

# The Riverporter



PLEASE READ AND PASS ON

COVERING THE NEWS FOR ST IVES AND AROUND

Issue 201: 30 January 2026

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## Mayor to skydive for local schools

**S**t Ives Mayor, Julie Kerr, and Councillor Michael Burke will be taking a leap for mental health support in local schools when they do a skydive on Saturday 14th March at Sibson Aerodrome.

This bold event aims to raise vital funds for mental health projects across all schools in our town. Funds raised will help provide resources for counselling services, safe spaces and initiatives that promote emotional resilience among young people.

Mayor Julie Kerr said: 'Mental health support for our students is more important than ever. We're taking this leap to show our commitment and raise awareness for this crucial cause.' Councillor Michael Burke added: 'We hope the community will rally behind us and help make a real difference. Please get involved by donating whatever you can.'

Mayor Kerr's chosen charities this year focus on supporting student well-being and another way to support her is by attending The Mayor's Sparkling Charity Ball at just £35pp in St Ives Corn Exchange on Saturday 21st March. Guests will be welcomed with Prosecco and canapés on arrival, followed by music to dance the night away and enjoy a wonderful evening in great company. Tickets from the venue or Town Hall.

**SPONSORED SKYDIVE**

**Taking the Leap** for Mental Health support in our local schools



How to donate to this great cause:  
[www.stivestowncouncil.gov.uk/pay/](http://www.stivestowncouncil.gov.uk/pay/)  
Ref: Skydive and surname



Please sponsor this crazy pair!

**Saturday 14th March 2026**

## Enjoy the outdoors with volunteering on the Great Ouse

Friendly volunteers are needed this summer to help keep the locks at St Ives, Houghton and Godmanchester running smoothly. The Environment Agency is looking for volunteers to help

boaters through the locks from April to September. At weekends, volunteers work in pairs to operate the locks and offer practical help and guidance to people using the river. It's an enjoyable outdoor role

that provides gentle exercise, fresh air and time in our most attractive riverside locations. We are looking for people with good people skills, practical common sense and a positive attitude. No boating experience is necessary as training is provided. To join the Anglian Waterways Volunteer scheme, contact Rachael Deas at [rachael.deas@camsacre.org.uk](mailto:rachael.deas@camsacre.org.uk) or call 01353 865037 or 07483 990211.

Find out more and see the application form at: [www.visitanglianwaterways.org/volunteer](http://www.visitanglianwaterways.org/volunteer).



## DIARY OF EVENTS

Please email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

### FEBRUARY 2026

**Wednesday 4th** - Engage Talk: Riots, Rebellion and Resistance-Trouble In The Fens - 2pm - St Ives Library (donations welcome).

**Saturday 7th** - The Repair Cafe at the Methodist Church 1-4pm. Fix it! Keep it! Donations welcome, cash or card. Book a slot. email [stivesrepaircafe@gmail.com](mailto:stivesrepaircafe@gmail.com) OR voicemail 07377 014401

**Saturday 7th** - St Ives Corn Exchange - Silent Disco 8pm to Midnight. Featuring Motown, Disco and Rock playlists. Tickets £7.

**Saturday 14th** - St Ives Eco Café is discussing this summer's St Ives Green Week. Come along with your ideas to the Free Church, 10am to 12pm, refreshments from Tookeys Café.

**Saturday 14th** - Huntingdonshire Philatelic Society Stamp and Postcard Fair at the Corn Exchange 10am-3pm. Free admission. Contact 01480 468037.

**Friday 20th** - COSI lunchtime concert - featuring a wind quintet. A free concert, 1pm St Ives Free Church.

**Friday 20th** - Civic Society - St Ives Historic Houses through time. With local historians, Keith Grimwade and John McKinnie. 7.30pm at the Free Church. Members free, visitors £3.

**Thursday 26th** - Town Team Film of the 600 - FREE event Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives).

**Friday 27th** - Chapel Arts Concert - Kim & Lee. Eurovision winning musician and songwriter. St Ives Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 from the venue or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents).

**Saturday 28th** - St Ives Corn Exchange - The Tomb Raiders Band 7.30pm. A night of blues in the Riverport Café. Tickets £10.

### MARCH

**Wednesday 4th** - Engage Talk: Women's Suffrage in Cambridge 2pm - St Ives Library (donations welcome).

**Saturday 14th** - St Ives Eco Café is hosting a talk by the charity 'Climate Change Gardening'. Come along to the Free Church, 10am to 12pm, refreshments from Tookeys Café, entry by donation (sug. £3).

