



Neighbourhood Profiles: Exwick

Introduction

Welcome to Exwick! This neighbourhood profile draws on the work of the Wellbeing Exeter community builder in Exwick, to bring you a community's eye view of the neighbourhood and what happens in it. You'll not find statistics here on demographics, health, education, etc. Please read this alongside the fantastic [JSNA Community Health and Wellbeing profiles](#), which provides a wealth of quantitative data. Our focus here is on local knowledge: what is it like to live here; what informal community activity is there; where are the important community focal points; what's missing, or of concern to local residents. This is a snapshot rather than a directory, so may not have exhaustive listings (although we've done our best to avoid errors and omissions). It aims to highlight community strengths, and not-so-strengths, and to provide an informed commentary on the health of community life. We've included some brief case studies from the work of the community builder, to give a sense of what this work can involve and highlight the kind of community action going on in Exwick. We hope you find it useful.

I'm not a resident in Exwick, so had little connection with the area prior to my work as a Community Builder. It has been fascinating finding out about the history of the area and I've really enjoyed getting to know the Community. I've met some inspiring individuals along the way and have found people very welcoming and supportive.

My role as a Community Builder is to listen to residents, to find out how they feel about where they live and discover what ideas they have to make their community a better place to live, things about which they feel passionately enough to take action on. I help connect people with each other around a shared idea and support community activities that will benefit local people. Another part of my role is to let people know about the existing groups and activities happening locally and help to link individuals into groups that they are interested in.

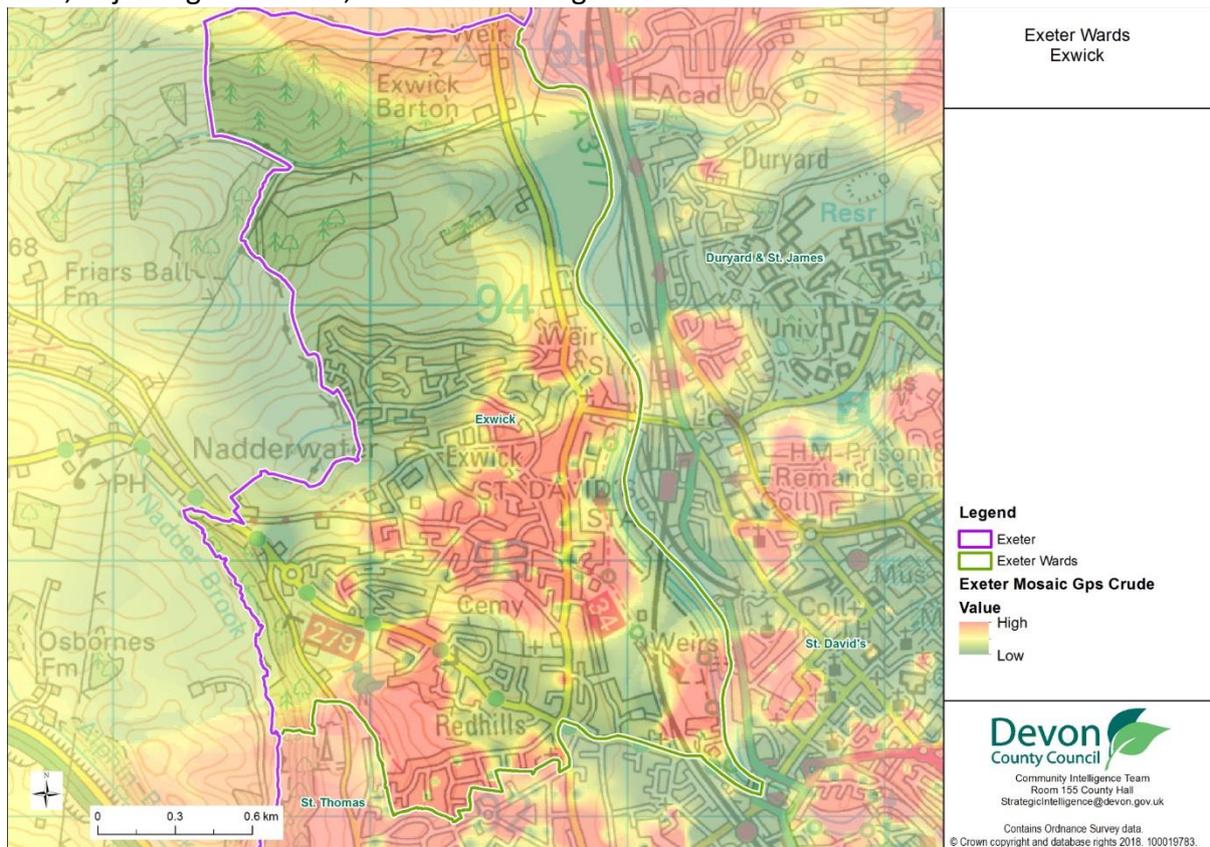
Picture of a Place: Natural communities vs ward boundaries

Exwick is an area very much defined by its geography. It's quite a hilly area, perched on the edge of the city, and bordered on the other side by the river and the railway line. As a result, residents tend to focus on a series of local centres. The first is the area to the north of the ward, around Kinnerton Way, home to the Community Centre. Then there's the area that runs either side of Exwick Road (parts of the old village from St Andrew's Church to the Thatched House Pub) running parallel to the river. The middle section is located around the

shops on Winchester Avenue (originally the drive to Cleve House) and then there's the Redhills area, bordering and interacting with western areas of St Thomas.

