

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 17th September 2009 at 7pm

Exeter Community Centre, St David's Hill

Everyone in the neighbourhood is warmly invited. We are having an Open Forum discussion, with Key Speakers on issues which may particularly concern you.

Refreshments from 6.30pm !

AGENDA	ITEM
6.30 -7pm	Refreshments Meet the Committee, friends and the neighbourhood policing team
7:00pm	Welcome from the St David's Neighbourhood Partnership Chair. Chairs Report for the year Treasurers Report Election of Committee 2009/2010
7:15pm	Rubbish Collections —hear from the Head of Exeter City Council Cleansing services about proposed reduction in black bin collections.
7:35pm	Properties left empty for long periods.
7:45pm	Exeter Community Centre: the future.
8:00pm	Grants available from Devon County Council's Locality Budget (£10,000).
8:10pm	Neighbourhood priorities for 2009/2100
8:30pm	CLOSE OF MEETING

If you have any issues you want raised at the meeting, please telephone 01392 211554 and leave a message with your phone number and we'll get back to you— or go to 'Have Your Say' on our own St David's Website at www.sdn.org.uk

We need YOUR help: Please join us (annual membership is just £3 per household/business). You can subscribe at the meeting or fill in the form on the back page.

Who Are We ?

The SDNP is a local group, open to all, which aims to promote the quality of life in the St David's area and to provide a collective 'voice' for the people who live and work here. Membership of the neighbourhood partnership is open to anyone who lives and works in the St David's area – from the Iron Bridge to the St David's Railway Station and all 'spine' roads in between. We also liaise with other active resident's associations around our area.

How Does It Help Me ?

Read on to get the latest news from our community and see the variety of things going on in our area.

Even better, come along to our AGM and help decide priorities for the next year.

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Update on the Community Centre

We are finalising our business plan and have setup a charitable trust with local people and tenants of the centre.

SDNP has been battling for years to prevent the closure and sale of this much loved and much used community resource. We are still in negotiations with Devon County Council to take over and manage the Community Centre on St David's Hill. DCC has now asked us to prepare a business plan to show how the Centre can be financially viable and how we would manage it. We are finalising the business plan and have also set up a charitable trust with local people and existing tenants of the Centre as trustees and have applied for funding for grants to refurbish the building itself.

The building was originally a residential school for the blind, until bought for community use in the 1960's by Exeter City Council. It had to be handed over to Devon County Council during local government reorganisation in the 1970's. Since then little has been spent on its upkeep or promotion. DCC proposed selling off the centre for development a few years ago. Planning permission was refused by Exeter City Council and since then the community has been fighting to ensure its future as a community resource.

Community use continues to show it as a going concern. It is structurally sound but needs re-roofing, re-pointing and electric re-cabling. These are essentials and taking over the centre will mean finding money for these upgrades (any generous philanthropists out there?!). The building continues to be used by the Global Centre, St David's Hill Preschool, Exeter College, Trades Unions, regional bodies and numerous other clubs and associations.

The community vision for the building is a multi-use centre. It would have a much needed branch for a doctors surgery, café, preschool, conference and meeting space, plus start-up 'hot desking' for businesses and services whilst retaining the Global Centre, the pre-school and the many clubs and associations that use the centre currently. The centre will be run by a board of local trustees.

You can help preserve this community asset by joining St David's Neighbourhood Partnership. The more members we have, the more St David's Neighbourhood Partnership can speak for the community. Write to your local DCC councillor, DCC Chief Executive and local MP supporting community ownership of this community asset.

Rubbish !

Bags are ripped open by seagulls leaving the area strewn with rubbish.

We are a densely populated city centre area with many houses in multiple occupation. Refuse collection and litter are issues often raised at SDNP meetings. Recently, concerns were raised about refuse arrangements for a new development nearing completion in the St Anne's Well Brewery site. There is also a regular problem of refuse being placed out days early, under the Iron Bridge and on the pavement by Dinham Rd . This is particularly distressing as bags are ripped open by seagulls leaving the area strewn with rubbish.

Our local DCC councillor, Phil Brock, has been working with ECC to sort it out and the Council's Environmental Enforcement Unit are investigating the continued "dumping" under the Iron Bridge to try to trace the culprit(s). Once this has been achieved they can make contact by letter with a warning of possible fines.

To date the Council have also letter-dropped in the area and Cleansing Dept have been in touch with the University as many of the houses in Lower North Street/ St Anne's Mews are occupied by students. Local residents will be continuing to monitor the situation.

Empty Houses In Richmond Road

With recurring problems of squatters and drug usage on the premises—local residents have long been concerned about the impact to the area.

