

Disposing of Bulky Items

Exeter residents can take domestic bulky waste, including white goods, to the recycling centres on Pinbrook Road (near Aldi on Pinhoe Road) and Exton Road (Marsh Barton).

For further information visit www.devon.gov.uk/recyclingcentres

If you are thinking of replacing any furniture that is in good condition and is still labelled as complying with current fire regulations, Turntable may be able to take it to pass on to people on very low incomes.

Visit www.turntable.org.uk for a list of what can and can't be taken.

Alternatively, Exeter City Council offers a chargeable bulky waste collection service. Visit www.exeter.gov.uk/specialcollections for current prices and booking arrangements.

It's important to note that the bin crews cannot take bulky items from bin stores or from beside bins. Placing bulky waste in a bin store may result in the crew being unable to empty the bins.



Home Composting

Composting is an inexpensive natural process that transforms your kitchen and garden waste into a valuable and nutrient rich food for your garden, window boxes and pots. It's easy to make and use. It's best to start composting in the spring. Add your kitchen scraps to the compost pile. Kitchen scraps are typically high in nitrogen, which helps heat up the compost pile and speed up the composting process. Egg shells, coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable peels and scraps are all good materials to add. After nine to twelve months you get a free garden fertiliser.

For more information on successful composting visit www.compostguide.com

Order a composter from Exeter City Council
ECC offers two sizes of composters at a reduced rate
220 litre composters at £10.00 each
330 litre composters at £10.00 each
We can deliver composters to your home for £6.00
Call 01392 277888 to arrange your purchase.



Cardboard boxes, foil, plastic bottles, glass... Do you find it confusing what items you can recycle? You're not alone!

Thankfully, the Recycling Team provided some helpful tips and advice in a recent video interview for the ECC Housing Facebook page. The interview went out LIVE on the Housing page, with the team also answering questions from those tuning into the broadcast.

Did you miss the interview? Not a problem - you can watch it again at www.facebook.com/ECCHousing

The team also recorded a new video series, "Recycling Officer Top Tips", with short need-to-know pieces of information about the items you can and cannot recycle. So do keep checking back to the page to see those videos soon! You can also see the video series on the Housing Twitter account: twitter.com/ecc_Housing
We'd love to know how you find the interview and video series, so do leave your comments on our social media platforms!

Love Food ... hate waste

Fact - Wasted good food and drink costs the average UK family almost £60 per month

Fact - the foods we waste the most are fresh vegetables and salad, drink, fresh fruit and bakery items such as bread and cakes

Plan your meals

Check your cupboards, fridge and freezer before you go shopping. Keep a shopping list on the go and add to it when you think of things or run out, saving you time and money in the long run.

Fresher for longer

Wrap cheese in the fridge, store potatoes in a cool dark place and bread in the cupboard or freezer. Fruit and veg keep longer in the fridge.

Last night's leftovers

Make them into today's feast. Turn leftover pasta into a pasta salad for the lunch box or turn leftover vegetables into a hearty vegetable soup - made even better with cheesy croutons made with stale bread.

Love your freezer

Most foods can be frozen including milk, cheese, yoghurt, boiled potatoes, cooked vegetables, bread, cake as well as raw and cooked meat. Save money, buy multi packs, put half in the freezer and defrost when you need it.

Fridge facts

Keep your fridge below 5 degrees C, 70% of our fridges are too warm so food is more likely to go off quicker. Fruit and veg is best kept in the fridge but don't keep bread in the fridge as it will go stale quicker.

Check the dates

'Use By' is there for your safety and food should not be eaten past this date, but it can be eaten or frozen right up to this date. 'Best Before' relates to quality but is still safe to eat after the date; it just may not be at its best. 'Sell by' and 'Display Until' are just for shops' internal stock control, not shoppers so they can be safely ignored.

For more great money saving ideas and recipes using leftovers visit www.lovefoodhatewaste.com



Intrigued what this strawberry bag is all about? You'll have to check out the Facebook interview!

Golden-Oldies launched in Exeter

A charity that brings songs and smiles to older isolated people launched in Exeter on 5 December 2016.

The Golden-Oldies Charity, fondly just referred to as 'Goldies' and with Sir Cliff Richard as its Patron, started in the Bath and Bristol area 10 years ago.

Founder Grenville Jones, a well-respected West Country choir leader, had seen for himself how singing brought joy to so many people through his many choirs.

