

Community Builder Neighbourhood Profile

Pinhoe 2021-22



Introduction

Welcome to Pinhoe! This neighbourhood profile draws on the work of the Wellbeing Exeter Community Builder to bring you a community's eye view of the neighbourhood and what happens in it. You'll not find statistics here on demographics, health, education, etc. Please read this alongside the [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) tool from Devon County Council, which provides a wealth of quantitative data.

Our focus here is on local knowledge: what is it like to live here; what informal community activity is there; where are the important community focal points; what's missing, or of concern to local residents.

This is a snapshot rather than a directory, so doesn't have exhaustive listings (although we've done our best to avoid errors and omissions). It aims to highlight community strengths, and its not-so-strengths, and to provide an informed commentary on the health of community life.



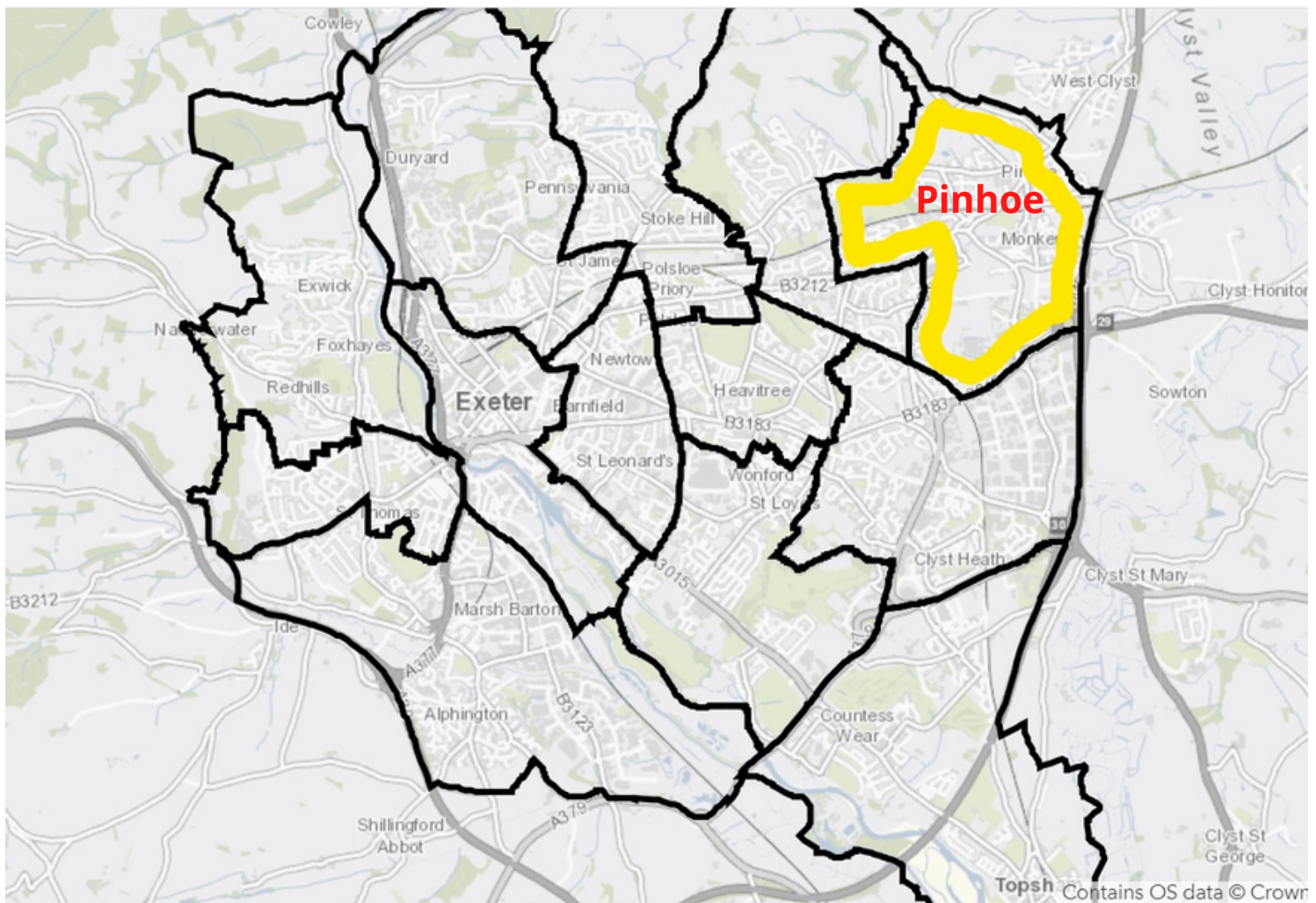
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Picture Of A Place

