





EXETER ST JAMES
COMMUNITY TRUST LTD
a shared interest

IMPORTANT NOTICE FOR TRUST MEMBERS

Have you changed your address and/or email?

Let us know — email trust@exeterstjames.org with your new contact details.

NOT YET A TRUST MEMBER?

Sign up at www.exeterstjames.org




Join us — help to bring about improvement to our neighbourhood.

Maisaa Sweid Our Community Builder

Maisaa is the Wellbeing Exeter Community Builder for Duryard & St James and sends this message to everyone:

"Hello Lovely Community: In the past months I have had great conversations with residents through walk and talk, conversation cafés and listening exercises. The festive season is approaching, and what worked best in the past at this time of the year is getting together over food, music, decoration and lights."

For example: community get together with mince pies, Windows advent calendar or carol singing together. If you are thinking of any of these or have an idea for your community, please get in touch and I would be happy to support"

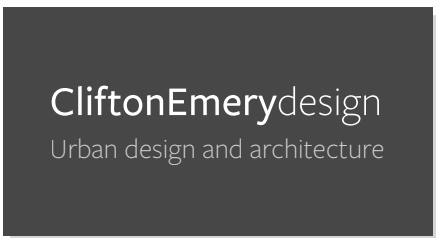
-  **Mobile:**
07746 472 581
-  **Email:**
duryardandstjamescb@eci.org.uk
-  **Facebook:**
Duryard St James CB

Litter picking

Residents from around the valley, including Thornton Hill, Velwell Road and Horseguards got together to do a community litter pick along Hoopern Valley path, supported by Exeter City Council staff and councillors, Maisaa from Exeter Community Initiatives and by students from Exeter University. It was also a lovely sociable occasion as the group finished up in Bury Meadow Park for coffee and cake! There was talk of making this a regular event so watch this space and please join in next year.

A huge thanks to all who took part – your hard work is much appreciated!







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DELIVERING THE NEWS AND STORIES AROUND AND ABOUT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD



Exeter
City Council

Supported by Exeter City Council New Homes Bonus



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Letting Signboards

In November every year (and actually mid- October this year) our streets are subject to a blooming of letting signboards, predominately on student houses of multiple occupation. Previously this annual proliferation was even worse, a blight on our streetscape lasting from November all the way through to the following Easter.

In 2014 Exeter City Council agreed a Protocol with Exeter Estate Agents Association to display less signboards in areas of the City, including St James, where there were excessive numbers. The Protocol encourages agents "to use internal signs behind windows or flat wall mounted signs in preference to flag or 'T' mountings" and restricts the number of signboards that can be displayed: "No 'Let by' or 'Let and Managed By' sign boards should be displayed, including for the fourteen day period allowed by law

No 'To let' signs should be displayed during July or August or by the same agent on adjoining properties."

The Council should follow up breaches of the protocol, so where you spot infringements do alert our City Councillors and/or the Council directly.



THE EXETER PLAN

Planning policies designed to deliver the City Council's vision for the City for 20 years - Time to have your say!

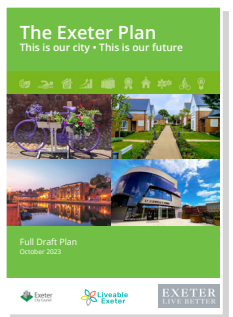
All development in Exeter is determined in accordance with the local Development Plan policies, comprising the Local Plan, originally designed for 1995 - 2011, the Core Strategy and, in St James, Exeter St James Neighbourhood Plan.

The City Council is consulting until 15 January 2024 on the full draft 'The Exeter Plan', a document intended to replace the Local Plan and Core Strategy, and as this will be used, if approved, until 2040 to decide whether planning applications large and small should be granted permission, the Trust suggests all residents and businesses alike would be

well-advised to find out what is proposed and let the Council know their views.

A series of public exhibitions have been running from October with the final two on 7 December at Positive Lights, Sidwell Street and on 12 December at Newcourt Community Centre, both between 1pm and 7pm. Planning officers will be in attendance to answer questions.

The consultation is primarily being handled online by Commonplace, but the documents including response forms may also be accessed at libraries across the City and at the Civic Centre.



Queen's Crescent Garden preparing for Winter

Thanks to the little group of volunteers who joined forces on Saturday, 11 November, an excellent start was made on cutting back old growth around the perimeter of the Garden, tidying it up before the winter sets in. There's more to be done. Extra hands on deck would

always be appreciated, so if you would be willing to help maintain our precious green space either regularly on the daily litterpicking rota, with mowing, or just an occasional couple of hours when a special working party is arranged, do let us know at cqg@exeterstjames.org.



Appeal **DISMISSED!**

Inspector cites **Neighbourhood Plan policies**

The good news for all who hold fast to the Neighbourhood Plan's (NP) vision of St James as a great place to live and work, with a balanced community of residents at all stages of their lives, not dominated by any single demographic group, is that the Appeal Inspector has upheld the City Council's refusal of an application for a 10 bed student accommodation in the rear garden of 47 Union Road. Amongst the policy reasons given by the Inspector were four specific NP policies across Community, Environment, and Design.

But the defence goes on

Whilst waiting for this decision, the same developer submitted a similar proposal for student accommodation in the rear garden of 70 Pennsylvania Road.