**Friday 20 March** - Civic Society - The Enduring Art of Stained Glass in Huntingdonshire. A presentation by local author Reverend Stephen Day. 7.30pm at the Free Church. Members free, visitors £3.

**Saturday 21** - St Ives Choral Society concert - Schubert Mass in G and Rutter Magnificat, Free Church 7.30pm.

**Friday 27th** - Chapel Arts Concert - Marina & Johnny. An evening of Country music. St Ives Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 from the venue or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents).

### APRIL

**Friday 17 April** - Civic Society - Mayflower Pilgrims & Links with Fenstanton. A presentation by Adrian Moss about Fenstanton's links with the Mayflower. 7.30pm, Free Church. Members free, visitors £3.

**Saturday 18th** - St Ives Corn Exchange - Stand Up Comedy with Arthur Smith 7.30pm. In association with Jubado's Comedy. Tickets £18

**Friday 24th** - Chapel Arts Concert - Lift Music Collective. U2, Talking Heads, Stranglers re-imagined as movie themes - Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 from the venue or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents).

**Saturday 25th** - St Ives Corn Exchange - Ceilidh Night with Frog on a Bike 7.30pm. Tickets released early due to popular demand. £12.

### MAY

**Friday 15 May** - Civic Society - The Life of Lord Fairhaven: 7.30pm at the Free Church. Members free, visitors £3.

**Friday 29 May** - THE HOUNDGS fundraising concert for The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival. 8pm St Ives Corn Exchange. Tickets £15 from the venue or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents)

# Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival acts announced

It promises to be another great Festival with 31 concerts featuring some of the best musicians in the UK at 15 locations, over four days in the town centre.

The Town Team, organisers of the Festival, are delighted to announce this year's line-up, which includes 10 new acts for St Ives.

This includes **Richard Exall's Benny Goodman Quartet**.

Richard is definitely one of our very best jazz musicians. His list of credits includes playing with Kenny Ball, The Pasadena Roof Orchestra and Syd Lawrence Orchestra. He will be opening the Festival in The Golden Lion with the magnificent Art Toper on piano.

The headline act for Friday is **The Kendall Collection**, spearheaded by guitarist, singer/songwriter Nick Kendall. Four of London's finest session musicians joined forces to create a band that Blues Matters Magazine said produced 'One of the best debut albums heard in a long time'. Band members have performed with 10cc, Brian May, Adele, Paul Weller, Alice Cooper, Gordon Giltrap and in over 20 West End shows.



The headline act for Saturday is **Thomas Atlas** (see below).

This UK-based singer/songwriter, and blues guitarist is taking 2026 by storm playing at some of the most highly regarded festivals and venues across the UK, including here in St Ives.

Playing in his band are some of the very best session musicians, performing Thomas's original songs and his chosen favorite covers. This makes for a versatile and exciting show for his ever-growing audience.

Thomas's music is a blend of blues, soul, funk, Americana, and rock - all in one. With Eric Clapton listening to Thomas on YouTube and calling him 'Pretty Nifty,' Saturday night's concert in St Ives Corn Exchange will definitely be one not to miss. You can see the full programme on The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival Facebook page.

## YOU DON'T HAVE TO WAIT TO SEE GREAT BANDS

We are holding two fundraising concerts in the Corn Exchange. Tickets £15 are available from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cxevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cxevents) or the venue. Your support helps us raise the funds so that the whole Festival will remain free to attend.

### Friday 29th May THE HOUNDODGS

### Saturday 4th July A double header with FRED'S HOUSE & THE 29TH FUNKTION

Saturday 7th February 2026

## ST IVES REPAIR CAFÉ

ST IVES METHODIST CHURCH  
THE WAITS, PE27 5BY  
1PM - 4PM

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WE WELCOME DONATIONS - CASH OR CARD

St Ives Repair Café is an initiative of  St Ives ecoaction repairers

St Ives  
ecoaction  
repairers  
Fix it. Keep it.

## Is there interest?

I am hoping to gauge whether there might be interest among local men in the establishment of a self-help forum focused on concerns relating to the prostate and prostate cancer.

The intention behind this forum would be to provide a welcoming and open space where men can freely discuss any issues or worries they may have, without embarrassment or stigma.

