiz has once again handed out £1,440 to local and national charities, nominated by the winning teams in the top ten pubs.

The White Swan in Bluntisham were the over-all winners, giving their prize cheque to the Arthur Rank Hospice, who support over 3,800 people in Cambridgeshire every year who are living with serious illness or life-limiting condition, as well as those

needing end of life care.

Pictured above is just part of the 23-strong winning team, led by Landlord and Team Captain Brian, who is receiving the Quizmaster Cup from Rotary President Sandra King. Also pictured are Rotarian Jim Murdoch, the local pub recruiter (right of picture) and Rotarian Beccy Roberts (holding the framed certificate) who was the Quizmaster on the evening. Members of the team are holding some of the twelve bottles of wine, kindly donated by

Wellington Wise Estate Agents, and which they plan to use as further raffle prizes to raise even more money for the Arthur Rank Hospice and the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. The £300 prize has already been donated to the charity.

The next Charity Quiz will be held on Thursday, March 26th 2026, and as always, the Rotary Club will welcome any pubs, clubs, groups or charities, from across Huntingdonshire, that would like to get involved.

It's always a fun night, and you don't have to be a 'quizzier' to get in on the action – over 40 volunteers help out as quizmasters at the different pubs, and to sort through the scores at 'Quiz Control'.

If you'd like to get involved in any capacity, please contact SKing@stivesrotarycambs.org.uk; we'd love to hear from you!

St Ivo Academy appoints new headteacher

Jess Pearce (right) who is currently at Trumpington Community College will take up her new role in January. (Image: Astrea Trust)

Ms Pearce has been part of the senior leadership team in schools across Cambridgeshire for nearly 10 years and brings a wealth of experience, including being a part-time Ofsted inspector.

Before her time at Trumpington, she was Assistant Headteacher and Head of Sixth Form at Parkside Community College, growing the Sixth Form to record numbers. She has taught religious studies for 15 years

She said: 'I'm thrilled to be joining St Ivo as principal. I am passionate about developing a school community that delivers an outstanding education, and which inspires students to reach their full potential. I'm looking forward to working together with the community of St Ivo to ensure every student thrives, both academically and personally.'



THREE OF OUR TRADITIONAL EVENTS

Langley Bread - The long standing tradition of distributing the 'Langley Bread' dates back to the 1650s when Robert Langley passed away, leaving money to be used to purchase bread, which was then to be distributed annually. Over the years, the bread has been accompanied by other small items such as tea, biscuits and other treats. Each year, bags are distributed to Widows and Widowers who reside within the parish boundary and are listed on the electoral register. The 2026 distribution will be on **Wednesday 14th January between 10am and 12 noon at St Ives Corn Exchange**. The Town Council encourage eligible residents to attend to take part in this cherished local tradition.

The HAIGH Trust Draw

This annual event where residents enter a draw for a share of the dividends from the Trust was started in 1961 by Mr C Haigh, a town councillor and Mayor, with 440 shares in the Eastern Assam Tea Company. This year's Draw will take place during the Darby and Joan Club meeting at the **Corn Exchange on Thursday 27th November between 2pm and 4pm**.

Persons eligible to participate must reside in the Parish of St Ives and be aged over 65 years. All applications for inclusion in the draw must be submitted to the Town Hall, prior to the event.

The Snowman Festival

One of our newer traditions started just over 10 years ago and sees lots of snowmen appearing in the shops for Christmas. Part of the Festival includes the Trail Map where children under 12 collect stickers from participating shops and can win one of four £50 vouchers from Townrow. The map can be collected from the shops or downloaded from www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk.

YOUR CHANCE TO WIN ONE OF FOUR £50 TOWNROW VOUCHERS

www.facebook.com/snowmanfestivalstives

Snowman Festival Trail Map



St Ives Christmas Lights
Saturday 15th November 2025
 Live entertainment from 11am
 Bridge Street Christmas Market
 Funfair
 Father Christmas
 The Big Switch On at 5pm

For further information visit
www.facebook.com/StivesXmas

Christmas Services at Sacred Heart

Here is the Christmas timetable for services at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church

Advent Talk Saturday, 13th Dec 2025 after the vigil mass at 6pm.

Confessions Thursday, 18th Dec 2025 between 7pm to 8pm.

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve Carol service – 5:30pm
 Christmas Eve Mass – 6pm
 Carol Service – 9:30pm
 Mass during the Night – 10pm

Christmas Day Masses at 9:00 am & 11:00 am

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having your say . . .

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

Milly and Tilly love your letters.

PLEASE NOTE: Letters are reproduced as presented by the writer. Editing is confined to grammatical corrections or minor trimming to fit the space. *The Riverporter* neither condones or condemns the opinions expressed.

