

The Riverporter

COVERING THE NEWS FOR ST IVES AND AROUND

PLEASE READ AND PASS ON

Issue I82: I8 April 2025

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

Dr Nik talks to Riverport Radio

Outgoing Mayor of the Combined Authority, Dr Nik Johnson, gave an interview to Riverport Radio this week, in which he told how hard it had been when he was elected in 2021 and how proud he is of what the Authority has achieved.

The forty minute interview shed light on some of the work of the Authority and the difficulties Nik faced when being elected.

Over the past four years many stories have emerged about the Combined Authority. Some positive but others suggesting a whiff of scandal.

In the interview Dr Nik explained that it took a while to get to understand the role, as there was no proper induction for him and he was left to get to grips with how the Authority worked. He wasn't helped by the antagonistic approach opposition councillors took.

Some of the problems came about because of the shock of his victory

brought about by the voting system used. With Supplementary Voting (SV), voters can choose a first and second choice. If no candidate gets over 50% on the first vote the second vote is then counted. On this method Dr Nik won. A surprise result, not just for Nik, but for the Conservative candidate James Palmer, the previous Mayor. Nik said it took a while to get to grips with the chaos he entered but is happy that there are now proper procedures in place and future Mayors may find it easier when elected.

Despite the difficulties Nik believes that the Combined Authority is a

good thing as it brings much needed funds for major projects such as transport and housing.

The Authority is run by a board made up of representatives of the other local authorities, so the Mayor has to work with them to get agreement to make the most of the funds.

Part way through his term as Mayor Nik had to undergo major heart surgery. The high level of stress being Mayor can engender, which may have contributed to his condition in the first place, made him decide not to stand again.

He has sent *The Riverporter* a farewell message (see page 2) about his achievements as Mayor.

BREAKING NEWS • BREAKING NEWS • BREAKING NEWS • BREAKING NEWS

16 injured on Guided Busway



The crash between a fire engine and two busses happened at 2pm Wed., at the junction of the B1050 and the busway, by the Longstanton Park & Ride. Two Air Ambulances attended and seven people including some children were taken to hospital.

To listen to the interviews with election candidates hear Episode 6 County Council Election Special part 1 at <https://riverportradiopodcast.buzzsprout.com> Dr Nik's interview will appear in Episode 7 - County Council Election Special part 2 next week.



THE **600** ANNIVERSARY

26th and 27th July 2025

- Come and see the Bridge being blown up
- Witness what life was like in the 1600's
- Watch a battle between Royalist and Parliamentary forces
- Experience the sights, sounds and smells of the English Civil War



St Ives Town Centre from 11am - Hill Rise Park from 2pm Saturday and all day Sunday.

Saturday 26th, 7pm in the Corn Exchange - a Ceilidh with Catch The Pigeon Ceilidh Band.

Tickets just £5 from www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents or from the venue.

A FREE to attend event from St Ives Town Team. For details:

www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk



The English Civil War Society

Bringing
History
Alive

www.ecws.org.uk



Roundhead
Association



Whose side
are you on?

25th April Greg Brice



'The most exquisite finger-picked acoustic blues that you could wish to hear' and 'A brilliant set, mellow, and thought provoking, a treat for the senses.'

Just two of the reviews for Greg - appearing for the first time in St Ives.

Doors open at 7pm. Concerts start at 7.30pm.

Tickets £10 from the venue or www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents



DIARY OF EVENTS

Please email: editor@theriverporter.uk

APRIL 2025

Thursday 24th - British Heart Foundation Quiz St Ives Corn Exchange 7.30pm. Tickets available on the night. Call Jean on 01480 469557 to book.

Friday 25th - Chapel Arts Concert with Greg Brice see above.

Sunday 27th - Houghton and Wyton Bowls Club Open Day 1400hrs

MAY 2025

Saturday 3rd - Craft fair - Saints Crafters and every 1st Saturday of the month at the Free Church. Doors 9:30am. FREE ENTRY.

Sunday 4th - Flea on The Quay. A free to attend Flea market on The Quay, St Ives from 10am until 1pm on 1st Sunday of each month May - August.

