

Students are encouraged to be on good terms

As the end of the academic year approaches and students begin to celebrate the end of exams, the University will be investing in some measures to help reduce the number of problems that could be encountered.

These will include a series of messages which will be sent to students in the lead up to the final weeks of term via social media, emphasising the need to be mindful of noise and disruption during nights out. All premises that received a visit from the Community Liaison Officer during the year will receive a backup message, highlighting the expectations described in the University's 'Community Guide'. First years preparing to leave University managed accommodation in May, will receive contact from this year's Student Community Wardens who will sign up students to receive the 'community updates' email throughout next year.

'Students On The Move' is a well established scheme which will involve a series of University subsidised refuse collections throughout June and July, to help with additional end of term waste. Other collections will focus on usable goods, including some food. If you see any additional waste placed outside (particularly at the start and end of the week), please be aware that It may be part of the scheme.

Term three is a short but busy term and residents are reminded that the Estate Patrol is able to assist with noise issues from premises at this time of year. They can be contacted 24 hours on 01392 723999.



The Longbrook Street Project

The Student Community Wardens worked alongside the student residents at the top of Longbrook Street recently to do some weeding and gardening. The scheme was partially funded and supported by the University, The Students' Guild and Cllr Keith Owen. The project concentrated on a small number of houses as part of a 'day of action' that also involved student volunteers gardening in Queen's Crescent. The tools were provided by the University Grounds Team, who also advised on a range of insect-friendly plants.

Nikita Frere, a Student Community Warden reported that 'The immediate impact has been really positive and the overall scheme has involved gathering feedback from tenants to help with future projects. The plan is to use what we have learned from this scheme to develop future projects on other parts of Longbrook Street and possibly other areas of St James'.

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ABOUT St James
A joint publication by Exeter St James Forum & Exeter St James Community Trust distributed to all households in St James Issue 3 Spring 2016



St James' Park Station Improvements

You may have noticed that St James' Park station was painted last year. The railing posts have been re-painted in red & white in celebration of the football club and all the shelters and notice boards painted in the green of the newly named Great Western Railway (GWR) who run the trains at the station. Funding has been awarded to the station for improvements to the shelters and for more seating.

A group of volunteers is creating planting areas at the station helped by Devon Wildlife Trust who have involved children at St. Sidwell's Primary School. They have been making seed bombs. These are balls of wild flower seeds, clay and compost to be thrown onto the banks – sounds like fun!

St James-On-Sea

Trains from the station run hourly to and from Exmouth and mostly hourly to and from the Paignton direction. It takes around half an hour to reach Exmouth, Dawlish & Teignmouth and an hour or so to Torquay & Paignton. The train travels alongside the Exe estuary and the sea, so the journey is as much an outing as visiting the seaside. Why not give it a try? Off Peak Day Return tickets are £4.30 to Exmouth or Dawlish and £6.70 to Paignton. Getting on at St James' Park station you can buy your ticket from the conductor on the train.

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DELIVERING THE NEWS AND STORIES AROUND AND ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Queen's Crescent Garden – spring is in the air

Bus Station – en route to traffic chaos

Students – digging in at Longbrook Street

KICKING OFF AT EXETER CITY?



Complete Elevation to Embankment

Local planning is for local people to decide and government will continue to ensure communities' views aren't sidelined, stated Brandon Lewis MP, Housing and Planning Minister, on 12 January 2016. Within a month, on 8 February, and in clear breach of our Neighbourhood Plan, Exeter City Planning Committee approved plans to build accommodation blocks for over 300 students as part of the redevelopment of the Football Club and Yeo and Davey site.

