



Axminster

& Axe Valley Guide

18/19

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Welcome to Axminster

Axminster always offers a warm welcome, whether to weary travellers, curious day-trippers, the active and adventurous or those who come just to experience the peace, tranquillity and beauty of our lovely area.

Axminster and the Axe Valley enjoy a way of life that is in tune with its surroundings and visitors are encouraged to relax here with us at a pace that suits their need.

This guide gives an opportunity to tell you of the benefits and possibilities this wonderful region provides and to offer you the chance to share our appreciation. Quite simply, if you seek awe, adventure or artistry, we have it all in abundance in this wonderful place.

This guide has been produced by CRW Publications in conjunction with Axminster Heritage Centre. Whilst every care has been taken in compiling this guide, and statements herein are believed to be true at the time of publication, the publishers are not liable for any errors or omissions. It is advisable to confirm information provided. Inclusion in this guide does not imply recommendation by publishers or Axminster Heritage Centre.

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A very special place

Axminster is the gateway to three designated Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty: East Devon, West Dorset and the Blackdown Hills, all protected landscapes. The countryside remains relatively untouched by contemporary development and sits alongside some of the most unspoilt holiday coast in Britain.

Situated in the beautiful Axe Valley, this historic and influential centre is a prime location for holidays, recreation, commerce, leisure, heritage, and culture. A charming and unspoilt market town promoted as “The gateway to the Jurassic Coast”, it has the nearest mainline railway station to this World Heritage Site. The proximity of incredible geology representing 185 million years of earth history, and the ease of access to a variety of equally captivating locations, make it a genuine base from which to discover the distinctive character and natural beauty of this part of the world. The distinctive and notable coastline is freely accessible. The dramatic headlands and rocky outcrops are interspersed with beaches, pebbled shorelines, white cliffs and quaint coves.

Inland, picture postcard images of traditional rural Devon are set in the lush countryside. Quaint villages and picturesque landscapes pop up in amazing variety throughout the area. Rolling hills and a patchwork quilt of fields and heath stretch out for miles before you in open vistas. Meandering streams and rivers and captivating woodland provide a perfect retreat for casual walks, with a dog, a camera or just your thoughts.



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Tourist information

Axminster Information Centre is based at Axminster Heritage, Thomas Whitty House, Silver Street, Axminster EX13 5AH www.axminstertouristinformation.co.uk

Opening Times

March – October:

Monday to Friday 10 - 4pm; Saturdays 10am to 1pm

November – February:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 10 – 12 noon

The office is situated in the centre of town at Thomas Whitty House, the former Axminster Carpet Factory. Come to see us for information for tourists and residents about local events, walks, cycle routes, maps and places to visit.

Also Available: Bus timetables. Coach trip lists and bookings. Radar Keys. Tickets for Axe Vale Festival, Yeovilton Air Day, Devon County Show. Local Attraction Literature. Local accommodation listings. Theatre information. Discount vouchers for local attractions. WiFi. We sell maps, books, souvenirs, postcards, and the Axminster teddy bear, Amos.





Axminster

Situated in the beautiful Axe Valley, this historic and influential centre seeks to be a prime location for holidays, recreation, commerce, leisure, heritage, and culture.

A charming and unspoilt market town promoted as 'Gateway to the Jurassic Coast', this is not purely because it has the nearest mainline railway station to the World Heritage Site. The proximity of incredible geology representing 185 million years of earth history, and the ease of access to a variety of equally captivating locations, make it a genuine base from which to discover the distinctive character and natural beauty of this part of the world.

Proud and aware of its own past there is provision for those who wish to investigate the heritage or get a nostalgic feel for the place by following the Blue Plaque Trail available from the Heritage Centre. This lies in the shadow of the beautiful Saxon church of St Mary on Minster Green where it dominates the centre of the town with imposing style and magnitude and is the perfect place to start strolling or browsing.



History and Heritage

Rich in history and perhaps surprisingly connected to so many significant events in this Country's history and development, this area can inform and enthuse about events in the past. Built on a hill overlooking the River Axe, our town has a proud history dating back to Celtic times and has been a flourishing community serving tourists and local needs over the centuries, including a prominent location on the coaching route from London to Exeter.

Its significance in Roman times is still not completely understood, but it sits at the intersection of two major Roman roads. It is evident these routes from Dorchester to Exeter, and Lincoln to Seaton were supported by a Roman fort built nearby presumably to secure the cross-roads. The Fosse Way, the name given to the road from Lincoln, is believed to have been originally built as a defensive barrier (Fosse meaning ditch) and subsequently used for the movement of troops and goods.

The town was granted a charter for weekly cattle markets in 1210 and these continued right up until 2006. Thursday is still Market Day, with a busy street market in the Square and a Country Market in South Street for local produce - perhaps not the previous chaotic scenes of livestock, but nevertheless still a lively centre of activity.



Famed most notably for the superb, high quality carpets that were first produced in the town in 1755 by Thomas



Whitty, the town is proud of its reputation. Axminster Carpets is the only manufacturer to purchase, wash, card, spin and dye its own yarn before weaving the carpet itself. Due to their hard-wearing and durable nature, Axminster carpets are most frequently used in country homes, luxury hotels, global airlines and train carriages. Every Wetherspoon pub has a bespoke designed carpet manufactured by Axminster Carpets.

To celebrate 250 years of carpet weaving in Axminster, in 2005 a commemorative rug was produced. Paraded by the company's weavers through the town, it was then blessed by the Bishop of Exeter and presented to the Earl of Devon. The carpet is now in Clarence House, the home of Prince Charles. Also in 2012, Axminster Carpets was awarded a Royal Warrant for the supply of goods and services to the Royal Household.

In more recent times, Axminster was close to the southerly starting point of the Stop Line, built in 1940 as a defence against invasion. Just outside the town on the banks of the river there is one of many pill-boxes, constructed along with antitank obstacles, in a line running North to the Somerset coast.

If you would like to investigate this heritage or get a nostalgic feel for our town, you should also visit the Axminster Heritage Centre, in the shadow of the beautiful Saxon church of St Mary. This is situated on Minster Green where it dominates the centre of the town and is the perfect place to start strolling or browsing.