Saturday 10th - Toby Lee Jazz & Blues Festival Fundraiser **SOLD OUT**

Tuesday 13th - An open invitation from St Ives Rotary Club for prospective members to attend a meeting where the Mayor-elect, Julie Kerr, will be talking about her plans for the year ahead. 6pm at St Ives Golf Club. Email membership@stivesrotarycamb.org.uk to secure a place

Wednesday 14th - Mayor Making - The Corn Exchange 7.30pm.

Friday 16th - Eating on the Ration - A Civic Society presentation by Chris Carr on rationing in WW2 and opportunity to try some wartime chocolate cake. 7.30pm St Ives Free Church. Members Free £3 for non members.

Saturday 17th - Community Information Day St Ives Corn Exchange from 10am to 1pm. Your chance to find out about local community groups.

Tuesday 20th - St Ives Rotary Club AGM open for prospective members. 6pm St Ives Golf Club. Email membership@stivesrotarycamb.org.uk

Tuesday 27th - St Ives Rotary Club social evening with a guest speaker for prospective members to attend. 6pm at St Ives Golf Club. Email membership@stivesrotarycamb.org.uk to secure a place

Friday 30th - Karen Hubbard String Quartet An evening of music from the past 600 years! The Bridge Chapel. A free event but tickets must be booked from www.ticketsource.co.uk/eventsstives.

SATURDAY 14TH JUNE 2025 ST IVES CORN EXCHANGE



Tickets are on sale for a special concert to raise funds for this year's Jazz & Blues Festival.

The Quo Experience are no ordinary tribute band, in fact their drummer, Jeff Rich was actually Status Quo's drummer until 2000. The Town Team are hoping to see a packed house which will help fund some of the 28 free concerts at the Festival in September.

Book your tickets now at: www.ticketsource.co.uk/cexevents

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

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A farewell message from the Mayor

I wanted to be Mayor because I believed our region was capable of more, and as I leave office this May I will take heart from having achieved what I set out to do. It hasn't been easy - I wish I'd been quicker to secure the expertise and experience this organisation so desperately needed.



But now, with outstanding people in place, the best legacy will be my successor taking on a vastly improved operation. Indeed, on 'Day One', they will walk into being a fully-fledged member of the Prime Minister's Council of Nations and Regions, an integral part of the UK Innovation Corridor, a key partner in both the Oxford-Cambridge work and Cambridge Growth Company, and an invaluable relationship with Homes England.

I'm also immensely proud to have instigated the 'Franchising' of our region's bus services; massively expanded the number of routes under public control and made possible more than a million Tiger Pass journeys.

We introduced all-day travel for pensioners and people with disabilities; picked up the baton of delivering, via exemplary partnership, ARU (Anglia Ruskin University) Peterborough; turbo-charged the Greater Cambridge economy, creating a highly skilled workforce, and with industry and government developing the infrastructure needed to enable world leading scientific and technological progress.

Best wishes, Nik Johnson

British Heart Foundation Quiz
Thursday 24th April - doors open 7pm
St Ives Corn Exchange - drinks - raffle
Tables available on the night
call Jean on 01480 469557 to book.

Lunchtime Concert at the Free Church
Friday 25th April at 1pm
Song Recital with Kate Wishart

Free Admission

Donations to St Ives Free Church



u3a learn,
laugh,
live

Open Day
April 29th
2-4pm

St Ives Corn Exchange on Tuesday 29th April

No need to book, just turn up anytime between 2 pm and 4 pm

- Do you have any spare time?
- Are you nearing retirement?
- Or are you already not in full-time work?
- Do you have skills, passions or interests to share?
- Would you like to join in social occasions, or go on outings?

Why not share your interests, passions or skills with others - there is support for you to set up groups and do almost anything!



As well as displays and information, there will be music from various groups, free refreshments, and opportunities to talk.

Explore our website:
u3aivo.uk

Find out how 900 members in St Ives organise and enjoy over 60 interest groups, social events, monthly outings and speakers.

