

# The Riverporter



SAVE THE PLANET - READ AND PASS ON

COVERING THE NEWS FOR ST IVES AND AROUND

Issue 173: 6 December 2024

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## The Riverporter launches Riverport Radio

**I**t's here! We're delighted to announce that, as an extension to the Riverporter newspaper, we've now launched our first Riverport Radio Podcast - the first podcast for St Ives!

Each episode will expand on the stories that appear in *The Riverporter* newspaper, with regular guests, interviews and discussions on what's happening here in St Ives.

To listen to the podcast, please use the link at the bottom of this article. Then click on '+ Follow' and select your podcast platform of choice. You'll then be notified as soon as our next episode of the podcast is available!

If you'd like to feature in a Riverport Radio Podcast, or have something you'd like to contribute, please click on the 'Send us a text' link situated just under the play button on the podcast website.

We hope you enjoy listening to our first Riverport Radio podcast featuring Ron, John, Paul and Erik of course, plus one or two tracks from bands due to appear in town. Each episode will include an interview

with a special guest as we explore our vibrant community.

In this first episode our esteemed guest is Julie Kerr, Deputy Mayor and passionate Town and District councillor. Ever wondered how road improvements can ignite such a heated debate?

Julie sheds light on the controversial Huntingdon and St Ives Road Improvement Scheme, while also sharing her insights on the promising developments of the new St Ives Hub, designed to allow you to find out everything about St Ives in one place, which will be shown on digital screens in the town centre.

We lighten the mood with stories of local charm, including the Snowman Festival, the closure of the Bentley garage and a delightful yet short-lived bakery that left its mark.

To listen to the podcast go to:

<https://riverportradiopodcast.buzzsprout.com/>



Our conversation takes a serious turn as we examine pressing community concerns, such as the decline in enrollment at Ivo's sixth form. This issue raises alarm bells about the sustainability of our local schools and the wider implications of the academy system.

Celebrate with us as we gear up for an exciting year with a major event celebrating 600 years since our famous bridge was built, promising a significant boost for our local shops and cafes.

## Next Year's Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival set to be the biggest yet

**W**ith 29 concerts over 4 days from 11th to 14th September 2025 the lineup is nearly finished and the organisers, St Ives Town Team, are hoping to publish it before Christmas.

Not only will it be bigger than ever there are likely to be 14 new bands playing here for the first time, some having played all over the globe. Already confirmed are the sensational Hounds at 10pm in the Corn Exchange on Thursday 11th. At 8.30pm on the Friday in the Golden Lion Hotel, the wonderful Mim Grey (below) will perform. Tom Jones claims she is his favourite singer. Friday

finishes with Blues star, Connor Selby. As usual the range of music covers many genres, not just Blues and Jazz and it remains a FREE to attend event of a very high quality.

You don't have to wait until September because the Team are holding two Festival fundraising concerts.

On 10th May it's the guitar sensation, **Toby Lee**, who is currently touring

with the Jools Holland Band.

On 14th June you can dance your socks off to **The Quo Experience** featuring Status Quo drummer Jeff Rich.

Tickets are just £15 from St Ives Corn Exchange or [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents). Book early to avoid disappointment.



## DIARY OF EVENTS

If you wish to inform us of your events please email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

### DECEMBER

**Saturday 7th** - Craft Fair. Saints Crafters, Free Church 9:30am-FREE ENTRY.

**Saturday 7th** - 'On with the Show' St Ives Community Choir concert, Free Church at 7.30pm. Tickets at the door, £6 adult and £3 children.

**Saturday 14th** - Santa Arrives at the Quay by boat starts at 10am.

**Saturday 14th** - St Ives Choral Soc. Family Christmas Concert

6.30pm at the Free Church. Tickets £8, under 12s free.

**Saturday 14th/Sunday 15th** - Santas Snow FEST St Ives Corn Exchange.

### JANUARY 2025

**Saturday 18th** - COSI Scottish Themed Winter Concert 7pm at the Free Church. Tickets £10, under 16s free, on the door or from [www.ticketsource.co.uk/chamber-orchestra-of-st-ives](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/chamber-orchestra-of-st-ives).

**Friday 31st** - Chapel Arts concert with The Lightwaves Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 [www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents) or from the venue.

## Need a laugh this festive season?

Why not try the Jubados Stand Up Comedy at St Ives Corn Exchange on the 1st Friday of each month. Tickets are usually just £5 and MC Judith Barrass introduces a lineup of comedians that are likely to leave you in stitches, according to the publicity, metaphorically we hope.