Always quick to emphasise that his charity Goldies is not a choir, Grenville took the first four daytime singing and activity sessions for isolated lonely people himself. Ten years on the charity now runs over 150 sessions across England and Wales. For thousands attending Goldies is a highlight for them and the only time that they enjoy the company of others.

Goldies was approached by Sarah Hemming the Housing Community Partnerships Officer at Exeter City Council early this year, Sarah explained, *"I work across the city with our older persons' housing schemes and the issue of loneliness and social isolation has been something that is evident to me. It is so important that lonely older people have the opportunity to get out and be with others and when I started to find out more about Goldies I was impressed with the work they are doing and making a real difference to people's lives."*

"The Golden-Oldies Charity, through its development over the recent years, is obviously brightening many lives. We are delighted to work with Goldies and founder Grenville Jones to introduce regular sessions across Exeter, as we know that there will be an enthusiasm for participating in the sessions which will help to improve the wellbeing and social lives of so many people."

An introduction session led by Grenville Jones took place in the historic setting of the Guildhall, on Monday December 5. It was attended by the Lord Mayor of Exeter, Cllr Cynthia Thompson and a number of residents from our Older Persons' Housing Schemes at Globefield, Topsham and Shilhay, Commercial Road, who enjoyed the sing along session, coffee and mince pies.

Golden Oldies founder, Grenville Jones said, *"It was great to bring our songs and smiles to Exeter, and good to meet the Lord Mayor and everyone on December 5 for the very first singing and activity session in the City."*

If you think that you might be able to help by becoming a leader of one of the sessions, or if you would like to have a session in a community room near where you live, please give Sarah Hemming a call on **01392 265766**.

www.golden-oldies.org.uk



If you love a good sing-along, have daytimes free and want to brighten the lives of lonely older people, then we would love to hear from you. The Goldies Charity is based on songs and smiles, it is NOT a choir. It started 10 years ago in the Bath area and has spread across England and Wales. The Charity, in partnership with Exeter City

Council, will be starting new sessions at community rooms in the next few months and wants to hear from anyone who would be interested in becoming our Exeter session leader. Please contact Grenville Jones on 01761 472468 for more details and see www.golden-oldies.org.uk to discover more.

Tea and mince pies at Rennes House

Residents of Rennes House enjoyed mince pies and tea before Christmas kindly supplied by C.S.Fry, the company building the new flats next to Rennes House. Residents also enjoyed a Curry Night at the local Public House and a Musical Memories evening during 2016. Both events were organised by tenants themselves. More events for residents are planned for 2017 so watch this space....



Older Persons' Special



Changes to how we deliver services in our Older Persons' Accommodation

As some of you will be aware in April 2015, Devon County Council withdrew its funding to support residents in Older Persons' Housing. This paid for the current warden service and the emergency call alarm service. Exeter City Council agreed to continue to fund these services for existing tenants temporarily so that it could carry out a review and consider any future arrangements. This review has now been completed.

How we carried out the review?

We sent out a questionnaire to all tenants of our older persons' housing and carried out a series of personal interviews with both our tenants in older persons' accommodation and those in our general needs properties. In addition to this we also held a focus group with some of our older residents to get their thoughts.

Other providers we spoke to have all adopted different approaches to meeting the challenges of providing housing and support in the present climate. Responses ranged from ceasing to supply virtually any housing-related support; to providing a simple sign-posting service; to providing a warden-style support service for all vulnerable tenants funded through a service charge

Our plans from April 2017

After completing this review Exeter City Council decided that we would deliver services in our older persons' accommodation in a new way. The most obvious change will be that we will no longer provide a warden's services. However, we are not simply stopping providing support services to older tenants but we will supply services in a different way.

Housing management and maintenance services will continue to be provided by existing staff based at the Civic Centre:

- **Housing Customer Relations Officers** for tenancy matters
- **Surveyors** for repairs and improvements
- **Lettings and Leasehold Officers** to let the properties.

We are currently recruiting for new Older Persons' Property Services Officers. These new posts will visit the schemes on a weekly basis from a property management point of view:

- Inspecting equipment from a health and safety perspective
- Reporting repairs and managing contractors
- Managing the communal facilities
- Visiting tenants if necessary and being their first point of contact.

