

Welcome



Welcome to our first Newsletter of 2025! This edition highlights our upcoming Volunteer Fair, which we are thrilled to host in its 5th year. We're aiming to make this event even bigger and better, and we can't wait to see its continued success! In our fundraising section, we want to express our sincere gratitude to each of you. Your support is vital to everything we do, and we couldn't achieve our mission without you. Read all about the power of community connections and how essential they are to our work. We are immensely proud of the impact we've made together. Thank you for your ongoing support.

Ellie Taylor

General Manager

Volunteer Fair



We are thrilled to be hosting the 2025 Volunteer Fair!

Coming to **Exeter Cathedral from 11am - 3pm on Thursday the 3rd of April**, this annual event promises to be bigger and better than ever. The Volunteer Fair is a unique platform where charities, non-profits, and community groups from across the region can meet with potential volunteers eager to make a difference. It's a chance to showcase the incredible work being done in Exeter and beyond, and offer people the chance to find out how they can get involved and support meaningful causes.

With over 700 attendees expected, and over 60 local organisations, the Volunteer Fair offers a great opportunity for both seasoned volunteers and newcomers to engage with causes they care about. Whether you're looking to give a few hours or commit long-term, the fair will have something for everyone.

What to Expect at the Volunteer Fair 2025

- A Wide Range of Organisations: From environmental groups to health services, education, and social causes, the fair will feature a diverse selection of organisations looking to expand their volunteer base.
- Engaging with the Community: Attendees will have the chance to meet representatives from local charities, ask questions, and learn more about various volunteer opportunities that suit their skills and interests.
- Inspiration and Connection: Whether you're a long-time volunteer or someone interested in starting your journey, the Volunteer Fair is a space to find inspiration and form connections that last.

"This event is a wonderful way to bring together our community of volunteers and those looking to give back," said Ellie Taylor, General Manager at ECI. "Exeter Cathedral is the perfect setting to host such an important event, and we are excited to see the impact it will have on local charities and the people who will dedicate their time to helping others."

Be sure to mark your calendar and get involved in one of Exeter's most anticipated community events of the year!

Want to volunteer but not sure where? Visit our Volunteer Fair and find out! Bringing together over 60 local organisations looking for you!

Book Your Space Here

 [Eventbrite](#)

Contact:

 01392 205800

 info@eci.org.uk



Fundraising Highlights

Pinhoe Pantomime Society

A huge thank you to Pinhoe Pantomime Society for raising money for us at their recent production of Aladdin! The funds raised will go towards the drama activities provided through Magic Carpet, which runs creative arts workshops for adults with learning difficulties or mental health difficulties.



Exeter Musical Theatre Choir

We were so pleased to be the chosen Charity for this year's Devon Musical Theatre Choir Christmas Concert. They raised £552 for us and the money will go to support our mission to uplift families in Exeter—helping build connections and improve wellbeing!

Thank you Kelly and The Exeter Musical Theatre Choir for choosing us.

Pears Foundation

A heartfelt thank you to the Pears Foundation for their generous donation of £12,000! With their incredible support, we've been able to bring joy and happiness to families across Exeter at Christmas. We organized 20 food bank hampers, 100 boxes of chocolates to Exeter Foodbank, and provided vouchers to over 160 families in our community. Your generous donation is making a real difference, and we couldn't have done it without you.

Thank you for helping us spread love and support.

"Thank You for offering this to us; it really means a lot."

"Thank you to you and your company for now making our Christmas less stressful."

"The voucher will be a massive weight lifted off our shoulders."

"What an absolutely fantastic surprise!"

Transitions Workshops

Our Transitions project works with people of 18+ in Exeter who may be feeling vulnerable and isolated, or going through a period of change. Sarah and Pete (our Project Workers) run small group workshops about wellbeing and life skills, exploring self-help strategies, and sharing ideas with others.

Upcoming workshops include:

Master Your Tasks:

Focusing on prioritising, planning, and time-management
3rd, 10th, and 17th Feb 2025 - The Moorings

Creature of Habit:

Looking at habits, routine, and daily structure
26th Feb and 5th Mar 2025 - Beacon Centre

Pound-Stretching:

Ideas for making your money go further and maximising your income
27th Feb, 6th Mar and 13th Mar 2025 - Online

For more info and to
book [click here](#)
or contact us



Please note that booking
is essential

01392 205800

transitions@eci.org.uk

Family Resource



Family Resource have completed the first of their new 'Hear My Voice in Schools' courses for parents and children. This unique offer in Exeter brings parents and children together to learn about emotions and self-care for mental and physical wellbeing. By learning together in a safe space, the families are gaining skills to live happy, healthy lives.

With thanks to the Focus Foundation for their funding and their Focus Group staff who visited us recently.