Dear Milly and Tilly,



I love living in St Ives but am disappointed by the general lack of pride by some residents. These pictures are the first views that most visitors will see as they enter the Town. As well as looking like a builders yard at the front there are also a variety of discarded items including an old washing machine, a broken clothes carousel and some old doors! What a shambles!

From a frustrated resident!

Dear Milly and Tilly,

Ref 'TWIG' - the Thicket Woodland Improvement Group.

I too believe the Thicket should be largely left alone. There's been a lot of thinning out lately, no doubt due to the dubious health and safety tag?

Yes, we both think some wild flowers, within the woods, would add some colour...for example where are Bluebells?? So, some colour would be lovely.

But to CLEAR areas would be a bad move. There's enough interference. Goodness knows what a mess they're going to make of the fields above the Thicket which CURRENTLY give the best views around.

Cheers **David**

Dear Milly and Tilly,

It is reported that more than 1000 people attended the A141 and St Ives Improvements consultation meeting in the Corn Exchange on the 23rd of October. The scale of the throng, and the level of passion, seemed to have stunned those members of St Ives Town Council (SITC) that attended. That the consultants seemed to be uninformed by many aspects of the realities of the roads in and around St Ives was disconcerting. It was not confidence-enhancing.

Clearly, as a consultee, SITC needs to submit an opinion (the closing date is November 19th). In what seemed a panic reaction, SITC convened an Extra Ordinary Meeting of SITC planning committee on 28 October, to include the St Ives Improvements Scheme. How many of the 1000+ knew about it? It looks like three.

Instead of a throng of impassioned voters, three attended, and two of these spoke against the proposals. Given the absence of data for public assessment of the proposals, and such data that the consultants did acknowledge, referred to pre-date Covid period, it seems that SITC is now chary about signing up in support without a little bit of thought. Better late than never.

So, is the absence of 999+ voters a case of sudden apathy, or the failure of SITC to launch an information drive. To have an extra ordinary meeting without a corresponding awareness raising drive is telling in itself. Democracy relies on dissemination, SITC needs to think a little more about this, and learn some lessons.

Name withheld

SHOP LOCAL CAMPAIGN

ForSIT, the St Ives Regeneration Forum has created a series of posters and leaflets encouraging people to shop local this Christmas. Among the reasons to shop in St Ives is the free parking. Yes there is free parking - 1 hour free on-street parking and all day free parking in the Park and Ride, 500 metres from the town centre.



The Riverporter

To listen to the latest **Riverport Radio Podcast** go to <https://riverportradiopodcast.buzzsprout.com>

OTHER NEWS

Would you like to review the Police?

The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner are looking for new volunteers to join their Community Scrutiny Panel. It is made up of local volunteers aged 16+ who share a desire to build trust and confidence between communities and the police across the county. The panel review body worn footage and police records in order to provide independent feedback to the constabulary.

The panel is set up to scrutinise three areas: Custody, Use of Force and Stop and Search and meets once a month. If you are interested in finding out more about the panel, you can get involved by emailing communityscrutinypanel@cambs.police.uk.

In a time of war, true love conquers all

Local composer, songwriter and performer Paul Dodson (AKA The Pianoman), invites you to a special preview concert of his new musical 'White Dove'. The evening features Paul and special guest, Carla Gray, performing songs from his show, live in the main hall of St Ives Corn Exchange on Saturday 22nd November. As well as performing the songs Paul will talk you through the events in his life that have inspired the songs and how White Dove came to be. Tickets available (£10) from the Corn Exchange.

HCRFM becomes Ouse Valley Radio

Local radio station, HCRFM has had a shake up recently. Bill Hensley, who was part of the original team that secured the licence for Huntingdon Community Radio (HCRFM) 30 years ago, left and has started a new digital radio station called Boomerang Radio. Meanwhile HCRFM has relaunched itself as Ouse Valley Radio from its Saxongate Centre.



Readers respond to Shoebox appeal

The Riverporter is happy to report that a number of our readers responded to the Rotary Club's appeal for Christmas Shoeboxes to be sent to Moldova and The Ukraine (RP194). This simple gesture can make a big difference to those struggling families that receive the box directly from the charity cr2ee. If you wish to help it is not too late - the shoeboxes need to be received by the club on or before Friday 14th November. Please note - everything in your Christmas box must be new, a condition set by Customs, if used contents are found, the whole lorry load will be rejected.

For details contact: **Rotarian Simon Townend on 01480 498054.**

Appeal lodged for over 65 apartments

Developers of 'residential accommodation with care' off Meadow Lane have appealed against the refusal of planning permission. The site overlooking St Ives Sailing Club which was labelled 'Grim Towers' (see RP 175) cause some concern over its appearance, loss of habitat and the effect on the 'loss of wind' for sailors! We await the outcome.