Pinhoe village is on the edge of the city boundary at the eastern extreme of the ward, which extends south as far as the business developments around the Met Office, and west into Whipton, but does not go beyond the motorway. Langaton Lane, where the Scout Hut is situated, is therefore outside the ward. It is bisected by the railway line. The original village is the centre of the area residents recognise as Pinhoe: "Green fields have been eaten up but we still see our village as a much-loved community."

There are two schools in the area, Pinhoe Primary and St Luke's High School. The catchment for St Luke's is wide, and attracts students from Mount Pleasant, Beacon Heath and Whipton as well as Pinhoe. There is only one preschool, based at Pinhoe Primary.



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The two churches, St Michaels & All Angels and the URC Church, are deeply rooted in village life. The congregation tends to be older at both. An accessible and family-friendly service is held weekly in the school hall. Both churches run community cafes on Friday mornings, St Michael's from a converted horsebox on the church office site on Church Hill.

The busy main road runs through Pinhoe linking it to Broadclyst. Although in earlier times this was a more thriving shopping location, there is still a busy Spar shop, a hairdressers, the Library, a garage, a butchers, vets, chemist, the Hall Church and an estate agent. There are good transport links, with regular buses and a station. A large Sainsbury's is on the outskirts of the ward, used by residents from all over Exeter as a destination supermarket.

There are two pubs - The Pinhoe Hoard, the Royal Oak (well-used by locals) and the coffee house Alicia's. The new housing developments have no community space, shops or cafes. On the outskirts of the ward is Sowton, a small industrial estate with a cluster of support businesses such as Costa and Dominos. This area of the ward is used more by people travelling into Exeter from the motorways than local residents. Along Harrington Lane, Sandpiper Court is an area that incorporates small business units.

There has been substantial development in Pinhoe since 2019, to the extent that the shape of the community is changing quite dramatically - we have described this as 'refocusing'. A new school has been opened in the Monkerton area. Although the old village centre remains important for many, different groups of residents look in different directions for their local 'centre', depending on where they live. This has, among other things, underlined the importance of the location of the proposed community hub, between the 'old' and 'new' parts of the area. The newer developments are now beginning to find their feet, and there are signs of new local organisations emerging to support community activity in those areas. When a new estate is built and populated with families at a single time, there are more opportunities for residents to get to know each other, and strong communities can form.



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On a less positive note, some proposed development (for example at the old quarry) is being met with dismay by local residents, as infrastructure is seen to be insufficient to support it. Community organisations have grown up to respond to this, and to knit together 'old and new' Pinhoe.

Green Spaces

Pinhoe is reasonably well-supplied with green spaces, evenly distributed throughout the ward.

Arena Skate Park on the western fringes of the ward, was recently extensively refurbished and is well-used as a destination park by the wider community.

Exhibition Fields – the site of Exeter Arena, with playing fields.

Eastern Fields is a much used and valued green space between Exhibition Way and Harrington Lane. It is surrounded by housing estates and industrial land and has a newly-formed Friends group that is campaigning to register this space as a village green, to protect it. This group have also opposed use of the fields by travellers, who left a large amount of mess, and has worked with the council to put up more secure barriers to prevent this happening again. Regular litterpicks take place.

Harrington Lane Play Area is adjacent to Eastern Fields. This is a well-equipped park sitting next to Pinhoe Primary School. It is used by a free fitness circuits training group twice a week. There is a MUGA. It is well used immediately after school by parents and carers.