The Trafalgar Way (towards Kilmington and Honiton) commemorates the route taken by Lieutenant Lapenotiere in November 1805, 'express post chaise' from Falmouth to London. His journey, carrying official dispatches with news of Nelson's death and the momentous victory, took 37 hours and required 21 stops for horses. Axminster was one of the 'breaks' on the 271 mile endeavour and featured in events to commemorate this fascinating historic occasion.



AXMINSTER *heritage*

The Axminster Heritage Centre opened in 2016, and is housed in the original carpet factory – Thomas Whitty House in Silver Street. The building is now undergoing a major renovation, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, but a smaller display area has been open to visitors, and also houses the Information Centre. The new expanded display area opens in 2019

The display tells the story of Axminster and its surrounding villages from pre-history, through Roman times to the modern age. Wool has featured prominently in Axminster's history and the exhibits feature weaving, spinning and dyeing.

In a town made famous by its carpet-making there is a special focus on the carpet industry founded by Thomas Whitty. On display there is an 18th century loom, together with original Axminster carpets, including the beautiful 18th century Whitty carpet from Rockbeare Manor, featured in Michael Portillo's Great British Railway Journeys.

A working model of a local mill and agricultural implements highlights the importance of farming.

The large American Hospital constructed to cope with World War 2 casualties is also featured.

Work is now going ahead to complete the renovation of the building and of Whitty's original Dye House and garden, and to build a mezzanine floor for storage of the collection and an office.



The Heritage Centre is open from March until October: Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm and Saturday 10am – 1pm.

The Centre is closed on Sundays.

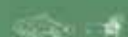


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Location, location, location

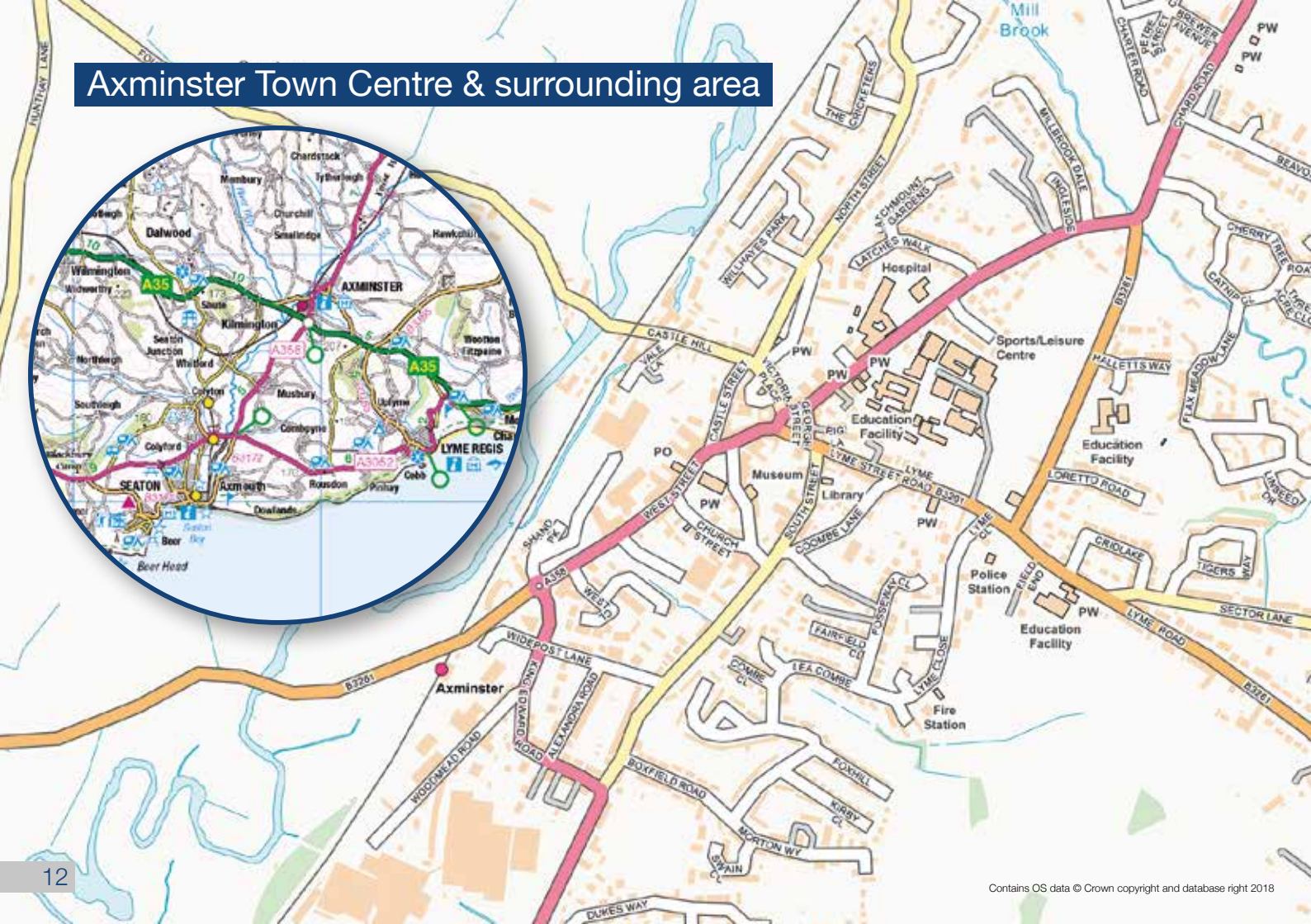
Axminster and the Axe Valley is an ideal base for touring Devon and the neighbouring counties of Dorset and Somerset, equidistant from Exeter, Dorchester and Taunton. The A358 brings you to us from the M5 (from the Midlands and the North) and the A303 (from London). The A35 links us to Bridport, Dorchester and Exeter. Exeter Airport is half an hour away, and you can hire a car there for your stay.

To reach local attractions, we have available and accessible public transport which enables visitors to travel freely without being reliant on a car. Walking and cycling are popular. Boats, trams and horses are among the less common, yet enjoyable conveyances you can choose!

However you get here, you will soon appreciate the centrality of the location and the variety of transport you can use for your travels. Buses and trains provide a regular service locally and to towns and resorts slightly further afield.

