

# **St Thomas**

**Community Newsletter November 2025** 



# Hello from Amy!



Welcome to the Winter edition of the St Thomas Community Builder newsletter! My role is to map what resources exist, create new networks and connect people and opportunities. I also support people to grow their own ideas and try new things together to help improve wellbeing and make our community

an even better place to live. So if you've got a great idea for your street or neighbourhood, be it a community garden, festival or new group, but don't know how to start, I can support you to turn it into a reality. Equally, if you've got an event or activity you'd like to feature in this newsletter, or you'd like to get involved in any of the activities highlighted, do get in touch. You'll find my contact details on the back page!

Best wishes

Amy Jones

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# **Listening Post**

Listening is an important part of a Community Builder's work. Here's what residents have shared with me at recent events.

Are there any Autisum friendly swimming sessions in Exeter?

I'd like to do a litter pick in my street. Can you help with this?

I'd like to have a coffee morning to get to know the other people in the building.

I'd like to get a noticeboard put up. How do I do this?

## All Souls Day 2025







It was a pleasure to take part in this year's All Souls Day celebration at St Thomas. A big well done to Aga, Chloe, and the team for organising such a thoughtful event, and thanks to Inclusive Exeter for capturing the beautiful moments in photos.

I was delighted to help facilitate a fascinating discussion on end-of-life experiences, featuring a diverse panel representing both multi-faith and non-religious perspectives. One of the most meaningful insights I took away was learning about End-of-Life Doulas — compassionate individuals who support people in planning for death, offering comfort, advocacy, and help with everyday tasks.

If you'd like to learn more about the work of End-of-Life Doulas visit https://eol-doula.uk/ or visit Exeter Library on the last Sunday of each month for the Exeter Death Café: 12:30pm – 2:00pm and the Bereavement and Grief Support Group: 2:30pm – 4:00pm. You can speak to Aly Dickinson to find out more.

# Door Knocking & Pop Up Events





I recently spent a few afternoons door knocking in the Flowerpots area with the Community Builder for Exwick, and it was great to hear about the fantastic things happening locally. Residents have cleared a green space, added benches, and even organised a summer coffee morning. A brilliant example of community spirit!

We also talked about the idea of a community noticeboard on the corner of Exe Bridges roundabout, where the pavement connects to the canal path (across from Wool on the Exe). If you think this would be useful, I'd love to hear your thoughts.

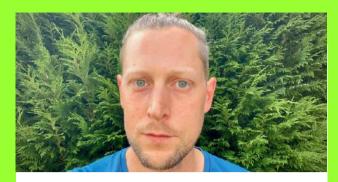
One resident asked about autism-friendly swimming sessions for children outside school hours. If you know of any, or feel this is something Exeter could offer more of, please get in touch.

I also joined the One Step Charity and Our Exeter event at the X Centre on Exeter Quay, alongside the Community Builder for St Davids. The event gathered ideas on activities people would like to try locally. I learned about a peer support wellbeing craft group, which meets at the X Centre every Wednesday, 10am–1pm free, friendly, and open to all.

You can catch me at Brillsville Market this Saturday, 8<sup>th</sup> November 10am–1pm, with the Wellbeing Exeter Active Travel and Transport Officer and Dr Bike who will be there to service your bikes. For more information about how to book, please see the poster attached at the end of this newsletter.

Next month on the 4<sup>th</sup> December I'll be at Bowhill School Parents' Evening 3:30pm - 4:30pm if you'd like to stop for a chat.

## News from Felix - CPAO



Hi, my name is Felix and I am the Community Physical Activity Organiser (CPAO) for West Exeter, covering Exwick, St. Thomas.

Walking Tennis is coming to Exwick! After a successful taster session during the Exwick Walking Sports Festival, plans are underway to launch regular Walking Tennis at the Exwick courts. Over 10 players joined the first session, and with support from Open Court (LTA), the group will soon receive a starter kit. This will be Exeter's first regular Walking Tennis programme. The inclusive sport features adapted rules — no running or jumping, two bounces allowed, smaller courts, and lighter balls — making it suitable for all ages and abilities. Sessions will be fun, social, and open to anyone 18+. Free sessions are planned to start in November. Stay updated via our Facebook group: Walking Tennis Exwick.