## I saw three skips come sailing in



Ann Jackson sent us this picture. She said 'I couldn't resist this scene in the Dolphin Car park. A modern twist on a traditional carol?!

Read on-line at [www.theriverporter.uk](http://www.theriverporter.uk) or see our Facebook page. Email: [editor@theriverporter.uk](mailto:editor@theriverporter.uk)

You can contact The Riverporter by telephone on: 07900 112635.

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Great Ouse Valley Trust  
Our landscape for life

## More trees please!



PHOTO BY GOVT

Did you know we are the county with the fewest trees in the country?

Not surprising then that of the projects that arose from the Great Ouse Valley Trusts Community Engagement workshops, increasing the tree canopy in the valley was one of the most popular.

A suitable St Ives site was Noble's Field, and so with permission from the Noble's Field Trust, and a grant from Natural Cambridgeshire, 2 Black Poplars, 1 White Poplar, 6 White Willows, 1 Crack Willow, 2 Alders and 2 Oaks were delivered just after Storm Bertie swept through. They ranged in height from 3 - 8 metres and so represented a challenging task for Trustees and volunteers to plant in a hurry as the river started to rise. In fact, as the hole for last tree was dug, it filled up with water so fast that Oak now has to wait for another day! **Job done!**



*Coincidentally, a lovely watercolour of the view from Noble's Field towards the town, painted by John Dobby Walker (1863-1925), came up for sale at auction just before the planting. It shows two houseboats moored on the meadow bank, the Osborne Brewery cupola, and the town bridge with the then two-storey chapel. In the foreground a few willow trees remain from what was once a more populated riverside landscape. How nice that we can help restore the valley to its traditional appearance.*

## Ikigai Refill Shop supports Holt Island

Ikigai focuses on reducing waste and plastic consumption and encourages customers to buy only what they need, using their own containers. The shop has chosen Holt Island Nature Reserve as a partner for its current loyalty card fundraising collection.

The island, located by St Ives Parish Church, has been recognised as part of St Ives In Bloom's Gold Medal win. The Friends of Holt Island Nature Reserve (FOHINR) and their volunteers work to maintain the island's diverse habitats, visible from a circular boardwalk, which requires regular and costly maintenance, and FOHINR is raising funds to replace it with a more durable one.

This partnership will help ensure the island continues to support a diverse range of flora and fauna, contributing to the conservation efforts in St Ives.



Martin Cooper of Ikigai and Tim Reed, chair of FOHINR.

## A Big Thank You

On behalf of the Team at the St Ives Corn Exchange, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to the St Ives and local communities for their unwavering support through what has been a very tough year for us.

Your support, enthusiasm, and generosity has been truly inspiring. Whether it was attending our events, using the Riverport Café, hiring out rooms, volunteering your time or donating, you have played an integral role in our recovery.

It is because of your support that the Corn Exchange continues to recover and with an ever-growing 2025 events list we are now gaining confidence and remain excited about the future. We are proud and fortunate to be part of such a caring and dedicated community.

Finally, on behalf of the Corn Exchange Team, we would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year.

**Al Thompson, Director**

*p.s. Our Just Giving page (type in 'St Ives Corn Exchange') remains open as we try to reach our target.*

## SSI Screen St Ives

Community Cinema

Supported by  
**BOONGATE KIA**  
Peterborough PE1 5UA, Tel: 01733 344344



### Wonka

Thursday 9 January 2025 at 7:30pm  
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7

**Director:** Paul King, 116m, Cert: PG

**Synopsis:** An impoverished chocolate-maker with big dreams befriends a young orphan in this colourful musical fantasy. Moments of peril are balanced by zany humour and a focus on friendship and adventure. Starring Timothée Chalamet as Wonka, with an ensemble cast including Calah Lane, Keegan-Michael Key, Paterson Joseph, Matt Lucas, Mathew Baynton, Sally Hawkins, Rowan Atkinson, Jim Carter, Olivia Colman, and Hugh Grant.

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

## A double commemoration for Slepe Hall Field

As the Civic Society donated an ornate bench and sapling trees to mark King Charles' coronation, past pupils from the Slepe Hall Girls School marked the gifting of the field to the town with a new heritage information board about its history.

The fundraising for the board was undertaken by Peggy Seamark and other past pupils who, sadly, weren't able to attend the ceremony. Representing them on a glorious autumn morning (26th November) were Julia Papworth and Jo Stanley, seen above with Town Mayor Councillor Pasco Hussain. After the unveiling, Slepe Hall Hotel hosted refreshments. Fundraising took place pre-Covid. The story of the playing field for the heritage board was written jointly by David Stewart, Helen Akeroyd from the Norris Museum and retired Museum Director, Bob Burn-Murdoch.