Recognising that these topics are often difficult to talk about,

such a group could offer mutual support and understanding.

In addition, I hope we might occasionally invite medical professionals or experts to give talks, answer questions, and offer guidance on matters of health and wellbeing.

If readers feel this would be of benefit or would be interested in attending or supporting such a forum, I would be grateful to hear from you. Please feel free to respond via the Riverporter.

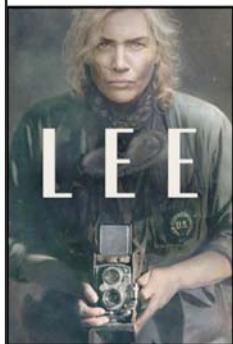
Ron Westrip

SSI

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**The Phoenician Scheme**  
Thursday 5 February 2026 at 7:30pm  
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7  
Director: Wes Anderson (2025), 101m, Cert: 15

The plot of Wes Anderson's *The Phoenician Scheme* centres on wealthy businessman Zsa-zsa Korda (Benicio Del Toro), who, after surviving numerous assassination attempts, appoints his daughter Lise (Mia Wasikowska), a nun, as his sole heir to his estate and a massive infrastructure project called the "Phoenician Scheme". The film follows Korda and Lise on a journey to convince investors to fund the ambitious but ethically questionable plan, which involves manipulating agricultural markets to cause famine, and depicts their evolving, complex father-daughter relationship amidst the chaos.

  
**Lee**  
Thursday 5 March 2026 at 7:30pm  
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7  
Director: Ellen Kuras (2023), 117m, Cert: 15

Lee tells the story of American photographer and war correspondent Lee Miller (Kate Winslet), who was determined to document the truth of the Nazi regime during World War II. Defying expectations for women at the time, she travelled to the front lines for *Vogue* magazine, capturing some of the most significant and horrific images of the war, including the liberation of the Dachau concentration camp. The film, a passion project for star Kate Winslet, explores her journey from a celebrated fashion model to a fearless photojournalist and the immense personal trauma she endured from what she witnessed. The narrative is framed by a later-life interview as Miller grapples with her past and the price of bearing witness to history's atrocities.

Tickets at [screenstives.org.uk](http://screenstives.org.uk) or in the Corn Exchange



## Tourism boost for St Ives businesses!

HDCs Jasmin Turner who specialises in the visitor economy and supporting the high street businesses across Huntingdonshire has approached the Civic Society's regeneration forum **FoRSIT** and begun meeting local businesses about the potential tourism opportunities in our area. Jasmin manages the Discover Huntingdonshire platforms which celebrate and showcase the district's amazing businesses and also runs the Hunts Visitor Economy Forum (HVEF), a working group designed to encourage collaboration, share ideas and help local businesses connect with one another through a

range of initiatives including:

- HVEF meetings – join the forum and share ideas with fellow businesses.
- St Ives Business Boosters.
- The Big Leaflet Swap.
- Discount campaigns.

For more information on any of these events and how your business can get involved, please email: [economic.development@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:economic.development@huntingdonshire.gov.uk)

**FoRSIT** is St Ives' network of local organisations and businesses. For more information see [www.stivescivic.org.uk](http://www.stivescivic.org.uk)



**Having your say . . .**

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

Jeffery, our new News Hound. Milly and Tilly are busy training him.

**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 nor condemns the opinions expressed.

**Dear Milly & Tilly,**

There's been a lot of coverage over new car headlights being too bright recently. My current gripe is having to drive at night against oncoming cars with:

- a) one headlight only
- b) lights on full beam
- c) lorries straddling the centre line, with lights like Christmas trees.

Particularly on the road from St Ives to Somersham, a badly lit potentially dangerous road anyway.

These idiots don't seem to know how their lights work or can't be bothered to fix the non working ones.

At the cross roads where you turn for the recycling plant you take your life in your hands.

Given you only see a police car after a crash I can't see the problem going away.

Regards Mike Smith

**Dear Milly & Tilly,**

**Taking a trip out!**

I hope this letter finds you well (and upright!). I write with a touch of concern and a dash of humour about the state of our town's pavements. It's hard not to notice that taking a stroll these days feels more like an obstacle course than a relaxing outing. Sadly, I am aware of two recent unfortunate falls, which serve as stark reminders that these trip hazards are much more than an inconvenience, especially for our elderly neighbours, who deserve to walk safely and confidently.

