

# The Riverporter

COVERING THE NEWS FOR ST IVES AND AROUND

PLEASE READ AND PASS ON

Issue 220: 30 October 2026

A TOTALLY INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER • UNCONNECTED WITH ANY GROUP OR ORGANISATION

## Will our community life die?

**W**ill the decline in volunteering ultimately see our communities cease to function as they have done in the past? The signs are on the wall, unless the younger generations step up.

In issue 218 we highlighted the success that St Ives In Bloom (SIIB) has achieved and also in that issue we published a call for volunteers for the same organisation.

Although many people help with weeding and planting SIIB need to find a Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary and a Volunteer Coordinator. They are not alone as many local organisations also need helpers.

We often report that St Ives is blessed with voluntary groups that work hard to provide many of the things we like about living here, such as The Carnival, Picnic in The Park, the floral displays, the Darby & Joan Club and the Jazz & Blues Festival. These are just a few of the things run by them in St Ives.

### What are the facts?

Of course not all volunteers are the same. It is easy to give a hand now and then, when it suits you, but none of those events would happen without a longer term commitment by people prepared to give up quite a lot of their time.

Countrywide there is a genuine and serious decline in volunteering. In England it's down from 45% to 28%

participation over the decade. Traditional volunteering is falling steeply, especially among older age groups, driven by the pandemic, cost-of-living pressures, and changing expectations.

### Volunteering is good for you

The evidence is that people who engage more with their community are more fulfilled and that they are not always the people with more free time, often they are the busiest.

*'Joy for human beings lies in proper human work, which consists of acts of kindness to other human beings.'*

Marcus Aurelius circa 150AD

Organizations like the Scouts and Girlguiding face historic waiting lists, exceeding 170,000 children, due to a shortage of adult leaders.

Approximately 40,000 more adults are required just to meet current demand in major youth groups.

Many St Ives groups, are run by people in their 70s or older. Could the difficulty in attracting younger helpers be because they don't put on

things for young people?

It's understandable that people in their twenties are socialising differently - often they are away from home or in training.

30/40 year-olds are beginning to settle down but are working hard just to bring up their families.

### Where are the 50+ year-olds?

Can it be that life is so hard now that this generation can't afford to give something back to their community? Or is it that they prefer to spend their time on hobbies, holidays, exercising or just relaxing?

Data from the National Council for Voluntary Organisations shows that 33% of people don't want to make an ongoing commitment and 32% do other things with their spare time.

### What of the future?

Without more people prepared to help run our community groups it is inevitable that some of them will fold. If St Ives In Bloom, which was voted best in Britain in 2024 and this year won a 9th Gold Medal and was voted best in Cambridgeshire, cannot survive, then many other groups may follow. And who will inform and entertain us then?

**Meanwhile the Editors have been looking at how the scaffolding on the old Barclays Bank site in the town centre may be better used, especially for next year's Michaelmas Fair ...**

## DIARY OF EVENTS

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

### OCTOBER

**Saturday 31st** - The Annual St Ives Ghost Walk - 7pm The Quay and afterwards in the Corn Exchange for a performance and disco.

### NOVEMBER

**Wednesday 4th** - Engage Talk: Ramsey Abbey Archaeological Dig - St Ives Library, 2pm (donations welcome).

**Saturday 7th** - Hemingford Firework Display

**Sunday 8th** - Remembrance Sunday service - Market Hill.

**Saturday 14th** - Christmas Lights Switch On - Market Hill.

**Saturday 14th/15th** - BHF Candle Lighting in the Bridge Chapel. Light a candle for a loved one. 10am to 4pm both days.

**Friday 20th** - St Ives Civic Society - Ed Kelly A Life of Service Free Church 7.30pm, Visitors Welcome, suggested donation £3

**Saturday 21st** - Artsfest Exhibition in the St Ives Corn Exchange.

**Saturday 21/22nd** - BHF Candle Lighting in the Bridge Chapel.

**Saturday 21st** - Verdi Requiem. St Ives Choral Society. Free Church 7.30pm. [www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society](http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/st-ives-choral-society).