As this issue goes to press, the Council's decision is awaited. Officers will be taking note of the many objections submitted by local residents as well as the Trust,

and with the Inspector's decision above as a precedent, it is hoped that this will be refused and developers will realise St James' gardens are not fair game for development.

And on

Another applicant has proposed the development of a block of flats on two adjacent Longbrook Street rear gardens, currently being used without planning permission as a commercial car parking area. Within the Longbrook Conservation Area the Trust considers this particularly unsuitable. The Council's decision is awaited for this application, too.

Meanwhile

A proposal for a 101 bed 'Co-Living' development at the bottom of Victoria Street received 128 individual objections. Residents were not fooled into thinking this was anything other than student accommodation by another name. Residents Associations and the Trust urged the Planning Officers to refuse on multiple policy grounds. The consultation ended in September so a decision by the City Council is expected soon.



More information on each of these proposals may be found via the News Archive page on the Trust website.

Another **Whizz-Bang Affair**

Once again the Powderham Crescent Residents Association community came together on 5 November for its annual bonfire night celebration. Around a hundred residents, friends and student neighbours congregated in the central garden which was transformed by twinkling lights into a magical wonderland. Contributions of festive fare were soon devoured and washed down with copious amounts of the Crescent's now famous mulled wine! When the fire had died down a magnificent 20 minute firework display ensued to the accompaniment of stirring music. Another fabulous community event enjoyed by all.



Community-themed ice cream sets the tone in Freshers' Week

Armed with handouts encouraging consideration for the local community and explaining expectations of behaviour that fosters positive relationships, members of the University of Exeter's Student Community Engagement Officers drew passers-by into Queen's Crescent Garden where they were presented with an astonishing choice of free ice-creams each with a community-themed message.



This impossible-to-resist engagement tactic ensured time to talk about important community matters!



Prospect Park Residents Association

The Prospect Park Residents Association annual street party took place in October on a gloriously warm Sunday afternoon. Old and new residents were welcomed to the street – both permanent and student - with a BBQ, cakes and plenty of other homemade goodies. Entertainment in the form of giant outdoor games provided by the University went down very well with both adults and younger attendees. A huge thanks to the student Community Engagement Officers for their help on the day. Christmas activity planned for this year

includes the annual advent window event and some street carol singing, so look out for these.

The residents association has lots of new members with lots ideas around supporting the street and making sure that Prospect Park continues to be a great place to live. A new Neighbourhood Watch scheme covering Prospect Park has also been recently set up and PPRA would love to link up with other local schemes. Do get in touch with any of the members in Prospect Park if you would like to get involved in any of the activities.



Time to start planning a great 2024 Summer Event

Time never stands still and next summer will be here before we know it. The Trust is calling on local residents, businesses, community groups and organisations to consider now how you might contribute to a Summer Fete full of fun, interest and activity for all, while raising much needed funds for the next phase of regeneration of the Garden. We anticipate this will be held on a Saturday in June and hope to finalise the date soon. We know the Garden is recognised as a precious space by many; please put on your thinking caps and get in touch qcg@exeterstjames.org with ideas and / or offers to help to make it a community event to remember.

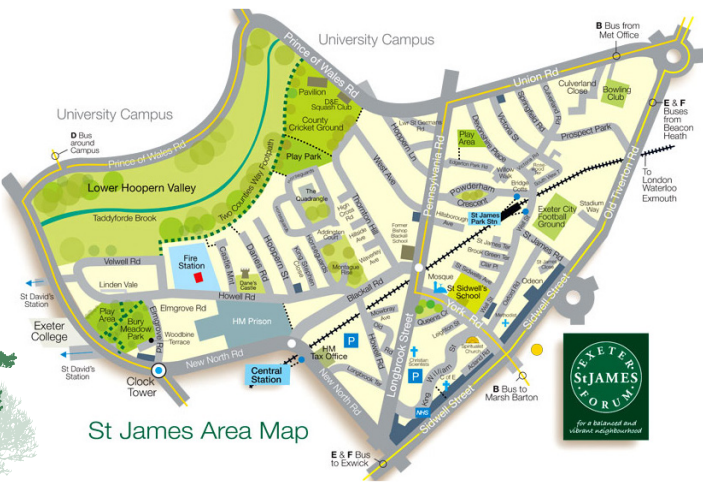
Lower Hoopern Valley - update

The previous issue of About St James explained that the University of Exeter was planning to conduct a second community engagement event in August over more detailed plans for the future of this very important large green space forming the northwestern section of St James.

This second stage was delayed but the University is now asking for comments on the draft designs that they are looking to implement over the next few years.

Information is available on their website:

www.exeter.ac.uk/sustainability/newsandevents/



Powderham Crescent Welcome Letter

For ten years or more, Powderham Crescent Residents' Association has delivered welcome letters to student houses. The letters give information about living in the crescent and on the reverse is the council refuse collection calendar which many students have said is very useful.

The letter also stresses the problem of noise in the crescent with its mixed community, many of whom need a good night's sleep prior to work or school – including students. Noise,

particularly at night, is amplified around the crescent, much of it not from residents but from students passing through or from houses in neighbouring streets. A shorter version of the letter, also with the bin calendar, is delivered to all houses in Hillsborough Avenue, Edgerton Park Road and on Pennsylvania Road between the two.

PCRA encourages students to take part in events and become part of the community.

Perhaps residents would like to get-together in their community and prepare and distribute a similar welcome letter!