

Experienced Fundraiser?

The Trust Board has recently reviewed its resilience and identified respective strengths and weaknesses. Always seeking individuals willing to serve the community as trustees/ directors, so fresh blood is introduced from time to time, it was agreed that the most pressing need was for a director with experience in fundraising, including

researching funding opportunities and completing bids as well as organising fundraising events in the community. The Board would be delighted to talk this through with anyone who might like to consider offering their time and expertise for the benefit of St James.

Please contact: [trust@exeterstjamesforum.org](mailto:trust@exeterstjamesforum.org)

Neglected planter to be transformed

Have you spotted this unloved planter?

When the Trust was asked by Cllr Kevin Mitchell to consider taking over the care of a large planter situated in the cobbled pavement by the junction of Blackall Road and Longbrook Street, the Board was quick to agree, recognising the benefit to St James to be gained from overturning the sad state of neglect. Our councillors are supporting an application for a ward grant for this purpose. We look forward to a colourful bulb display next spring by which time a technical condition assessment will be undertaken

and then a planting scheme for year round interest can be agreed.



A squirmy worm for your tea?

Here's an account by Nick Willatt of an excellent initiative he has been involved in:

"A squirmy worm for your tea?" This is part of what will be said on a sign in Bury Meadow inviting young children on a nature trail round Bury Meadow Park. It asks them to spot birds, the things they eat and the bird boxes that the Bury Meadow Residents Association have recently installed.

About two years ago we found that the wooden boxes we had installed previously were all disintegrating. When I volunteered to look into it I did not know what I had let myself in for! First of all I found that the "woodcrete" bird boxes which were both sustainable and durable were very expensive, ranging from £23 to £60 (owl box) and we needed thirteen of them. Then I found that I could not shin up the trees and nail them on myself as I had imagined. Oh no! I was led on an interesting adventure around the permissions needed, the full health and safety rules, advice from the RSPB, a contractor to place the boxes and

the council tree expert to advise on where and how to attach in a tree-friendly way.

However, Councillor Percy Prowse was very helpful in obtaining grants from the County and the City Councils from money designated for this kind of project. We put the project together with tree planting in the park and obtained £1,500.

I then looked into installing bat boxes but eventually we decided to go for a sign inviting children on a nature trail round the park. This was not simple either as it involved a fascinating tour around advice from the RSPB (again), council permissions, a surveyor to determine if there are any pipes or wires beneath the ground, a designer, a sign maker and a contractor to erect it. But as I write we have the go-ahead and I believe the sign will be there in the new year.

Now I am not only better informed, and less naive, but also feel proud to have been part of an effort to help our struggling bird population and raise children's awareness about nature, its challenges and what they can do to help.



COULD YOU MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ST JAMES?

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A TRUSTEE WITH FUNDRAISING SKILLS AND EXPERTISE

ARE YOU THAT PERSON?

Please contact: [trust@exeterstjamesforum.org](mailto:trust@exeterstjamesforum.org)

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A joint publication by Exeter St James Forum & Exeter St James Community Trust Distributed to all households in St James Issue 10 December 2019



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Ongoing Closure Threat Looms Over Highly Valued Business

The determination of a developer to build student accommodation on the adjacent sites of Wisteria House and Vanborn & Radford of Lion's Holt Garage at the bottom of Victoria Street, is a serious concern, not only for this business that has earned its enviable reputation for high quality and excellent customer service, but for the hundreds of loyal customers, including some who have been well served by the garage for over half a century. Facing the possibility of termination of lease is seriously unsettling for owner, Roger Backhouse, and his staff.

Many would agree with Roger's proud claim that V&R is 'far more than a garage'. It serves local residents, including the vulnerable, in many ways beyond the expected, and there is no doubt that the developer would face unparalleled community opposition in the fight against his plans, should he finally submit the anticipated planning application. Concern for the business is matched by concern over the developer's apparent disregard for St James Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and its principal aim to restore community balance. These issues were raised at the recent Have Your Say meeting where each of our city councillors vowed to fight any such proposal, together with the local community. We can rely on them once again to remind Planning Committee of the NP and the statutory status of its policies. News of the planning application, expected sooner or later, will appear on the Forum website; keep checking so you are ready to join the fight.



