

Farewell to our beloved friend

The Riverporter is heartbroken to announce that our exceptional news hound Erik has died. Erik was diagnosed with cancer last year and has fought bravely for the past 6 months to recover but sadly last Sunday he succumbed to the disease.



Erik will be sorely missed, not only because of his love of sausages and his ability to sniff out the news but also because of his wonderful sense of humour.

'Erik was a great example to all dogs in St Ives,' said John 'he championed free speech and shops providing a bowl of water and nibbles for his canine friends and was always happy to converse with other dogs (except the large black dog round the corner).'

The Little White Dog with a Big Impact

During his short nine years, Erik touched the lives of many and brought smiles to countless faces. His presence in the window of his home on The Quay became a cherished sight, with people travelling miles just to catch a glimpse and photograph the little white dog.

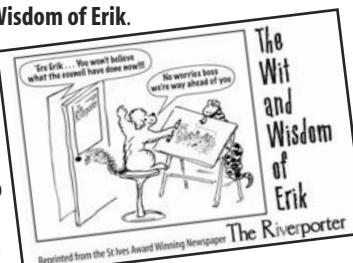
Erik's journey with *The Riverporter* began with the very first edition. Who could have known how much his cheerful disposition would invite people to open up and

engage with him? Over the past eight years, Erik has been an integral part of every issue, attending numerous events and even running for Mayor. His charisma earned him an interview with BBC Radio Cambridge Breakfast Presenter Dotty McLeod and a visit on Lord Robert when in Town. Erik has probably received more letters than any dog. Subjects have ranged from, the state of the streets, parking, the never ending saga of the car trap and his favourite, a letter informing people that Erik was a dog! His proudest moment was the winning of the Best Community Paper Award in 2019. Erik has also featured in countless cartoons and even had his own book -

The Wit and Wisdom of Erik

One of Erik's most recent contributions was aiding the launch of the Riverport Radio podcasts. His distinctive bark can be heard in the jingle, a testament to his involvement and spirit. Erik was not just a colleague; he was a wonderful, intelligent companion whose absence will be deeply felt by his family and friends. His legacy will endure through the smiles he inspired and the connections he fostered.

Rest in peace, dear Erik. You will be forever missed.
'ERIK' 2016 – 2025



Reprinted from the St Ives Award Winning Newspaper The Riverporter



Above left to right: Erik with Dotty McLeod, in his Mayoral Hat in the Council Chamber, on Lord Robert and with Ron, John and the Best Paper Award.

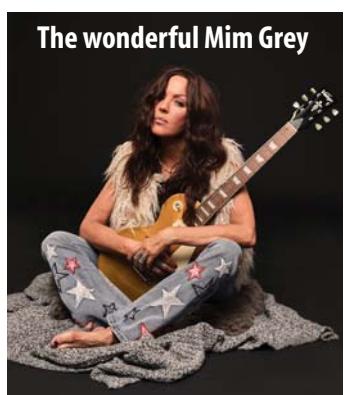
The area's best music Festival is on and better than ever ...

Following the recent news that some of the areas Festivals, including the world renowned Cambridge Folk Festival, are not on this year, The Town Team want you to know that their Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival is on from 11th to 14th September and will be bigger and better than ever!

Not only has it a reputation for hosting the best musical talent around, this year there will be 28 concerts over the four days in 14 locations around the Town Centre

and unlike most of the others, is completely FREE to attend.

Other Festivals in the area, such as the Ely Folk Festival and Red Rooster at Thetford will charge you at least £128 per person. The quality of our artists gets better each year with internationally renowned performers, including Connor Selby, Mim Grey and Fred's House playing. There are 12 new acts and the return of some old favourites, including the incredible Hounds, Mr Griff & The Grifters and The Barefoot Doctors.



Read on-line at www.theriverporter.uk or see our Facebook page. Email: editor@theriverporter.uk

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DIARY OF EVENTS

If you wish to inform us of your events please email: editor@theriverporter.uk

FEBRUARY 2025

Sunday 9th - Tea Dance hosted by Lesley's Social Dancing St Ives Corn Exchange 2pm Tickets www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from the venue.

