



Car trap gets biggest response

The lead article in the last issue of *The Riverporter*, where we highlighted the growing incidents of vehicles getting caught in the Car Trap, has resulted in a bigger response from readers than almost any other issue.



Within minutes of *The Riverporter* appearing on-line, a fortnight ago, we started to receive emails about the car trap. Most of which gave suggestions as to what needs to be done to reduce the number of vehicles ending up in it.

Ironically that weekend vehicles seemed to queue up to enter the trap, with three getting caught on the Saturday and at least one on the Sunday. We hoped our article, which raised the issue, might result in something being done to alleviate the pain for those caught out and not encourage more to enter it.

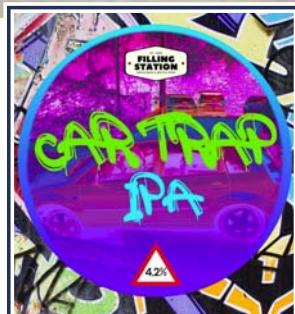
The County Council are the authority which can make improvements but with these comments from our only functioning County Councillor that doesn't appear to be very likely.

'Not high up on our list of priorities. There is a strong feeling that those caught in the trap should have their licences removed and/or prosecuted for dangerous driving. If they cannot see a large hole and associated signing what chance does a small child have?'

'It has been suggested that the holes are topped up with water and crocodiles put in but I think that is a bit excessive.'

He went on to say that there was a greater concern about the weeds sprouting out around our roads, which we cover on page 3.

You can see some of the many comments Erik received on our letters page and with vehicles entering the trap regularly there continues much comment on-line.



In recognition that the car trap has become a media sensation the Filling Station launched the Car Trap IPA.

We hope the suggestions our readers have made might be taken seriously as there now appears to be a consensus that it is not a joke any more and, as one of our contributors says, 'It never was.'

A new welcome

Thanks to Waitrose the Town Team has a new poster board on Station Road, which offers visitors, that walk from the Park and Ride, a map, details of walks and facts about St Ives, plus a list of events taking place this year. It was suggested that it could be 'better' used to help drivers avoid the trap. See page 3.



A busy fortnight ahead

A week on Sunday sees the official opening of the **Bandstand** and the following week, starting on 14th September, is this years **Old Riverport Jazz & Blue Festival**.

The **Bandstand** was built with donations from around 120 families and businesses and the Town Team are encouraging all those who pledged support to come to The Waits at Noon on Sunday 10th September to witness the Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Julie Spence, OBE CStJ QPM, the King's representative, cutting the ribbon.

The Mayor, Town Councillors and the High Sheriff will attend in a ceremony not dissimilar to the unveiling of Cromwell's statue (see above) and the Victoria Monument over 100 years ago.

The Town Team hope that if the weather is fine that the public will come and enjoy a picnic on the grass and the entertainment from Thorndown School Choir, the Over Drumming Choir, followed by The Lightwaves and Split Whiskers, who will perform until 5.30pm.

Floods will be providing a BBQ so that you can buy your lunch if you wish.



This is the 9th year of **The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival** (it improves with age) with 10 new acts out of the **25 FREE** concerts. Unlike other festivals we don't do headline acts as all our performers are top class and don't be put off by the Jazz & Blues title as the range of music is much wider.

Friday night is dance night in the Corn Exchange with The Umbrella Big Band followed by a Soul and Motown Disco. Also in the Corn Ex. is a brand new feature - at 12.30pm Saturday 16th the **Illumination Dance Troop** will be holding a dance workshop.

The Festival starts in The Oliver Cromwell at 7pm on Thursday 14th with a new performer, Brooks Williams, and ends Sunday at 6pm in The Lounge with the sensational young band The 29th Funktion.

For the full programme go to www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk

DIARY OF EVENTS

There is so much on this month we are only able to show September's events. Our next issue will cover November and December as well.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 9th - Climate Café Sustainable Fashion discussion from St Ives Eco Action. St Ives Methodist Church 10am - 12pm.

Saturday 9th – Saturday 16th - Knitted Bible Stories Exhibition. A fun and fascinating exhibition at the Free Church. Free entry. See page 4.

Sunday 10th - The official opening of the bandstand.

Sunday 10th - The Ouse Valley Marathon. Through the town centre.

Thursday 14th September - History of the Fens. 10.30am - 12.15pm at St Ives Methodist Church from Continuing Learning for Adults. See page 4.

Thursday 14th to 17th - The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival.

