



## Welcome!



Welcome to the festive edition of the Exeter Connect Newsletter. This month we are celebrating the success of The Big Exeter Feast. Over 80 people attended from the VCSE sector to explore how food can be made more accessible, affordable, healthier, sustainable and celebrated in Exeter - go to page 1 for all the details.

We have an Exeter Connect website update, it's all the same great content, all that's changed is the web address! Check out the new website here [www.eci.org.uk](http://www.eci.org.uk)

Don't forget our SEE network Christmas event Wednesday 13th December 12 - 2pm at the MIDI music centre - go to page 5 to book your place!

On behalf of all of us all at Exeter Community Initiatives and Exeter Connect, we would like to wish everyone a happy, healthy festive season and a prosperous New Year!

*Dawn & Johanna*

**Exeter Connect**

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# News

## The Big Exeter Feast Success!



More than 80 people from Exeter's VCSE sector and 20 local food businesses attended the Big Exeter Feast to explore how food can be made more accessible, affordable, healthier, sustainable and celebrated in Exeter.

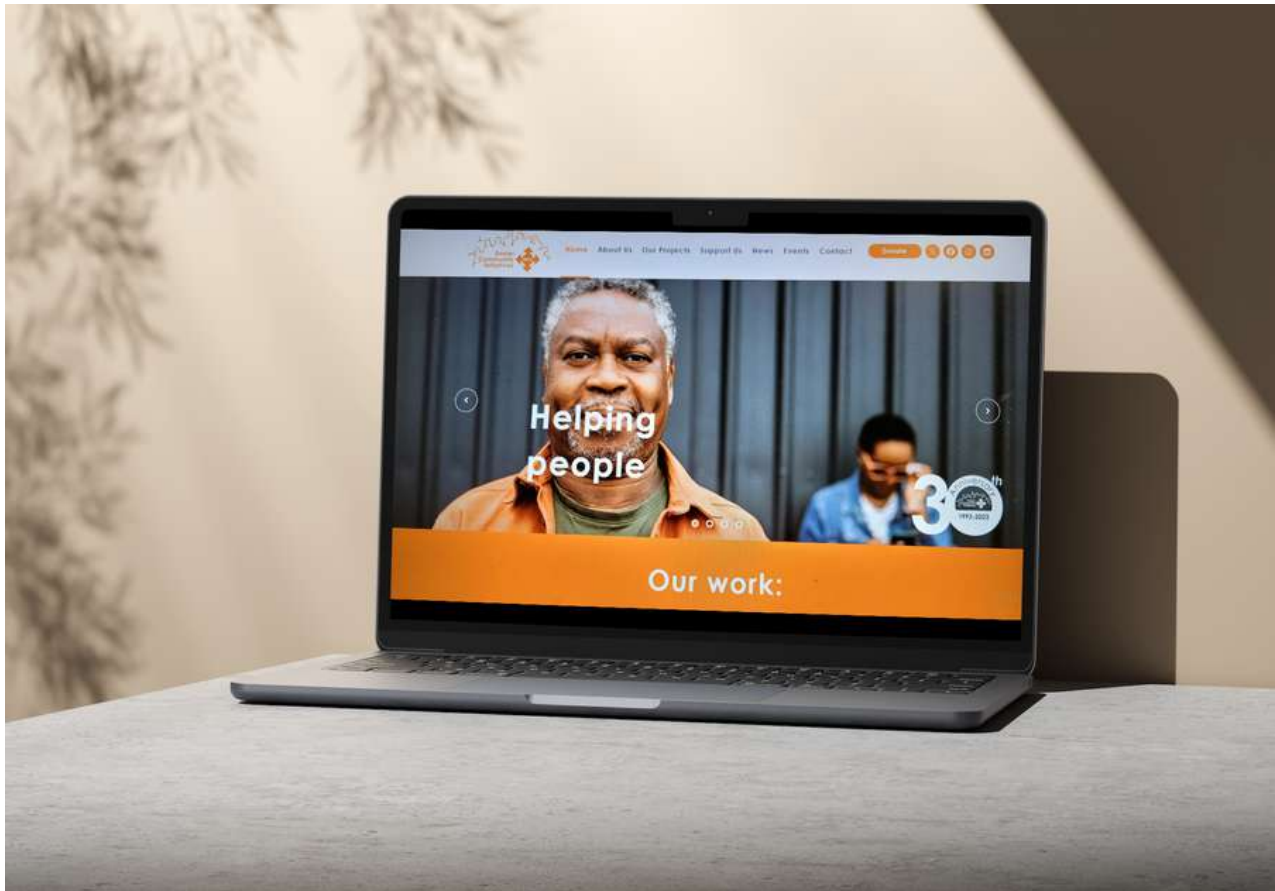
With only 2% of locally grown food sold directly into Exeter and 35% more people using Exeter Food Bank than last year we discussed what an integrated and eco-food system in Exeter might look like; and what partnerships and local groups and organisations can do to turn the vision into a reality.