Whilst we're on the topic of our streets, might I also ask when the potholes dotted along our roads will be getting some well-deserved attention? The current state is that there are 5,400 in the county, dare I say, a public disgrace - one that leaves both vehicles and ankles in jeopardy!

Surely, we can do better for our town and residents. Here's hoping some positive action is on the horizon, so we can all step out without fear of a twisted ankle or a broken car wheel. Yours, with a hopeful heart and sturdy shoes.

**Andy Notherthing**

# The Riverporter

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

## OTHER NEWS

### A Rare Visitor at St Ives Quay

On Wednesday morning, excitement flapped its wings in a dazzling display of sunlight that could shame even the brightest holiday photo. A rare black swan graced St Ives Quay. Locals and visitors, still rubbing sleep from their eyes, stopped in their tracks, some clutching their pastries as the elegant bird glided past his fellow swans with an air of utter sophistication. A rumour quickly spread amongst the crowd: was it a royal envoy from far-off waters, or simply a feathered connoisseur seeking the finest lunch in St Ives? Mobile phones were brandished, photos snapped, and one enthusiastic child attempted a conversation in fluent 'Quack.' The swan, unfazed, continued its regal promenade, leaving behind an audience convinced they'd witnessed something truly marvellous, and undeniably rare, on an ordinary St Ives morning.



### Town Council would love your views

St Ives Town Council is looking at the future of the Pavilion in Warner's Park, and would like you to visit their website by 6th February and take a moment to complete their short survey and help shape the next steps for this much loved community space.

### A new restaurant is set to open

The Teller's Table will welcome diners at the former *Di Rita's at No 2 - The Old Bank* in the coming weeks. The restaurant will serve up seasonal British produce with a contemporary twist, including relaxed daytime dishes as well as refined evening plates. The Teller's Table is run by Stephen James Inns, the company which opened the Broadway Cellars in The Broadway last October (see RP 195).

### Prominent Retail parade up for sale

The premises, which contain TG Jones, Caffé Nero' and Card Zone, with a rental income of £137,500 p.a., comprises four ground floor retail units as well as first and second floor accommodation. Details on Rightmove suggest further residential development might be possible. The guide price is £1.3m. It is due to be sold by auction on 12th February.



### Town Team to show film of the 600

At 7.30pm on Thursday 26th February you will be able to see a film of the weekend of 26/27 July last year when troops of the English Civil War Society re-enacted the blowing up of our famous bridge. The evening, which will also include films made of other notable events, such as the building of the bandstand, is a **FREE** to attend event. However as this may be very popular anyone wishing to attend should obtain a ticket from the venue or online at [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cxevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cxevents).

## Eco Café events January 26

The St Ives Eco Café has had its first birthday, marking a year of lively monthly gatherings that have brought local people together to talk about environmental issues in a practical way. Discussions have covered home energy, wildlife-friendly gardening, food and water sustainability and how to have a 'green Christmas'.

The Eco Café discovered that one of the 'easy wins' to reduce personal carbon footprint is to eat less meat, and this led to their 'Veganuary Evening' on Thursday 15th January, where about 30 people came to hear an inspiring talk from Carrie Webb.

The evening at Westfield Junior School was sponsored by the Coop, with donations of organic vegan chocolate from Ombar and oat milks from Glebe Farm Foods. It included

practical advice, recipe ideas and food tasting, leading to lots of informal discussion about making healthy plant-based meals to benefit health, animal welfare, and the environment. The next St Ives Eco Café will be a discussion focusing on the second St Ives Green Week, planned for the week 6th to 14th June 2026. Please do come along to the **Free Church at 10am on Saturday 14th February**, with ideas for what you would like to see happen during the week: suggestions so far have been: a visit from experts on Home Energy, advice on recycling, help from the Repair Café, free bike repairs, visits from environmental charities, litter picks, guided walks in nature or trips on the river. Everyone is invited to suggest topics, share information or simply offer a helping hand.

Join our  
**'Big Dementia  
 Conversation'**  
 event

**Staying connected:  
 A guide to dementia-  
 friendly conversations**

**Friday 6th February 2026  
 2.30pm - 4pm**

Join us as we explore how to communicate more effectively with people living with dementia. Together, we'll learn simple, practical ways to stay connected - helping to build understanding, ease frustration, and create more meaningful moments in everyday life.

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