Residents met this decision with consternation and dismay. Having wholeheartedly embraced the neighbourhood planning process over a two year period, which culminated in a decisive referendum vote of 92% in favour, prior to adoption by Exeter City Council in 2013, they expected the Neighbourhood Plan's central rationale, that being to improve the balance of the community in the face of an ever increasing

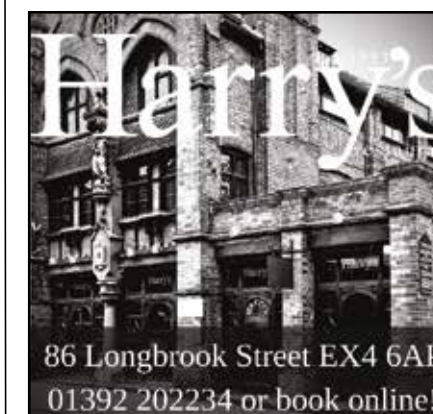
student population, to be respected. St James must be protected from the further development of purpose built student accommodation to even maintain the present balance, which is already tipped in favour of students. It appears that the views of local people, enshrined in their Neighbourhood Plan, are indeed being sidelined.

In addition to concerns about community imbalance objections have been raised about the scale and design of the proposed development.

Concerned that residents' legitimate aspirations for our community were being thwarted, the Forum wrote to the Minister at the end of February to alert him to the fact that the core policy of the Neighbourhood Plan had been so readily set aside. We have since been informed by the Department for Communities and Local Government that a Direction under the Town and Country Planning Order 2015 has been issued, preventing Exeter City Council from granting planning consent for the time being. The matter is now in the hands of the Secretary of State.

68 Bedroom Student Accommodation Development Proposed for St James

Flyers have been posted through doors in the Well Street area in the last fortnight, announcing the proposed redevelopment of City Service Station car sales site as yet more student accommodation. Visit the Homepage of the website for more information, and to watch for opportunities to make your views known.



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Copies of About St James issues one and two can be seen on the website.
Produced by Exeter St James Forum and Exeter St James Community Trust.

Queen's Crescent Garden brings out the best in our community!

Few in St James can have failed to notice the hive of activity Queen's Crescent Garden became this spring, nor the improvements that have been achieved in six short weeks since it was chosen as one of just 87 pocket parks nationwide to receive funding from the Government's Pocket Park Programme, with generous matchfunding contributions from many sources extending the achievements considerably.

The enthusiasm and level of support that has developed has been tremendous. As the sight lines were opened up by removal of shrubby vegetation, reducing the attractiveness of the space for anti-social activity, sections of stone and brick wall were restored and a new entrance into the Garden from Longbrook Street was created, interest of passers-by soared. The erection of a noticeboard, funded in large part by a welcome donation of £375 from John Lewis' Community Matters green token scheme, was essential if the builders were to be able to focus on the practical work instead of answering the questions of all who stopped to enquire and without exception express delight!

There has been a fantastic demonstration of goodwill starting with student residents of a house overlooking the garden taking hot cups of tea to the builders on the first cold, wet morning, through to valuable self-initiated neighbourhood watch when a brick-thief was spotted helping himself to bricks that had been carefully salvaged and cleaned ready for re-use. Fortunately only a few were taken. Donations of 100s of further bricks from local residents and Polish builders saved some £700 from the materials' bill.

It was a requirement of the Pocket Park award that the money was spent by the end of March, and now that the daily sound of chisel on brick has faded away, we are left to contemplate what has been achieved and to galvanise ourselves for the next phase, when the work on the walls will be completed and next steps of the project undertaken, eventually leading to the community's Masterplan coming to life in its exciting fullness.

We shall not be idle though! The sound of lawnmower has now replaced the hammer and chisel as our volunteer teams get to work. A group from the University's Environmental Society of Exeter Student Volunteers, descended on the Garden on 23 March to start the long job of forking and raking the borders, before enjoying what surely must have been the first informal picnic event of the year in the Garden! Much further work is required and the Project Group warmly invites anyone who would like to spend an hour - or more(!) - making a practical contribution to this



community project, to contact at info@exeterstjamesforum.org. Many hands will make light work, so do join in! Working parties will be arranged and details posted on the noticeboard and emailed to all on our contact list.

The fierce winds that were experienced during the work revealed it was not only sections of wall that were in a fragile state. The tall evergreen Lawson's cypress tree by the gated entrance from Longbrook Street scared the builders when it could be seen rocking at the base, and subsequently Devon County Council Highways called in experts who have decided the tree presents a danger to the highway, so must be felled within the next six months. The bill for this should rightly fall to the owner or leaseholder - Mr Nobody! - but once the Trust becomes the legal leaseholder, it will be financially responsible for the felling of any further trees should they be condemned.

