

The Saffron Walden Weekly News is your truly local newspaper for the town and surrounding villages.

We pride ourselves on producing publications for the community and about the community and aim to provide the very best service for readers and advertisers alike.

At the same time, we are constantly looking to improve our title and are always happy to hear from you with suggestions and comments. If you have any feedback for us then please contact the relevant person or people listed below.

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WEEKLY NEWS LETTERS

Send your letters to: The Editor, Saffron Walden Weekly News, 46 High Street, Saffron Walden, CB10 1EE or by email to editorial@saffronwaldenweeklynews.co.uk

Show fairness to shopkeepers

Sir, A few months ago, the planning people of Saffron Walden made the decision not to allow Sainsbury's to open a store in the vicinity of the town.

I have to say I was incensed by that decision at the time. I accept that buildings need to have some control on design etc. What riled me was an unelected officer made the decision that I would not have a choice of supermarket to purchase my everyday requirements. (A local referendum or survey would be a good idea). One supermarket with a monopoly is not good.

Surely this kind of decision should be beyond the remit of this officer? I then walked around Saffron Walden to see which shops are directly affected by superstores.

Very, very few are affected. Possibly the butchers may stake a claim, although I believe they have their regular clientele who prefer to purchase their meat produce from a butcher and like to discuss their purchase with the staff.

I believe the problem with the town shops is not superstores on the outskirts, it is rents, rates and the expansion of internet shopping. The future of shops in the town will be decided by the three issues I have raised.

Greedy landlords, a council that is not prepared to help with council rates for shops.

The internet issue is beyond our control, as nearly all age groups are turning to this way of purchasing goods.

The shops in the town are exactly what you would expect to see in a small market town that attracts tourists. The shops around the town that are viable are usually owned by the inhabitants, have a long lease taken out many years ago, or are parts of a chain. How can one small independent retailer exist with these costs when the likes of estate agents and banks can rake in huge profits?

We have a fair share of charity shops and I believe the council treats these shops favourably.

Charity should start with the shopkeepers of Saffron Walden getting

a fair crack of the whip.

David Wilson
High Street
Debden

Accident policy needs a rethink

Sir, The actions of the lady reversing along the M11 (Weekly News, August 9) cannot be condoned. However, she will surely have the sympathy of anyone who has sat in a hold-up on the M11 or A14.

I believe that the police, Highway Authorities, and probably local councils have a policy which forces traffic to queue on these roads until accidents are totally cleared and all forensic evidence gathered. No attempt is made to warn approaching drivers of delays before they have passed an appropriate exit.

It is possible for all but the largest of vehicles to travel from Spittals Interchange (A14-J23) to Stansted (M11-J8) without using either of those roads. True, it is further, slower, and sometimes tortuous, but to those with appointments or collection/ delivery schedules to keep or with young children, anything is preferable to a long wait. Regrettably this would probably put traffic back on roads which are now little used.

The need for police and emergency service vehicles to access an accident scene quickly and safely is appreciated. However, seemingly needless delays (sometimes for many hours) are not. Perhaps it is time for a rethink of this policy.

Jim Foster
Emsons Close
Linton

Concert pick-up made me angry

Sir, After all the argument earlier this year about parking outside Ice House Lodge on Audley End Road, when it was claimed that it was dangerous to traffic and environmentally damaging

and banned, I was surprised and angered to see that at the weekend it was the designated spot for set down and pick-up for the concerts at Audley End.

Are English Heritage, Lord Braybrooke and their clients above the law? I hope that if this happens on future occasions the officers from our solely-for-profit Parking Partnership will be in attendance to enforce their urban clearway with tickets. It might keep them out of town for a while anyway.

Peter Cowper
Beeches Close
Saffron Walden

Airport bosses being greedy

Sir, I refer to the article on Page 7 (Weekly News, August 2) concerning the charges to be introduced for dropping off passengers at the Stansted Terminal Building. Mr Crick defended the charges saying: "If you do not want to pay, you do not have to". Does this mean one can drive to the terminal and quote Mr Crick and one will be let off paying the charge? I don't think so.