Email: info@u3aivo.uk 07458197372



Know your candidates on 1 May

Here is our second piece on the 1st May elections. As well as electing a County Councillor, you can elect the Mayor of the Combined Authority and below are short statements from the five candidates.

Cambridgeshire County Council candidates:

St Ives North & Wyton

BROWN Keith James, Lib Dems
GILL Martin James, Conservative
HOEKSMATom, Greens
KERR Julie Elizabeth, Independent
KHAN Sajjad Ahmed, Labour
SANDERSON Noah, Reform UK

St Ives South & Needingworth

BULAT Alex, Labour and Co-op
REYNOLDS Kevin A. Independent
SMITH Chris, Greens
SMITH Craig Thomas, Conservative
TURLEY Mark Joseph, Reform UK
WELLS Nic, Lib Dems

We contacted all the candidates and offered them the opportunity to give a statement and have an interview on Riverport Radio. Neither Green or Reform party candidates responded.

Here is Statement from Sajjad Khan, whose statement arrived after our last issue.

For the other candidate statements see Riverporter 181.

Sajjad Khan, Labour.

St Ives North & Wyton Ward

St Ives is my home, where I'm raising my young family, feeling its heartbeat - its warmth, its struggles, its dreams. As your Town Councillor and former Magistrate, I've always pushed for transparency at every level. I've fought for safer streets, reliable buses, and a future our kids deserve. Now, I'm taking that fight to County Hall, where they make the decisions that affect us all daily, with a bold plan: a Council Tax that works for us, squeezing every penny to serve residents; public transport that serves its purpose and never fails us - especially when we need it most; more police to cut crime, drugs, and anti-social behaviour - rooting them out of our community; and schools that nurture thriving, well-educated children who'll contribute positively in our society.

You'll see familiar faces yet again asking for votes - on 1st May, don't waste your vote on empty promises. I bring a fresh, outside-the-box mindset, an active and modern approach, and a loud voice for the issues ordinary people care about most. Don't settle for less.



Combined Authority Mayoral candidates

Please note the election rules have changed and the winner will be the first past the post. The previous Supplementary Vote (SV) system was dropped by the Tory Government, when they lost seats under SV.

The Combined Authority candidates are:

Paul Bristow, Conservative
Ryan Coogan, Reform
Lorna Helen Dupre, Lib Dems
Bob Ensich, Greens
Anna Smith, Labour



Paul Bristow Conservative

Too often, we see public authorities indulge in cultural agendas. Clear rules are needed for the Combined Authority. If I become Mayor, there will be

- No four-day week
 - No staff working entirely at home
 - No Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) officers
 - No pronouns in email signatures
 - Values excellence and public service
 - Recruits entirely on merit
 - Respects people with different views
 - Keeps politics out of the workplace
- Where possible, this will also apply to projects and activities that the authority funds others to deliver. It's taxpayers' money. Politics should be left to politicians.

Ryan Coogan Reform



I started working on the farm aged 8, and have worked multiple jobs and juggled my own business and a family all

at the same time, relentlessly my whole life!

I am a real person, have an unmatched work ethic and it would be a pleasure to use it to serve my homelands. Helping put all the experience gained over the years in to serving as your Mayor.

If you have followed me for a while, seen my work across the county, you will know I mean business, for those who have not, it is my absolute pleasure to show what can be done from outside the 'club' so just imagine what can be achieved with a vote to place me inside!



Lorna Helen Dupre, Lib Dems

I want Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

to be greener, fairer, and better connected. A thriving area with opportunities for all.

A vote for the Liberal Democrats is a vote for better public transport, access to new skills for the changing world of work, and cooperation at every level to meet the urgent challenges of a changing climate.

There is a desperate need for genuinely affordable homes in the right places, and a Liberal Democrat Mayor using new powers handed down from Government can make that happen.

We also need a Mayor who will work in partnership with the NHS, firefighters, and the police, for a healthier and safer Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

I'm well placed to work with the area's three Liberal Democrat MPs, and the Liberal Democrats as a growing force across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough's local councils, to achieve the change we need.