Saturday 15th - Huntingdonshire Philatelic Society Stamp and Post Card Fair at the Corn Exchange Free admission 10am-3pm. Information. 01480 468037.

Friday 28th - Chapel Arts Concert with Kimberley Rew (of Katrina & The Waves) and Lee Cave-Berry - at the Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from the venue.

MARCH 2025

Saturday 1st - Repair Café - at the Methodist Church. To book a repair slot please email stivesrepaircafe@gmail.com. No email? Leave a message on 07377 014401. Pre-booking is recommended.

Saturday 1st - Craft Fair. Saints Crafters at the Free Church. Doors 9:30am. FREE ENTRY. Also on the 1st Saturday of each month.

Wednesday 5th - Engage Talk - Tales from the Riverbank 2pm, St Ives Library - Donations welcome.

Thursday 20th - Annual Town Meeting details to follow.

28th March - Chapel Arts Concert with Solomon Smith, Chris Newman and Mal Hyde-Smith at the Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets £10 www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from the venue.

28th February Kimberley Rew & Lee Cave-Berry



An evening of popular music with Eurovision winning musician and songwriter of Katrina & The Waves - Kimberley Rew & Lee Cave-Berry.



28th March Solomon Smith

Cambridge based singer songwriter with Chris Newman and Mal Hyde-Smith. Blurring the lines between Folk, Soul and Blues.



25th April Greg Brice

Greg's performance will leave you wanting more. 'The most exquisite finger-picked acoustic blues you could wish to hear.'

Doors open at 7pm. Concerts start at 7.30pm. Tickets £10 on the door or from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents

Charts. It is likely to be a sell-out. The second fundraiser features The **Quo Experience with Jeff Rich**, Status Quo's drummer from 1985 to 2000. You can enjoy an evening of 'Quo' on **Saturday 14th June** also at **8pm in the Corn Exchange**.

Tickets for each concert cost just £15 available from the venue or at www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents. Book early as tickets are selling fast. For details of this year's Festival go to The Old Riverport Jazz & Blues Festival Facebook page.

FLEA ON THE QUAY TO RESTART . . .

The Town Team is planning to restart the popular FLEA ON THE QUAY markets on the first Sunday of each month, starting 4th May. Before Covid stopped them these Sunday

morning markets on The Quay proved very popular. With the warmer weather not too far away (we hope) planning to hold the Flea Markets again is underway.

If you are interested in having a stall or would like to help please email Sandra at: townteam@stivescambridgeshire.co.uk

St Ives is Going Green!

What a turn-out to support our first St Ives' Big Green Week! Such enthusiasm! People from many local groups came together to say what they plan to do from Saturday 7 - Sunday 15 June.



There'll be something for everyone, young and not-so-young, to celebrate this national event. Work is planned at our schools and youth groups, a Farmers' Market with green stalls and Holt Island opening daily.

We hope the Library and Norris Museum will go green and our local supermarkets, too, with the Co-Op supporting activities in the north of the town - and our cafes and restaurants serving greener food.

There will be a Pilgrimage Walk to Holywell and back, viewing wildlife on the way; the Electric Boat Company is involved and St Ives in Bloom is planning something blooming special. We expect plenty of information to be available, from home energy to wildlife gardening and how not to waste water - and there might even be a 'Swish' of unwanted good-quality clothing.

We plan, not only to make our town green, but to bring the community together in the process, so start making your green bunting and perhaps find some green lights for outside your homes and business premises (lights are not just for Christmas).

There will be entertainment too. The Town Team have booked the wonderful Dickie de Vere & The Dorchester Mavericks (above) to play a free concert at the Bandstand during the afternoon of Sunday 8th June.

The Town Team are also hoping to hold a special 'Recycling Flea on the Quay' event on one of the Sunday Mornings.

Interested? Look online at the Great Big Green Week national site and if you have questions or suggestions please go to: stivesecocafe@gmail.com; we're open to anything!