Important meeting at HDC

District Councillors will be discussing their recommendation on how to re-organise the local authorities next Wednesday at 7pm in Pathfinder House. With the County Council recommending putting Huntingdonshire with Peterborough and Fenland, this should be a lively meeting that might see Huntingdonshire go it alone. See *Riverporter* 195.

SAD PASSING OF POPULAR LANDLORD

The Riverporter extends its condolences following the passing of Jerry Schonfeldt on 13th October. He will be sincerely missed by all who knew him; his kindness and sense of humour are remembered with great respect.

Jerry served as landlord of the Oliver Cromwell pub for many years and previously managed the King William in Fenstanton. As a valued friend to both *The Riverporter* and St Ives, Jerry dedicated part of his retirement to assisting as director of the Corn Exchange. Always known for his cheerful spirit, he leaves behind a legacy of goodwill. Our thoughts are with his family and loved ones during this difficult period.



Left: Jerry in his favourite position in front of the Ollie bar with his two daughters, Natasha and JoJo.

Right: Erik with his favourite landlord Jerry, who always had biscuits available.



**Friday 28th
November**

**Stella
Hensley's
Magical Colours**

This year has seen many great concerts, including Toby Lee and a host of fine performances during the Jazz & Blues Festival. So why not end it in style with the very best of musicians around in the intimate Riverport Bar.



Doors open at 7pm, concert 7.30pm
Tickets £10 from the venue or from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents





Opera: Puccini's La Bohème

Thursday 20 November 2025 at 7:30pm

Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £10

Director: Richard Jones, 118m, Cert: N/A

Synopsis: A Royal Opera House Production. Sonya Yoncheva and Charles Castronovo lead an award-winning cast in Richard Jones's acclaimed 2020 production of Puccini's most heartrending opera. Emmanuel Villaume conducts the Orchestra of the Royal Opera House and the Royal Opera Chorus in some of the composer's most luscious and memorable music. Spectacular designs by Stewart Laing for this Royal Opera production set the passion, friendship, comedy and tragedy in late 19th-century Paris. The production evokes the vulnerability of youth amid the harshness and glamour of the big city, and contrasts the poverty of the bohemians's attic home with the splendour of Paris's shopping arcades on Christmas Eve.



The Ballad of Wallis Island

Thursday 4 December 2025 at 7:30pm

Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7

Director: James Griffiths, 100m, Cert: 12

In the 2025 film *The Ballad of Wallis Island*, lottery winner Charles Heath (Tim Key) escapes the world by retreating to his remote island. He hires his favourite folk duo, Herb McGwyer (Tom Basden) and Nell Mortimer (Carey Mulligan), to perform just for him. The trio reunites on his idyllic island and as the music begins old resentments surface. They navigate humour, longing and the strange intimacy of an audience of one discovering that solitude nostalgia and friendship can collide in unexpected and moving ways.

Tickets at screenstives.org.uk or in the Corn Exchange

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

SUNDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2025



The Parade marches on at **10.30am** from Station Road (near Waitrose).

The Act of Remembrance takes place in St Ives Town Centre, Market Hill, by the War Memorial, starting at **10.45am**. All are welcome.

The service will be led by **Rev Fr Mark Amey CF** (Vicar of St Ives and Hon Chaplain to St Ives & District RBL)

This Act of Remembrance is offered for all the people of St Ives and beyond.

The Christian Faith holds that we are all God's Children regardless of faith or indeed none.

Therefore everyone is invited to take part in this service.



ADVERTORIAL

Hyperion and The Courtyard's Breast Cancer Awareness Campaign raises over £1,200

A 3-day campaign - running from Friday 24th October through to Sunday 26th October helped Hyperion and The Courtyard exceed their target of raising £1,000 for this year's 'Wear It Pink' campaign.

Money was raised by:

- A tombola (prizes gifted kindly by courtyard dealers, friends, family and supporting businesses)
- Fun activities such as, hook a duck, 'wine or water?', Pick a lolly, weigh the cake
- Cake stall. Cakes, and snacks baked and donated by our dealers
- Kids tattoos and face painting by one of our dealers on the Saturday.

Lester Day of Hyperion told *The Riverporter*: We had our auction on the Saturday the 25th October which created a buzz around the courtyard.

Throughout the month of October (Breast Cancer awareness month) we had a 'Wear It Pink' pod 99 in our courtyard selling gifted donations throughout the month.

We want to thank everyone who donated and supported by coming down to show support.

And a big thank you to our courtyard dealers for playing a part in the curating of the event by giving up their time and kind donations to the tombola, cake stall etc. Without them it wouldn't have been possible.

Last year we raised around £900. This year we managed to achieve well over our target and have raised over £1,200!

All the proceeds will be donated to the 'Wear It Pink' campaign, ran to support Breast Cancer Awareness.