**Friday 27th** - Margaret Scourie and Frank Dudridge playing Bach, Beethoven and Prokofiev 1pm St Ives Free Church.

**Saturday 28/29** - BHF Candle Lighting in the Bridge Chapel.

### DECEMBER

**Wednesday 2nd** - Engage: Ukelele Christmas Sing-a-Long

Join us for a jolly event to round off our Engage year, Christmas hats optional!! - St Ives Library, 2pm (donations welcome).

**Saturday 5th/6th** - BHF Candle Lighting in the Bridge Chapel.

**Saturday 5th** - 'Sailing into Christmas' - Concert by St Ives Community Choir 7.30 pm in the Free Church tickets are £10 adult, £5 children (over 5 yrs) available online or on the door.

**Sunday 6th** - Christmas Craft and Gift Fair - Burgess Hall 10am.

**Saturday 19th** - Annual Christmas Concert - Free Church.

**Sunday 20th** - Santa arrives at the St Ives Quay.

At 11am - either by boat or walking over The Bridge.

**Sunday 20th & Monday 21st** - Santas SnowFest event

St Ives Corn Exchange. With Santas Grotto and Giant Snow Dome.



**TONIGHT**  
FRIDAY 30TH  
OCTOBER

**STELLA HENSLEY'S  
MAGICAL COLOURS**



Featuring an  
astounding  
line-up of  
Stella on  
vocals,  
Myke Clifford  
on sax and flute, Chris Newman  
on guitar, Fabian Bonner on  
bass, Art Toper on keyboard and  
Malek Hyde-Smith on  
percussion.

7.30pm St Ives Corn Exchange  
**Tickets just £10 on the door**

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. The publishers, Ron Westrip and John Souter, reserve the right to determine the content of the publication. © copyright reserved

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

**FEST** ARTSFEST 2026



Find that special gift at the  
**Art & Crafts Exhibition**  
in the  
**St Ives Corn Exchange**  
**Saturday 21st November**  
**10am - 4pm**

Artists who wish to exhibit please contact:  
Pat-stivesnow@hotmail.com

 **Coffee Shop Open**

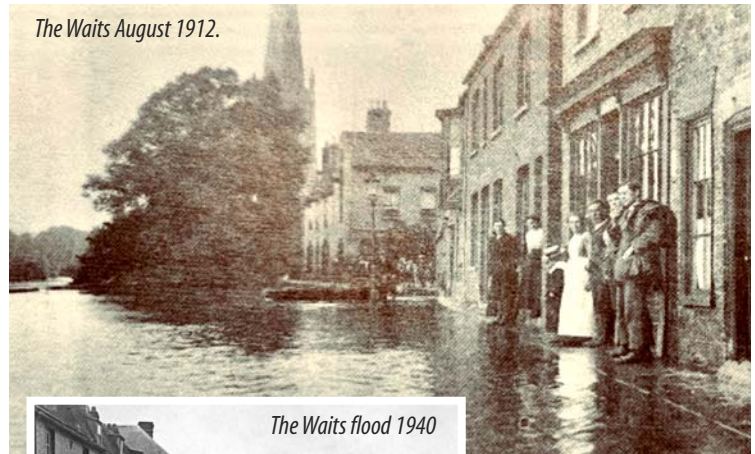
 **FEST St Ives** [www.stivesfest.org.uk](http://www.stivesfest.org.uk)

With thanks to our sponsors continued support

# St Ives news from the past

**A** raised pavement opposite The Waits might seem useful for winter floods, but it was built in 1860 specifically so the Parish Church congregation could walk from town in their Sunday best without muddying their clothes.

*The Waits August 1912.*



*The Waits flood 1940*



A compulsory church rate funded the project, sparking a bitter dispute. No other pavements in town were to be improved. When Mr Johnson refused to pay this extra tax, officials seized his goods to auction at the Cross.

Nonconformists blocked the sale by standing in a circle around the items.

Parliament abolished church rates in 1868.

For more news from the past, go to St Ives 100 Years Ago at <https://tinyurl.com/SI100YA>

## St Ives Choral Society to perform Verdi's Requiem with BBC Young Musician winner Jordan Ashman

St Ives Choral Society will present Verdi's magnificent Requiem at the Free Church on Saturday 21 November at 7.30pm.

Widely regarded as one of the greatest works in the choral repertoire, Verdi's dramatic and emotionally powerful work continues to captivate audiences around the world. The performance will be directed by the Society's resident conductor, Arwen Gilbert.