Our **Housing Community Partnerships Officer**, will be able to advise residents on what services are available locally and help to organise local events and activities. **Call 01392 265766 or email sarah.hemming@exeter.gov.uk.**

In order to fund this service, tenants living in Older Persons' Housing will be required to pay a modest service charge (no more than £4.00 per week). This service charge will be linked to the property and not the tenant, so anyone wishing to live in Older Persons' Housing will be expected to pay it. This charge will be eligible for Housing Benefit. This means if you are in receipt of Housing Benefit now, there will be no additional cost to you for this service.

We propose to replace all hard-wired alarms with dispersed ones administered by Home Call. However, we intend to continue subsidising the provision of an alarm system to those who currently benefit from it and do not pay for it. This will apply until their tenancies come to an end.

You are invited to a Coffee Morning with our maintenance contractors



All tenants and leaseholders of ECC are invited to take part in coffee mornings, hosted by Mears, at older persons' schemes.

These coffee mornings are attended by a representative from Age UK to talk about the services they offer including insurance, the Age UK Careline, befriending service, wills, funerals etc. Tenants are also invited to visit the local Age UK café in Exeter to encourage meeting new people and give them access to the popular trips that Age UK runs locally. They also hold a raffle for a hamper of goodies which is very popular and bring cakes for the coffee morning.

"Tenants really appreciate the input from Age UK and the information they provide to make their lives easier and more interesting." Mears

You don't have to live in older persons' accommodation to attend, so drop in for a chat!

Diary date

March 14th - Globefield - St Patricks Day theme
June 15th - Rennes House - Summer theme
September 14th - Nelson Close - Harvest Festival theme
December 14th - Faraday House - Christmas theme

If you would like to attend and need more details about where these schemes are located contact Lawrence Blake on 01392 265691 or email: lawrence.blake@exeter.gov.uk

Chicken Burgers with Caramelised Shallots and Blue Cheese

Ingredients

- 2 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 2 large shallots, sliced
- 450g minced chicken
- 1 large garlic clove, minced
- 1 tsp chopped fresh rosemary
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 romaine lettuce leaves
- 4 burger buns or brioche rolls, split and toasted (fresh if you prefer)
- 4 tbsp mayonnaise
- 40g crumbled blue cheese



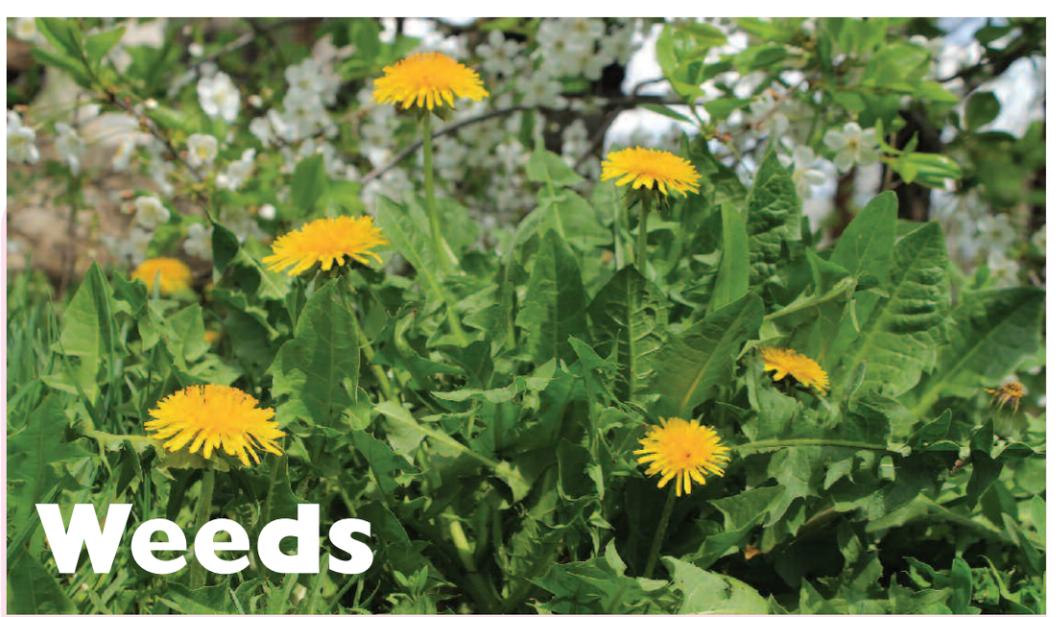
Enjoy.....!