PART-TIME EXPERIENCED KITCHEN ASSISTANT NEEDED IN THE FREE CHURCH

A hands-on Kitchen Assistant is required to work in a busy kitchen, covering all aspects of kitchen duties.
An interest in home cooking would be preferable.

Hours: Wed 12-3.15pm and Fri 11am-3.15pm

May include extra hours for holiday cover, sickness and functions.

You would be working with a small team of friendly caterers, along with a team of volunteers.
Good people skills are essential.

Call: 01480 468535 or email us at:

office@stivesfreechurch.org

for an Information Pack and Application Form.



The challenges and needs of St Ives Corn Exchange A CALL FOR SUPPORT



The much-loved St Ives Corn Exchange continues to face the relentless pressures of finance and management in these challenging times. Not everyone realizes that, while the Corn Exchange building is owned by the Town Council, its operation is managed by a dedicated volunteer board of unpaid Directors under a Community Interest Company on a not-for-profit basis.

The current team is urgently seeking more volunteer Directors and general helpers to alleviate the pressure on the existing members. These volunteers would need to contribute just a few hours of their time to make a substantial difference.

Despite the popularity of the Riverport Café and the success of general space hirings, overheads continue to be a significant concern. The event diary for the coming year is

The picture shows an event held as a fund raiser for the Corn Exchange last weekend. The band S080's staged the event to show their support for the venue and the Corn Exchange is very grateful to them for their support.

brimming with exciting plans, offering some great nights that promise enjoyment and engagement for all. The team encourages visitors and supporters to check the website and join in the activities.

If you possess any business skills or can spare some time to support the valuable work of this vital town asset, please drop by for a chat at the Corn Exchange Office or email: manager@thecornexchange.org.uk. Your contribution could be instrumental in sustaining the St Ives Corn Exchange through these difficult times.

Hundreds of items saved from Landfill



On Saturday 1st March from 1pm to 4pm the Methodist Church will transform itself once again into a Repair Café. Around 400 items have been repaired and saved from landfill since the café began 3 years ago. The Repair Café idea is a win win win event; saving waste, saving money and sharing skills, not to mention the great cakes and conversation! We have a brilliant team of volunteer repairers who will have a go at fixing anything from toasters, bikes, lamps to jewellery, toys, clothes and more. There is no charge for repairs though donations to the cafe towards costs are welcome.

To book a slot please email stivesrepaircafe@gmail.com **or call 07377 014401.** Bookings close about 1-2 weeks before, but you can turn up on the day and see one of our assessors who will give advice and may be able to link you up with a repairer there and then if there are free slots. You are also welcome to just pop into the café and relax with a cup of tea and a piece of cake. St Ives is just one of many Repair Cafes happening in Cambridgeshire. A full listing can be found here: <https://cambridgecarbonfootprint.org/what-you-can-do/events/>.

UPDATE UPDATE UPDATE 600th anniversary of the Bridge celebrations

Following the public meeting last month about the celebrations (RP176) there have been discussions with the Civil War Society to agree where the 450 troops can camp and a battle take place.

Although permissions are to be agreed it is likely that each morning there will be troops marching in the Town Centre prior to the simulated blowing up of the bridge. In the afternoon the troops will muster at Hill Rise Park for a large battle. This free to attend event will happen over the weekend of 26 and 27 July.

On the Saturday evening there will be a ceilidh with the Catch the Pigeon Band in the Corn Exchange, tickets will be available by 21st February from the venue or www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents.

The Old Riverport Ukulele Easter Festival

Following a small change to the line-up, places are still available for this fun day for Ukulele players on Saturday 22nd March in St Ives Corn Exchange. Tickets are just £10 for the day, which includes a free workshop and a performance from The Lightwaves and are just £10 from the venue or on-line at: www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents.

Morrismen Day of Dance

This will happen on Easter Saturday, with up to four sides including Fenstanton and Sutton Masque dancing in the town during the day. A fun spectacle to enjoy whilst visiting the Farmers' Market.