Lots of amazing ideas came out the conference and the hope is partnerships can be formed to create a city food system in Exeter that works in partnership to make healthy and sustainable food a defining characteristic of where people live.

Thank you to everyone who contributed on the conference day and a special thanks to the organisations that help make this conference happen!



## Exeter Connect has a website update!



Exeter Connect is a project of local charity, Exeter Community Initiatives (ECI). ECI's website has had a refresh which includes merging all its microsites - including Exeter Connect - into one mobile-friendly platform so people can better access information and support across all of its projects.

Don't worry, we will still have the same great content, all that's changed is the web address!

Check out the new website here [www.eci.org.uk](http://www.eci.org.uk)

You can sign up to our Newsletter, the volunteer directory and see all our latest events!

### Sign up to Exeter Connect's Newsletter

[sign up >](#)

## Have your Say on the future shape of Exeter



Have your say on the future shape of Exeter, including housing developments, green spaces, workspaces and community facilities.

Exeter City Council is preparing the Exeter Plan, a new local plan which will shape the future of the city for the next twenty years. The Exeter Plan will be the main planning policy document for Exeter, setting out where development should take place and providing policies that will be used to make decisions on planning applications.

From 23 October 2023 until 14 January 2024 the Council is consulting on a Full Draft of the Exeter Plan. It contains the vision for the future of Exeter, a complete set of draft planning policies and potential development sites for public comment.

To have your say and get involved in the consultations scan the QR code or

- Go to <https://exeterplan.commonplace.is/> to view the interactive and accessible Full Draft Exeter Plan and respond to its proposals online.
- Please send all response surveys, other correspondence and enquiries to: [Planning.policy@exeter.gov.uk](mailto:Planning.policy@exeter.gov.uk)
- Local Plans team on 01392 265080



ECC encourage you to respond to the consultations online. However, if you need paper copies of the consultation documents or surveys, these are available at;

- Exeter City Council Customer Service Centre, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter Monday to Friday, 9.00-14.00
- Public libraries in Exeter and Topsham
- Attend exhibitions, Further details including the locations and dates of the exhibitions will be released on the Council's website and social media channels during the consultations.

Please pass this communication on to anyone else you think might be interested in the Exeter Plan.

## Council Tax Support Scheme 2024-25 Consultation

Exeter City Council would like you to share your views on a proposed plan to give care leavers a 100 per cent discount on their council tax. The aim of the plan is to financially support them whilst they develop independent lives and life skills.

To qualify the care leaver must be:

- up to the age of 25,
- living in the Exeter district,
- and be looked after by Devon County Council.

### What is the proposal?

The council are proposing to introduce a class of support within the working age scheme to award 100% council tax support to care leavers looked after by Devon County Council, up to age 25.

For more information click [here](#)

Please share your views by completing this short questionnaire.

Alternatively you can write to:

Council Tax Support 2024-25 Consultation, Exeter City Council, Civic Centre, Paris Street, Exeter, EX1 1JN

The consultation closes at midnight on 12 December 2023



## Social Enterprise Network



**Wednesday 13th December 12 - 2pm**

Location: Coombe Street, Exeter, EX1 1DB

- A very special, strictly fun only festive get-together! At the MIDI Music Centre with the chance to indulge your mental well-being in a bit of creative expressionism!
- Allan of Shumba Arts will be facilitating a drumming session!
- A gathering for like-minded socially enterprising folk to share some peer support and look ahead to the new year Indulge in some festive treats and refreshments

Please contact:

dawn.eckhart@eci.org.uk or exeterconnect@eci.org.uk for more details

**Book via Eventbrite [here](#)**

# Funding

## Gibbons Trust



The Trust Deed of the David Gibbons Foundation has grants available for:

- People that are physically or mentally unwell, disabled, or affected by learning disabilities.
- People suffering from financial hardship and the elderly

Within East Devon and the County of Devon, in any manner as the Trustees may decide.

