



EXMINSTER NATURE RECOVERY

Ninth Progress Report – June 2025



This project was developed under the umbrella of Exminster Parish Council's Environment Working Party and initially presented to the Council in April 2022. This is the latest summary of progress and activity. My thanks go to all those who have helped support and deliver aspects of the project to date.

More background and previous progress reports are hosted on the Parish Council's Biodiversity page found here:

[EPC-Biodiversity](#)

The Vision

Exminster working together to enable nature and wildlife to thrive. A village recognised as valuing biodiversity and as an exemplary part in a wider nature recovery network.

Theme 1 – Building on existing voluntary action.

Over the first 6 months of 2025, **Exminster Greenspaces** volunteers have worked to enhance village for both people and nature. The team's work has included;

- In the orchard we tackled some hedge laying in January to help create that dense hedge nesting habitat. From Spring we recommenced the careful management of paths, leaving longer grasses and vegetation to help develop the wildflower diversity – and added new plants including honeysuckle in the orchard hedge.
- In St Martins churchyard we've added more foxgloves and tried planting some sedum on grave surfaces to provide extra nectar sources. We have continued to benefit from advice offered by local ecologist Kelvin Boot – helping shape the future management. The volunteers have experimented with the addition of willow hoops to mark out an area to be left uncut as a wildflower refuge over summer.

- The small wildflower bed introduced by the Deepway Community Centre was reseeded and a new, similar bed added on a grass verge in Jubilee Close managed by Teign Housing.
- The new trees planted over autumn were supplemented by a weeping beech, donated by a local family in memory of a loved one.
- We've added some daff bulbs along Reddaway Drive and at the foot of Exminster Hill – a number donated by a supporting neighbour.

A shout out too for **Exminster Hedgehog Rescue** – a fantastic effort to rehabilitate and release rescued animals into safe spaces – 500 followers take on board updates regularly posted on Facebook.

Theme 2 – Community Engagement.

The Exminster Greenspaces Facebook group provides a regular flow of topical Greenspace and nature-themed content and continues to build a following, with 687 at the last count. [Facebook](#)

January is the traditional time for **Wassail** and a chance to celebrate the nature and fruitfulness of our village orchard. This year was a departure in that we held the event after dark, which made for a magical atmosphere decorated by fairy lights – with the usual ingredients of cake, mulled cider and music, drawing an enthusiastic crowd.



A highlight of the Spring was a major gathering and a packed Victory Hall, gathered to celebrate nature in and around Exminster. We had a lovely opening song from Phil Beer leading into talks from Kevin Pike, a local RSPB volunteer, Kelvin Boot on the mini beasts and more in the churchyard (including a close look at the drama played out in the church's very special 'bee wall'. Sian Avon for Teignbridge District Council

updated us on the work on Ridgetop Park. Guests from Starcross and the DWT Wilder Communities team gave a sense of how community networks are building beyond Exminster. Hall displays from the primary school, NHS New Leaf along with a giveaway of tree saplings – helped complete the evening.



A new event for us this year was a Dawn Chorus walk with John Waldon, a local birder. Over 20 species were seen and/or heard on an early misty April morning.

In January a new Community Garden initiative got underway based on part of the St Martins Church allotments. A plot has been transformed and is being managed under organic principles and providing increased biodiversity and wildlife opportunities. The space has been acknowledged under the DWT Wildlife Garden Award scheme. As well as providing opportunities to bring members of the community together, it provides another way of highlighting and encouraging sensitive gardening methods.



Themes 3 and 4 – Partnership Working and Exminster in the wider Landscape



Exminster Greenspaces continues to be an active member of the growing **ACT Wildlife Warden** Network across Teignbridge. We helped support the network stall at this year's garden festival held at Powderham Castle.



There were opportunities to work with both the **Community Primary School and Exeter Pre prep**. With the former we visited to join the school eco team to package up a supply of 'mini meadow' wildflower seed, some of which were to be used at school, others taken home. At the Exeter school, we had a fun afternoon exploring bird song with some enthusiastic budding ornithologists.



The Parish Council made a bold and tremendously positive move by adopting a more sensitive approach to supplementary mowing on a number of areas of grassland this year, allowing grasses and wildflowers to bloom and set seed. The Bowling Green and parts of Reddaway Drive in particular have been buzzing this spring and early summer.



In working to support nature across Exminster, we were delighted to be recognised in 2025 as **Wildlife Community of the year** at the Wild About Devon Awards at the Local Nature Partnership Conference in March to celebrate individuals, groups and parish councils making a real difference for nature across Devon.

Snapshot of partner and supporting organisations

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exminster Parish Council • Devon Wildlife Trust • RSPB • Teign Housing • Exminster Community Primary School • St Martins Church • Westbank Community Health and Care • Riviera Tree and Garden • St Martins FC • Kenton Nature and Greenspaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teignbridge District Council • ACT Wildlife Warden Network • Brook Academy – Matford • Exeter Pre Prep School • Devon LNP • Devon Bat Group • Exe Valley Lamb • Exminster Cubs • NHS New Leaf • Pottles Court • The Manor • The Barn Owl Trust
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Future work

- Engaging with the development of the **Devon Local Nature Recovery Strategy** and Nature Recovery Network
- Refresh of **Exminster Greenspaces Trail**
- Development of **tree planting options for autumn /winter 2025/26**
- **Autumn bulb planting**
- **Big Butterfly Count 2025 and Meadow Count** (survey of Crockwells Meadow)

We are always open to new suggestions, ideas and offers of help - just get in touch via any of the contact points below.

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Exminster Environment Working Group and Greenspaces Volunteer team.

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