For this concert the choir will be accompanied by an innovative orchestral arrangement by Michael Betzner-Brandt, featuring the marimba, an increasingly popular percussion instrument renowned for its rich and expressive sound.

The marimba part will be performed by Jordan Ashman, winner of the BBC Young Musician of the Year competition in 2022. A Cambridge-born musician of international acclaim, Ashman has established himself as one of the UK's most exciting percussionists.

Chair of St Ives Choral Society, Robert Guinea, said:

*'We are delighted to be performing this challenging and inspiring work. Verdi's Requiem is a masterpiece that offers audiences moments of both great drama and profound beauty. We are particularly looking forward to working with outstanding local musicians, especially Jordan Ashman, whose artistry will bring an exciting additional dimension to this performance.'*

Publicity Manager June York said:

*'We are anticipating a sell-out audience for this concert and would encourage people to buy tickets in advance. This promises to be a memorable evening of music-making and we look forward to welcoming both regular concert-goers and those experiencing Verdi's Requiem for the first time.'*

**Tickets cost £18 are available at [www.ticketsource.com](http://www.ticketsource.com)**



## Supporting residents to live life their way

At Care UK's Field Lodge in St Ives, every resident is supported to live their life the way they choose. Our team takes pride in offering quality residential, nursing, dementia and respite care.

John, a Care UK care home resident, shares how the support and reassurance of the team help him to live more comfortably and independently.

### **'I am happy with the team supporting'**

Living in a Care UK home means John has access to support 24 hours a day, and while he can still do many things himself, carers make daily life a little easier. *'I shower and the team wash my back. They make my bed and take my washing,'* John says.

The friendly team do all they can to help John live comfortably and independently. *'If I can't do it, I say so,'* he says.

By knowing each resident well, team members provide care that's personalised to their needs. John, for example, has deteriorating eyesight, so they help him to read signs and menus using his magnifying glasses. *'The team changed the batteries on my hearing aid because I couldn't see the small parts. It's helpful for the little day-to-day things,'* he says. *'I'm quite content.'*

### **One of the family**

John gets on particularly well with the kitchen team. He sings the praises of hardworking Raj, who knows everyone's orders and just how they like them cooked. Through their conversations he has got to know Raj well. As well as having a good laugh, he likes to offer her and her sons advice. Raj often greets John by saying, *'Hello, grandad.'* *'I feel like one of Raj's family,'* John says.

In fact, John is affectionately known as 'grandad' by many members of the team. And with their support, he lives an active life doing the things he wants to do. *'There's no point in sitting on your*



**care UK** 

*backside and doing nothing!'* John says. *'You've got to keep going and keep your mind active.'* With the team's reassurance, he does just that, and despite challenges with his eyesight, he joins in with quizzes, crosswords and even Italian lessons. *'The team are very good indeed.'*

Join us for our Christmas Fair on Friday 27th November, 10.30am - 12.30pm with plenty of seasonal refreshments, family-friendly activities, and festive surprises along the way. Come together with friends, family and the local community to share in the joy of the season. Everyone is welcome.

### **Trust us to care**

We work hard to support residents to keep connected with their loved ones. We help families and friends to continue sharing special experiences whether that's in the home, through special trips and outings, or maximising technology so that distance is no longer an issue. Care UK is a leading independent care home provider with some of the highest quality ratings of the UK's larger care providers, and over 40 years' experience of delivering high-quality care to older people.

**For more information about Field Lodge in St Ives, call 01480 710673 or visit [careuk.com/field-lodge](http://careuk.com/field-lodge)**  
London Road, St Ives, Cambridgeshire PE27 5EX



having your say . . .

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

Milly & Tilly love your letters.

**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,  
Subject: Peace Vigil**

A small group of us are planning to start holding a monthly silent peace vigil in St Ives. I would be glad to hear from anyone interested in joining us, or indeed in starting a Peace Group in St Ives - please do get in touch.

Ann Barnes at courtspinney@hotmail.com

**Dear Milly & Tilly,**

I read your article 'Plans for swimming pool refused' with interest and dismay. The reason given is due to insufficient parking. I assume this is because there is no space on the weekend due to the Eastern European lorry park being in place

Another winning decision by our esteemed cretinous council to accompany their ill thought out CCC collaboration

PS: I always love reading *The Riverporter* in Café Nero, keep up the good work !!