Walking Basketball for Everyone!
Exeter's first Walking Basketball group has launched! Inspired by two St. Thomas residents, we teamed up with the Exeter Spartans Basketball Club to run weekly Sunday sessions (7–8 pm) at Exeter College Sports Hall, Victoria Yard.

Walking Basketball removes running and contact, focusing on fun, friendly, and inclusive play for all (18+). One participant shared how great it felt to "come away from a session feeling positive" after rediscovering the game. Sessions cost £3 (first one free). Learn more via our Walking Basketball Facebook group. More info:

<u>facebook.com/CPAOExeterWest</u> <u>felix.elsen@ecct.co.uk</u>

# Get Creative This Christmas: Make Your Own Advent Window



Would you love to bring a little extra sparkle to your street this Christmas? Perhaps you've admired the beautiful Advent Windows around the community in past years and thought about joining in but haven't had the time, materials, or inspiration to get started?

This year, Lovely Liz has come up with a wonderful way to help! She'll be running two free workshops in the hall at St Thomas Church, where you can design and create your very own Advent Window. Whether you'd like to make a festive stencil, create your window on the day or simply collect materials and chat through ideas, you'll leave feeling inspired and ready to add a little light and joy to your home this Advent season.

The workshops are completely free of charge, and everyone is welcome whether you're a seasoned crafter or trying something new. A huge thank you to Liz for sharing her creativity and Christmas spirit with us all!

And if your street is planning to take part in the Advent Windows Trail this year, or if you'd like to help set one up but aren't sure where to start, please do let me know. It would be lovely to see even more windows lighting up our community this Christmas!

# Exeter Food Bank Christmas in a Bag Appeal

This Christmas, Exeter Foodbank is inviting you to fill a festive bag with treats and small gifts for someone who might otherwise go without. It's a simple way to spread joy, and it really matters.

Drop-off location: Exeter Foodbank, 174/175 Cowick Street, St. Thomas, EX4 1AA

Drop-off dates: Monday 1st – Friday 5th December Time: 9am – 11am

For more details, please contact Sophie Email: admin@exeterfoodbank.org.uk

(If you are going to donate, please let the foodbank know! It is so very helpful for us to have a rough idea of numbers)



# Volunteers Needed for St Thomas Food Fight



St Thomas Food Fight are looking for more volunteers. We need volunteers to help serve hot food and drinks on Sundays (11:30am - 12:30pm) in St Thomas once a month. If you can help please direct message them via the St Thomas Food Fight Facebook page or contact me and I will pass on your details.

## **Donations Needed at Turn Table**

URGENT APPEAL – WE NEED YOUR HELP! Turntable Furniture is desperately short of essential bedroom furniture for local families in need. We urgently need wardrobes, chests of drawers, bed bases and mattresses. These items help people who are rebuilding their lives after homelessness, domestic violence, or financial hardship. Every donation helps someone start again with dignity and comfort. We can collect from your home (subject to availability) All items must be in good, usable condition. Upholstered items need a fire safety label sewn in. Phone: 01392 202032 Email: office@turntable.org.uk Address: Swan Yard, Okehampton Street, Exeter EX4 1DS

# West Exe Nursery Autumn Celebration

West Exe Nursery School's special Autumn Celebration is on Friday 14th November!

If you, or somebody you know would be interested in holding a craft stall at this event, please get in touch with Reception Tel: 01392 279361.

The Nursery would be really grateful for any raffle prize donations. Please email Reception at: admin@wecc.devon.sch.uk.

This is a free community event and everyone is welcome.



## Brillsville Christmas Market



This year, the big St Thomas Winter Festival will be taking a well-deserved rest, as the organisers enjoy a break after years of wonderful events.

We're very lucky, though, to have another fantastic local market right here in St Thomas — Brillsville Market! If you haven't visited yet, you'll find it in the Kings Pub car park off Cowick Street, every second Saturday of the month, 9am–1pm.

The December market will be extra special, with festive stalls, Christmas crafts, seasonal treats, and entertainment (details to be announced soon!).

The market also hosts the brilliant Repair Café, where you can get everyday items fixed while supporting sustainability and community connection. So come along, shop local, and celebrate the season with your St Thomas neighbours!

## **Get Social**



Keep up-to-date by joining these local Facebook pages and groups.