Powderham Crescent Facelift

Powderham Crescent is getting a face-lift thanks to a community project which sees University students working alongside long-term residents.

The project involves painting the Victorian railings that surround the garden in the centre of the Crescent. Since 29th September, volunteers have worked every Sunday morning from 10:00am till noon to clear the vegetation growing through the railings, prepare the metalwork and then apply fresh black paint. 32 people have been involved thus far, including 15 students.

"Many hands really do make light work", observed project organiser Jonathan Kirby, "so it's great to see so many people getting involved." Local resident, Lindsey Glanvill added "it's actually quite fun, working alongside other people, having the

chance to get to know your neighbours a bit better, including the students. They've been really committed and put a lot of time in. That's lovely to see."

"Paint the Railings" is a project supported by the University's Streetwise Fund and by city and county councillors through their Ward.



University students



Closure Order - Flat 4, 25 Old Tiverton Road, Exeter

The Neighbourhood Policing Team has listened to concerns from the local community regarding perceived drug dealing and Anti-Social Behaviour emanating from an address in Old Tiverton Road. Information was gathered from the local community and presented to the court on their behalf. Local police databases were also interrogated for intelligence and evidence to assist with a closure order. As a result Flat 4, 25 Old Tiverton Road, Exeter is now subject of a closure order pursuant to Section 80 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing

Act 2014. The magistrates concluded that the order is necessary to prevent the behaviour, nuisance or disorder from continuing, recurring or occurring.

As a result of this order only certain people are authorised to enter the property until 23 December 2019. PC Rob Deacock, our Neighbourhood Beat Manager commented "I would like to thank everyone who took time out of their day and came forward to provide information to the police in relation to this matter. Without this information it is unlikely that a closure order would have been granted."

CLOSURE ORDER





## Queen's Crescent Garden Project Update

### Plans Approved for Third New Entrance into Queen's Crescent Garden

Approval has been granted for Exeter St James Community Trust's planning application for Queen's Crescent Garden (QCG) developed from the Community Masterplan of 2014. Many supportive comments were submitted by the public during consultation. The plans seek to enhance the character of the Conservation Area and act as a stimulus to its wider regeneration. They address the internal infrastructure with sweeping paths leading through the garden with its central performance area defined by curved seating. To accommodate the change of levels and location of the underground Longbrook

culvert, the third and final entrance, from York Road near the corner with Queens Crescent, is designed as a generous stairway with railings that replace those on the boundary lost during the Second World War. These will be locally-fabricated and of distinctive steel square bar construction.

With these plans approved and a contractor appointed for the next phase, we can now look forward to the completion of the boundary restoration involving the creation of the final entrance as soon as schedules allow, using funding already secured. Meanwhile sources of funding are under consideration for the next phase - completion of the internal infrastructure.

### About St James invited business support - and what a response!

Complementing the ongoing regular maintenance work of our fantastic individual volunteers in Queen's Crescent Garden, there have been no fewer than four separate organisations this summer offering to provide working parties to undertake specific practical tasks.

First planned was the return of Clifton Emery Design for a repeat of last year's evening working party that the workforce had found thoroughly enjoyable. Sadly the weather didn't

play ball this year and the work eventually had to be abandoned for a later date. Next up was the University's Student Services Team. Members chose to spend the first half of their Community Challenge Day tackling the overgrown vegetation in the top corner. It was a very hot day (hard to remember now!) so the team were truly ready for the second half of their day litter-picking on the beach. University of Exeter Estates' Team spotted the call in the last edition of About St James and spent several hours continuing the work their colleagues had begun, making satisfying progress. They promised to come back next year, and also plan to recruit another University staff team to join in.