*The Riverporter was amused by a report in the Hunts Post last week. Under the heading **St Neots town centre civil injunction order for two years** the injunction aims to deter anti-social behaviour including preventing running, jumping, or climbing across rooftops in the area covered, without permission. We don't appear to have this problem in St Ives, but we wondered if there was a simple reason for this activity??*





Erik is very excited by Riverport Radio, see page 1.

**Dear Erik,** On Thursday 21st November 2024 a Christmas Fayre was held at Broadleas Court with the proceeds going to Fenstanton and Hilton primary School in an effort to assist the school to raise funds to support the creation of a sensory room to assist the development of special needs children. The event was opened by the school headmaster, Richard Martin. Residents, relatives and friends were well in attendance and helped to raise funds to the value of £700.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to the successful event, either in providing items for sale, purchases on the day and to others who donated money. **Dave Shaw** a Broadleas resident

**Dear Erik, Subject: New Broadway benches.**

Did St Ives Town Council prefer not to continue the traditional street furniture theme as might better suit an ancient market town? And are they graffiti proof? And where are the trees?

Still to come we are told.

Also spotted a mobile addition to the town centre lights! **Luka That**



**Dear Luka,** Sadly there will be no trees as the Michaelmas Fair means everything installed has to be removable, which means the planters must contain lower-level planting according to CCC, who accept that the visualisations of the improvements showing trees was an error.

**A message to parents of Ivo pupils** - The Ivo School Newsletter recently sent out by the school seems to blame *The Riverporter* for inaccuracies in the article in our last issue RP172. It also claims we didn't contact the school before publication. In fact we rang the school twice but got no answer. Our report was an accurate account of what was reported to the Town Council, and any error of facts was not our responsibility - so please don't shoot the messenger. The good news is that the Principal Tony Meneaugh may take part in a Riverport Radio Podcast so we can hear the schools point of view.

## Chickens get a reprieve over Christmas

The Riverport Radio team visited the Whisky Café to interview Sam Purchas about his new venture for our second Podcast recording, which will be available next Friday. Sam said that they wouldn't be doing a special Christmas meal but the Chicken Brick would be a Turkey Brick instead over the Christmas period.



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**having your say ...**

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

# The Riverporter

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

## OTHER NEWS

### Rotary Shoebox appeal thank you

The President and members of the St Ives Rotary Club send their sincere thanks for the shoeboxes you helped put together for the Moldova and Ukraine Appeal 2024. Undoubtedly they will bring pleasure to both children and adults in Moldova and war-torn Ukraine. The 126 boxes have now been delivered to our contact from the charity cr2ee in the west country, for onward transmission to their contacts in both countries.

**Thankyou for your kindness and generosity.**

### Webtec Products win big in Liverpool

St Ives based manufacturing business Webtec Products has won a prestigious accolade at the industry's most acclaimed awards. They won the International Trade category at The Manufacturer MX Awards 2024, which was presented at a black-tie ceremony and gala dinner at the Titanic Hotel Liverpool on November 27.

### Car damages house in The Quadrant

At about 3.45am last Sunday, police officers attempted to stop a car in East Street. The driver, a 43-year-old man from Bluntisham, failed to stop, and crashed into a house in The Quadrant. Social Media lit up with comments and a picture (right) by Msadiq Hussain was posted online.



The driver was arrested on suspicion of dangerous driving, failing to stop, driving without insurance, driving without a licence, possession of cannabis, criminal damage and failure to provide a specimen for analysis. He remains in custody. Nobody was injured in the crash, and engineers were called to secure the house and assess the damage, which according to the picture (left) taken by the Editor on Monday morning seems quite extensive. It must have been a big shock for anyone asleep in the room as the wall collapsed at 3.45am!

### Choral Society celebrate 50th in style

St Ives Choral Society celebrated their 50th anniversary in style with a sell-out concert in the Free Church on 16 November. Attended by the Mayor of St Ives, Councillor Pasco Hussain, the audience were treated to a wonderful selection of music from four magical eras, Baroque, Renaissance, Classical and Romantic, with the Medlock Sinfonia and three soloists. A slice of history was also made with the cutting of a presentation cake by the Chair, Musical Director and other members of the choir.