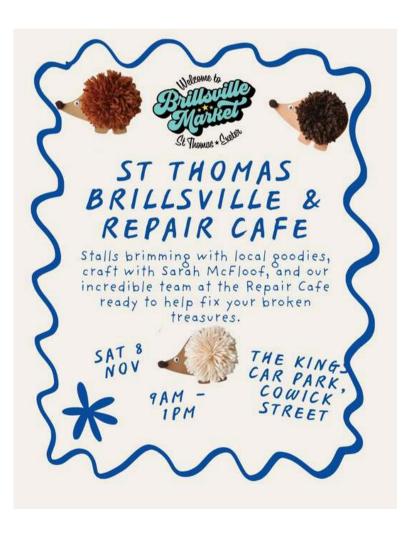
- St Thomas, Exeter
- Brillsville Market St Thomas
- Love St Thomas Festival
- West of the River Magazine
- Love Food CIC
- Cowick Roots and Recreation
- Friends of Merrivale Park
- Family Garden CIC
- St Thomas Winter Market (Winter Festival)
- The Birdhouse Cafe
- · Zero Mile Gardens
- St Thomas Community Garden
- St Thomas Local History Group
- St Thomas Squilometre open group
- St Thomas Food Fight
- Friends of St Thomas Heath Centre

## **Useful Information**

- Parental Minds gives support to families who are struggling with their mental health <a href="https://parentalminds.org.uk/">https://parentalminds.org.uk/</a>
   Tel: 07907 614 516
- Domestic Violence Splitz Devon Helpdesk Tel: 0345 1551074.
- Talk works Tel: 0300 555 3344 www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk
- Mental Health Mind charity Tel: 0300 123 3393
- The Moorings @ Devon Out of hours mental health support for 16+.
   www.mhm.org.uk/the-moorings-devon
   Tel: 07990 790 920
- Andy's Man Club Talk through problems that men face. Monday evenings, 7pm. www.facebook.com/AndysManClubExeter/
- Age UK Exeter Tel: 01392 202092
- Adult Social Care team Tel: 01710 424000
   Out of hours Tel: 01720 422699
- Care Direct 0345 1551 007
- NHS Chat Health Health Visitor confidential text messaging service <a href="https://www.chatline.nhs.uk">www.chatline.nhs.uk</a>
- Home-Start Support for families with young children <u>www.homestarteemd.org.uk/</u>
- Exeter Food Bank <u>exeterfoodbank.co.uk/</u>
- Lightning Reach financial support portal https://www.lightningreach.org/
- Early help child safeguarding <u>https://www.devonscp.org.uk/early-help/</u>

## **Events & Activities**





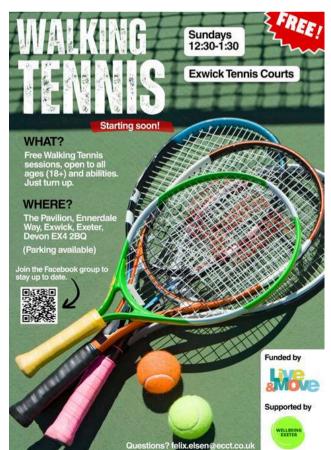


## **Events & Activities Continued**









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## West Exe Stay and Play

Come and join us for a play!

## Fridays, 9.30am to 11am, term time only

The session is run on a co-exploring basis, giving parents/carers and their child a space to play together and to learn more about what we offer as a Nursery School.

Each week, we will make use of our wonderful garden.

Hot drinks are available at each session.

£2.50 per session.

Please book at Reception on: 01392 279361

#### For children aged from birth to 4 years old.









## What's on: St Thomas

#### Monday

- 09.00-11.15 Baby & Toddler Group St Thomas Baptist Church (STBC) (Term time only)
- 10:00-10:30 Story Time St Thomas Library (STL)
- 10:00-13:00 Play space The Family Garden (FG) (term time only)
- 10:00-15:00 Community Fridge & warm hub Love Food CIC (LF) (term time only)
- 10:30-12:00 Knit & Natter (STL)
- 11.30-16:00 Exeter Food Bank (EFB) (referral service only)
- 13:30-17:30 Tech Cafe-IT Support- (STL) (3rd Monday of the month only)
- 15:30-17:00 Exeter City Community Trust Youth Club Years 7 & 8 West Exe School (WES)
- 17:00-18:00 Premier League Kicks Football Sessions 4-11 Years (WES)
- 17.45-18:45 50th Exeter Brownies St Thomas Methodist Church (STMC)
- 18:00-19:30 Brownies 7-10 years Trefoil Lodge (TL)
- 18:00-19:00 Womens Walking Football Riverside Leisure centre (RLC)
- 18:30-19:30 Freemovement Circuits in the Park Cowick Barton Fields (CBF)
- 19:00-20:30 Guides 10-14 years (TL)
- 19:30-20:30 Exeter 45th Guides (STMC)
- 19:30-21:00 Rangers 14-18 years (2nd and 4th Monday) (TL)