Station Road Playing Fields includes a MUGA and children's play area (refurbished with inclusive play equipment in 2019 using developers' community infrastructure levy funds) and small skate ramp, and is home to Pinhoe AFC.



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The football pitch has also benefitted from improvements funded through Community Infrastructure Levy monies, and a Chat Shack meeting place for teens.

There are also small play parks at Monkerton, Hill Barton Estate and Harringtons Estate. The latter has been used for a number of resident-led and Community Builder-led events.

Community Hubs and What Happens In Them

Community hubs can be buildings, spaces, organisations, even people. They can be community-owned and run, council property, and commercial businesses. What they have in common is that they bring added value to the activities and energy associated with them by bringing people together in ways they might not otherwise do, being a focus for local expertise and connection, and facilitating the casual encounters that fuel fantastic community action.

Pinhoe has a wealth of established community groups and assets and has a varied range of opportunities for local people to engage in their neighbourhood. Although Pinhoe does not have a traditional community centre, it has a number of other assets such as church halls which are well-used by outside groups, and are central to community life.

America Hall is a large building, with two spaces available to rent out commercially (though it is heavily booked out). Various community and commercial activities are hosted, including a community-led baby and toddlers group, Weightwatchers, various dance classes plus arts and crafts groups. Some of these draw people from across the city, and therefore many people do not consider this building to be a community centre in the normal sense. The Pinhoe Pantomime Society produce a very well-established annual community panto here. The Women's Institute and Pinhoe Angels (a women's social group) now meet here too.



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1st Pinhoe Scout Group Scout Hut on Langaton Lane hosts beavers, cubs, scouts, and explorers (children aged 6-18), as well as rainbows and brownies, the youngest sections of the Girl Guides. The hut is also available for private hire.

Pinhoe Library has a friends group of volunteers, with around 30 residents involved. They hold regular coffee mornings, and also host bounce and rhyme sessions for pre-school children and attended by around 30 parents and carers. The library makes use of local volunteers and is a valued local resource, despite its run-down building. It has a varied range of events, hosting local authors, musical events and guest speakers, and the Pumpkin Trail, organised by residents with Community Builder support. The space can also be used for meetings.

United Reformed Church Hall is busy with bookings for yoga, tai chi, a pop-up café, toddler group etc. The church is keen to engage with the wider community. Recent events held here initiated by community members include a wellbeing day, supported by the Bommunity Builder. The Garden Club also meets here. The United Reformed Church with Isca church has plans to link with Christian outreach organisation Youth Genesis to establish a volunteer-run youth group in Pinhoe.

The Hall Church is in a bad state of repair and undergoing ongoing works, so is currently closed for hire use.

Pinhoe Church of England Primary School, alongside its own PTA-run events, the school hosts a parents' running group.

Pinhoe Village started as a heritage group, growing from the informal Pinhoe Memories group. A few years back it evolved to look at creating a neighbourhood plan and to look at traffic issues and the impact of developers. During lockdown, Pinhoe Village website emerged, linking with Pinhoe Community Support. This was very active during the height of the pandemic, playing a big role in mobilising volunteers and supporting neighbourhoods and it continues to support residents.



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Pinhoe Forum developed from both these organisations, describing itself as: 'a forum for ideas, connecting Pinhoe to neighbouring communities in North East Exeter.' Issues of concern include impact of housing development on the ward of Pinhoe. Pinhoe Forum is, with the help of Exeter Connect, working towards becoming a social enterprise model. It has actively engaged with residents, supporting local campaigns and networks across the city.

What Else Is Happening?

Jubilee Club - a traditional social club, with a vibrant skittles league, bingo, snooker, Euchre, etc. A range of sporting events are hosted. The Community Hub group has held skittles and pig racing events here.

Exeter Arena is the nearest leisure centre, on the western fringes of the ward. It is also home to Isca Bowls and Bridge Centre, which runs health walks, table tennis, whist and scrabble groups, and has trialed a coffee morning in an attempt to reach out to the community. There is also a newly fitted gym.