There are two primary schools, Exwick Heights and Redhills, an Anglican church (St Andrew's), Exwick Community Church and New Hope Baptist Church. A Hindu community meets for worship the first Saturday of each month. The area is also home to Exwick Ark Nursery and out-of-school club.

Below is a heat map showing Exwick Ward (outlined in green and purple), and indicating the relative risk of frailty for the population (red is higher risk). Central Exwick, and the Redhills area, adjoining St Thomas, are the areas at greatest risk.



Green/public spaces

There are three sets of **allotments**: Guys and Hylton, which are adjacent to each other and cover an area of 14 acres, and the much smaller Rackfields.

There is also green space along the flood relief channel.

Exwick Playing Fields, managed by Exeter College. Sports hub: hosts the First Steps Running Group, and a Couch to 5k. Exwick Tennis Club is also based at the Sports Hub, and offers regular tennis-playing opportunities for adults and juniors, in partnership with Exeter College, along with professional training for students throughout the year. The Exeter City Community Trust also run football courses suitable for all abilities for children aged 5-14 years during the school holidays, as well as other football events, such as the schools' world cup. A regular weekly session in Exwick is starting soon.

Exwick Cricket Club: Open to men and women, meets to train weekly at Exwick playing fields on Thursday evenings between May and August. They play competitive local matches both home and away. The club has future plans to build some permanent outdoor cricket nets and are in preliminary discussions about building a cricket pavilion with community access, which would include meeting rooms.

Kinnerton Way MUGA is adjacent to the community centre.

The area also has a number of **small play areas**, at: Gloucester Road, Burrator Drive, Station Road, Cemetery Fields Play Area, Haccombe Close, Lavender Road, Addison Close Hylton Gardens play areas. It has been recently announced that five of these have been scheduled for closure by the City Council. The location of a new 'destination' play park in Exwick/St Thomas has yet to be determined.

Flowerpot Playing Fields, also managed by Exeter College. With changing facilities, etc. The Flowerpot Chill Zone is home to a skate park, and also has trampoline and basketball facilities.

Whitycombe Way Nature Reserve, managed by Exeter City Council.

Part of the **Exeter Green Circle** runs through Exwick. The Green Circle is a twelve mile walk within the boundaries of Exeter – The route goes through green countryside, valley parks and quiet leafy suburbs. The Exwick section, detailed, in the Redhills Leaflet, takes in **Barley Valley Nature Reserve**.

Spreading the word: how do people connect?

Exwick News is a free community magazine, set up by a local resident with support from the community builder in January 2018. Councillor Rob Hannaford agreed to fund the first three editions with a grant from Devon County Council and the first edition was distributed in April 2018. It is distributed free to households throughout the area by volunteers and can also be picked up at shops, the two Health Centres and other local community hubs. It carries articles on local issues and features on local organisations as well as advertising and listings. The publication is now self-sustaining through advertising revenue.

Facebook groups: Exwick, Exwick CB, Exwick News, Exwick Community Association, Exwick Parish Hall.

Noticeboards:

Exwick Parish Hall, Exwick Community Centre, Tesco on Kinnerton Way, outside the Funeral Directors on Exwick Road. In Entrance of St Andrew's Church and in Andy's Café (next to St Andrew's Church). Foxhayes Surgery and Exwick Health Centre.

Both **schools** are really supportive in helping to share information about events or activities by putting up posters. Exwick Heights share information about events with parents electronically and although Redhill's School don't currently have this system have sent flyers home with children, which I provided. The Thatched House Pub and the Fish and Chip Shop on Exwick Road are happy to display posters. The Exwick Pantry are also happy to display posters for local events in their window, and they hold copies of the Exwick News.

Community Hubs, and what happens in them

Community hubs can be buildings, spaces, organisations, even people. They can be community-owned and run, council property, and commercial businesses. What they have in common is that they bring added value to the activities and energy associated with them by bringing people together in ways they might not otherwise do, being a focus for local expertise and connection, and facilitating the casual encounters that fuel fantastic community action.

Exwick has a community centre and a well-used Parish Hall. It is worth bearing in mind that, owing to the topography of the ward, not all residents feel these venues are accessible for them.