To cook

1. Heat 1 tbsp oil in a frying pan. Add shallots and cook, stirring often, until softened and browned, about 4 minutes. Remove from pan and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, combine chicken, garlic, rosemary, salt, and pepper. Form mixture into 4 burgers. Add remaining 1 tbsp oil to same pan and cook burgers, turning once, until cooked through, about 5 minutes.
3. Place a lettuce leaf on bottom half of each bun and top with a burger. Top burgers with shallots. Mix mayonnaise with blue cheese, spread on bun tops, and put on burgers.

Serves 4 Preparation time 30 minutes

Go healthy for spring - serve burgers with a large mixed salad with dressing of your choice or a bean salad rather than with chips and a bun.



Weeds

Exeter City Council undertakes a weed management programme for paths and hard surface areas associated with Housing properties, and currently also for Highways footpaths in the city. Highways footpaths are most often those adjacent to roads. Weed control is undertaken mainly by the use of a herbicide, applied two or three occasions per year commencing in early spring. The council does not use residual herbicide, so there needs to be adequate weed growth (a green target) for the herbicide to work. The herbicide used is a form of Glyphosate, mixed with a vegetable based adjuvant that makes the herbicide extra 'sticky', meaning that the actual volume of herbicide used is far smaller than in previous years. Most weeds succumb to one treatment, but some woody weeds may require an additional treatment.

Most weeds are simply native species growing somewhere where they are not wanted. They have many uses - for example stinging nettles are the food plant for caterpillars of the Red Admiral butterfly. Some weeds are not native to this country and can cause problems. Himalayan balsam (also known as policeman's helmets) have exploding seedpods and produce hundreds of seeds from each plant. Japanese knotweed, with leaves shaped like an ace of spades, is extremely vigorous and can cause damage to walls and buildings. Weeds such as these need to be killed by using a herbicide, hand pulled or dug up and disposed of. For further advice visit

www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-japanese-knotweed-from-spreading

Dealing with weeds in your garden

However, most of the weeds in your garden that you want to remove can be dealt with by digging in or by placing a mulch of wood chip, plastic sheet, carpet or similar material over the top. Gravel mulches over a layer of polythene will brighten up parts of your garden, be maintenance free, and also allow you to plant through the plastic with some of your favourite plants.

Landlord Services is now on Facebook

ECC Housing is now on Facebook! Give us a like and spread the word! Keep up to date with the latest news and information. <https://www.facebook.com/ECCHousing/>



WE ARE NOW ON TWITTER!



Follow us to get updates on how many homes are available for rent, the repairs service, cleaning service and much, much more about our work to meet housing need in the City.

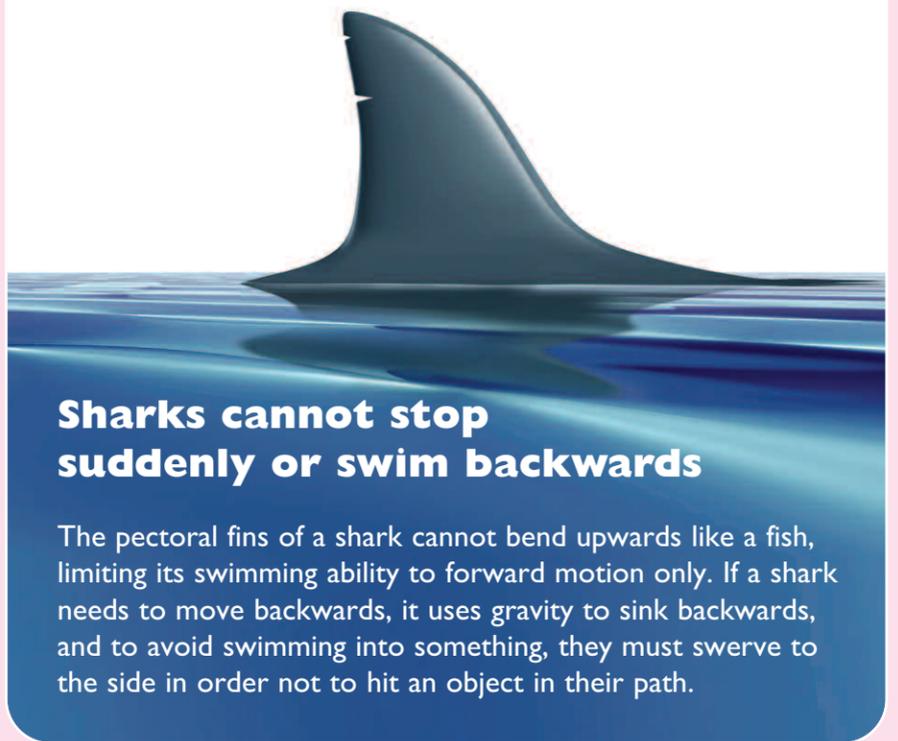
@ECC_Housing
So get tweeting!

