News from Exeter: September 2021

We were so proud that His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales chose to come and visit Exeter in July and look at the new Bus Station.

It was a proud day for the whole city. It was great that we very able to show the new station and leisure centre to Prince Charles, as well as demonstrate some of our Net Zero initiatives with our partners.

He was genuinely interested in the good work we are doing here in Exeter to help address climate change. It was great to be able to demonstrate this while recognising at the same time that there is still much to do.

Exeter remains committed to becoming a Net Carbon Zero City by 2030. The link below is the city’s Blueprint for a greener future – Exeter’s Collectively-owned Roadmap to Carbon Neutrality

<http://www.exetercityfutures.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Net-Zero-Exeter-2030-Plan-PU.pdf>

Just a few days after the Royal visit we opened two very important facilities for the people of Exeter in the same weekend.

The reopening of the Riverside pool will be welcomed by everyone in the city. It was a big success and I was so pleased that we were able to welcome key workers, who played such an important role in the pandemic, to be the first in the pool.

It was our way of saying a small thank you on behalf of everyone in the city for the incredible work they did - and continue to do – during the crisis.

It was great to see families spending quality time together in the pool – this is something we missed out on during lockdown. It was really refreshing to see mums and dads with their children in the pool together - these are memories that you hold on to throughout your life.

This is what we are trying to do with our leisure offer here in Exeter – it’s all about improving quality of life by providing access to quality facilities for everyone to enjoy.

We’ll certainly see this with our new super low-energy leisure centre St Sidwell’s Point. I know it will be an amazing facility for everyone in Exeter to enjoy when it opens later this year.

The opening of the new Bus Station means we’ve finally got a modern station which is fit for purpose and will offer a great experience for the millions of passengers who use it every year.

We are bringing in a pilot in the autumn for the kerbside collection of food waste from people’s homes. Like the rest of the UK, Exeter has suffered from a shortage of HGV drivers, which lead to short suspension of collections for garden waste over the summer.

This was quickly resolved, and we hope that the food waste collection pilot will prove a success and help residents to recycle more, by making it easier for them to do so.

It is pleasing to see footfall in Exeter city centre rising again following the various lockdowns we have all had to contend with.

It is great to enjoy the relaxation of the regulations, but we must continue to be careful because cases of Covid remain high in Exeter at the moment. We hope this is just a blip. The vaccination programme continues to roll out and we are working hard with businesses to make sure we continue to welcome people back safely.

Exeter’s recovery from the lockdowns caused by the pandemic requires a city-wide partnership. A very important recent development for us has been the creation of the Exeter Place Board. This brings together all the key organisations and institutions from the public and private sectors to work together for the benefit of everyone in Exeter.

We are very proud of this collaborative way of working. The same partnership is tasked with helping the city to create thousands of new homes in a green setting over the next two decades through our Liveable Exeter housing programme.

You can read more about the Place Board using the link below:

<https://www.liveableexeter.co.uk/updates/the-liveable-exeter-place-board/>

Finally, sport is very important to us here in Exeter.

The new football season is underway and we wish Exeter City well – it is great to see supporters allowed back inside the stadium. Exeter is one of the few football clubs owned by its supporters, a fact we are very proud of.

We also look forward the new season for Exeter Chiefs, who continue to be one of the most successful teams in Europe. We are all hoping for another successful season – the whole city is behind our teams.

Finally, just this week, we had the Devon stage of the cycling Tour of Britain finish in Exeter. This was a fantastic day which saw many thousands of people pack into the city centre to watch the conclusion of the race.

It was also broadcast live on national television and attracted media from all over the world, so it was a great showcase for the city and everything we are trying to achieve here in Exeter.