**Frustrated of Cambridgeshire**

**Dear Milly & Tilly,  
Subject: Candle Lighting  
in the Bridge Chapel**

You can light a candle for your loved ones again this year in the Bridge Chapel starting on Saturday 14th November between 10am and 4pm. We will also be opening the Chapel on the following Sunday and repeating the opportunity over the next three weekends until Sunday 6th December. We are hoping to beat last year's total raised, which was over £1,500. **Jean**

**Dear Milly & Tilly,**

In a recent report that car parking fines generated almost £65k for HDC from October 2025 to September 2026, the BBC quoted the council as saying its car parks operated at a small loss. If charging motorists fails to turn a profit, why keep doing it? Or is there some HDC logic applying? Perhaps it's time to abolish parking charges altogether. **John**

# The Riverporter

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

## OTHER NEWS

### Is the Bus Gate idea a dead duck?

At the end of last week, HDC published a new document in the evidence library of the Local Plan update, a 'statement of common ground' (a formal document laying out points that both parties agree on) between Huntingdonshire District Council and the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority.

Referring to the A141 consultation, it said in official speak:

*'Feedback received through the consultation process is being used to inform further progress of the scheme, ensuring the evolving design continues to reflect local priorities while maintaining momentum towards delivery. For instance, initial outcomes indicate that the St Ives bus gate may be removed from the proposals. Active travel routes between Huntingdon and St Ives will also be reconsidered.'* So the bus gate idea is no more!

### Cross-party motion runs out of time

A cross-party motion has run out of time to vote on a pressing issue for children and families. On 13 October, Cambridgeshire County Councillors debated a motion proposed by St Ives Cllr Alex Bulat (Labour) and seconded by Cllr Mark Goldsack (Con) on Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) delays. The motion noted how EHCPs must be completed within 20 weeks by law. Yet over 93% are issued outside that deadline. Families are left waiting an average more than 14 months to secure basic educational adjustments. National Government confirmed they will cover up to 90% of the SEND deficit if there is a valid recovery plan. However the Lib Dem-led Cambridgeshire County Council's plan has not been accepted yet, only 1 of 8 across England to be deferred.

Cllr Bulat has re-submitted the motion for the next County Council meeting on 15th December. She said: *'The County must do better on EHCPs. Every week of delay is another week children do not get the support they are entitled to and another week of increasing school budget deficits. Blaming current or previous Governments will not teach a struggling child to read, nor will it support an overwhelmed teacher.'*

## II-I2 THE PAVEMENT Update

As another month slips by, so does another broken promise from the contractors to restart work within the month. It's a positive move that the Health & Safety Executive has appointed a named inspector. Unfortunately, there is no sign of action beyond accepting the contractors' vague promises.

The campaign continues to chase Cambs County Council, who seem reluctant to confirm that the scaffolding holds a valid licence for the public highway. In White Hart

Court - base poles continue to swing in the wind and show vehicle impact damage. There was strong support from HDC Cllr Alex Bulat, who stood up for St Ives residents during the recent HDC Questions to Cabinet Members session. Cllr Tom Sanderson's response (Executive Cabinet Member for Planning & Building Control) was a repeat of what we've heard before, Alex pushed him to commit that if there is no progress by the end of October, HDC will consider further action. So by the next *Riverporter* we might know more.

## Talking Together November Zoom Events

These 45-minute sessions can be joined from the comfort of your home on your computer, phone or tablet. They are open to all COPE members and you can join both sessions if you wish. These talks are free.

### The Winter Journey

The story of the worst journey imaginable to collect emperor penguin eggs in the dark of the Antarctic winter.

Kat Murphy, Public Engagement Co-ordinator from the Scott Polar Museum will be leading this fascinating new, online talk.

*Interested in this online talk?*

Then join us for this Zoom event on Friday 6 November at 2:30 pm.

Register by 2 November.

### Going Viral!

The global attempt to eradicate Polio using vaccination, polio-related local and international history and ongoing support for polio survivors in the UK.

Dr Anne Bishop PhD, Research Biologist and Science Communicator from Nottingham will be leading this talk.

Join us for this COPE Talking Together Zoom event on Thursday 19 November at 2:00 pm. Register by 13 November.