Saturday 16th - Huntingdon and District RAFA Branch Band Concert with the Huntingdonshire Concert Band. Free Church 7.30pm. Tickets £12 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from the Corn Exchange.

Saturday 16th - Heritage Open Day. There is fun on Holt Island and the opening of The Muddy Hoard exhibition at the Norris Museum. Civic Regalia on display at the Town Hall and interesting buildings to explore.

Friday 29th - COISI Lunchtime Free Concert with the Ermine Street Band. 1pm at St Ives free Church.

Friday 29th - Chapel Arts concert with the Tapestry Singers.

Contemporary and period music sung - a cappella style. The Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 from the venue or at www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents.

Roof work underway



Work has begun on repairing the Corn Exchange roof. As the picture shows the scaffolding is large and one of the main expenses of the work. The Centre has had to close the Riverport Café Bar during the day in order to save costs. Full time staff are remaining to continue running bookings from groups using the premises mainly in the evenings and at weekends.

Savings will include a reduction in costs on casual staff and services, such as the need for constant cleaning in areas such as the toilets, which are normally open to the public.

As a not-for-profit, Community Interest Company (CIC), the Corn Exchange cannot run at a loss and this work, plus the large increase in overheads, has put a strain on resources. The management hope that these measures will ensure that the centre will be able to re-open fully once all the work is completed in late Autumn.



WOULD YOU LIKE TO BECOME A DEMENTIA FRIEND?

All you have to do is come along to one of our Awareness Sessions, delivered by a Dementia Friends Ambassador, trained by the Alzheimers Society.

The Sessions are free, last about three-quarters of an hour and are open to everyone. They are welcoming, interesting and will help you learn more about the dementia condition. They take place in the Corn Exchange's Tony Burgess room.

The next session will be on

Wednesday 20th September at 10.30am

For more information and to book your place, please contact Roger at rjkuch@gmail.com or mobile 07796783521.



Landing stage planning update

According to the District Council Planning portal the retrospective application for a landing stage on the river bank by the Thicket path is now marked 'Withdrawn'. We are trying to establish exactly what this means but it could be good news and lead to enforcement action to re-instate the riverbank as it was before trees were removed and fencing erected.

An interesting talk in Godmanchester!

'In the Domesday survey of 1086 the watermills along the Great Ouse in Huntingdonshire, between Brampton and Hemingford Grey were the most valuable in England. Was this a statistical phenomenon or did a unique set of geological, historical, political and economic circumstances give rise to this 'milling powerhouse'?

For centuries many families made their living as a result of the trade along the Great Ouse River between Kings Lynn and St Ives. Upstream the river also brought considerable wealth and power but not for the boat owners.

GODMANCHESTER MUSEUM TALK

Come to a new and fascinating talk on the local mills from Bridget Flanagan and Keith Grimwade.

Saturday 30th September. Queen Elizabeth School, Godmanchester. 7pm for 7.30pm. Tickets £10.

Kate Sington 01480 454154 or David Stokes 01480 454277 email kate.hadley@btinternet.com. Licensed bar



Town centre to see changes in the next year

There are likely to be several changes taking place over the next twelve months in the town centre as businesses come and go and projects underway come to fruition. Here are just some of the changes we know about, but if you know more, please tell us.

We can report that the **Ivo Lounge**, is hoping to open in the old YMCA building in November and will be a 117 cover restaurant.

One of our readers, who frequently visits a **Loungers** restaurant, told us he was in Peterborough last week and had a bite to eat at The Argo Lounge. 'It was fabulous as always'. He also said 'Try the Olmo Lounge in Huntingdon if you want a sneak peak - it's on the high street next to The Works. And they welcome dogs'.

The **Royal Oak** on Crown Street is undergoing refurbishment by the owners Green King. They are currently looking for a landlord to run, what is supposedly the oldest pub in the town, named after the oak tree that King Charles I hid in to avoid Cromwell's troops.

Barclays old bank is being knocked down and rebuilt as flats according to plans it will take a year to complete.

The **old Pet Zone shop** at 3 Station Road is due to be refurbed and could look something like the image above, when completed.

Mike Smith the owner told *The Riverporter* he hopes to find a tenant so that he can finish the work to suit the type of business using it. He hopes the shop will open mid 2024.

The **Robin Hood** in Market Hill, which closed in 2012 could also be re-opening next year. Mike Purchase confirmed that on Wednesday 30 August he had received a message from HDC's planning department approving the plans submitted, subject to a few conditions.