FUN FACTS

Pluto was named by an 11 year old Oxford school girl

The planets were called different things by different cultures but the names we know today are derived from Roman and Greek mythology except for Earth which is Germanic and Old English in origin. The Romans named planets according to their movements and appearance. For example, Venus, the planet that appears the brightest, was named after the Roman goddess of beauty, while the reddish Mars was named after the god of war.

Pluto (now a dwarf planet) was discovered in 1930 by Clyde Tombaugh at Lowell Observatory in Arizona. Other names suggested for Pluto included Lowell, Atlas, Perseus, Tantalus, Cronus, Zymal and Minerva. However, the name Pluto was apparently suggested by Venetia Burney, an 11-year-old from Oxford, England, and then recommended to astronomers by the observatory staff. Pluto won out, possibly because it's appropriate for the most distant world to be named after the god of the underworld.



Sharks cannot stop suddenly or swim backwards

The pectoral fins of a shark cannot bend upwards like a fish, limiting its swimming ability to forward motion only. If a shark needs to move backwards, it uses gravity to sink backwards, and to avoid swimming into something, they must swerve to the side in order not to hit an object in their path.



Congratulations to Matthew Thomas, age 7, who won our Christmas drawing competition.

Congratulations to Heather Gilbert, Prescot Road, the winner of the Christmas Wordsearch in the last issue.

Spring Flowers Wordsearch

F	L	O	W	E	R	J	O	N	Q	U	I	L	H	A
L	I	D	O	F	F	A	D	A	C	I	D	C	A	T
H	A	P	P	Y	U	P	L	S	O	F	C	E	V	A
K	A	X	P	A	T	O	N	O	G	O	T	T	E	N
O	L	D	R	I	I	O	Y	S	L	R	E	I	S	E
F	U	L	I	V	W	I	M	U	L	G	I	N	J	M
U	M	J	M	D	A	Z	M	S	A	E	M	O	U	O
N	I	Y	R	O	R	B	O	S	X	T	A	C	R	N
G	R	O	O	M	I	L	L	I	O	M	E	A	O	E
I	P	O	S	N	G	U	W	C	A	E	V	N	C	E
C	A	G	E	D	U	E	P	R	R	N	E	L	L	K
E	N	I	H	I	B	B	V	A	L	O	N	G	N	O
C	S	R	E	A	D	E	R	N	H	T	C	I	H	E
R	Y	I	P	T	U	L	I	P	U	L	P	U	P	X
E	D	S	E	A	E	L	A	Z	A	J	P	E	S	J

- | | | |
|----------|--------|---------------|
| JONQUIL | AZALEA | BLUEBELL |
| ACONITE | PANSY | PRIMROSE |
| CROCUS | VIOLA | NARCISSUS |
| PRIMULA | TULIP | COLUMBINE |
| ANEMONE | PINK | SNOWDROP |
| DAFFODIL | IRIS | FORGET-ME-NOT |

Win £20 of high street gift vouchers.
 All you have to do is find the words listed in the grid. Words may read across, down or diagonally in any direction.
 Please cut out your entry and fill in your details on the form provided. This competition is open to all residents and leaseholders of Exeter City Council.
Please send your entry to : Jane Norton, Housing Assistant, Exeter City Council, FREEPOST EX132, Civic Centre, Exeter EX1 1RQ before Friday 10 March 2017.

NAME:

ADDRESS

.....

TEL NO:

Email:



Growing fruit and vegetables in containers

Spring is on its way and many of us start to think about growing our own fruit and vegetables to harvest later on in the year. Growing fruit and vegetables in containers in your garden, balcony or patio is much easier than you might think and the results are delicious.

Popular produce for container gardening includes carrots, radishes, spring onions, beetroot, tomatoes and lettuce.

Easy growing tips - the secrets of success

- Don't sow seeds too early unless you have a frost free greenhouse
- Start in April and sow 'successions' of each crop every two or three weeks
- Don't be greedy and try to cram plants into containers give them a reasonable amount of space
- Position your containers in full sun, in a spot sheltered from wind
- Water and feed regularly
- Never let the compost dry out
- After six weeks give a half-strength feed at every watering, timing all year round but mostly from April to October.
- Try planting some nasturtium and marigolds to prevent pests.