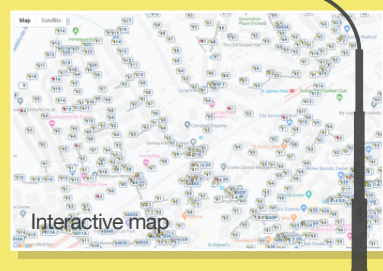
Finally St James was the lucky beneficiary of LDA Design's 40th anniversary celebrations. Each member of the workforce was given a day to spend working in the community and 20 from the Exeter office chose the QCG project. The Garden was a hive of activity all day and, continuing where the previous working parties had left off, they worked tirelessly to dig out old roots and clear long sections of the border, at the same time giving easy access to the footings of the sections of wall to be restored.



## Did you know that you can report a faulty street light or illuminated traffic sign online?

Just pinpoint the faulty street light on the interactive map on <https://www.lightsonindevon.co.uk/Public/ReportFault.aspx>

A useful feature of the interactive map is that it indicates when and where street lights have already been reported to Devon County Council. Clicking the "For Faults Only" button accesses a drop-down menu of possible faults such as "Light not working", "Light flashing", "Light on during the day time", "Light dim", etc. However if a street light is damaged it may be dangerous, especially if any wiring can be seen. In such cases, please call Devon County Council on 0345 155 1004 immediately so that they can make it safe as quickly as possible. They aim to attend to emergencies within two or 24 hours depending on the severity of the fault.



## Co Cars come to Powderham Crescent

### Having trouble parking in St James?

That's because you own a car, or maybe two cars. The average private car is parked for 95% of the time, and the average motorist spends time equivalent to four days a year looking for somewhere to park! One solution is to join a car club, like Co Cars, and rent a car cheaply and easily rather than own one.

Exeter-based Co Cars are expanding and now have a Toyota Yaris T-Spirit Hybrid available in Powderham Crescent, located at the St James' Park end. Membership of Co Cars costs just £25 per year, and gives access to cheap cars available by the hour from a number of locations in Exeter.

Local resident Jonathan Kirby comments "Having joined the club, and used the car on a number of occasions, I can thoroughly recommend it. I rented the Powderham Crescent car for a 2-hour shopping trip that involved Cowley Bridge and Sowton, the cost was £10.30 - far cheaper than a taxi, more convenient than using buses, and no problem parking when I got home."

## A big hole now filled - New Professional Graphic Design Support

Following the departure of Aylwyn Bowen, our professional graphic designer who generously gave of his time and expertise to the Forum and Trust for many years, we

are delighted to announce that Stevie King, graphic designer for Clifton Emery Design of Hem's Buildings and his team have been volunteered by the company to take on the art work of About St James. Thank you to Stevie and CED for this generous pro bono contribution!

CliftonEmerydesign

## Annual have your say meeting

The annual "Have Your Say" meeting held at St Sidwell's School on Wednesday 23 October attracted a bumper audience of local residents. The panel, chaired by the Forum's Anne Jobson, was made up of representatives from Exeter City Council, the University and our Devon County Council (DCC) and Exeter City Council (ECC) Councillors.

A lively question and answer session prompted discussion on a variety of concerns. Matters raised included: traffic congestion in York Road, particularly at the junction with Longbrook Street;

parking problems exacerbated by a lack of enforcement of car free designation for new developments; speeding, notably along Howell Road, New North Road and Well Street; the high concentration of student accommodation and associated issues of anti-social behaviour, late night noise and rubbish; and a disturbing absence of uniformed police presence in the city centre in the evenings, especially on Friday and Saturday nights when the High St was described as resembling a war zone

Apologies were received from the following who were disappointed not to be available to join the panel: Insp Simon Arliss and PC Rob Deacock (Devon & Cornwall Police), Simon Hill (ECC Cleansing & Fleet Manager), Rory Cunningham (Exeter University Community Liaison Officer), Chris Rook (DCC Traffic Management Team Manager) and Cllr Percy Prowse (DCC).

Questions for any of these individuals may be sent to:

[info@exeterstjamesforum.org](mailto:info@exeterstjamesforum.org)