Riverport Radio

The Riverport Radio podcast has been well received and the fourth edition will be available on Valentine's Day, 14th February. It includes an interview with 'Chunky Chambers', the ex Ivo School Head of Art, and a number of interviews with the public and stallholders at last weeks Farmers' Market. It is easy to listen to, just click on the link on our website at: www.theriverporter.uk or go to <https://riverportradiopodcast.buzzsprout.com/>.



having your say ...

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

Erik always looked forward to the office party.

Dear Erik, Subject: Houses for People

I wanted to write to you to tell you about the dreadful problem my sister is having with the 'Houses for People' housing association (formally Luminous).

They own a property attached to my sister's property and the shared concrete gutter between the two properties is leaking badly and causing severe damp and mould passing through the wall [see picture].



We have written and called them over and over again, even sending solicitor' letters but the association simply ignore us and never respond. The leak is on their side and we are not allowed to fix it ourselves.

The damage is only going to get worse, do any of your papers readers have any ideas what we can do we feel desperate? **Rachel**

Dear Erik, Subject: Poor road

In 2024 an elderly woman tripped and fell over a road defect, whilst crossing over between the two Ramsey Road bus stops, near the junction with Hill Rise & Marley Road. The defect is a long hollow and raised hump. I reported this as 'urgently needing attention' to Cambridgeshire County Council in July 2024. So far, they have failed to rectify this despite constant reminders from me.

A lot of people cross the road here when catching a bus and getting off one. Many are elderly or disabled. Anyone tripping could be injured by their fall and in the worst-case scenario could be either injured further or killed by an oncoming vehicle.

I have told the County Council that if this happens, I will release my correspondence to the media at large and the police. **Tony**

Dear Erik, Subject: Prudence?

I observed the following exchange at a well-known ring-road store last week. The store normally provides small brown paper bags to put veg and fruit into. There were none.

As they struggled with onions spilling from the DIY check out scale, a customer asked the assistant if she was aware that they were out of paper bags by the fruit and veg.

'Yes', was the reply. *'They were now kept near the DIY checkout- in an unmarked container.'*

'Why was that?'

'It was a management decision: people were apparently taking too many'; nothing to do with her. For the ill-will that is engendered, it seems an odd policy. Or have I missed the headline about the world shortage of small brown paper bags? Name withheld.

Dear Erik, Subject: Speed Sign

I was very saddened to hear of the recent passing of Colin Saunderson in *The Reporter*, he was such a nice helpful person and worked hard with HDC to get a speed sign erected. However, it had not been up long before they altered it to flash only when a car speeds at over 40 mph to save the batteries.

This is the only sign that does this, all the other signs work correctly and tell you what speed you should be doing. I was just about to contact Colin to see if he could arrange for it to be reversed, when he died.

Not all drivers, but very many, travel along Marley Road at terrific speeds.

Does *The Riverporter* know if this sign can be adjusted to flash up and remind drivers of their speed? Kind Regards **Valerie Ritch**

Dear Erik,

I propose that there should be a one month 'free car parking amnesty' for all St Ives car parks. During that month the HDC should undertake a 'deep repair/overhaul' of all ticket machines. Better still replace the current system with one that doesn't require users to trek from machine to machine looking for one that works. And bearing in mind too - that not everyone copes easily with 'smart' technology. **Stewart**

We know that many of you will be unsure who to address your letters to. We feel at this moment, to honour our beloved friend, that contributors should still send their letters to Erik. Milly, who will step into Erik's shoes, is happy to answer them for her lost pal.



The Riverporter

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

OTHER NEWS

Coral and Hyperion buildings for sale

The 9,392 sq ft property, described as an early 1980's single storey, detached building with yard and parking, has a price tag of £825,000. This significant site in the Town Centre, adjacent to the bus station and Cattle Market Car Park, has been considered ripe for development for many years. In the 1990s plans were drawn up for a 2/3 story building with accommodation above shop units, part of proposals to improve the Town Centre. This development was stopped by 'The Gang of Nine' Town Councillors who didn't approve of the plan HDC put forward and the money to make the changes went somewhere else. More recently the ill fated Masterplan, another District effort suggested even greater changes has been abandoned.