#### Tuesday

- 10:00-15:00 Community Fridge & warm space (LF) (term time only)
- 10:00-10:30 Bounce & Rhyme (STL)
- 10:00-12:00 Memory cafe for dementia and memory disorders & or carers Riverside Church (RC)
- 10:00-13:00 Play space (FG) (term time only)
- 11:00-13:00 Breastfeeding support drop in- Birdhouse Cafe (BC)
- 11:30-12:00 Bounce & Rhyme (STL)
- 11.30-14:00 Exeter Food Bank (EFB) (referral service only)
- 14:00-16:00 St Thomas Library Book Chat- Luccombe Oak Pub (LO)
- 16:45-17:45 Rainbows (STMC)
- 16:45-17:45 Rainbows 4-7 years (TL)
- 18:00-19:00 Rainbows 4-7 years (TL)
- 18:00-19:00 45th Exeter Brownies (STMC)

#### Wednesday

- 10:00-15:00 Community Fridge & warm space- (LF) (term time only)
- 10:00-13:00 Play space (FG) (term time only)
- 10:00-12:00 Friendship hub, knit & natter & community cafe (RC)
- 11.30-14:00 Exeter Food Bank (EFB) (referral service only)
- 13:15-14:45 Songbirds Choir St Thomas the Apostle Church Hall (STACH)
- 13:30-15:00 Mums Choir (STL)
- 17:00-18:00 Squirrels 4-6 years 6th Exeter St Thomas Scout Hut (STSH)
- 17:00-18:00 Beavers 6-8 years (STSH)
- 18:30-20:00 Cubs 8-10 1/2 years (STSH)
- 18:30-19:00 Freemovement Circuits in the Park (CBF)

\*Abbreviations in brackets ( ) relate to the location. See back page for contact details



## What's on: St Thomas

#### **Thursday**

- 09:00-11:00 Community Gardening Session Zero Mile Gardens Emmanual Hall (EH)
- 09:15-10:30 Stay & Play Baby & Toddler group Montgomery School (MS) (term time)
- 09.30-11:00 St Thomas Tots (STAPH) (term time)
- 10:00-12:00 Community Drop-in (STBC)
- 10:00-15:00 Community Fridge & warm hub (LFC) (term time)
- 11.30-14:00 Exeter Food Bank (EFB) (referral service)
- 12:00-14:30 Craft Group Shilhay Community Centre (SCC)
- 12:30-13:30 Community Lunch Club, Love Food CIC 95 Cowick Street (term time)
- 15:00-17:00 Warm Space Hub Community Drop-in (STACH)
- 16:30-17:30 Wicketz Kids Cricket Sessions 8-16 Years Riverside Leisure Centre (RLC)
- 17:45-18:45 Super 1's Disabilities Cricket Sessions 12-25 Years (RLC)
- 18:00- 20:30 5th Boys Brigade 5-18 Years (STMC)
- 19:00-20:30 Crafting 4 Others St Thomas Methodist Church (every other Thursday) (STMC)
- 19:00 -20:30 Bell Ringers (STPH)

#### Friday

- 09:00-11:00 Stay & Play West Exe Nursery Cowick Street (WEN) (term time)
- 09:30-11:00 Community Breakfast Club all welcome (STL)
- 10:00-12:00 Stay & Play Toddler Group Riverside Church (RC)
- 10:00-10:30 Story Time (STL)
- 10:00-12:00 Knit & Natter- Trefoil Lodge (TL)
- 10:15-11:00 Chair Based Exercises (TL)
- 11:30-12:30 Table Tennis, Badminton & Pickle Ball Sport in Mind Sport for improving mental health - (RLC)
- 11.30-14:00 Exeter Food Bank (EFB) (referral service only)
- 14:00-16:00 Tea, Craft & Chat (TL)
- 14:30-16:30 Carers Group (TL) (First Friday of the month only)
- 19:00-20:00 St Thomas Local History Group (monthly 1st Friday of the month)
- 19:00-21:00 Scouts 10 1/2-14 years (STSH)
- 19:30-21:00 Youth Club (RC)
- 19:30 -St Thomas Local History Group (monthly 1st Friday of the month) (STACH)