Doctors Surgery is well used and growing, and has an active PPG group.

Wild Pinhoe is an informal group of residents that have planted wildflower beds, also worked in collaboration with Pinhoe Library.

Community Singing Group is currently paused, as there is no available venue.

The Defibrillator Group has gone from strength to strength and is now a constituted group. The first defibrillator was installed on the wall outside the Heart of Oak pub, the second is at Pinhoe Surgery and there are plans for a third.



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Hill Barton Vale Residents Association is newly formed, with Community Builder support, after a resident became concerned by issues faced with the management company and the housing developer.

Harrington's Residents Association is another newly-emerged group, strengthened during the pandemic, again focused on managing the relationship with the management company, but also plenty of opportunities to connect neighbours socially.

Little Free Libraries – inspired by the Hill Barton trailblazer, there are now also little free libraries in the Harringtons, Tithebarn, and Summerway, supported with ward grants from Exeter City Council, and each with their own online presence.

Puzzle Library - similar to the little libraries. One is sited at a resident's house, another at the Finance shop. Grew in popularity during the pandemic.

Clyst Carers is a local charity based out of the medical practice run a weekly drop-in coffee morning at the Heart of Oak pub.

Spreading The Word: How Do People Connect?

Pinhoe Press, a quarterly newsletter established in 2018, is delivered locally in hard copy by volunteers. There is also a Facebook page. Community organisations within the ward of Pinhoe qualify for a free quarter-page advert, and have reported an increase in interest in their activities since the newsletter launched: "We want to help the Pinhoe Community and the organisations link together, support one another and establish a future."

Pinhoe School's newsletter also periodically carries community news and information, and is available to read online. Pinhoe Village, Pinhoe Community, Pinhoe Forum and Pinhoe Community Hub have well-used Facebook pages. Pinhoe Parents is a closed Facebook group, describing itself as 'a friendly group for Pinhoe parents to chat and organise local events.'



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There are three noticeboards in the centre of the village, including one outside the school and one in Church Lane. A local resident also displays posters on her fence.

Premier Financial Planning has a noticeboard at its office on Station Road. Pinhoe Library has a dedicated Community Builder board as well as a general noticeboard. The surgery also displays information electronically. The Hall Church (currently closed) will display events in the hall on its noticeboard. America Hall display posters outside and inside that relate to the building.

Local residents living on prominent streets will also put up laminated posters on stakes or in windows outside their houses. Residents are keen to help spread news of local events, often volunteering to distribute flyers to local groups. The Community Hub has a new noticeboard at Station Road park.

Where Are The Gaps and Concerns? What Potential For The Future?

The extensive local development has brought with it concern from residents about traffic and infrastructure. However, the new developments have made great progress in building and strengthening their own distinctive sense of community. The new and emerging community associations are one indication of this, and there will be plenty more opportunities for the Community Builder to support this work in future.

There is growing opposition to attempts to extend development to valuable green field sites, with the accompanying loss of wildlife and green spaces. A recent well-supported petition presented to Exeter City Council called for the protection of green spaces from development that could dramatically affect the green skylines and green corridors around the city. There is a corresponding interest in tree-planting and rewilding.



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Plans for the Hub, developed through community consultations, include a new base for the dilapidated library, along with a community café and sports changing rooms. There will also be meeting space, ICT facilities and small business development space. A number of community groups are hoping to relocate to or establish in the new building. It is hoped the Hub will also collaborate with the nearby GP surgery in initiatives to address social isolation and improve levels of physical activity. The Community Builder has been closely involved in supporting all aspects of this project.

The Hub project has generated widespread support and interest locally and has continued to fundraise with regular events during lockdown – the summer fun day has become a regular fixture on the Pinhoe Calendar.

The fundraising and building teams meet regularly. Planning has now been approved, the business plan completed, and a professional bid writer appointed to support the team. The Friends of Pinhoe Library have begun to think about how it can attract some younger members, and involve more young people and families in events. This again is all looking forward to and paving the way for the relocation of the library to the new community hub.