Arriving at Axminster Station, with an hourly service from London Waterloo, you can connect with regular bus services to Lyme Regis, Bridport and Dorchester, Seaton, Taunton, Honiton and Exeter. See pages 14-15 for details.

Axminster Town Centre & surrounding area





Getting around.....by car

Axminster is a convenient centre for three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (East Devon, Blackdown Hills and West Dorset) and the Jurassic Coast. The A35 from Honiton to Dorchester forms the Axminster by-pass to the south, and with the A3052 gives access to the coast, and the A358 from north to south links us to the main road network, but there are many other minor roads to explore.

The main roads are free-flowing, well signed and provide direct routes to and along the coast, or to local towns inland. The cathedral city of Exeter is less than twenty-five miles away and can be reached in well under an hour, while the six miles from Axminster to Lyme Regis is likely to take less than ten minutes.

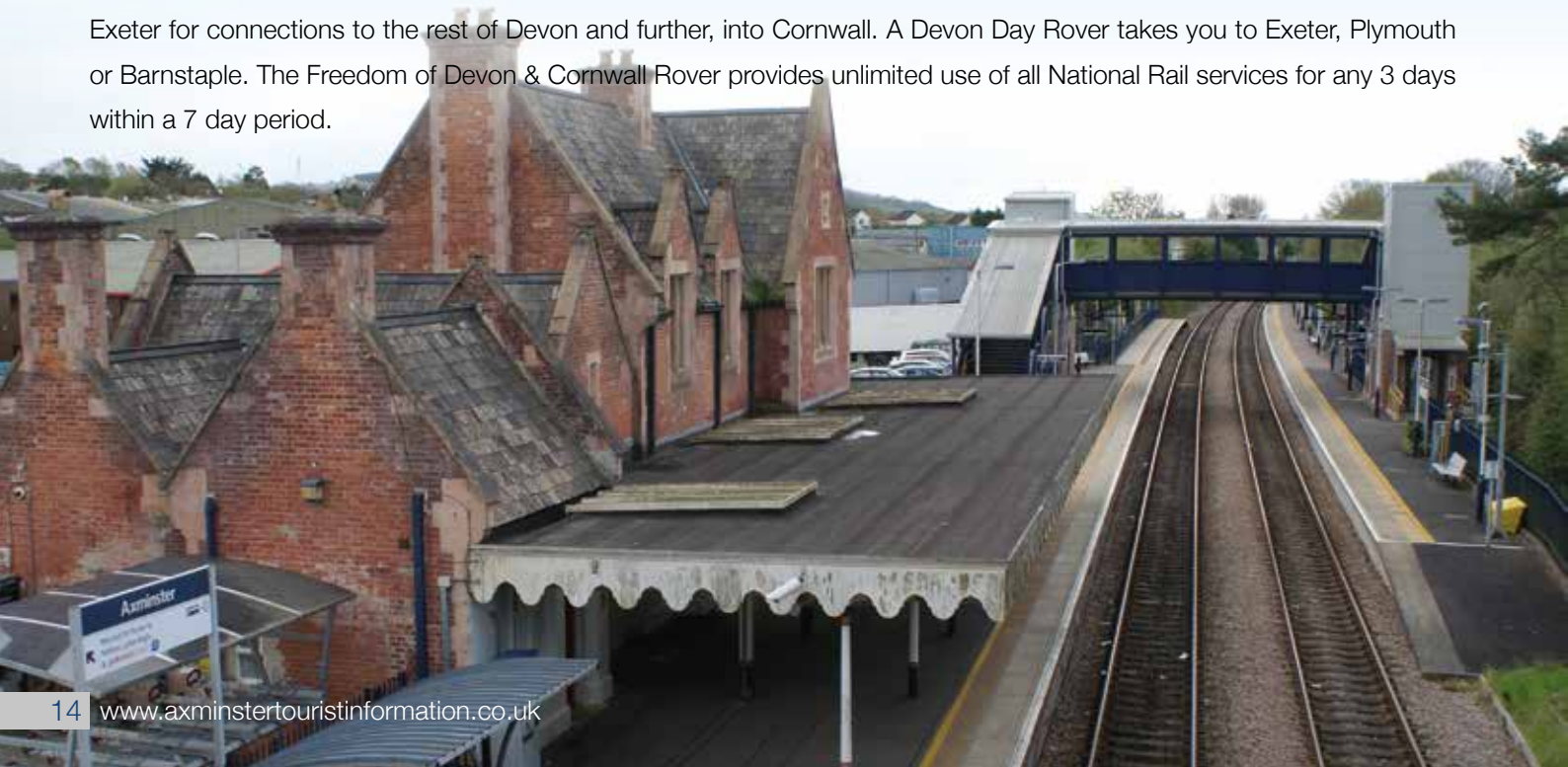
An intricate network of by-roads and lanes criss-crosses the landscape. There is often an opportunity to pull over and take in the view for a moment without causing obstruction. Many visitors enjoy exploring these rather than the more direct routes.

Getting around by Public Transport.....

Public transport here is a viable alternative, with regular and reliable train and bus services.

Rail

Axminster station acts as a hub for local transport connections. Axminster is the nearest town to the Jurassic coast with a regular hourly rail service from London (Waterloo). The train also conveniently connects at Basingstoke with trains from the Midlands and North and at Salisbury from Bristol and destinations along the south coast. It continues to Exeter for connections to the rest of Devon and further, into Cornwall. A Devon Day Rover takes you to Exeter, Plymouth or Barnstaple. The Freedom of Devon & Cornwall Rover provides unlimited use of all National Rail services for any 3 days within a 7 day period.



Bus



Bus services in the town and valley are provided by Stagecoach (4/4a to Honiton and Exeter), First (30 to Chard and Taunton and X51/X53 to Dorchester and Weymouth), and Axe Valley (885 to Seaton and Beer). There is also a Fare Car that you can book a day in advance to get to and from local villages (call Axminster Taxis on 01297 34000). The Axe Valley and West Dorset Ring and Ride Service also provides wheelchair-accessible transport for the elderly and people with disabilities – contact them on 01404 46520.