Bob Ensich Greens

The Green Party is now the only progressive voice left in British politics; that's why I'm standing for Mayor.

Having directed the Cambridge office of a national construction company for 15 years, I understand business. I'm passionate about sustainability, and the importance of developing the skills of local people. Now retired, I work for social enterprises supporting the homeless and getting young people into construction.

Polls consistently report that most of us want to see the richest taxed and we want more government action on the climate crisis. If you want real hope and real change, VOTE GREEN.



Anna Smith Labour

I know the past few years have been tough for everyone. That's why I have a plan to drive growth and create opportunities for everyone in our region.

My number one priority will be ensuring there are secure, well-paid jobs available in every part of our region. And I'll build the transport links, homes and services to go with them. I'll make sure that everyone has access to the training they need. I'll make Cambridgeshire and Peterborough a place where you can have a career, not just a job. I have a track record of delivering for local people.

As Deputy Mayor, I have overseen the introduction of the highly successful Tiger Bus Pass (£1 tickets for under 25s) as well as taking back control of our buses.



Milly and Tilly like your letters.



having your say ...

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

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 Tilly and Milly,
Subject: More Broadway Improvements?**

At first I thought I could get a short back and sides al fresco while enjoying the new street vibe in The Broadway. Then I realised it was simply the Turkish barber refit. Shame really...

Luka That



**Dear Tilly and Milly,
Subject: Quaker Meetings**

We (Huntingdon Local Quaker Meeting) are restarting regular monthly Quaker Meetings at the **Free Church, starting on Sunday, May 4th, at 10.30 am** and thereafter the first Sunday in June and July

These Meetings for Worship are held in silence for contemplation and prayer, and are open to everyone, of any faith or none; all are welcome. Meetings are followed by coffee/tea and a friendly discussion.

Thanks **Ann**

**Dear Tilly and Milly,
Subject: Town Meeting**

Sadly I was unable to attend last month's Town Meeting, which you reported in your excellent Riverporter.

I noticed that the meeting was chaired by Ed Goodman rather than the Town Mayor, as always used to be the case a while ago.

As an ex St Ives Mayor it was one of the duties I gladly and willingly performed and considered it a major part of my role.

Can I ask when did this trend for a person, not connected with the Council to take over this role? No doubt Mr Goodman is good at his job but it does seem to be further distancing councillors from the public.

Yours concerned **Jean Chandler**

The Riverporter

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

OTHER NEWS

PLAYERS TO PERFORM 'SISTER ACT'

Rehearsals are currently in full swing for The Centre Theatre Players forthcoming production of the Divine Musical Comedy **'SISTER ACT'** which they will be staging in The Burgess Hall of One Leisure St. Ives on May 8th - 10th. Evenings 7.30pm, Sat matinee 2-30pm.

Based on the hit 1992 film of the same name, the show was first performed in 2006 and has enjoyed tremendous success in London's West End as well as in countries all over the world. Great characters, fabulous music, creative production routines, all combining to make this a really feel-good show not to be missed.

Sam Burke makes his debut in a directing role for The Players with musical direction from Stephen Denman and Sarah Rees and choreography from Becky Prime and Tara Wilson.

Tickets for the show are selling fast so to avoid any disappointment book on line www.ticketsource.co.uk/burgesshall or from the One Leisure main reception.

Another very successful

Was held on Saturday 12 April when we discussed the impact of 'fast fashion' on the environment - and what we could do about it. Several contributors including the 'Sew, Mend and

Save' group, local crafter Janice Parry and craft shop 'Escape and Create', showed how they made new items from old fabrics, and the 'Huntingdon Community Swap' (who repair, then give away good quality unwanted clothes) provided the attendees with more inspiration. It is intended to follow-up by improving buying habits, finding solace in a loved item well-repaired - rather than our mood relying on the latest shopping trip! The next Eco Café will be at St Ives Library on 10 May, with the topic of **'Gardening for Wildlife'**. Do come along: 10.00 - 12.00; everyone welcome! stivesecocafe@gmail.com



Driver who hit 2 cars and houses jailed

43 year old Carl Scarrow from Bluntisham was spotted by officers driving a black Vauxhall Vectra on the A1123, near Harrison Way, in St Ives, at about 3.40am on December 1 (see RP173).