Exwick Community Centre: Slimming World, Crafty Crafters, Exwick Tots (baby and toddler group run by mums), Chat, Chill and Play (after school drop-in group), over 60s Keep Fit, Karate. Exwick Youth Council is also based here and have a weekly Youth Club which runs when funding is available. Exe Movement, a fledgling youth dance and physical theatre initiative, has operated from here. It is not currently running, but the organisers are exploring further funding options. A pop-up Community Café runs once a month alongside the Craft Group, which provides an opportunity for residents to meet their community builder, to find out what's happening locally and share ideas for the community.

Exwick Parish Hall –Exwick Community Church, which is a Baptist church, meets here for Sunday worship, and runs events such as Messy Church, Friday Friendship (a drop-in social group aimed at people of all ages, including parents and carers with young children). Other groups include: Keep Fit, Fit Steps Fab, Pilates, Ballroom and Latin dancing classes, bingo, even dog training. The Exwick Community Singers and Mama and Baby Postnatal Yoga also use the Hall. In 2015 the Parish Hall Committee carried out the Exwick Life Survey using questionnaires to find out how people felt about their Community.

Exwick Community Association:

This group has re-formed over the last year; although not formally reconstituted, the group meets regularly and has organised some local events. These include the summer fair in which they joined with St Andrew's Church and Exwick Community Church. They have also organised a Community Litter Pick and BBQ. Future plans include a planting project around Exwick Community Centre and the 2019 summer fair.

Thatched House Pub: hosts informal resident meet-ups, such as a small group who meet regularly to play scrabble, and another who are keen on canasta. A walking group also uses this as its base, and an informal drop-in depression and anxiety group also meets here.

Village Inn: Has regular Karaoke Nights and Darts evenings. It also allows the pub to be used for community meetings and the informal walking group meet there after their walk on Saturday mornings.

Andy's Café: A community Café attached to St Andrews Church (open every Wednesday 11am-2pm). The café space is also used for a weekly AA meeting and community events and meetings.

What else is happening?

The **Flow** project with help from local residents planted trees and fruit bushes along the River Exe in this part of the city. This has created a ribbon orchard for foraging and helps support wildlife. The Flow project has also run two Wassail events in Exwick and St Thomas, where the community comes together with storytelling, music, singing and refreshments.

The **Girl Guides** have weekly sessions after school at Exwick Heights School. Brownies runs on a Thursday night, for girls aged 7-10 years and Guides runs on a Tuesday night, for girls aged 10-14.

The local PCSO has organised a **Community Action Day** on Farm Hill around the Foxtor Road area (northern Exwick). This included a litter pick and rubbish clearance, as well as kids' activities and a BBQ.

The **Exwick Sunflower Competition** was set up by some local residents to help strengthen and bring the community together through growing sunflowers. They organise two annual events; the first is the launch of the Sunflower Competition in April, held in the Parish Hall. Free sunflower seeds are available, along with children's activities, and singing from two local choirs, as well as Cream Teas. The second event is the End of Summer Party, where the competition winners are announced. This is a barn dance in the Parish Hall, where people bring food to share.

Councillors' Support in Exwick

The Councillors in Exwick have been very supportive of Community Building and in helping the small groups and initiatives that are emerging by providing funding through the Exeter City Councillor's Ward grant and Devon County Council's Locality grant funding schemes. Grants have been awarded to a variety of groups and activities, including:

- Exwick News – production of the Community Magazine
- Gardening Project at Iveagh Court (supported accommodation)
- Autumn in The Park - a local resident who has organised a number of family events in her local park.
- Exwick Parish Hall – to help support Exwick Summer Fete.
- Crafty Crafters Craft Group that meet at Exwick Community Centre
- Exwick Tots – local toddler group, run by volunteer mums.
- Exe Movement – Free Dance and Movement classes for 10 to teens.
- Exwick Sunflower Competition.
- Chat, Chill and Play – an after-school drop-in group for parents/carers and their children. Volunteer-run, by a local mum.
- Exwick Community Association- Planting Project.
- Curiosity Club – Community Learning Group.
- Exwick Community Church – Community Action Day

Where are the gaps and concerns? What potential for the future?

Residents are deeply concerned about the lack of **youth provision** in Exwick, particularly for teens. There is also a great deal of concern about the proposed closure parks in Exwick and the lack of play equipment.

Parking is a particular issue for those living around Exwick Heights School and on the bend in Gloucester Road, where parents and carers dropping and collecting children from school park their cars on the pavement and block residents' driveways. Local people are also concerned with the number of speeding vehicles, particularly along Exwick Road and Kinnerton Way, and the number of commuters who work in the city or travel from Exeter St Davids and park in the area, putting pressure on spaces for residents.

There is growing concern about the amount of **drug-use and dealing** in the area. Needles have been found in local parks and near bus stops. Residents have commented on a particular area by the river at Flowerpots under the railway bridge, where people congregate.

There are additional concerns around proposals to build more houses in fields around the Farm Hill Area.

Residents would like to see more of a variety of **exercise** classes, such as Tai Chi and Yoga in the area. There is also a growing number of residents who would like to have the Free Moovement exercise sessions in a local park or greenspace in Exwick. A local resident has now been trained to deliver this and a taster session is happening shortly.