



## Exmouth Town Council –Newsletter

Newsletter 33

December 2008

### **Christmas Cracker**

Our thanks go to Exmouth Town Management, Exmouth Festival and Local Businesses for organizing the Christmas Cracker Event on 28<sup>th</sup> November. Thanks also to all the people who turned out in force to create a special atmosphere for this reinvigorated Late Night Shopping and Christmas Lights switch on event. It was a ‘Cracker’ and sets new standards to be bettered next year. In difficult financial times it demonstrated how businesses can work together and demonstrate what Exmouth Town Centre has to offer in terms of choice and value. It also demonstrated the spirit of community which exists here in Exmouth which when tapped into cannot be beaten – anywhere.

### **Remembrance Day**

Back in November the Royal British Legion and Veterans Associations provided one of the best remembrance parades to be seen. The poppy wreaths adorning the war memorial pay fitting tribute to our brave service men from the past wars and up to the current day. The services bring to the fore that service men are still dying or being injured in the service of their country making it especially poignant for those touched directly by these events. The war memorial continues as a focus for these events and is set to continue to do so in perpetuity.

### **Some other Good Things About Exmouth (to counter some of the negative things we hear which often seem to outweigh the things we know about our town)**

Here are a few things which are great about Exmouth and for which we can all be thankful:-

- One of the best Community Colleges around;
- A selection of high achieving Primary Schools with well motivated children;
- High achieving young people;
- Low crime level and a hugely committed Police Team;
- Fantastic location on the Gateway to the Jurassic Coast and at the mouth of the River Exe;
- Some great shops with wonderful locally produced products;
- Supermarkets which provide a secure food supply for us all;
- Exmouth Festival and Kite Festival;
- Watersports of all kinds;
- Surrounded by some of the best bird watching and countryside anywhere;

- Exmouth Pavilion and its wide and varied programme;
- An active lively and vibrant community and community groups such as Centre Stage, Town Twinning, Exmouth Musical Society etc. etc.

### **2009 The Year of Delivery**

Hot debate, strong opinions and passion about Exmouth have been the hallmarks of 2008. Negotiations, funding, planning, environmental, highway and parking studies have been the basis of much work behind the scenes. No proposals in a lovely town like Exmouth are every going to be anything but controversial, however the Councils are charged with looking after the economic health of the town and creating the right conditions for businesses to succeed and for community well being in the widest sense. Standing still is not viable and work will continue to create the right conditions for a healthy future for the town. Your Councils need encouragement, support and your help to make the best of the options which are available.

The Strand Consultation has so far been a good example of a robust consultation where people have been able to contribute their ideas to a final solution. It is hoped that whichever option is decided upon that people will get behind it and help motivate those concerned to deliver a great solution. Exmouth people need to work together and to send out positive messages if the investment which it deserves is to be achieved. So Come on Exmouth make 2009 the year of delivery – Exmouth is a great town – It is national Britain in Bloom winner – it is a great place to live lets talk up our town and its future and look on the bright side for a change.

### **Strand Consultation**

The Options for the scheme to transform the Strand into a town space, rather than an island surrounded by traffic, have been given a good airing and responses from the public will be analysed to help develop the plans to a point where a scheme can be funded and implemented. This is a significant opportunity for Exmouth based on a confidence in the future of the town. Whilst the financial services of the world face a period of realignment, the opportunities being taken now will help to make the town's economy stronger when the Country is eventually able to emerge from the current recession.

### **Other Regeneration Schemes**

The New lifeboat station is beginning to emerge beyond the initial steel structure and provides optimism for the lifeboat service and the town that significant schemes can take place in Exmouth with significant public support and in this case particularly through the magnificent response to the fund raising appeal which has enabled the project to go forward. This coupled with the Harlequin's ten pin bowling alley combined with other leisure uses, demonstrates that projects are possible within Exmouth which will add to the offer available to residents and visitors alike. Exmouth with other coastal towns has to find ways to provide employment and the right environment for investment and there are great opportunities surrounding Leisure, Arts and Environment which can give Exmouth new focus and confidence in itself to succeed. More people should be able to work in the town than can at present to create a better social and economic balance than exists at present.

Proposals for a close to town supermarket with Asda as the preferred developer, following presentations by four potential developers about 1 year ago, continue to be developed. The

Visitor Centre project, which will have as its theme the past, present and future based on the Jurassic Coast, Exe Estuary and Climate Change, also continues to be progressed. The local promotion group, World Heritage Site Team and Project Officer are all working hard with the Seaton and Exmouth Visitor Centres Board to deliver visitor centres at both Exmouth and Seaton. The Exmouth Visitor Centre will be delivered as part of the overall building linked to the supermarket building with hard work being undertaken to create something really special out of the design, timescale and funding challenges which have to be faced. The chance to transform the bus station site from a low grade and dreary built environment to an exciting and vibrant entrance to the town remains to be achieved over the next few months. Public consultation will happen soon once all the detailed technical studies and necessary work have been carried out.

It is interesting that it can take years to deal with the planning stages of development and maybe two years to carry out the construction on the ground. If approvals are obtained and the funding can be found both private and public sector and development does go ahead, no one will honestly ever be able to say that all views and shades of opinion have not been fully expressed and taken into account. The pages of the Journal have been generously provided for all shades of comment over a long period of time and the proposals on the site will continue to raise passions one way or another. There are those who will never agree to any construction on this site and those who wonder why not a brick has yet been laid after such a long time of debate. The Local Authorities will ultimately decide what is in the best interests of Exmouth having taken all views, opinions and professional advice into account.

### **Neighbourhood Projects Fund**

£20,000 has been grant funded or pledged under the Neighbourhood Projects Fund in respect of which there were 11 applications. Awards go to:-

- Brixington Bloomers to create an environment of working together to promote community spirit with people of all age groups working together to deliver gardening projects in Brixington - £4,000
- Littleham Family Activity Centre to provide outdoor play equipment - £525
- Littleham Residents Association contribution to seating area on the crescent Littleham £3,000
- Exmouth Players contribution to provision of disabled access at Blackmore Theatre - £4,000
- Friends of Phear Park contribution towards Phear Park improvements for the Community – £2,000
- Level 1 Football Association Coaching at Exmouth Community College - £2,000
- Exmouth Rowing Club to maintain a sporting amenity for all section of society in Exmouth - £4,000.

A further £10,000 has been set aside as this Council's contribution to future regeneration schemes such as the Strand.

### **The Budget Recommendation for 2009/10**

The Finance Committee has recommended a budget of £315,600 equivalent to a band 'd' Precept of £23.88 per person per year. This is in effect a stand still budget. Last year the budget was £315,637 with a Council tax of £24.05. The Council Tax levied by Exmouth Town Council

will be .17p per year lower per person than last year due to the higher Council Tax yield from new properties in the town.

The Finance Committee decided that it could not raise the precept this year at a time of Financial crises in the wider economy, however it has maintained an amount of £20,000 for project money recognizing the need to invest in the future of the town and its community. The Council will be asked to confirm this budget at its meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2009.

For more information – contact the Town Clerk on 01395 276167, visit the Town Hall, contact your Local Councillor or visit **[www.exmouth.gov.uk](http://www.exmouth.gov.uk)**

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