From further afield, there is a National Express daily service from Cornwall to Sussex which stops at Raymonds Hill; and Berry's provide a superfast service from London which connects at Ilminster with local buses.



Worthy of particular mention is the X51/53 bus service running from Axminster Station along the Jurassic Coast to Lyme Regis, Bridport, Dorchester and Weymouth. Described on many web sites as 'epic' it is certainly one of the great British bus routes. You might also enjoy the local 899 service from Seaton to Sidmouth via Beer and Branscombe, where the lanes are only just wider than the bus! All these routes can easily be used to enable you to walk the South West Coast Path, in bite-sized sections and without retracing your steps.

Getting around by Bike.....

Many visitors to the area choose a cycle to get around. You don't have to be an enthusiast on two wheels to enjoy the benefits and independence that a bike gives you for all or part of your stay.

Axminster, as it did in Roman times, finds itself at a significant crossroads. Today it is the National Cycle Network which links us to other places. From East to West, Route 2 runs from Dover in Kent to St Austell in Cornwall and cyclists, rather than legionaries pass through on their travels. The route to the north is the Stop Line Way, covering the 70 miles from Seaton to Weston Super Mare. This long distance cycling and walking route connects Axminster, Chard, Ilminster, Taunton and Bridgwater, and links the two coasts of the South West Peninsula. It then joins National Route 33 via Clevedon to Bristol and Route 3 to Padstow. See the Sustrans website for more details.

Cycling away from these routes can still be a safe and pleasurable voyage of discovery, with lots of easy cycling allowing time to enjoy the surroundings, meet local people, and exercise of course....


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Getting around on foot.....

For those that are able and enthusiastic, walking is an exhilarating experience, whether you are intent on tackling the whole of the East Devon Way, strolling along a short section of a bridleway, sauntering through gardens, or ambling beside a brook.

The area has extensive Public Rights of Way, mostly clearly signed and often way-marked and supported with information points, maps and written guides.

There are numerous and varied local walks, some more leisurely than others. Details can be obtained from the Tourist Information Centre, where, for example, you can collect a leaflet describing walks from Axminster itself, and six circular walks from Kilmington that venture into both East Devon and Blackdown Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



© East Devon AONB

South West Coast Path:

Adjudged to be among the best walks in the world, this 630 mile National Trail extends from Minehead in Somerset, all the way around the peninsula to Poole in Dorset.

The dedicated web site **www.southwestcoastpath.org.uk** allows users to tailor walks to individual need, simply defined as easy, moderate or challenging or to consider themed walks, multi day trips and walking festivals. Links to public transport provision make it easy to venture further afield.



Photo provided by the South West Coast Path Association.
Photographer: Jenny Bowden.

The East Devon Way:

This is a 40mile inland route that uses footpaths, bridleways and country lanes from Exmouth to Lyme Regis. A guide is available that breaks the route into half day and day walks, and points out places of interest and landmarks. It is a good alternative to the South West Coast Path, and has links at both ends and numerous intermediate locations, giving scope for varying landscape and distance on your journey. Accessible in all seasons, it provides a beautiful means to explore the area, crosses five rivers, leads you through eight villages and two seaside towns. The hospitality and interest they offer complements the stunning rural countryside.



© East Devon AONB

Gardens and historic buildings

For those that want to take things a little more slowly there are some beautiful parks and gardens to stroll through:

- Burrow Farm Gardens: over 13 acres and a tea room
- Pecorama, with a miniature railway
- Bickton Park Botanical Gardens
- Abbotsbury Sub-tropical Gardens

Historic Houses within easy reach are Cadhay, Sand (Sidbury), Forde Abbey, Montacute, Barrington Court, Lytes Cary Manor. See www.hha.org.uk/stately-homes-castles-and-gardens-in-devon for details. There are two National Trust properties close by at Loughwood and Shute.



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Calendar of Events

As the Axminster Guide is now printed bi annually we are unable to give exact dates for some of the many events held in Axminster, the Axe Valley and surrounding area in 2019 and early 2020.

Detailed on the following two pages is a selection of events normally held during the year, we suggest you contact the organisers direct or one of the Tourist Information Centres listed on page 51 for full details.

2018

June 2018

Music in the Garden

Most Saturdays 11.00-1.00, June - September
Axminster Arts Café Bar 01297 631455

July 2018

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Meditation at Seaton Wetlands* | Wed 4th, 6pm - 8pm |
| Booking required. | |
| Bird ringing demonstration* | Fri 6th from 9am |
| Discovery Hut - Seaton Wetlands | |
| Tai Chi at Seaton Wetlands* | Sat 7th, 10am - 11:30am |
| Booking required. | |
| What's that bird?* | Sat 7th, 11 - 1pm |
| Island Hide at Seaton Wetlands | |
| Yeovilton Air Day 0330 100 3654 | Sat 7th |
| Canoe safari* | Thursday 12th, 6pm - 8.30pm |
| Meet at Seaton Wetlands. Booking required. | |

Summer Wildlife Spotters Challenge* Mon 23rd - Mon 3rd Sep
Seaton Wetlands.

Nightjar night walk* Tue 24th, 9pm - 10.30pm
Trinity Hill. Booking required.

Forde Abbey Annual Fair 01460 220231 Thu 26th

What's that bird?* Thur 26th, 11am - 1pm
Island Hide at Seaton Wetlands

Lyme Regis Lifeboat Week 01297 442138 Sat 28th July
to Fri 3rd August

Windrush willow: Breton Button Basket* Sat 28th, 10am - 4pm
Reed Base at Seaton Wetlands. Booking required.

Branscombe Festival 020 7955 1446

"Gate to Plate" Honiton High Street Wed 18th

Honiton Charter Day 01404 42957 Sat 28th

August 2018

Yoga at Seaton Wetlands** Wed 1st, 9:30am - 11am
Seaton Wetlands. Booking required

Fun in the stream* Thur 2nd, 2pm - 4pm
Cranbrook. Children must be accompanied. No dogs. Booking required.

Little Ones Wild Walk* Thur 2nd, 10am - 12noon
Woodbury common. Booking required.

