

Exwick Community Association (ECA) background

ECA is a residents association for people who live in the electoral ward of Exwick, which is around 5000 people in ~3900 homes. This is one of the biggest electoral wards in Devon and is bigger than many small towns in the county.

Exwick has seen massive growth since the late 1960s with the population more than doubling. There are a large number of council and housing association properties mixed in with privately owned and rented homes.

Geographically the area is all West of the Exe and stretches from the North side of Isleworth Road up to almost Cowley and the A377 in the North and from the river in the East to almost the boundary of the city in the West.

The housing is built on several valleys and hills as well as the flood plain of the river. The focusing of transport over the river to a few bridges and the fact that the area is spread out makes bits of the area feel dis-connected to other parts. One valley or hill seems separate to the next.

Exwick has a relatively young population with few retired people compared to most areas of Exeter and Devon.

There are concentrated pockets of deprivation, unemployment and low educational achievement while the area has a good proportion of employed people over all.

There are 2 churches, 3 pubs (1 currently changing hands), several convenience stores, take away food outlets and a couple of specialist shops. Not many employers in the area are mainly a suburb of Exeter.

Recently the area lost its post office and petrol station. It is soon to gain a Tesco.

Exwick benefits from being over the river from the heart of the city. It is close to the country side and railway station. There are good playing fields and green spaces, although children's facilities are scarce for such a young area.

ECA's history goes back 20+ years when it rented land from the City Council and built a BMX track. More recently it became a charity in 1994 with the aim of building a community centre. This came to nothing until Roy Slack, the then leader of the city council, succeeded in getting a "106" planning agreement for a community centre to be built. The city council worked with local residents to build up the by then dormant community association to take on the running of this centre.

In 2005 the charity was relaunched with a new committee of Trustees.

Current trustees:

Trevor Sharp (Chair)
Janet Gale (Secretary)
Pat Murphy
Rob Hannaford
Adrian Hannaford
Connel Boyle

ECA has 2 aims – Improve the community and run a community centre.

ECA publishes a newsletter 2 or 3 times a year with the aim of delivering one to every home in Exwick. The post holder would be involved in the production and distribution of this (they would not have to deliver them all).

The centre was built by Westbury Homes which merged with Persimmon. It was opened in December 2006. It is used every week day and Saturday mornings. See the Exwick Courier Issue 6 for more details. We would see the post holder being involved in trying to increase the number of users.

The charity is in fact very small and a key task is to encourage people to be involved. We do have volunteers, who like to be involved with one thing here and there. This seems to be the nature of 21 century volunteering. But being welcoming and positive to those who want to give their time is important.

Although not a big time commitment the Centre needs overseeing as things need attention, maintenance or repair. Recently we had to have some doors replaced; the lift is inspected every month; Electrical devices need safety testing on a regular basis. The intention is that the post holder does not do the maintenance or cleaning, but that they would ensure it gets done.

The trustees would seek to support the post holder in their job. We are keen that any staff would get training for their job and we would expect the successful applicant to take part in this if required.

We would also want to get reports from the post hold how things are going. We would set goals or work plans with the post holder so that everyone is clear what is being done.

Customer Service to the hirers of the centre is important. Most hirers are regular and are used to doing things for themselves. However, customer service might mean making sure the centre is presentable and perhaps topping up the loo roll holders. If on occasions a hirer may need help with moving furniture the centre manager would not have to do the moving, but as part of our customer service the manager would seek to find ways to make sure hirers were happy. In addition hirers may need chasing up over a booking or similar. All these would come into this post.

The only sources of income are renting the building and some grant funding. The post holder would need to keep costs to a minimum where possible to get best value and help develop new sources of income for the charity.

The post is being paid for by a special pot of money held by the city council as part of the 106 money for 2 years. This means the post is for 2 years in the first instance.

It may be that as ECA grows regular volunteers or other specialist or junior staff will be taken on. The Centre manager role may then grow to cover supervising these staff.

If you would like future information please contact Trevor Sharp, Trevor@exwick.com or call 07954244422 or leave a message at the centre on -