The 'free' alternative is to go to the mid-stay car park where passengers may wait for a bus to take them to the terminal. This is clearly a further deterioration in the passenger service provided and experienced at the airport, particularly in adverse or winter weather conditions. This greed for further revenue comes from a company who, despite losing millions of pounds and increasing their debt, paid their Spanish owners a dividend of £60 million in the last financial year. It might increase business if some of that dividend money had been spent improving customer service and encouraging more passengers to use the airport, rather than being yet a further irritation and deterrent from

using Stansted.

Robin Morgan
Watling Lane
Thaxted

Inquiry result must be known

Sir, After the tragic accident involving Dr James Kew, you report a spokeswoman for UK Power Networks as saying "until the facts are known it would not be appropriate for us to speculate". That, of course, is only right and proper. It is even more paramount that when the inquiry is complete that the result is made public to all in its entirety via the press and media in general. The millions of public footpath users, joggers, ramblers and dogwalkers demand the right to know.

Robin Plumridge
Bartlow Road
Ashdon

Honest methods are required

Sir, We are living through times when the mightiest bank and its senior people have been brought low. The public disapproves of corporate fat cats and evasive politicians at all levels of government. Their secretive culture is not acceptable.

The current controversy over planning at Uttlesford District Council is a local example of corporate organisations acting outside expected standards of behaviour. In Stansted we have just witnessed an example of planning at its worst.

Large swathes of the public seem to have lost trust in the council's attempts to create a 15-year plan for the district. They don't believe what they are being told, and nor do I.

LETTERS POLICY

Letters should arrive by noon on the Monday before publication. Full name and address must be supplied and details will be withheld only in exceptional circumstances. Letters should be no longer than 250 words and may be edited. Email your letters to editorial@saffronwaldenweeklynews.co.uk Alternatively write to: Letters to the Editor, Saffron Walden Weekly News, 46 High Street, Saffron Walden CB10 1EE.



When are you happiest?
Even though I enjoy running my own company very much, I'm even happier when I am able to switch off on holiday.

How do you relax? I find it easiest to relax in the water, probably because my laptop is not waterproof so I have an excuse to have a break from work!

Pet hates? Broken things. I either have to fix them or they have to go.

Guilty pleasure?
Champagne truffles.

Favourite book/movie:
Book: *50 Shades of Grey*,

because of what it has done for our business. Movie: *Meet The Parents*, because it makes me cringe every time I watch it.

Favorite holiday destination? Any Oriental beach – they are so beautiful and relaxing.

Your hero? Richard Branson, there is so much an entrepreneur like myself can learn from him.

Four people you'd invite to dinner? Richard Branson, for a top business discussion (plus it's always nice to meet your hero); Richard Koo, top Taiwanese-American economist, an essential

In this regular feature we ask local celebrities to give a snapshot of their lives. This week the spotlight falls on Chris Simms, founder of Bondara.co.uk based in Saffron Walden's Shire Hill industrial estate. He is 39 years old, was born in Epping and lives in Thaxted.

guest to supply a meaningful economic debate; Anthony Hopkins, would serve the C-Chianti (actually, let's make that an Amarone); Jacqueline Gold, chief executive of Ann Summers, because it would be interesting to share views with someone else in the same industry.

What would your super-power be? If I had any super-powers it would make things easier to achieve, but then I wouldn't appreciate them as much as I do now. I like that feeling of achievement – so it's best I don't have any super-powers.

What three possessions would you take with you to

a desert island?

A can of Orangina, a bottle of Maggi (seasoning sauce similar to soy sauce – and delicious) and a flight ticket back to the UK.

If you ruled the country for a day what would you do? I'd introduce a new law that only allows people who have successfully been able to run a business to run the country. Successful business owners are essential to this country and it's only right to let them use their skills to help manage it. I would also add to the school curriculum a section on money managing skills – particularly to teach children that it's a lot more painful to



have to pay debts back compared to the short-term pleasure that spending borrowed money actually provides.

What do you love most about living in your town? I like living in Thaxted because people still greet each other when they pass in the street.

Who would you like to spend Two Minutes With? Let us know and we'll put the questions to them. Email editorial@saffronwaldenweeklynews.co.uk