More info click [here](#).

Email: [enquiries@gibbonstrusts.org](mailto:enquiries@gibbonstrusts.org)

Closing date is 5th January 2024

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## Exeter Community Energy



Exeter Community Energy have now opened to applications for the sixth year of ECOE's Community Fund, in which we are offering £5,000.

The fund is available for local community groups to apply for financing for projects that help to save energy and/or help to alleviate fuel poverty.

**To apply for a Community Fund grant, you must complete and submit an application form. You can download the application form from [here](#) and return it to [info@ecoe.org.uk](mailto:info@ecoe.org.uk) by 15th December 2023**

If you have any queries email [info@ecoe.org.uk](mailto:info@ecoe.org.uk)

For examples of projects that have previously successfully gained funding, [visit this webpage](#).



# Funding

## Lloyds Bank Foundation

Grants for specialist charities – 3-year unrestricted grants of up to £75,000 are available to strengthen the capacity of registered charities in England and Wales with an annual income of between £25,000 and £500,000.

**LLOYDS BANK  
FOUNDATION**  
England & Wales



Charities must be specialising in one of the following fields: addiction, asylum seekers and refugees, care leavers, domestic abuse, homelessness, offending, sexual abuse and exploitation and trafficking and modern slavery.

The programme opens to applications on Wednesday 1st November 2023 with a deadline for applications of Thursday 25th January 2024. For more information click [here](#)

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## VCSE Energy Efficiency Scheme Coming Soon

Eligible organisations can apply for the cost and delivery of an independent energy assessment. This will help identify how to reduce bills through measures such as improving or installing new energy features in the building, or changing how energy is used. This assessment will be useful to organisations whether or not they apply for the second element.



Organisations with an energy assessment may then be eligible to apply for a capital grant to support the cost of installing recommended energy efficiency measures in their premises

Full eligibility criteria will be published when the scheme opens, but organisations must be based in England, be a voluntary, community, and social enterprise, deliver frontline services and not be suitable for blended finance or loan support through other schemes. Priority will be given to organisations for whom energy is the biggest concern and those directly supporting individuals and communities with critical needs, particularly those related to the rising cost of living.

Sign up to be alerted to when the scheme opens for applications [here](#)

- Applications for free independent energy assessments will open in December 2023.
- Applications for the installation of energy efficiency measures will open in January 2024.

Practical support will be available to help organisations manage capital installation projects. All measures will need to be installed and paid for by March 2025.

For more information visit: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/vcse-energy-efficiency-scheme>



## We need you!

To help us move things forward on food related matters in Exeter, we need your feedback!

If you haven't had a chance to give us your feedback from The Big Exeter Feast then please click the link [here](#) or scan the QR code below to fill out the form.



## Useful Information

- If you would like to be part of our Volunteer Directory then please fill out the form [here](#) and send an up to date logo to [info@exeterconnect.org.uk](mailto:info@exeterconnect.org.uk)

Need advice on:

- Structures
- Governance
- Constitutions
- Recruiting and managing volunteers
- Managing buildings
- Insurance

Visit our NEW website: [www.eci.org.uk](http://www.eci.org.uk)  
Our resources page has plenty of information to support you.

## Who we are

Exeter Connect is a project of Exeter Community Initiatives. We are a voluntary and community sector support service providing free one-to-one mentoring and advice; training and events; and networks to help community groups in Exeter develop and grow.

We have a vision to make Exeter a place where residents, community groups and

organisations can make a positive difference in the places where they live and work.

Whatever stage you are at with your project or community group, we can help on topics such as:

- Starting up a group
- Organisational health checks
- Funding support
- Business planning
- Role of Trustees

Get in touch via the contact details below.

 Exeter Connect, 148-149 Fore Street, Exeter, EX4 3AN  
 01392 205800  
 [exeterconnect@eci.org.uk](mailto:exeterconnect@eci.org.uk)  
 [www.eci.org.uk](http://www.eci.org.uk)



**Exeter**  
City Council



Registered Charity Number: 1026229  
Registered Company Number: 2844870 (England)