Lyme Regis Regatta Sat 4th - Sun 12th

Sidmouth Folk Week 01395 516441 Fri 3rd - Fri 10th

What's that bird?* Sat 4th, 11am - 1pm

Island Hide at Seaton Wetlands.

West Bay Day Sun 5th

Honiton Show 01404 41794 Thu 2nd

Bug Hunt* Seaton Wetlands Thur 9th, 1pm - 3pm

Canoe safari* Thur 9th, 6pm - 8.30pm

Meet at Seaton Wetlands. Booking required.

Beer Regatta 01404 41794 Sat 11th - Fri 17th

Bird ringing demonstration* Sat 11th from 9am

Discovery Hut at Seaton Wetlands

Rockpool Ramble* Sidmouth seafront Tue 14th, 2pm - 4pm

Yoga at Seaton Wetlands** Wed 15th, 9:30am - 11am

Seaton Wetlands. Booking required.

| | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Bridport Carnival | Sat 18th |
| Seaton Wetlands Summer Holiday Club* Seaton Wetlands. Booking required. | Mon 20th - Fri 24th 10am to 4pm |
| Melplash Show | Thu 23rd |
| What's that bird?* Tower Hide at Seaton Wetlands | Thu 23rd, 11am - 1pm |
| River Cottage Festival | Sat 25th & Sun 26th |
| Sidmouth Regatta | Sat 25th & Sun 26th |
| Candles on the Cobb , Lyme Regis | Sun 26th |
| Honiton Hill Rally 07929 534277 | Sun 26th & Mon 27th |
| Family adventure day* Offwell Woods nr Honiton. Booking required | Thu 30th, 10am - 3pm |
| Lyme Folk Festival , Lyme Regis | Fri 31st - Sun 2nd Sept |

September 2018

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Bird ringing demonstration* Discovery Hut at Seaton Wetlands | Sat 1st from 9am |
| Bat Walk Seaton Wetlands. Booking required | Thu 6th, 8pm till late |
| Food Rocks Festival , Lyme Regis | Sat 8th & Sun 9th |
| What's that bird?* Island Hide at Seaton Wetlands | Sat 8th, 11am - 1pm |
| Axminster Carnival 01297 639884 | Sat 15th |
| Garden and Harvest Fest , Forde Abbey | Sat 15th & Sun 16th |
| Family forage and cook-up* Hollyford Woods. Booking required | Sat 15th, 10am - 12.30pm |
| What's that bird?* Island Hide at Seaton Wetlands | Thu 20th, 11am - 1pm |
| Bat Walk* Seaton Wetlands. Booking required | Thu 20th, 8pm till late |
| Sidmouth Illuminated Carnival | Sat 22nd |
| Meditation at Seaton Wetlands* Seaton Wetlands. Booking required | Sat 22nd, 10.30am - 12.30pm |

October

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Sidmouth Science Festival | Fri 5th - Sun 14th |
| Beer R&B Festival | Fri 12th - Sun 14th |

November

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Fireworks display , Lyme Regis (tbc) | Sat 3rd |
| Bridport Literary Festival | Sun 4th - Sun 11th |

December

| | |
|--|----------|
| Great Christmas Pudding Race , Lyme Regis | date tbc |
|--|----------|

January

| | |
|---|----------|
| Lyme Lunge - Fancy dress swim in the sea at Lyme Regis | date tbc |
|---|----------|

February

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Dorchester Beer Festival | date tbc |
|---------------------------------|----------|

March

| | |
|--|----------|
| Plant and Gardening Fair , Forde Abbey | date tbc |
| Eat Dorset Food Fair , Abbotsbury Gardens | date tbc |

April

| | |
|--|----------|
| Spring Plant Fair , Mapperton Gardens | date tbc |
| Plant Fair , Burrow Farm Gardens near Axminster | date tbc |

May

| | |
|--|----------|
| Fossil Festival , Lyme Regis and Charmouth | date tbc |
| Exeter Festival of South West Food and Drink | date tbc |
| Millfest . Town Mill, Lyme Regis | date tbc |
| Devon County Show , Westpoint Showground, | date tbc |
| Spring Tide Food Fair , Burton Bradstock | date tbc |
| Jazz and Blues Festival , Lyme Regis | date tbc |
| River Cottage Spring Food Fair near Axminster | date tbc |
| Street Food Festival , Lyme Regis | date tbc |
| Classic and Vintage Rally , Pecorama, Beer | date tbc |
| Sherborne Country Fair | date tbc |

Events compiled with the help of Judith Huygens at Lyme Tree House (See page 49)

* Discover more at wildeastdevon.co.uk, 01395 517557, countryside@eastdevon.gov.uk

** Yvonne Waite: 01297 20326 discover more at wildeastdevon.co.uk

Retail Therapy

Rich in local trade, the area provides a wealth of independent and individual stores and services, vibrant weekly markets and specialist outlets, ensuring there is a different feel in each location. Generally free from hectic crowds and pressures, the quality of service and freedom to wander and browse just make it more appealing for most shoppers. Not only that, the parking is relatively cheap and the ticket is transferable to any car park across East Devon, so you can move from centre to centre at will.

Taking a saunter through the streets of Axminster, keeping an eye open for a bargain or a locally produced snack that takes your fancy is a lovely way to while away some time, especially on your holiday. Even if you have something more specific in mind to purchase you will be surprised to find the variety and unusual nature of much that is available. There are two supermarkets, and a few standard High Street names of course, but there is the quirky, the unique and the original, just waiting to be discovered by you.

Axminster Carpets, still made in the town, are on sale at an outlet centre on the Musbury Road just beyond the A35 over-bridge. If you cannot take home a whole carpet, squares are often available as a more portable souvenir!

The town is also the home of Axminster Tools and Machinery, who pride themselves not only on their range of over 300 brands, but also on attention to detail in areas like carving, wood-turning, modelling and pyrography.

In the area, there are also amazing opportunities to purchase items direct from source, or from the very hands that made them. Numerous farm shops, cheese, honey or winemakers offer their own natural produce, and a range of galleries, studios, workshops and creative businesses can give you the chance to buy bespoke works from the talented artisan that made them.