To register for these events email [copetalkingtogether@hotmail.com](mailto:copetalkingtogether@hotmail.com) or phone 01223 364303 before the deadline dates.



## St Ives Snowman Festival

**Come to The Old Riverport  
this Christmas and enjoy  
all the fun of the  
Snowman Festival and have  
a chance to win a fabulous prize in  
the Snowman Trail.**

**The St Ives Snowman  
Festival runs from  
9 November to 12  
December 2026.**

**To download the Snowman  
Trail map and see full details  
of the Festival visit [www.  
stivescambridgeshire.co.uk](http://www.stivescambridgeshire.co.uk)**



# Why pay eye-watering prices for eyewear?

## EyeSpecs

a personalised approach to eyewear



**BIG SAVINGS GUARANTEED**

- ◆ No pressure, no rush
- ◆ 1:1 personalised service
- ◆ Relaxed dispensing suite
- ◆ Ophthalmic experts for 40 years

BOSS RALPH LAUREN MICHAEL KORS vogue eyewear JIMMY MOREL OAKLEY TOMMY HILF

Call or email us today! 01480 499606 - [info@eyespecsuk.com](mailto:info@eyespecsuk.com)  
OR scan the QR code to visit our website

[www.eyespecsuk.com](http://www.eyespecsuk.com)

25 Edison Road  
St. Ives  
Cambs  
PE27 3LF

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

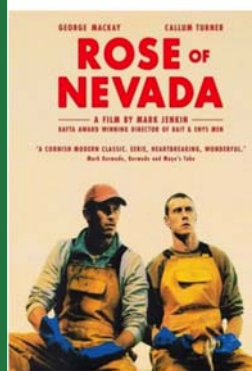


Screen St Ives Community Cinema

Supported by

**BOONGATE KIA**

Peterborough PE1 5UA, Tel: 01733 344344



### The Rose of Nevada

Thursday 5 November 2026 at 7:30pm  
Doors open 7:00pm. Tickets £7  
Director: Mark Jenkin (2025), 114m, Cert: 15

Three decades after vanishing at sea, the fishing boat *Rose of Nevada* mysteriously reappears in a remote, economically devastated village. Hoping to reverse their community's bad luck, the locals decide the ship must sail again. Joining the crew are Nick, a young father desperate to provide for his family, and Liam, a drifter eager to escape his past. After a successful voyage, they return to harbour only to discover they have been transported thirty years into the past. Stars *George Mackay* as Nick, *Callum Turner* as Liam, and *Francis Magee* as the skipper, Murgey.



### Tuner

Thursday 3 December 2026 at 7:30pm  
Doors open 7:00pm. Tickets £7  
Director: Daniel Roher (2025), 107m, Cert: 15

*Tuner* is a 2025 crime thriller about Niki White, a gifted piano tuner with Hyperacusis whose heightened hearing makes him a talented safe-cracker. He is drawn into a life of crime by a gang of thieves in order to pay his mentor's medical bills, which threatens his budding romance with a fellow musician. Stars *Leo Woodall* as Niki, *Dustin Hoffman* as his mentor Harry Horowitz, and *Havana Rose Liu* as Ruthie.

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

ADVERTORIAL

## It's present buying season

Autumn is well and truly here with wind and rain and it's time to light the fire as the evenings arrive more quickly. It is also the time to pick up some early Christmas presents before the final rush in December.

The annual Michaelmas Fair has now gone for another year but the Courtyard remains open and with up to 30 different traders it offers a wide range of goods to choose from.

Its cobbled courtyard is quirky and the unique market style offers a shopping experience with a difference.

### There really is something for everyone!

You can also sit down at our coffee shop and relax and natter with a cup of artisan coffee and some homemade cake.

If you enjoy shopping, browsing or general mooching about then The Hyperion Courtyard is worth a visit. And if antiques are your thing, next door is The Hyperion Antique Centre, full of interesting items and even more potential presents for friends and relatives.

The Courtyard is open 7 days a week, so there is plenty of opportunity to get your shopping fix.

### Here are the auction dates for the rest of the year.

21st Nov Antiques & Interiors  
28th Nov Fine Art & Design  
12th Dec Antiques & Interiors.

The Courtyard



1960  
**HYPERION**