For a fuller account of all these matters, including the generous matchfunding provided by local residents and organisations, as well as Devon County Council and national green services provider, Glendale, visit the QCG page at www.exeterstjamesforum.org, where information about the next steps of the project and opportunities to get involved, as well as events in the Garden, will be posted and updated as progress is made - so it's well worth your while checking back from time to time. Forum and Trust members will be notified by email of significant matters, so if you're not yet a member ...!



Top Left - Getting to the root of the problem. Clearing the old and tired shrubs was the first step in the recent works.

Top Right - Community spirit. Student volunteers start raking out stones and dead roots from the borders.

Middle - Longbrook Street entrance. This is the first of three set out in the Masterplan.

Inset - The new notice board has proved popular as a first line of communication with passers by. Watch this space!

Bottom Right - Time for tea and a deserved rest as student volunteers relax after their noble endeavours.

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Let's raise a glass to another new local



It has been good to see the doors opening at the St. Anne's Well public house in Well Street after its long closure and the accompanying uncertainty about its future. However since just before Christmas a warm welcome has been there for the whole community from landlady Terri Anderson and her daughter Sasha who are running this recently refurbished and renamed hostelry. It is a comfortable place to meet friends and there's a menu offering a range of pub favourites, available from 12.00 - 3.00pm and 6.00 - 9.00pm on week days and from 12.00 - 9.00pm on Saturdays. On Sundays Terri concentrates on providing both breakfast and a traditional roast dinner between 12.00 and 3.00 pm. All the food is cooked freshly on the premises. There is plenty of comfortable seating in the bar area and also a quiet and cosy snug a few steps above this, for those wanting a more secluded drink.

It is Terri's aim that the St. Anne's Well should be a real asset to the whole community and a place where residents can meet. Regular Quiz Nights are planned for Sunday evenings and as the days get longer and the temperatures rise, patrons can relax outside in a courtyard area. So if you haven't yet made a visit, then do pop into our new local at the heart of the St. James community and raise a glass. After all, it is very refreshing to witness the opening of a public house at a time when so many have had to close! Let's support Terri and make our community pub a success.



Powderham Crescent Goes Wild

Powderham Crescent Resident's Association has been grateful to receive a Community Grant from Exeter City Council, thanks to support from Councillors Keith Owen and Christine Buswell. The grant will go towards funding a project with Devon Wildlife Trust to encourage wildlife in the Powderham Crescent Garden. Bird and bat boxes will be put into the trees and habitats for hedgehogs, reptiles, invertebrates and small mammals will be created. Wild flowers and lavender will be planted to attract bees, butterflies and other insects. We should be able to see the effect in the summer and a second phase of work is planned for the autumn.



Traffic congestion in Longbrook Street

New Bus Station Concerns and Consultation

Although it's just outside St James, the bus and coach station development will have an effect on traffic in St James, as was detailed in the last issue of About St. James. As well as creating new shopping and dining opportunities, and closing Paris Street, the development includes a leisure centre, pool and a new bus station. The planned development has created much discussion in the community.

The new bus station will be smaller than the current one, meaning it is likely that not all services will have space to wait on this reduced site. The proposed solution is that some buses and coaches will use

new bus stops on nearby streets, in particular Sidwell Street, which has caused some concern about increased traffic problems and pedestrian flow. Buses waiting in the streets are likely to increase the traffic problems already experienced in the area. There is also concern whether facilities, such as waiting and drop off areas, will be adequate for bus and coach passengers.

There was a public consultation about the new bus station in early March and a more detailed design consultation will take place on Wednesday 18th May, from 8.00am to 7.30pm in the Guildhall.

Details of the development can be found at www.exeter.gov.uk/busstation and www.princesshay.co.uk/news-whats-on/news/have-your-say or search for planning application no. 15/0791/01 at exeter.gov.uk

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