Mr Purchase said it had taken three years to get approval. The project



Artists impression of 3 Station Road, previously Pet Zone, which closed in 2022.

had initially stalled because of the discovery of very ancient roof timbers. This required more permissions from the conservation officers and coupled with the pandemic, delays ran into years.

Obviously we are delighted that this important and historic town building can be brought back to life but it is another indication of how planning delays can be costly and one of the major causes of poor economic growth in the UK.

Other good news is the opening next week of a new **Art Shop** in the ground floor of The Free Church. Mrs Chaja Berker hopes to open the studio next Monday, offering artists a place to sell their work.

Also **The Snug**, which applied for a premises licence at 3 The Mill, Free Church Passage will be a shop and bar open Monday to Sunday between midday and 11.30pm. We have no date for the opening yet. This still leaves several empty premises in town, including the old

M&Co, HSBC bank, Fat Face and Kings Barbers premises. The YMCA are still hoping to find somewhere and perhaps they will be lucky and more businesses will return.

Sorting Office to close

Staff in the Royal Mail premises in Bridge Street have indicated that the sorting office will close, probably around Easter.

The building, in a prime location on Bridge Street, has not been the post office for many years. It has continued as the sorting office but the main shop front has remained shut off. This could result in staff possibly working from Huntingdon. It also opens up the opportunity to reduce the need of mail vans accessing the building via Market Hill, which could aid pedestrianisation of this area.

Of course the shop front in Bridge street could be an attractive premises for a variety of 'high street' businesses wishing to locate here.

Another successful St Ives Flower, Craft and Produce Show

The organising team were initially a little worried having had to move the show forward to the bank holiday weekend. However there were a large number of entries, particularly in the vegetable growing section and the show, held on Saturday 26th August in the Corn Exchange, was a great success. Of particular note were some superb hand crafted items including a metalwork bread cutter and a working model carousel, some stunning flower arrangements along the theme of 'Emergency services', unusual vegetables like pink celery and a vast number, and types of tomatoes.

The Mayor Phil Pope opened the show and Cllr Margaret King (chair of Amenities Committee) gave out the prizes.

Summary of winners were as follows: Photography, Jayne Reynolds; Art and Crafts, Sue Cheffins; Home brewing, Wine and Liqueurs, Darren Seymour; Baking, Darren Seymour; Preserves and Produce, Andrew Holmes; Flower arranging, Kate Campbell; Flower and Plants, Robin Bletsoe; Fruit, Louise O'Brien; Vegetables and Herbs, Robin Bletsoe; Gardening club award, Richard Weightman; Waitrose prizes 1st Fiona Stocker, 2nd Kate Campbell, 3rd Neil Millar; Peoples Choice award, Chris Holland; Holmes Trophy for overall Best in Show, and RHS Banksian Medal for best in growing sections, Robin Bletsoe.



Mayor Phil Pope and show team members Richard and Hayley Weightman looking at some of the exhibits.

The team thank everyone for supporting the Show, including sponsors, individuals and businesses who donated prizes.



Erik loves your letters.



having your say ...

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

Dear Erik, Ref: The Car Trap

Your article in the current newspaper shows yet another vehicle caught in this trap. Surely the answer has to be a rising bollard? Very effective in Cambridge, as only vehicles fitted with the lowering sensor can use it. We are in an IT age after all!

Yours Stanley J White Hemmingford Grey

Dear Erik,

Re letter from Colin Saunderson

Acting Secretary St Ives and District Road Safety Committee

I live in Needingworth and nearly every time I come into St Ives there is yet another car stuck in the car trap. Yesterday, 28th August, was no exception with a distraught young driver trying to sort it out. They are usually visitors to St Ives, who have never heard of a 'Guided bus' many say 'their Satnav sent them there', they didn't see the writing on the road as they were following the traffic and were behind a bus' but most drivers say 'that they thought the one sign on the right meant that they could go down the left hand lane but not the right'. All that is needed to stop this ever happening again is to put the same red No Entry sign on the left hand post at exactly the same height as the one on the right. (Below is what the driver sees). The existing sign on the lamp post is far too high, not near enough and last year was obscured by branches.



I am hoping I don't have to console another unfortunate driver and reassure them that it happens every week. Yours sincerely,

Judith Jones, Needingworth

Dear Erik, Ref: The Car Trap

Once again the car trap has eaten a vehicle! I have no sympathy with drivers who cannot read signage. There are plenty of warnings leading up to the bus way and one at eye level on the drivers right hand side warning of no exit except for guided buses.