20-22 Richmond Road have been empty for seventeen years! There have been recurring problems of squatters and drug usage on the premises. In the last year there have been a drugs raid and a small fire prior to squatters being evicted once more. Neighbours have long been concerned about the impact this has on the rest of the street. The properties are on the Council's 'Buildings At Risk Register' (BAR) and SDNP has been pressing for action. In the meantime, the owners have sold the property at auction to a property company - they have not yet decided what they will do with the premises but we will monitor progress and report back.

Let There Be Light

You may have noticed that the number of failed lights on the handrails of Miller's Crossing Bridge have increased over the years. In 2005 there were 12 not working, in 2006 there were about 24 not working. In 2007 this increased to over 36. In 2008 there were nearly 40 not working

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Each year we ask Devon County Council to repair/replace the lights but to date there hasn't been any action. In their latest email Devon County say: 'The problem has been with the ballast units that supply power to the lights in the handrail. These have been failing but it has not been possible to source replacements. The Council is therefore going to replace the lights with LED -type units as these are maintenance free for about 15 years and also very energy efficient. The intention is that they will be replaced before September this year ready for the coming winter.'

Let's hope the bridge, as featured in the BBC 'Spotlight' opening captions, will soon be returned to its former glory.

Bury Meadow Park

You may know that play equipment funded from Section 106 money (that's money from the developers of Richmond Yard and the Episcopal site) was used to add play equipment in Bury Meadow Park. The police recently held a fun day on Saturday 8th August in an effort to encourage local residents back into the Park after long periods when drug-dealing and other anti-social behaviour had taken hold. Unfortunately the process

All parties involved hope lessons will be learnt from how a positive change to a local park ended up creating bad feeling and disappointment in the community.

of consultation with the community over the play equipment was, in the view of many of those involved, rushed and tokenistic. Additionally the offer of support in conducting a full and wide ranging community consultation from a team of experts from a national charity was turned down by the Council. In view of all this SDNP made an official complaint to ECC regarding the poor consultation process and the way in which the equipment and its location was chosen. Following an exchange of letters and a meeting with the Chief Executive and other council officials they acknowledged that things could have been done better. At the core of community dissatisfaction was the feeling that in this project the council ethos had not taken onboard the national policy drive for community engagement and involvement and their 'duty to involve' the community.

All parties involved hope lessons will be learnt from how a positive change to a local park ended up creating bad feeling and disappointment in the community. SDNP hopes the 'duty to involve' will become central to the council's work with communities in the future. In the meantime, it is hoped that greater use of the Park will help discourage drug dealing.

Closure Of Rockside Footpath

The Rockside footpath was closed during the building work behind St David's School and diverted onto private land. Unfortunately the developer of the site has gone into liquidation so this diversion cannot legally continue. Nor can the original footpath be reopened as development work is not complete. Devon County Council (DCC) has taken legal advice and has put a new (longer!) diversion in place. Following a query from SDNP on behalf of local residents the following reply was received from the DCC area engineer:

DCC: " We are exploring what would be needed to reopen the route along Rockside...and will be discussing that possibility with the developers' receivers as a matter of urgency.

"We are exploring what would be needed to reopen the route along Rockside, or other alternatives through the development site and will be discussing that possibility with the developers' receivers as a matter of urgency. Together with Exeter City Council we will work to ensure

that any future owners of the development site are required to provide a suitable temporary alternative to Rockside footpath as soon as it is practical, and that they are required to reinstate Rockside footpath to appropriate standards as part of their development.

County Council Highway officers have met with the Local County Councillor and several local residents on site to explain the situation and hear local concerns. As a result additional signs and fencing are being provided. The receiver is aware of the vandalism problem and is taking action to secure the site and have a security presence.

It is accepted that there was inadequate information provided to the local community on the reasons for closing the temporary route through to Mount Dinham, and I apologise for this. As a result of the site meeting it has been agreed that regular updates on discussions with the receiver and future land owners will be provided to the local residents associations to keep the local community informed."

DCC Area Engineer, August 2009

St Davids Primary School—Sing Hey! For St David's

Earlier in the year the new Key Stage 1 building was officially opened by the Chairman of Devon County Council, the Bishop of Plymouth and the eldest and youngest children of the school. A brass band drawn from the upper year children performed a flawless rendition of Queen's 'We Will Rock You' (Rok were the builders !). The entire school sung a specially composed song 'Sing hey! for St Davids, we're proud to see you here today to celebrate and sing'. The new building has greatly enhanced the school.

Further improvements have been taking place over the summer holiday as the Key Stage 2 toilet block is being completely refurbished, and a shower added. Additionally, the outside area around the new Early Years building is being landscaped with a mini adventure trail, plus learning areas. Next term, improvement plans continue with new outdoor equipment in the front playground.

The new building has greatly enhanced the school.