### Broadway revamp divides opinion

There has been some criticism of the 'new look' Broadway. Christine Phillipotts, Chair of the Civic Society contacted Vanessa Kelly, the County's lead on the project to express her dismay at the poor quality of the workmanship. On the other hand Councillor Nic Wells said 'It is now a safe route for classes of schoolchildren to cross the Broadway at the Norris, there has been a big decrease in the number of boy racers and The Broadway is no longer host to a scrappy car parking area, which was potentially dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists.' He suggested the ambience of the Broadway as a public realm area is much improved. Since these comments workmen have returned to do a 'snagging' visit to finish off the project. Time will tell if the improvements will help increase footfall and encourage new retailers to locate here.

### NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE

Notice is given that **MR SHONKU CHOWDHURY** has on the **10/11/2024** applied to Huntingdonshire District Council for a Premise Licence for **BENGAL SPICE and 1 WELLINGTON STREET, ST IVES, CAMBRIDGE, PE27 5AZ UNITED KINGDOM** For the following regulated activities – **Monday To Sunday 12:00 to 23:00, as well as indoor or outdoor, as applicable per activity.**

- Provision of Live Music Monday To Sunday 12:00 to 23:00**
- Provision Recorded Music Monday To Sunday 12:00 to 23:00**
- Provision of Performance of Dance Monday To Sunday 12:00 to 23:00**
- Anything of a similar description Monday To Sunday 12:00 to 23:00**
- Retail Sale of Alcohol for Consumption ON and OFF the Premises – Monday To Sunday 12:00 to 23:00 off or on sales only, or both Monday To Sunday 12:00 to 23:00, as well as indoor or outdoor, as applicable per activity.**

Persons wishing to inspect the register or the record of this application may do so by visiting the public register online <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/licensing/public-registers/>

Anyone wishing to make representations concerning this application should do so in writing online via the public register above or by email to [licensing@huntingdonshire.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@huntingdonshire.gov.uk) or by post to Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon PE29 3TN.

Representations in respect of this application must reach the Licensing Authority by **9/12/2024**.

It is an offence knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application, the maximum fine for which on summary conviction is unlimited.

**Large party bookings still available before Christmas**

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FEST IS A NOT FOR PROFIT VOLUNTARY GROUP - RUNNING EVENTS FOR THE PEOPLE OF ST IVES



**SANTA'S  
SNOW FEST**

Santa and the  
Chief Snowman arrive  
by boat at The Quay,  
on Saturday 14th December,  
@ 10am



Image credit to: Media Imaging Solutions

**Visit him in his Grotto**

at St Ives Corn Exchange for  
**'Santa's Snow FEST Weekend'**

Saturday 14th December 11am - 4pm  
Sunday 15th December 10am - 3pm

With crafts and  
**A HUGE SNOW GLOBE**

All children to be accompanied by an adult. Admission £2 per child



In support of the  
**Snowman Festival**



Image credit to: eastangliafest.co.uk

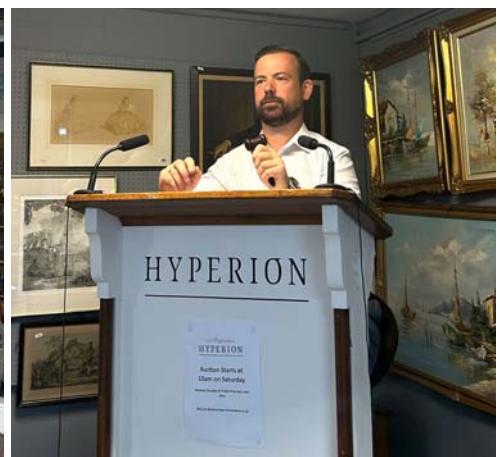


Image credit to: Jason Archibalds  
FEST St Ives [www.stivesfest.org.uk](http://www.stivesfest.org.uk)

With thanks to our sponsors continued support

## **THE COURTYARD**, a hidden gem in the heart of St Ives.

An eclectic mix of traders and pods. Situated between St Ives Bus Station and Hyperion Auctions on Station Road.



Step into our unique courtyard, where vibrant traders and eclectic pods offer one-of-a-kind treasures.  
Explore a charming array of hand-crafted goods, rare finds, and artisanal delights –  
all from passionate vendors eager to share their stories.

Whether you're searching for Christmas gifts, unique home décor, or simply a delightful stroll, The Courtyard has something for everyone. You can also check out the collectibles in the Hyperion Antique Centre.

Whilst you are browsing enjoy a cup of freshly made coffee and a tasty bacon roll from Kate's Coffee Pod.

**Open 7 days a week Monday to Saturday 9-5 and Sunday 10-4.**

Here at The Courtyard, we feel incredibly proud of our work and supportive local community.  
Thank you so much to you all for your kind words and continued support.