"I have learnt where I can go for support and to think more about my feelings"

"This course has really helped B to recognise her feelings and talk to me a bit more about her worries"

"I am having a hard time this gave me a reason to get out of bed and come and help my children"

Magic Carpet



A Night to Remember: Christmas Party & Open Mic Night with The Pelican Project

What an incredible evening we had at our Christmas Party & Open Mic Night, in collaboration with the Pelican Project. We were blown away by the amazing talent on stage and the buzz that filled the room. A huge thank you to everyone who came and made the night so special – your enthusiasm and participation made it unforgettable. Stay tuned for more exciting events and opportunities in the coming months!

Thurspians & Exmouth drama groups Christmas performances: we were treated to two fantastic shows!

Thurspians Christmas Show 'One Night at Ginos' - Who knew so much could happen in one evening - a talent show, a visit from the Queen, a run-in with Cruella D'ville, and some delicious food and singing from the multi-talented Gino herself. This show had it all - Well done everyone!

Exmouth Drama group Christmas Show - 'Christmas Presents...!': There were some surprise gifts in Exmouth, and it was all singing and dancing! Well done to everyone who performed.

Exeter University Drama students on placement with us during the Autumn term. One student said:

"I had the best time at the Magic Carpet group. This was something I had never done before, but after the first session it became the highlight of my week. Having session with these wonderful people and for those two hours seeing them forget the worries or concerns they usually have in the outside world and just focus and their character and enjoying being whoever they want, judgment free, was stunning"

Jelly

Unlock your career potential at Jelly, our award-winning children's charity shop.

Volunteering at Jelly is a great opportunity to learn new skills in retail, gain customer service experience, meet people, and enhance your CV. What you get as a volunteer; 25% discount in Jelly, earn coffee vouchers and most importantly have fun!

Contact info@eci.org.uk or [click here](#) to start your journey.



Community Connections

This month, Newtown Community Builder Maisaa Sweid saw the long-term positive impacts of her work in the area she used to cover, St James:

“During my time as a Community Builder St. James, one of my goals was to foster connections among residents in the Horseguards area and improve their local play park. We organised litter-picking events to engage residents in taking care of their environment, and made the park accessible for all ages and abilities. The effort required time, resources, and commitment from the community, and we worked collaboratively with the council’s green space team.”

The benefits of this work were recently seen when a St James resident wrote to Maisaa to share an update. Exeter County Council held a consultation for the Horseguards area last year, which gave resounding positive feedback for the work done in the playground. What’s more, Maisaa’s effort encouraged further local collaboration between the University, Devon Wildlife Trust, and the Friends of Hoopern Valley, who are continuing to build on this groundwork.



Exeter Bach Choir

EXETER BACH CHOIR AND ORCHESTRA
Musical Director Jonathan Lucas Wood
Honorary Patron Jonathan Peter Kenny

2024/2025 Season
30th ANNIVERSARY

Soprano Sam Cobb
Soprano Bethany Partridge
Alto Angharad Rowlands
Tenor Thomas Hobbs
Bass Tim Mirfin

Musical director Jonathan Lucas Wood
Orchestra leader Anna Cockroft

Mass in B Minor

7.30 pm Saturday 8th March 2025
Exeter Cathedral

Tickets priced £15 - £30 may be purchased from our website
www.exeterbachchoir.co.uk

making music

Exeter Bach Choir have chosen to support ECI at their upcoming concert **at Exeter Cathedral, on Saturday the 8th of March at 7.30pm!**

Exeter Bach Choir is a mixed-voice choir that features professional musicians from the South West in concert. Celebrating their 30th anniversary, they will be performing Bach’s Mass in B Minor at Exeter Cathedral next month with a range of talented soloists.

They will be supporting us in raising funds by promoting ECI’s work and collecting donations on the night. Be sure to come along for a spectacular night of music in one of Exeter’s most iconic venues.

Tickets are available [here](#).



Get Involved!



Volunteer

Join our team of volunteers.



One-Off Donation

By cheque to 'Exeter Community Initiatives' or online.



Regular Donor

Through our scheme you can make a regular longer term donation.



Leave a gift in your Will

Make a lasting impact or remember a loved one.



Newsletter

Sign up for newsletter updates.



Fundraise

From skydives to bake sales, have fun and raise money!

Callout for Fundraising

Whether you would like to run a marathon, or organise a cake sale, we are very grateful to you for choosing to raise funds for Exeter Community Initiatives.

The funds you raise will allow us to continue supporting over 1,000 people each year through our projects.



[Click here to Get Involved!](#)



Many thanks for taking the time to read ECI News!

To save money and protect the environment, news from now on will only be available digitally.

📍 Exeter Community Initiatives, 148 -149 Fore Street, Exeter, EX4 3AN

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