One part of the highway code is to be able to read, recognise and obey road traffic signs. I do think the only solution to stop vehicles going down the hole would be to place two rumble strips diagonally across the road leading upto the 'guided bus only' signage. This would not cost the council a great deal of money out of our council tax.

Short enough not to effect the buses but long enough to alert drivers. If they drive over these and still go into the hole maybe they should not be driving.

Regards Paul D

Dear Erik, Ref: The Car Trap

Having seen over forty cars fall into the trap in St Ives I read your article with interest. One significant point that your article does not address is the age of the people dropping into the trap. They tend to be retired people of my age group and if the farce is allowed to continue then one day someone will have a heart attack.

A frail old couple a couple of years ago burst the front and rear wheel of their aging car and probably needed paramedic help to overcome the stress. The matter must be resolved immediately. They could fill in the pit when they are repairing the potholes, there goes another pink flying pig. We enjoy the local news, keep it going.

Steve Middleton, Holywell.

Dear Erik, Ref: The Car Trap

It never was a joke for all those poor motorists whose view was impeded by the bus in front or were blinded by the morning sun, and if you ever want your paper to be taken seriously you would use your connections and influence to sort this major problem before anybody else writes off a motor and probably has a heart attack!

Chris Martin [What Influence? ED]

Dear Erik, Ref: The Car Trap

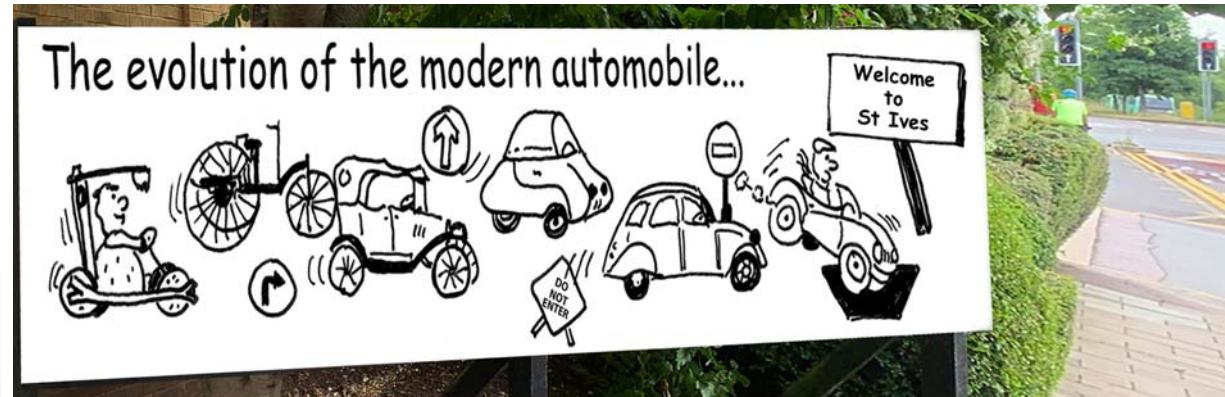
I agree too. The car trap could easily be altered so cars can reverse out and reduce the risk of expensive damage. There clearly is an issue that needs addressing. All the signs are high up. By the time you are too close to the trap - especially if a car is following a bus, the signs are not so easy to see.

Julie

Dear Erik, Ref: The Car Trap

Perhaps the solution is to go for more high tech signage, similar to that used at St Pancras Thameslink station. Faced with a problem of passengers with heavy luggage falling on escalators, the station now uses CCTV linked to AI and large display screens. If the CCTV detects passengers passing through the ticket gates with large bags, bikes or pushchairs, it then displays the item on a large screen with the message 'please use the lift'. Something similar in St Ives could display the car approaching the car trap with a 'Stop - turn back' message. Regards Nick

An alternative illustration for the new display board near the car trap!



OTHER NEWS

Draft Neighbourhood Plan goes to Council

A draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is due to go to the next Town Council meeting on Sept 13th.

There will be a consultation period for the public from 18th Sept to the end of October.

Dates for the public consultation have yet to be set but are likely to be at the Free Church. The Town Council will be presenting details of the NP at the October Farmer's Market and it will be on display in the Town Hall. The new town website currently under construction, may not be ready to display plans but may be on the Town Team website www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

In November, the NP group will distill all comments and will seek 10-15 representatives from the people who have participated, to help shape it for submission to HDC. If approved, any new development in the town will need to take account of these policies and proposals.

Why is it important?