The Axe Valley

The Axe Valley has plenty to offer visitors whether exploring for a day, enjoying a short break, or escaping for a longer holiday. The river Axe enters the English Channel approximately 6 miles from Axminster, between the towns of Axmouth and Seaton, two of many distinctive places to explore along The Jurassic Coast. Just a few miles along the coast, beyond Seaton, lies the picturesque fishing village of Beer. To the east of Axmouth, between there and Lyme Regis, lies the Undercliff, a National Nature Reserve.

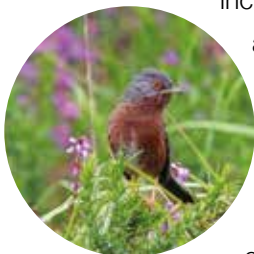


The Axe estuary is a haven for birds and birdwatchers, and those who want to get closer to nature. The Axe Valley Wetlands offer over 4km of level trails and boardwalks, through this varied natural habitat between Colyford and Seaton. It comprises three distinct Local Nature Reserves, Colyford Common, Black Hole Marsh and Seaton Marshes.





The area is teeming with birdlife all year round and is home to large breeding flocks of birds. It attracts plentiful migrant visitors, and amateurs and enthusiasts can easily access vantage points, including hides, to catch sight of the antics of curlews, kingfishers, snipe, and many more. Butterflies and dragonflies are common and even otters have been spotted. East Devon District Council who



own and manage the site, run an education centre and organise activities, particularly for the young, who can explore and discover in safety.

At Stafford Marsh, you will find the Discovery Hut and hide, pond shelter, classroom, toilet facilities and wildlife garden. The Discovery Hut is staffed by volunteer wardens most weekends throughout the year - from here you can find out more about the Wetlands, hire pond dipping equipment and have a cup of tea or coffee.

Around and above Axminster, the rivers Axe and Yarty run through rolling countryside and a flood plain. Except in winter, there are pleasant walks alongside the rivers, and a cycle route, the Stop Line Way, is gradually being extended along the valley.

The wider area affords many opportunities to get close to nature, savour the sweet bouquet of wild flowers, catch the scent of diverse crops and draw in the aroma of fresh air.

Get in touch with your environment! Feel the sand between your toes, or waters rush over your body in waves or ripples. Maybe smooth some earth or clay between your fingers, even hug a tree or perhaps lie down and let the grass tickle your ears while you study the clouds.....





People of great taste

Throughout the locality there are hundreds of people dedicated to the production of fine food and drink and a good many of them are keen to show you how it is done or to help you share in their enjoyment.



Touch, taste and smell our unusual, different, authentic and creative flavours, and you will certainly be richer for it.

Run by Malcolm Miller and his family, Millers Farm Shop in Kilmington has been growing and selling locally sourced produce for over thirty years. Some of the vegetables are grown on the farm, the rest are provided by local suppliers passionate about good quality food.



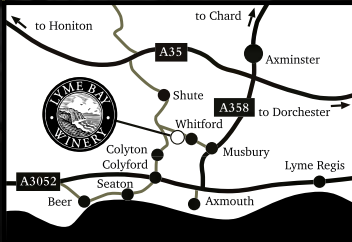
For something more exotic try Home Farm Hotel & Restaurant in Wilmington who are renowned for their Thai food and from late 2018 will be running Thai cookery classes.

Not far out of town is the Lyme Bay Winery. They produce a specialist range of country wines, ciders and liqueurs which can be tasted and purchased in the on-site shop.



Also nestled in this glorious valley of East Devon and close by is The Coffee Factory. If the fresh smell of the countryside doesn't tempt you the aroma of coffee will! Offering a unique subscription service you and your friends can enjoy fresh coffee every day.

VISIT OUR WINERY SHOP



We are a small, dedicated West Country company passionate about producing delicious, award winning English Wines, Country Wines, Ciders, Meads and Liqueurs from our home in Devon's beautiful Axe Valley.

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River Cottage

The Axe Valley is home to River Cottage HQ, a 60 acre farm run by TV chef Hugh Fernley-Whittingstall. He has created a unique venue offering cookery courses, related training and experiences with a strong focus on organic, natural and local produce. He has also opened the River Cottage Canteen and Deli in the middle of Axminster making it easier for people to sample his cuisine.



River Cottage

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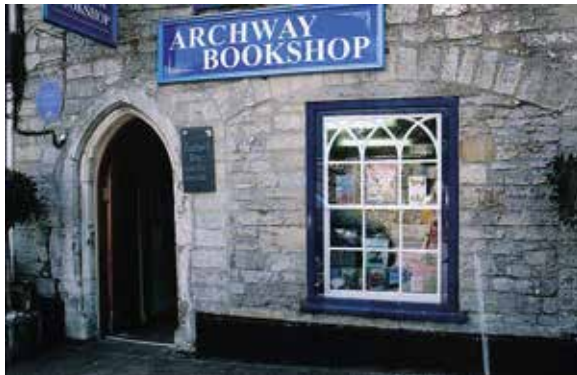
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Axminster

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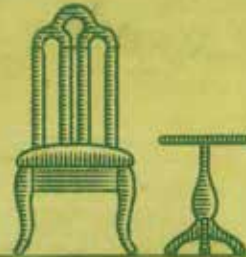
The modest 13th century frontage and stone arch belies the vast array of books displayed over two floors within. Here we combine excellent old-fashioned customer service with new-era technology, to provide quality information in an instant.

Books for the curious mind



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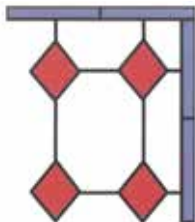
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Towns and Villages revealed

As the river flows towards the sea from Axminster it is joined by many streams and by two main tributaries, the Rivers Yarty and Coly. This rich and fertile valley has provided for the populations and settlements for hundreds of years. The history and heritage of these places is best experienced by a personal visit to appreciate their atmosphere.