The officers followed and Scarrow drove normally before turning into Broad Leas where they indicated for him to stop.

Scarrow continued driving and turned into East Street where he overtook two vehicles while turning left and collided with a Toyota Aygo, an Audi A3 that were both parked and two houses. On Wednesday (April 9), at Cambridge Crown Court, Scarrow was jailed for 10 months.

He pleaded guilty to possession of cannabis, dangerous driving, no insurance, driving otherwise than in accordance with a licence, failing to provide a specimen for analysis and four counts of criminal damage. He was also banned from driving for 29 months.



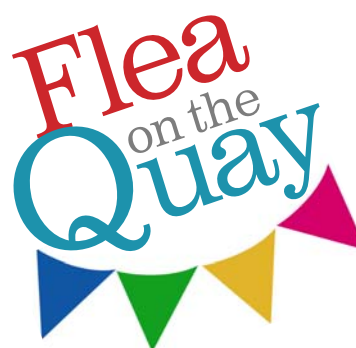
St Ives a long way west ward

A new candidate and late comer to the election has thrown his hat into the ring in the hope that he'll still be useful if his present position doesn't work out as his current boss appears a little flaky. In his most recent interview with Riverport Radio, JD complained to Tucker Carlson that the council was being run by 'childless cat ladies who are miserable in their own lives and the choices that they've made' and 'want to make the rest of the country miserable, too'. Additionally he observes, 'Pyjamas? Poor people don't wear pyjamas. We fall asleep in our underwear or blue jeans. To this day, I find the very notion of pyjamas an unnecessary elite indulgence, like caviar or electric ice cube makers.'

J.D. Vance, *Hillbilly Elegy: A Memoir of a Family and Culture in Crisis*



**Sunday 4th May from
10am to 1pm**



COLLECTABLES • CURIOUS ITEMS
CRAFTS • OBJETS D'ART • ANTIQUES

Chatty Cafe Scheme

At a loose end?
Fancy a cuppa?

The 'Chatter & Natter table' is a wonderful way of encouraging people of all ages to talk to others. During the day and time below, the table will be hosted by a friendly volunteer. Do come along and sit for a chat.

Where: St Ives Corn Exchange CIC
The Pavement
St Ives PE27 5AD

When: Every Wednesday
11am - 12.30pm

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real
good*

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Open Monday to Friday 9-5
Saturday 9-1 (by appointment)
PARKING AVAILABLE



Unfortunately, tickets are sold out for our May screening of Conclave



Anora

Thursday 5 June 2025 at 7:30pm
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7
Director: Sean Baker, 139m, Cert: 18

Synopsis: *Anora* (2024), directed by Sean Baker, follows Ani Mikheeva (Mikey Madison), a Brooklyn stripper who becomes involved with Ivan "Vanya" Zakharov, the immature son of a Russian oligarch. Their impulsive Las Vegas marriage faces challenges when Vanya's disapproving parents intervene, seeking an annulment. The film explores themes of love, class disparity, and personal agency, blending screwball comedy with raw drama. *Anora* premiered at the Cannes Film Festival, winning the Palme d'Or, and went on to secure five Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Actress for Mikey Madison.



A complete Unknown

Thursday 3 July 2025 at 7:30pm
Doors open 6:30pm. Tickets £7
Director: James Mangold, 141m, Cert: 15

Synopsis: *A Complete Unknown* (2024), directed by James Mangold, follows a young Bob Dylan (Timothée Chalamet) as he arrives in New York City in 1961, seeking folk legend Woody Guthrie. Under Pete Seeger's guidance, Dylan rises in the Greenwich Village folk scene, forging key relationships with Joan Baez and girlfriend Sylvie Russo. As his fame grows, he struggles with artistic expectations, culminating in his controversial electric performance at the 1965 Newport Folk Festival. The film captures Dylan's transformation from folk troubadour to rock icon, showcasing his early career and musical evolution.

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

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 Easter presents, 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.