Following the consultation with the public, the document will be updated to take into account the comments made. **So this is your chance to have a say in how St Ives develops over the next decade or more.** Once the draft document is finalised it goes through a series of checks and ends up with an Independent Planning Inspector to sign off, when it will be put to a **referendum of voters in St Ives**. If supported it then becomes a legal planning document.

What are the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan?

Policies can only consider matters related to the planning. For example it can not include policies on parking charges or the types of goods sold in shops. A summary of the content is:

A Spatial Plan for the town - focussing on using brownfield land for any new development.

A successful and prosperous town centre - supports proposals that maintains town centre functions such as the markets. Protects existing shop units from conversion to other uses.

Town Centre East - defines requirements for any changes to the Cattle Market site.

Walkable communities - protects and supports additional facilities within residential areas.

High quality design - requires new development to reflect the local environment.

Building for a healthy life - requires new development to demonstrate this.

Green and blue infrastructure - protects and supports climatic improvements.

Active Travel - supports improvements to walking and cycling routes within the town.

Passivhaus Buildings - requires new development to be very low energy.

Urban greening - requires major development to provide 20% tree canopy cover.

Flood risk and water management - ensures new developments do not increase flood risk.

St Ives Design Panel - to review major development proposals before plans are submitted.

Concern raised over Christmas Lights

The Riverporter has been trying to establish the date for the annual Christmas Lights 'Switch On' which normally includes a Festive Market, entertainment and firework display. We have emailed Councillor Michael Burke, who has been in charge of the Christmas Lights Committee but have had no response. We spoke with lux, the company that has installed lights in the past but they too are in the dark! There is some doubt about whether there will be lights at all, although Councillor Pasco, the Town Council's representative on the committee says there will be, but he could not guarantee the usual Switch On event this year. Councillor Burke has been elusive lately and doesn't appear to have attended any Town Council meetings since April.

Dear Erik,

Regarding the roadside verges

Is this not a cunning plan to gradually narrow the roads, slow traffic, capture nasty fumes, carbon, and protect the active transport routes from pavement parking and speeding?! Is this not a gradual plan to de-throne the car as 'king' and the only safe option for families and children in all built up areas?! Please say it is Rebecca

Dear Erik.

A thank you

I wish to pass on our thanks to everyone who supported RAFA Wings last Friday August 25th at Morrisons.

We had a very successful day, and it didn't rain.

Guess the Teddy Bears name was won by a lady in St Ives. His name [the teddy bear's] was Aaron.

Margaret Perryman. Wings Co-Ordinator.

**Entries Invited for Our Next
Antiques & Interiors Sale
on Saturday 23rd
September**

Sold In Our Last Interiors Sale

Very Large Edo Period Japanese Lacquered charger
with bone carving depicting Dragon with dog of
foe and wiseman

Sold £180



Laphroaig Islay Single Malt Scotch Whisky 25 Year
boxed 700ml 51.4% 2019

Sold £250

Ladies 9ct Gold Cartier Design Bangle

Sold £340



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



CALL

Cambridgeshire Alliance
of Lifelong Learners

Continuing Learning for Adults in St Ives ("CLASI")

We are a group of between 30 and 40 people who meet in the **Methodist Church Hall** on The Waits, St Ives on a Thursday morning.

Our courses start at **10.30am** and finish at **12.15pm** and run for 10 weeks.

The next course starts on:

Thursday 14th September

and is "*History of the Fens.*"



Contact Peter for more information
at:

peter.german@ntlworld.com

07980 864 543

A Fun and Fascinating Exhibition St Ives Free Church 9th to 16th September

Open 2pm to 4pm each day apart from Saturday 16th, when open 10am to Noon.



**Come and enjoy our
Knitted Bible Stories Exhibition
Free Entry**

(You may wish to make a donation to St Ives Free Church)

**Morning group visits are available by prior arrangement
- contact carrier_mj@yahoo.co.uk regarding these.**

St Ives Free Church - Registered Charity Number 1132694
Tel: 01480 468535 office@stivesfreechurch.org

CLIMATE CAFE SUSTAINABLE FASHION

'What percentage of textile
waste is used to make
new clothes?'
Answer: Less than 1%



NUMBER 2

**VENUE: ST IVES METHODIST
CHURCH, THE WAITS,
PE27 5BY**

TIME: 10am-12pm

**THE FUTURE OF THE PLANET
IS IN OUR HANDS - JOIN US**

SATURDAY 9TH SEPTEMBER 2023