

## HAPPIEST PLACE TO LIVE IN GREAT BRITAIN?

By Mike Trippitt.

It was an eye-catching ITV News headline: “**St Ives ... named happiest place to live in Great Britain.**” This was, according to a survey in 2020.

### Well, we knew that didn't we?

“This news comes as no surprise to me nor local residents,” said Mayor Tony Harris

“As we all know St Ives is a great place to live ... it is of course a pleasure to live in such magnificent surroundings every day.”

I couldn't agree more Tony.

There's just one snag. I mean our St Ives. Sadly, the ITV report meant St Ives in Cornwall, and Tony Harris is the Mayor of the Cornish town.

I don't know about you, but I get irritated when I enter 'St Ives' into Google, only to find entries concerning Cornish tourism, accommodation, hotels, caravan parks and fishing trips. 'Cambridgeshire' only features at the very bottom of Google's first page, after 'Penzance', 'Newquay', 'Carbis Bay', 'Padstow', 'Port Isaac' and 'Falmouth'.

Not that there is anything wrong with the Cornish resort. Far from it. I have a very vivid memory of my first ever trip there as a child back in 1969. In the early evening under a blue sky the turquoise sea was an oily calm.

I have an equally vivid memory of my first ever trip to our St Ives. It was ten years later, though we still lived in my family's native Yorkshire. I saw it first from the bypass looking towards the bridge. Immediately I was drawn to this enchanting little town: the River Mill, the chapel on the bridge, The Waites, and The Quay.

Six years later in 1985 I came to live here, and apart from a spell in a village, it's been my home since.

One lunchtime a few weeks ago we met a young couple from Sevenoaks. Pete and Sandy were nervously transiting St Ives lock in a hired cabin cruiser from Ely. They were heading to St Ives Quay and asked whether the town would have somewhere they might replace a pair of broken off-the-shelf reading glasses. They were new to boat hire and unfamiliar with the area. They had not heard of St Ives, Cambridgeshire before.

We chatted to the couple, and took the opportunity to tell them about our town, its history and its facilities. “It's a great place to stop for a while,” I said.

As they left the lock heading upriver they waved a cheery goodbye and tooted the boat's horn. That view of the Quay, the River Mill, the chapel and the bridge opened up before them: the same view that had charmed me in 1979, and does to this day.

Later that afternoon, I noticed the little hire boat moored at the Quay. It was still there the following morning. Who needs, cloudless skies and azure seas, golden sand and Cornish climes. For 24 hours or so, Pete and Sandy had discovered a little happy place. For those of us blessed to be able to linger longer, perhaps we live in the happiest place of all.

**Are you looking to let your property?**

**Do you want an agent that ticks these boxes?**

- 30+ years of letting experience
- Local knowledge and contacts
- Fully reliable service, including 24hr call-out



**...we tick all these boxes and more!**

01480 462906  
info@parkerprops.co.uk  
www.parkerprops.co.uk