Two of the units are currently leased to Hyperion Antiques and Ladbrokes (Coral bookies) and so a buyer may need to wait for leases to expire before any redevelopment. Obviously HDC might be considered a buyer, as they own the land around the building and could then redevelop the site for the benefit of the Town. *The Riverporter* understands that this is most unlikely to happen as the future of HDC is up in the air, following the Governments Devolution White Paper (see RP174). This is also why the future of The Octagon will not be resolved soon. Two of the units are currently leased to Hyperion Antiques and Ladbrokes (Coral bookies) and so a buyer may need to wait for leases to expire before any redevelopment can happen.

Rotary grateful for friends

The Rotary Club of St Ives are always very grateful for the help they get from 'Rotary friends'; people that volunteer to help with one or more projects, but who are not full-time Rotarians.



In this case the 'friends' were none other than the Mayor of St Ives, Cllr Pasco Hussain, and the Deputy Mayor Cllr Julie Kerr. Pictured with Rotary President, Fiona Stocker, they helped Santa on his rounds in the Kings Hedges area, collecting lots of money and sharing out the sweets. A big thanks goes to all of the 'elves' who helped to make this year's fundraising one of the biggest and best yet, raising a whopping £10,600!

If anyone would like to know more about helping the Rotary Club, please contact secretary@stivesrotarycambs.org.uk

Another vacancy on St Ives Town Council

Following the resignation of James Cantwell there is a vacancy in St Ives South Ward. Mr Cantwell was co-opted as a councillor in March 2023, however he appears to have only attended one full council meeting since last June. An election will be held if ten electors from the parish call for an election within 14 days of the notice, which is 17th February. This is unlikely and therefore the Council can co-opt a new member. If you or anyone would like to be considered for the post they should contact the Town Clerk.

Rumbles returns to town

Rumbles Fish Bar opened on Wednesday at the Abbey Retail Park in the old Eric's Fish Shop. It will be open between 11am-9pm Monday to Thursday and 11am -10pm Friday to Sunday.



Blue Diamond to reopen Garden Centre

Dobbies at Banks End in Wyton shut its doors for good on December 23. However, the building is to be brought back to life thanks to a national chain, the Blue Diamond Group, which has taken on the lease and is set to spend £1.5 million on a refurbishment but no date is set yet.

Hemingford Grey - fighting to save Postie

Mick Rodger, a 'much loved' postman has worked the round in Hemingford Grey since 2016 but is due to be moved. Gareth Baldwin, a resident, launched a petition on January 29, calling on the company to let Mr Rodger continue as the village's postman. It has received more than 170 signatures and has gained the support of MP Ben Obese-Jecty. This follows a letter in our last issue (RP176) complaining about the irregular deliveries, since the St Ives Sorting Office closed.

A friend is missing

Riverport Radio





BENGAL SPICE

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Offer applies to dining in only

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HYPERION

Entries invited for our Fine Art, Antique & Interiors Sales



Rolex Oyster Speedking with
second sub dial and numeral face
Sold £1,000



Rare Olympics: Tokyo, 12th
Olympics Games 1940,
(cancelled) **Sold £950**

Rare Jérôme Thibouville-Lamy & Cie
19thC guitar **Sold £650**



A Violin by Francois Breton, Labelled: F.
Breton **Sold £900**



The Miracle Club

Thursday 6 March 2025 at 7:30pm
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7
Director: Thaddeus O'Sullivan, 90m, Cert: 12



All We Imagine As Light

Thursday 3 April 2025 at 7:30pm
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7
Director: Payal Kapadia, 118m, Cert: 15

Synopsis: Payal Kapadia's second film after the acclaimed *A Night of Knowing Nothing* (2021) is a gentle, loving story of friendship and female independence set in Mumbai. Prabha (*Kani Kusruti*) and Anu (*Divya Prabha*) are two Malayali nurses who live and work together, each having her own rhythm when it comes to relationships and daily routines. Yet, they meet every night in the kitchen and take turns gazing at night-time Mumbai—a place that signifies different things for both of them. The first film from India to compete in the Cannes Film Festival main competition since 1994, *All We Imagine as Light* won the Grand Prix. A beautiful, comforting film to revel in.

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