EXMOUTH TOWN COUNCIL
Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Party

Notes of the meeting held at 6pm on Tuesday 4th November 2025 in the Town Hall Chamber

Present

Councillor Tim Dumper	TD	Exmouth Town Council (Chair)
Councillor Olly Davey	OD	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Steve Gazzard	SG	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Nicky Nicholls	NN	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Mike Rosser	MR	Exmouth Town Council
Councillor Louise Venables	LV	Exmouth Town Council
Lisa Bowman	LB	Exmouth Town Council
Zoey Cooper	ZC	Exmouth Town Council
Lewis Connor	LC	East Devon District Council
Lou Doliczny	LD	Transition Exmouth
Craig Jolly	CJ	Mushroom Exmouth District Community Network

Apologies

Councillor Andrew Woodward	AW	Exmouth Town Council
Catherine Causley	CC	East Devon District Council

1. **Welcome and apologies**

TD welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted.

2. **To approve the notes of the meeting on 23rd September 2025 and any matters arising**

The notes of the previous meeting were proposed for approval by NN, seconded by MR and agreed by all.

3. **To receive a short introduction from Craig Jolly, Mushroom Exmouth and District Community Food Network, followed by questions from members**

CJ shared the latest Mushroom newsletter and outlined the origins of the Mushroom Exmouth & District Community Food Network. He highlighted current activities such as monthly baking sessions and a lunch break club at Sideshore. In the November newsletter (see attached) items include:

- Mushroom Funguys (Saturday Loaf, Community Lunch and weekly Lunch Break)
- Mycelium knowledge: health and diet snapshot

- The Carrot Report: Universal free school meals could unlock £600m for British Farmers
- Craft Your Christmas (Xmas pudding cakes and vegelets!)
- CAG Devon and Local Food Networking
- Mushroom and Transition Exmouth
- Plant-based power (and the regular plant-based bring and share event)
- Good food South West Regional Online Summit
- Gate to Plate stall
- Devon Food Partnership
- Food Providers Round-up
    - Open Door
    - Launchpad
    - Exmouth Food Bank

Craig explained that over the past year, Mushroom has strengthened its structure by affiliating with Transition and forming an advisory board.

A main challenge raised was Exmouth's limited access to genuinely local food, with supermarkets dominating and few local producers. Transport, cost and accessibility issues particularly affect older residents. Although allotments generate surplus food, better coordination is needed to distribute it.

Members noted past successes with community cooking and shared meals and expressed interest in reviving similar programmes - potentially including culturally diverse cooking sessions.

CJ emphasised the need for Mushroom to increase its capacity through more volunteers, stronger partnerships and support to deliver new initiatives. He also noted opportunities to link food work with sustainability and health strategies, prepare for future government policy, and explore local food distribution models such as community fridges or mobile vans.

Members asked how the Town Council could help, with suggestions including volunteer recruitment, school and community links, support from the Green Team of volunteers, campaign and activity promotion, and ensuring Mushroom is represented in wider strategy discussions. The group also discussed ways in which the Eco-Tuk might distribute food.

CJ concluded that the priority is to scale up Mushroom in a structured way to expand community food initiatives and strengthen Exmouth's local food system.

4. To receive an update from EDDC

LC provided several updates. CC is due to return to work tomorrow. Work on the Climate Strategy and Action Plan is continuing, with progress expected next week to ensure alignment with EDDC's Green Team and broader climate initiatives. The Climate Change Manager post remains delayed while approval is still awaited.

LC also outlined key project updates. Security lighting installations are progressing well, along with an assessment of the carbon savings they will generate. The green waste project is expanding to include wider biodiversity benefits, and funding is available to support the 2030 Tree Cover Strategy. Two groups will be taking part in Climate Action Day next week. In addition, the “Stories on the Rocks” project - developed with the artist to highlight climate impacts on the Jurassic Coast - is moving forward, with funding currently being sought. LC noted continued efforts to encourage town and parish councils to implement more local climate actions.

In terms of engagement and awareness, the Green Team is being revitalised to improve communication and coordination, with plans for regular meetings to monitor progress. Housing and emergency services teams are also involved in related climate and sustainability projects.

LC mentioned that ZC and CC will discuss local experiences with retrofit projects, and the current compost scheme will run until September, with the option of an extension being considered.

5. **To receive an update from Transition Exmouth**

A budget has now been allocated for the Community Engagement Project. Sarah Kersey has been appointed as the project coordinator. The project has also secured a grant from Impact Devon to purchase Google tablets, which will replace older paper-based methods and support a more modern and accessible approach to community engagement. A workstation can also be provided by ETC in the Town Hall.

Volunteer engagement will be a key focus. Efforts will centre on recruiting volunteers and involving individuals and local groups to help identify community needs and what a sustainable Exmouth looks like.

With her Recycle Devon hat on, LD updated that she will visit Exeter Road School to deliver the first “Monster Bin” assembly on food waste.

6. **To receive an update from ZC regarding projects and resources for 2025**

Christmas Event and/or campaigns

Craft your Christmas

The event will take place on Friday, December 6th, 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM at several venues: Salvation Army Hall, Library, Exmouth Arms, and the Museum.

Crafts & Workshops:

- CC – Baking (details TBD).
- A la Ronde – Christmas decorations using pinecones.
- EDDC Countryside Team – Nature-themed decorations.
- Devon Loves Dogs – Paw print decorations (possible gazebo outside museum).

- Helen Plant – Lanterns from jam jars and pen pots from tins (requests for clean jam jars and tins).
- Plastic Free Exmouth – Stall (details to be confirmed).
- Hayley from Isolation Creation – Wreaths made from scrap fabric.
- Polly Merrick – Decorations from Tetra packs (possible).
- Library – Christmas jumper swap (replacing Halloween swap) and craft activity until lunchtime.
- Pimp and Pump Your Bike – Returning attraction.
- Popular previous activities (like pompom making and wrapping paper printing) may return, possibly in the library.