## Saturday

- 09:00-10:00 Freemovement Circuits in the Park St Thomas Pleasure Grounds (STP)
- 10:00-12:00 Lego Club (STL)
- 09:00-13:00 Brillsville Market & Repair Cafe (Second Saturday of the month only) Kings Carpark, Cowick Street (KC)

#### Sunday

- 08:50- 09:30 Junior Park Run 4-14 Years (CBF)
- 10.15-12.15 Natter Club (TL)
- 11:00-12:00 Community Gardening Session St Thomas Community Garden (STPG)
- 11:30-12:30 St Thomas Food Fight (free hot food and drinks) St Thomas Precinct, Cowick Street.



## What's on: St Thomas

#### Contact Details for Venues and Classes:

- (STBC) St Thomas Baptist Church 01392 421707 https://www.stbc.org.uk/
- (STL) St Thomas Library 01392 407061- stthomas.library@librariesunlimited.org.uk
- (LF) Love Food CIC info@lovefoodcic.co.uk https://lovefoodcic.co.uk/
- (EFB) Exeter Food Bank St Thomas Hub 07818 226 524 info@exeterfoodbank.org.uk
- (WES) West Exe School Premier Kicks & Youth Club 01392 255611- inclusion@ecct.co.uk
- (RL) Womens Walking Football https://www.eventbrite.com/.../stthomas-womens-walking...
- (LO) Luccombe Oak Pub 01392 966695
- (STMC) St Thomas Methodist Church https://www.stthomasmethodist.co.uk/
- (STMC) Crafting for others email: mrsmaccookie@sky.com
- 50th Exeter Brownies 50thexeterbrownies@gmail.com
- 45th Exeter Brownies exeterbrownies45@gmail.com
- · Exeter 45th Guides exetergg45th@aol.co.uk
- (STSH) 6th Exeter St Thomas Scout Hut https://6thexeterscouts.org.uk/contact-us/
- Freemoovement 07709 300765 freemoovement@hotmail.com
- (CBF) Cowick Barton Playing Fields 01392 262630 https://exeter.gov.uk/leisure-and-culture/
- · Rainbows westexerainbows2nd@outlook.com
- **(BC)** Birdhouse Cafe breasting feeding support Text 07484747923
- (STACH) St Thomas the Apostle Church Hall-01392 437486http://www.stthomaschurchexeter.co.uk/
- Mums Choir mums.choir.exeter@gmail.com
- (EH) Zero Miles Gardens Community Gardening zeromilegardens@gmail.com
- (MPS) Montgomery Primary School 01392 285240 https://www.facebook.com/MontyToddlerGroup
- (SCC) Shilhay Community Centre, Thursday Activity Group (Shilhay Community Centre) See Facebook group
- Super 1's Disabilities Cricket & Wickets Kids Cricket damian.price@devoncricket.co.uk
- · Sport in Mind Table Tennis, Badminton, Pickle Ball info@sportinmind.org
- 5th Boys Brigade boysbrigade5thexeter@hotmail.com
- (WEN) West Exe Nursery Stay and Play 01392 279361
- (RC) Riverside Church 01392 210146 info@loveexeter.com
- (TL) Trefoil Lodge- 01392 210232 Trefoillodgebookings@outlook.com
- Friends of St Thomas Health Centre Knit & Knatter, Chair Exercise, Carers Group 01392 676676denise.knowles@nhs.net held at Trefoil Lodge
- (STCG) St Thomas Community Garden https://www.facebook.com/groups/2504356273192890

# About Wellbeing Exeter



Wellbeing Exeter is a collaborative partnership of organisations working together to promote and improve the wellbeing of people individually and in their neighbourhoods, to make the community a better place to live.

# **St Thomas Community Builder**

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Email: <u>amy.jones@eci.org.uk</u>

Facebook: Amy Jones Community Builder (St Thomas)