Some of best named vegetables and fruits to grow in containers include:

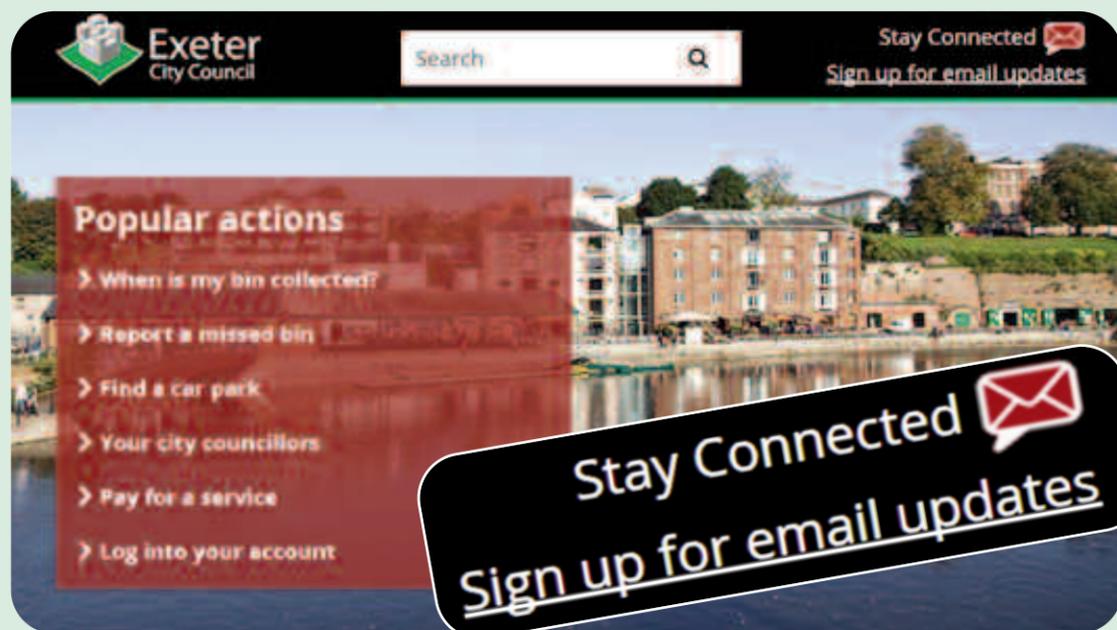
- Beetroot - Boltardy
- Carrot - Early French Frame
- Cucumber - Burpless Tasty
- Green French Bean - The Prince
- Lettuce - Tom Thumb
- Pea - Hurst Beagle
- Potato - Aran Pilot
- Radish - Cherry Belle
- Runner Bean - Painted Lady
- Tomato - Gardeners Delight
- Strawberries - Cambridge Favourite.



STAY CONNECTED

Keep up to date through Stay Connected.

If you head to Exeter City Council's website (www.exeter.gov.uk) you can sign up for email updates in the top right hand corner. You can select the topics you are interested in - there are currently three that relate to housing including one for tenant and leaseholder news.



Lions Message in a Bottle is a simple, but effective, way to keep essential personal and medical details where they can be found in an emergency - the fridge.



More than 5 million **FREE** Message in a Bottle kits have been distributed by Lions Clubs British Isles & Ireland in recent years to people with conditions such as diabetes, allergies, disabilities and life-threatening illnesses.

The bottles are supplied **FREE** of charge thanks to generous donations from the public and businesses. Lions clubs supply the bottles to Health Centres, Doctors' Surgeries and Chemists. They are also available direct from Lions clubs just call their **Freephone number 0845 833 9502** and they will post one to you.

Paramedics, police, fire-fighters and social services support this life-saving initiative and know to look in the fridge when they see the Lions Message in a Bottle stickers.

If you would like this information in other languages or formats, please contact: Landlord Services, Exeter City Council, FREEPOST EX132, Civic Centre, Exeter, EX1 1RQ

Tel: 01392 265033 or email: housing@exeter.gov.uk
www.exeter.gov.uk

The City Council is committed, both as an employer and as a deliverer of services, to ensuring that no recipient of services provided by the Council receives less favourable treatment on any grounds such as disability, ethnic origin, age, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, national or social origin, association with a national minority, locality, property, birth or other status. The Council has also stated its commitment to ensuring that institutional racism and discrimination in general does not exist within Exeter.