Musbury:

The village takes its name from Musbury Castle, an Iron Age hill fort, which crowned the hill above the village some

175 metres above sea level. The centre of the village is a designated conservation area, with numerous listed buildings and sites of historical interest. It has a 15th century church, and the Drake memorial dating from 1611. It sits on the East Devon Way. A Domesday Book reference to Musberia, translates as Old fortification infested with mice. **www.musburyvillage.co.uk**



Kilminster:

A regular winner in the Best Kept Village Awards this lovely spot is home to a dynamic and progressive community, intent

on preserving and protecting their quality of life. Used as a location for the 1998 adaptation of Tess of the d'Urbervilles it has a comfortable and traditional feel, including two thatched pubs. **www.kilminstervillage.com**. Miller's Farm Shop is a great attraction locally, with food sourced from over the Channel as well as from the local area.



Seaton

Cliff top gardens and the long esplanade ensure visitors can enjoy unhindered views of Lyme Bay as they stroll along

the seafront. The largely pedestrianised town centre with a range of independent and distinctive shops is very close to the mile long pebble beach providing a constant source of activity and enjoyment in a relaxed setting. Its position at the centre of the Jurassic Coast singles it out

in terms of access to the full range of geology. The Seaton Jurassic Centre, which combines geological history with an introduction to local wildlife, stands next to the new terminus of the Seaton Tramway, offering a nostalgic and scenic ride through the Wetlands to Colyton.

Colyton:



This individual and fascinating town has very early origins and a complex street pattern, almost certainly Saxon. Parts of the church

date back to Norman times and its lantern tower is a rare feature from the 15th century. Recorded as the “most rebellious town in Devon”, it supplied many men to the Duke of Monmouth in 1685, for the last rebellion on English soil. It has also witnessed great wealth as a merchant centre and been instrumental in English history, evidenced in part by the very existence of the Chamber of Feoffees. Established by Royal Charter in 1546 they have continuously served the parish since that time.

Colyton Parish History Society operate a Family History Service Point at the Heritage Centre, which also houses a lovely tea room with homemade scones to savour. They also organise talks, town walking tours, exhibitions and research projects. **www.colyton.co.uk**

Colyford:



The village honours its past with the annual Michaelmas Goose Fayre, a colourful and family friendly event well worth

experiencing. The Seaton Tramway crosses the A3052 which runs through the village and passengers can get on and off here to enjoy the surroundings or venture onto Colyford Common, a Local Nature Reserve forming part of the Axe Vale Wetlands. The village is very proud of the part it played in safeguarding one of the oldest natural woods in the country, Holyford Woods, which is now also a Local Nature Reserve. **www.colyfordvillage.co.uk**

Beer:

A familiar destination for locals throughout the region, Beer is a firm favourite for walkers especially. The cliff top approaches from either direction delight visitors with glimpses of the sheltered cove and white limestone cliffs as well as the extended views inland or out to sea. The small fleet of working fishing boats and leisure craft, drawn directly out of the water to rest on the pebbled beach, generate great interest and activity. The colour and character is supplemented by the rainbow of traditional beach huts and Beer has become a focus for artists and photographers.



Nestling in Lyme Bay, this haven has many sea-faring stories to tell, including its reputation for smuggling. Beer is perhaps more widely known for the stone that has been quarried here since Roman times. The impressive and accessible caverns created as a result are alluring to tourists, and popular in part with one mammal in particular; it is protected as a winter bat roost.

www.visitbeer.co.uk



AXE VALLEY WILDLIFE PARK

Family fun day out

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Family Fun

Holidays are a great time for the family to do things together, away from the chores, enjoying life and creating memories. The area has an array of activities designed for the young, and the young at heart.

There are Theme Parks, attractions, special occasions and events throughout the year and some are featured below. However, there is also a wealth of fun and family activities to be had for free: - crabbing on a quayside, rock pooling, hill climbing, foraging, pond dipping, bird-watching and treasure hunting come to mind.



East Devon District Council

The natural environment can provide a source of inspiration as well as plentiful open space in which to play; safe beaches, woods and heaths - creative influences encouraging our imagination as well as our children to run free. Bring a rug and a picnic and there will be chance to relax while the young of all ages let off steam.

Seaside Specials

A day out at the seaside is certainly a childhood favourite, yet with so many pastimes and interests catered for, places like Lyme Regis, Seaton and Beer can stimulate and engage all ages. Brisk walks, family games, a quick dip in safe waters or



just a paddle while you watch the boats being launched.

For the whole family, it can be a little bit of paradise. An amble into town for fish and chips and ice cream, a pub lunch or cream tea, or perhaps the last bit of souvenir shopping, is even more pleasurable in such idyllic surroundings.

There is stunning scenery all along the coastline in this part of the world, and for those wishing to see and do something different every day you won't have to travel far east or west of the Axe Estuary to experience something special.



Within 15 miles in either direction there are the resorts of Lyme Regis, Charmouth, West Bay, Branscombe, and Sidmouth, all bringing their own unique charm and opportunity - certainly something for everyone. They are all reached easily by car or bus, and there are Park and Rides at Lyme and Sidmouth. You could choose somewhere quiet and peaceful to relax, somewhere more bracing or challenging, a hive of activity or more hidden and remote.

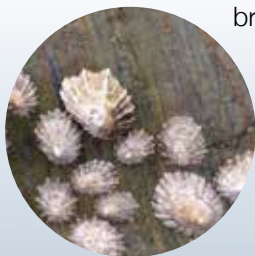
Maybe your idea of bliss is lying down in the warmth of the sun, listening to your music, or sitting in a deck chair reading. The children playing safely in the sand, building castles and other creations as they let their imagination flow. Digging pits and trenches, walls and towers, or maybe burying Dad.

Slow easy walks along the promenade, harbour walls and breakwater, soaking up the atmosphere and pondering the

brilliance of the sea. Perhaps enjoying the excitement of the quayside, crabbing or the magic of rock pooling, before the pleasure of a '99' ice-cream covered in clotted cream.

For the more energetic there could be days spent kite flying or kite surfing. Volleyball, rugby football and cricket are played side by side on the beach while others revel in on or the safe and clean waters.

The beauty and variety of the immediate coastline gives you the choice. There are some beaches where dog access is restricted in summer, but for dog lovers there are also plenty of dog friendly beaches.



Local Attractions

If you are hoping for a break from the sand and sea, there are many local attractions.