This has all been made possible by last year's successful grant application to the DCC 'Investing In Devon fund', with support from our local county councillor.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

DIG IT ! PLANT IT ! EAT IT !

Families Food & Allotment Lunch Day Saturday 13 June 2009

On the day Buckingham Palace announced they had created their own 'allotment', Exeter's largest allotment site (Guys & Hylton) opened its gates to 100 guests who came along to discover what life on an allotment is all about. Several residents of St David's have plots on the allotments and guests from St David's were there too.

..Evaluations showed it had been a hugely successful community day. A big 'thank you' to all the volunteers and sponsors who supported the day.

Volunteer plot holders met and welcomed the guests, taking them on a tour of the site and to individual allotments. After their plot visits, the visitors had a busy programme of activities. These included a "sack mound" workshop with Ronnie Kazibwe from Uganda. He showed us how growing in a sack with a core of stones can produce a huge crop with minimum watering. His workshop was a huge success with adults and children alike and, thanks to a local farm supply company, we had plenty of hessian sacks to give away so that people without gardens or an allotment could go home and, inspired by Ronnie, could get started.

Other activities included digging up beautiful new potatoes to take home and cook; working on a plot, preparing the soil, sowing carrots, beetroot, peas and putting up bean poles for the runner beans; making our own pizzas with our choice of topping; learning about composting and wormeries with Exeter's Recycling Team and trying a gardening quiz. The evaluations showed it had been a hugely successful community day. A big 'thank you' to all the volunteers and sponsors who supported the day. A special 'thank you' goes to Christine Fraser who originated the idea and put such energy, enthusiasm and hard work into finding sponsors and making it happen.

The event was generously sponsored by Devon Community Foundation (GrassRoots Grant), Exeter City Council, Devon County Council's Locality Budget and Sutton's Seeds.

Wizard Of OZ—The Meaningful Occupation Project

The Meaningful Occupation Project (MOP) on St David's Hill joined with the local community and the Wolf and Water Arts Company to create, produce and perform an exciting musical. There was a cast of nearly 40 people in the show, all of whom live, study or work in the St David's Hill area. This has helped forge new friendships. Rehearsals were held at St David's Primary School. Marc Coulson, director of MOP used grants from the

"We really found ourselves crying with laughter for most of the show and being continually surprised with the twists and turns taken by the plot."

National Lottery, Devon and Cornwall Constabulary (thanks to our local PCSO's) South West Water, and Exeter City Council through the Exeter Shilhay's Meaningful Occupation Project. to initiate and support this exciting and creative production.

The show was held at the Barnfield Theatre 10th June to 12th June. Those who went to the show had an exciting and hilarious evening's entertainment! As one audience member said 'We really found ourselves crying with laughter for most of the show and being continually surprised with the

twists and turns taken by the plot.'

Well done to all those who took part and we all look forward to the next production
Read a full review of the play on SDNP website www.sdn.org.uk

YMCA—New Community Project Launched in Remembrance

A lot has been happening at the YMCA on St David's Hill. On Friday 19th June, Chef Michael Caines MBE and the Lord Mayor of Exeter attended the launch of a new community project at Exeter's YMCA - **Brenda's Kitchen and Exeter YMCA's Job Club**. This project aims to enable young homeless people and ex-offenders to learn skills that will help them to live independently and support them in seeking work.

Cooking classes will be offered as many young people who are forced to leave home and end up at the YMCA have little idea about how to prepare food,.

Brenda Bragg was a local community worker who tragically died in October 2008 after a long illness. Together Brenda Bragg's family, friends, colleagues and local companies have raised funds and carried out the works to completely revamp a dilapidated room at the YMCA. It now includes a new kitchen (Brenda's Kitchen) and meeting place. Cooking classes will be offered as many young people who are forced to leave home and end up at the YMCA have little idea about how to prepare food, especially healthy food. Chef Michael Caines MBE started off this process at the launch with a quick and easy cooking demonstration for residents of the YMCA and guests.

Another of the many important uses for this newly revamped facility is Exeter YMCA's Job Club, which aims to help ex-prisoners and homeless people access and sustain employment, training and education, as well as helping with issues such as budgeting. Job Club also aims to work with local businesses.

Neighbourhood Party

On the 22 April the residents at the Exeter YMCA Residential Centre in St David's Hill hosted a buffet party for the neighbourhood. The event, supported by a My Neighbourhood grant from Exeter City Council, was the idea of YMCA residents and neighbours in the area who thought it would be a great idea to bring together the different people who live in the vicinity, to build a greater sense of community, mutual support and understanding. About 50 people enjoyed a buffet supper together - a mixture of local residents and young people living at the YMCA. Neighbours had the opportunity to look round the Residential Centre, and also got to hear the moving stories of some of the people who live there. Well done to the young people who put the event together. They put in a lot of effort in and made it a great success.

