The Mayor from 'The Maer'

Mayor's Blog – June 2025

"… and so by the majority of votes cast, I confirm that Councillor Graham Deasy has been elected as Chair of Council and the next Mayor of Exmouth for the ensuing municipal year."

The words of the Town Clerk rang in my ears. I was there in the room, but my gaze stayed safely fixed on the floor while councillors' hands were raised (or not!). The vote came and went. Then came the handover, complete with the ceremonial chain, which, I must say, sits quite solidly on the shoulders. Heavy lies the chain that leads the town…

As I read the Declaration of Acceptance, my head was still spinning. I felt honoured and humbled, but let's be honest, the real perk of the job? That coveted Mayor's parking space at the Town Hall!

Joking aside, I took this role on because I believe deeply in **community**—our ability to come together, lift each other up, and create something greater than the sum of our parts.

It's easy to feel powerless in today's world, but here in Exmouth, I see the exact opposite: power *in people*, power *in connection*.

The Chain Reaction

Chain now firmly in place, my first task was to chair the Full Council meeting. Thankfully, my fellow councillors gave me a gentle baptism. With the gavel dropped and business closed, it was time for the inevitable photo-shoot.

First me and the chain. Then me, the chain, and the robes. Then me, the chain, the robes, and the Deputy Mayor, Dianne. No expense spared on variations!

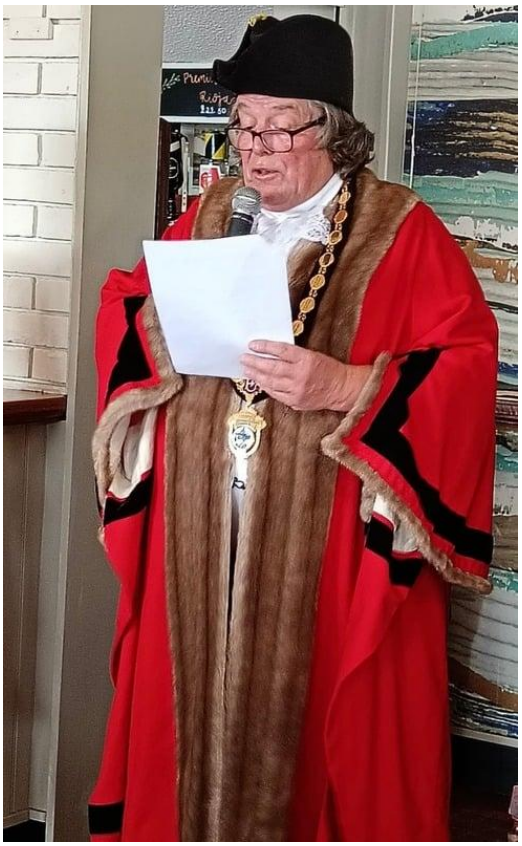


Later at home, my wife, Elizabeth, now the Mayor's Consort, complete with shiny badge welcomed me with a swift "Congratulations" and a cheerful, "See you in twelve months." This wasn't a marital crisis however, just herself knowing how enthusiastically (read: obsessively) I throw myself into these things.

Late at lights out time, I bid her "Sweet dreams."

Her reply? "Nightmare." or was it "Night Mayor" ????

A (Slightly Lost-in-Translation) Welcome



A few days later, I found myself fully robed, frilled, and perspiring profusely, in a warm, poorly ventilated room, greeting our twin-town visitors from Brittany. Keen to make a good impression, I'd written a welcome speech in English and had it lovingly mangled by Google Translate before a kind friend (retired French teacher) rescued it. With phonetic spellings and double-spacing in hand, I gave it my best shot.



Our French friends were far too polite to laugh at my pronunciation, and I think they appreciated the gesture, if not the grammar.

The next day, we played Petanque with them.

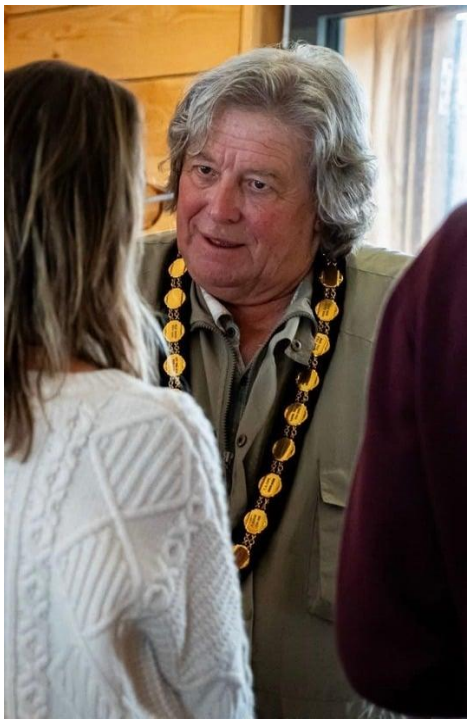
L to R: Simon Pardoe, Yours truly and David Rauzier

I may be a current Devon Triples champion and a county player, but I kept that schtum!! Let's just say the match between members of Exmouth Petanque Club and Dinan finished in an honourable draw. Vive l'amitié!

All Creatures, Great and Small

The following week was a classic Mayoral schedule:





- A plant tabletop sale by our friends at Exmouth in Bloom
- The first anniversary of the inspiring Sideshore Community Hub
- More poignantly, a former councillor's funeral
- Attending the AGM of a community association



ECA Chairman Bruce de Saram welcomes Mayor Deasy to the AGM

At the Exmouth Community Association AGM, I was struck by the passion of those present. I listened to their concerns over disappearing banking services in the Town and the closure of public toilets which is causing real problems for residents and visitors alike.

These aren't just about facilities; they're part of what makes a town accessible, inclusive, and… well, *human*.

Guest speaker Heath Nickels from Exmouth Wildlife Group gave an inspiring talk about the power of "Tiny Forests" in urban spaces. Who knew we could make room for foxes, badgers, swallows, and even hedgehogs, right here among us? Volunteers making it happen—quiet heroes of community, again.





Why I'm Really Here

In addition and wearing my Chair of the Water Quality Working Party 'hat', I attended (via a diversion along what seemed like every leafy lane between here and the Cornish border!!) a Forum to learn about topics such as Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans, Storm Overflows and the Enhanced Bathing Water Quality Monitoring Programmes.

This first whirlwind week has been everything I imagined—and more. But through the heavy robes and funny hat, to sharing birthday celebrations and AGM's, and giving stuttering speeches, **what grounds me is people.** .



People planting tiny forests

People running eco-hubs.

People coming together for Boules or banking debates.

That's why I accepted being nominated for this role, in order to celebrate these people. The doers, the carers, the quiet champions.

Community is not a fluffy word. It’s our anchor. It’s what makes us stronger when things get tough, kinder when things feel cold, and more joyful when we come together.

So, here’s to Exmouth. Here's to the builders of community, in all their forms. And here’s to a year of stories worth telling, laughter worth sharing, and work worth doing.



Long may it continue.

Yours in service,

Graham Deasy

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