Nearby are the splendid Burrow Farm Gardens and Pecorama. Axe Valley Wildlife Park is just a mile from Axminster and is well worth a visit with endearing animals and birds! Below are some others within easy reach:

- Flamingo Pool **www.flamingopool.co.uk**
- LED leisure facilities, inc gyms, crazy golf, tennis, swimming **www.ledleisure.co.uk**
- Lyme Bay Winery, Shute Nr Axminster
- The Coffee Factory, Shute Nr Axminster
- Axminster Heritage Centre **www.axminsterheritage.org**
- Seaton and District Electric Tramway – Seaton
- The Donkey Sanctuary – Sidmouth
- The World of Country Life – Exmouth
- Crealy Adventure Park – Clyst St Mary, near Exeter
- Bicton Park Gardens
- Forde Abbey
- Otterton Mill
- Beer Quarry Caves



Burrow Farm Gardens

Dalwood, Axminster EX13 7ET

East Devon's Secret Garden

Beautiful 13 Acre Landscape Garden

Open Daily from 1st April to 31st October

10am - 6pm

Nursery, Gift Shop, Lunches and Teas

www.burrowfarmgardens.co.uk

Axminster & Seaton Leisure Facilities

LED's Axminster Leisure Centre offers a multi-functional sports hall, fully equipped gym, contemporary activity area and childrens birthday parties

We also have the only full size **3G Pitch** available for public hire in East Devon which has floodlights and a rubber crumb surface to allow local clubs to train **all year round!**

LED's Seaton Fitness Centre An amazing 37 station gym with cardiovascular and resistance machines, fabulous freeweights and functional training specific areas

This sleek centre also boasts a stunning exercise class studio for our ever popular classes such as **Studio Cycling, Yoga and Pilates**



Seaton Fitness Centre

The Grove, The Underfleet, Seaton, EX12 2FU
01297 304000

Axminster Leisure Centre

Lyme Road, Axminster, Devon, EX13 5AZ
01297 35235



www.ledleisure.co.uk



Getting Active

Getting active is not difficult here, but deciding how just might be.

There is a massive selection of water-based sports and activities available all year round as you might expect. Full day and half day boat trips or even fishing expeditions can easily be arranged from Seaton, Lyme or Beer and tuition and structured sessions are available to participate in sailing, water skiing, and kite surfing for example. If you don't have your own, you can hire canoes, kayaks, paddle-boards and jet skis to give you some scope and freedom to explore if you want to be more enterprising. Local sports centres enable access to indoor pools and gyms and hire out facilities and equipment for badminton, table tennis etc.

There are some fabulous golf courses, in particular at Axe Cliff, Lyme Regis and Honiton, and parkland courses at Cricket St Thomas and Woodbury, all within easy reach.

Those seeking an adrenalin rush might be interested in Grand Prix indoor go-karting, paintballing, quad biking or perhaps gliding or flying lessons from Exeter Airport only 30 minutes away.



There is also the potential for hot-air balloon trips near Broadclyst. Horse riding and pony trekking can be organised to experience different terrains, and caters for all levels of riding ability, but a visit to the Donkey Sanctuary may be more your idea of fun.





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Accommodation

Axminster and the surrounding areas have some excellent places to stay, many of excellent quality, so you are sure to find somewhere that is perfect for you.

How to book:

- by phoning the accommodation provider listed in this guide
- by visiting our website
www.axminstertouristinformation.co.uk
- by contacting us on **01297 34386**

Details of accommodation providers within this guide are based on information supplied by them at the time of going to press. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, neither Axminster TIC, Axminster Heritage Centre or the publishers can accept no liability for any errors or omissions.



Accommodation Map of advertisers

See pages 45 & 48-50



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The hotel welcomes all ages and groups of any size.



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www.homefarmhoteldevon.co.uk

email: info@homefarmhoteldevon.co.uk

Home Farm Hotel, Wilmington, Nr Honiton, Devon, EX14 9JR

www.axminstertouristinformation.co.uk



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Tourist Information Centres

Axminster Heritage

Thomas Whitty House, Silver Street, Axminster, Devon EX13 5AX

T: 01297 639884

E: info@axminsterheritage.org

Budleigh Salterton Information Centre

Fore Street, Budleigh Salterton, Devon EX9 6NG.

T: 01395 445275

E: info@visitbudleigh.com

www.visitbudleigh.com

Exmouth Information Centre

42 Strand, Exmouth, Devon EX8 1AL

T: 01395 830550

E: exmouthtouristinformation@gmail.com

www.visitexmouth.org

Ottery St Mary TIC

Broad Street, Ottery St Mary

T: 01404 813964

E: info@otterytourism.org.uk

Seaton Tourist Information

Seaton Jurassic, The Underfleet, Seaton, Devon EX12 2WD

T: 01297 300390

E: info@seatonjurassic.org

Sidmouth Information Centre

Ham Lane, Sidmouth, Devon EX10 8XR

T: 01395 516441

E: ticinfo@sidmouth.gov.uk

www.visitsidmouth.co.uk

Local Services

Below are listed some telephone numbers that you may find useful. For further information on these or other Axminster services please visit our website www.axminstertouristinformation.co.uk or contact the Axminster Tourist Information Centre on **01297 34386**.

Emergency Services

| | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
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| Police 24 hour switchboard | 101 |
| Crimestoppers..... | 0800 555 111 |
| Gas | 0800 111 999 |

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Electricity: Western Power..... | 0800 365 900 |
| South West Water | 0844 346 2020 |
| NSPCC | 0808 8005000 |
| Childline..... | 0800 1111 |
| East and Mid Devon Victim Support Group.. | 0845 3030 900 |
| NHS Direct | 111 |
| Samaritans | 01392 411 711 |

GP's: St Thomas Court, Church Street..... 01297 32126

Dentists: S.F. Dunn (Stamford House) 01297 33373

Axminster Dental Practice (Millway Rise) 01297 33733

Care Services

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Axminster Hospital - Reception..... | 01297 630400 |
| Social Services (Adults)..... | 0845 1551007 |
| Citizens Advice Bureau Axminster/Honiton .. | 01404 44213 |
| East Devon Carers Link | 01404 44411 |
| Devon Early Years Child Care Service | 0800 0563666 |
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