Food & Refreshments:

- Exmouth Arms: “Taste the Difference” mince pie challenge (plant-based vs. non-plant-based).

Entertainment:

- Music: OD, Salvation Army’s Andrew Cutler coordinating with the town band. Live music, bunting, and festive atmosphere expected.

ZC requested help with running craft tables (pompom making, printing, etc.) and event setup, coordination, and clear-up.

The Exmouth Factor

The Exmouth Factor is a new sustainability initiative developed in collaboration with Visit Exmouth, inspired by Bude’s “Bude Way” campaign.

The concept promotes sustainable behaviour, such as supporting local businesses, reducing waste, and enjoying the local environment responsibly.

The purpose of this is to help Visit Exmouth businesses and organisations communicate their sustainability stories consistently; to identify and define “five positive sustainability themes” that represent The Exmouth Factor and to create shared messaging and branding businesses can use in their marketing and public engagement.

The Planned Activities: A workshop session on December 3rd to engage local businesses and groups in shaping The Exmouth Factor themes. Potential to link the campaign with a food initiative, highlighting Exmouth’s plant-based and vegetarian offerings. Possible accreditation or window sticker scheme for participating venues. Promotion through local networks, including the Chamber of Commerce.

Various members of the group agreed that they preferred the initial name of the project “The Exmouth Way”. It was agreed that The Exmouth Factor would remain a working title until a more appropriate name was chosen during or after the workshop.

Marpol School Visit

Marpol School has an ongoing Year 6 sustainability and climate change project, where pupils create short videos on related topics. Previous themes included plastic waste and the natural environment.

The school has invited ZC again to be interviewed by pupils about sustainability, Exmouth's environmental initiatives, and how individuals can make a difference. During the visit, there will be an attempt to arrange a future talk on reusable period products.

Greatest Hits radio piece

ZC had a discussion with Greatest Hits Radio on Tuesday about promoting a plastic-free and waste-free Halloween**.** The segment encouraged listeners to visit the library's Halloween clothes swap**,** supporting reuse and sustainable celebrations. Greatest Hits Radio will interview ZC ahead of the Craft Your Christmas event.

Energy

Retrofit Project Update

ZC is planning to share retrofit project results for 4 building archetypes with the local community. Instead of just leafleting, they will collaborate with artist Polly Meyrick to display her "energy heroes" portraits at Sideshore and the library**.** The library display will include retrofit project information, and leaflets will invite people to a final event in Jan–Feb (details tbc). Coordination with community groups like Transition and Eco Advice is ongoing.

Book about heat pumps

Sune Nightingale**,** a heating engineer and renewable energy expert, shared a book he contributed to: "The Ultimate Guide to Heat Pumps: A Comprehensive Resource for Homeowners."

ZC proposed that ETC purchase two copies - one for on-site use and one for the library (possibly displayed during Polly's exhibition alongside retrofit info). The library copy could be available for borrowing, with measures to ensure it stays accessible and tracked in the library system.

Members discussed this and it was highlighted that green energy suppliers are also a useful source of heat pump information, though commercial bias may apply.

Waste

The Exmouth Cup – how to increase engagement

Currently in four cafes, including the Sea Dog Art Gallery and Bar. Drop-off points for returned cups will be moved temporarily for Remembrance Sunday to support more Exmouth Cup usage and return. Social media and press releases are planned to raise the profile. Challenges: limited café participation and volunteer management

make broad distribution difficult. Exploring funding streams and volunteer support to expand reach.

ZC has explored Beyond The Bin Fund (£45k), but it focused on disposable cup recycling, not reuse, which would have conflicted with the Exmouth Cup messaging.

Community groups have been invited to borrow boxes of (165) Exmouth Cups with info materials, but there has been limited uptake so far. There was discussion of potential branded items (eg T-shirts) to increase visibility.

Proposal to purchase another cigarette butt ballot bin for the Exmouth Beach Hotel

Exmouth Beach Hotel**,** via Plastic Free Exmouth, have requested a cigarette butt ballot bin**.** The cost of the bin £385 and the CEE WP budget is sufficient to support it. Members agreed to fund the bin. Members were open to expanding to more venues if interest was shown. The promotion of bins will be highlighted via social media and press releases to encourage more organizations to request them.

Mini ashtrays**:** Plastic Free Exmouth suggested bulk purchase for distribution, but the group declined to sell or distribute them, to avoid promoting smoking.

Transport

Exmouth Active Travel Group

ZC to organise the next meeting and inform members.

Natural Environment

Tree Forum & Community Project

The last Tree Forum was held on 22nd October and the notes have been distributed to members.

Tree Community Project (East Devon District Council): Launching a community-led initiative to track tree planting activity across towns and parishes. Collects data and provides support for community projects**.**

The Tiny Forest ‘Tree Keepers’ have discovered rare species, including different types of garden tiger caterpillars. Observation: nature recolonizes areas if habitats are provided..

- **Exmouth Court visit**

ZC was invited to Exmouth Court to talk to residents about the benefits of No Mow May and the value in growing and maintaining a wild garden.

7. To receive an update on other relevant matters from Town Council

working parties and outside body representatives.

No updates.

8. Any other business

ZC's presentation at the DALC conference was well received and she has been invited to join a panel of experts at the NALC conference in June next year.

SG asked about the possibility of planting trees with memorial plaques for Exmouth Town Councillors who have passed away.

9. Dates of next meeting: 16th December 2025, 6pm – 8pm, in the Town Hall Chamber.