Retirement of John Henton, Rev for St David's and St Michael's

A familiar face to many - John Henton retired in July after 18 years as vicar of St. David's and St. Michael's Parish.

During his time in the parish he oversaw the updating and refurbishing of the interior of St. David's Church, together with the tidying of a section of the churchyard, which has since been used regularly for community events. As vicar he quickly built strong links with the local schools- especially St. David's School. The clergy team now help every week with school assemblies, and the children are welcomed into both St. David's and St. Michael's for their regular and special services. Through his pastoral presence in the playground, he encouraged folk to come to Family Services, and to have their children baptised.

"We will miss his distinctive presence in this community over such a long time"

But more than anything, he has been loved and valued as a caring priest, who was not afraid to take risks in order to further the Christian gospel. He leaves both churches with strong, vibrant congregations - people who have deepened their faith and their confidence through his encouragement.

He retires to live near Thorverton and we wish him well in all his ventures.

COMMUNITY NOTICES

APPEAL FROM EXETER SAMARITANS

The Exeter branch of the Samaritans is based in St David's and they are looking for new volunteers. If you would like to make a difference or have ever thought you're a good listener, you could help. You need to be able to give, on average, three hours a week and one half night a month. The first step is to attend an open evening at the friendly branch at 10 Richmond Road (01392) 411711. There you'll learn a lot more about what being a Samaritan entails, and about how they train and support volunteers. There are regular Open Evenings and training courses throughout the year, just call for details. There is also a website where you can learn more: www.samaritans.org

COMMUNITY CRIME FIGHTERS AUTUMN ROAD SHOW, PLYMOUTH

If you work alongside your police, council or housing association locally, or are interested in making sure your community is a safe place to live, you may like to attend one of the FREE Community Crime Fighters training events taking place this Autumn.

In the South West the Community Crime Fighters training is taking place in Plymouth on **Tuesday 15th September**. The day starts at 9.30 am and will be finished by 4pm. The event is **free** to attend and lunch and refreshments will be provided. **Help is available with travel costs** if required. To book a place please call the Community Crime Fighters registration desk on 0800 197 2965. You can also book electronically at: www.communitycrimefighters.org.uk quoting booking reference CCF02. This event is open to people who are over the age of sixteen and not in full time education.

FANCY TRYING SEQUENCE DANCING?

Sequence Dancing (which includes foxtrot, quickstep, waltz etc.) is a wonderfully social activity where all the dancers do the same steps in different formations and often changing partners as they go. The Sequence Dancing Club is St Thomas is very friendly, open to beginners and there is plenty of parking. They would welcome new members. Interested? Ring Pauline Borham on 01392 411547 for more information. Sequence Dancing is held every Thursday 7.30 – 10.15pm at Bowhill School (formerly John Stocker) in Buddle Lane and is just £2.50 a session.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

EXETER CITY COUNCIL (noise, housing, graffiti)	01392 277888
POLICE (in emergency call 999)	08452 777444
COMMUNITY PATROLLERS (Exeter City Council out of hours service)	08453 511060
CRIMESTOPPERS (national report line)	0800 555 111

COMMENTS ON YOUR NEWSLETTER?

Write to Kelvin Lacy, 4 Queens Terrace, Exeter EX4 4HR
or email: admin@sdpn.org.uk

This edition of the newsletter was generously printed by the Shilhay Community as part of their Meaningful Occupation Project for homeless or vulnerably housed adults.

JOINING OR RENEWING MEMBERSHIP FORM

We welcome new members. Membership is £3 per household/business at whatever point in the year you join. Your membership donation is vital to help us pay the costs of hire of meeting rooms, running the website and printing the newsletter.

Application for
Membership 09/10
April 2009 – 31 March 2010 (Year 6)

St. David's
NEIGHBOURHOOD
PARTNERSHIP

Contact Name

Business/Group name (if applicable)

Address.....

Postcode.....

Telephone.....

Email.....

The household, community group or business above applies for membership of the St David's Neighbourhood Partnership for 1 April 2009 – 31 March 2010.

Signed on behalf of household or business.....

Date.....

Number in household over age 18.....

Number in household under age 18.....

(numbers in household will only be used as a total area figure to show approx how many people the Association represents, as well as the number of households)

Please hand in this sheet at any SDNP meeting with **£3 membership fee for Membership Year 6**, or send to:

The Treasurer, St David's Neighbourhood Partnership
c/o 2 St David's Hill, Exeter EX4 3RG

For queries, or more information about SDNP and how you can get involved, please call:
Hannah Reynolds 01392 421869

The St David's Neighbourhood Partnership is a voluntary organisation run by local residents, community groups and businesses. Any help you can give will be most welcome.