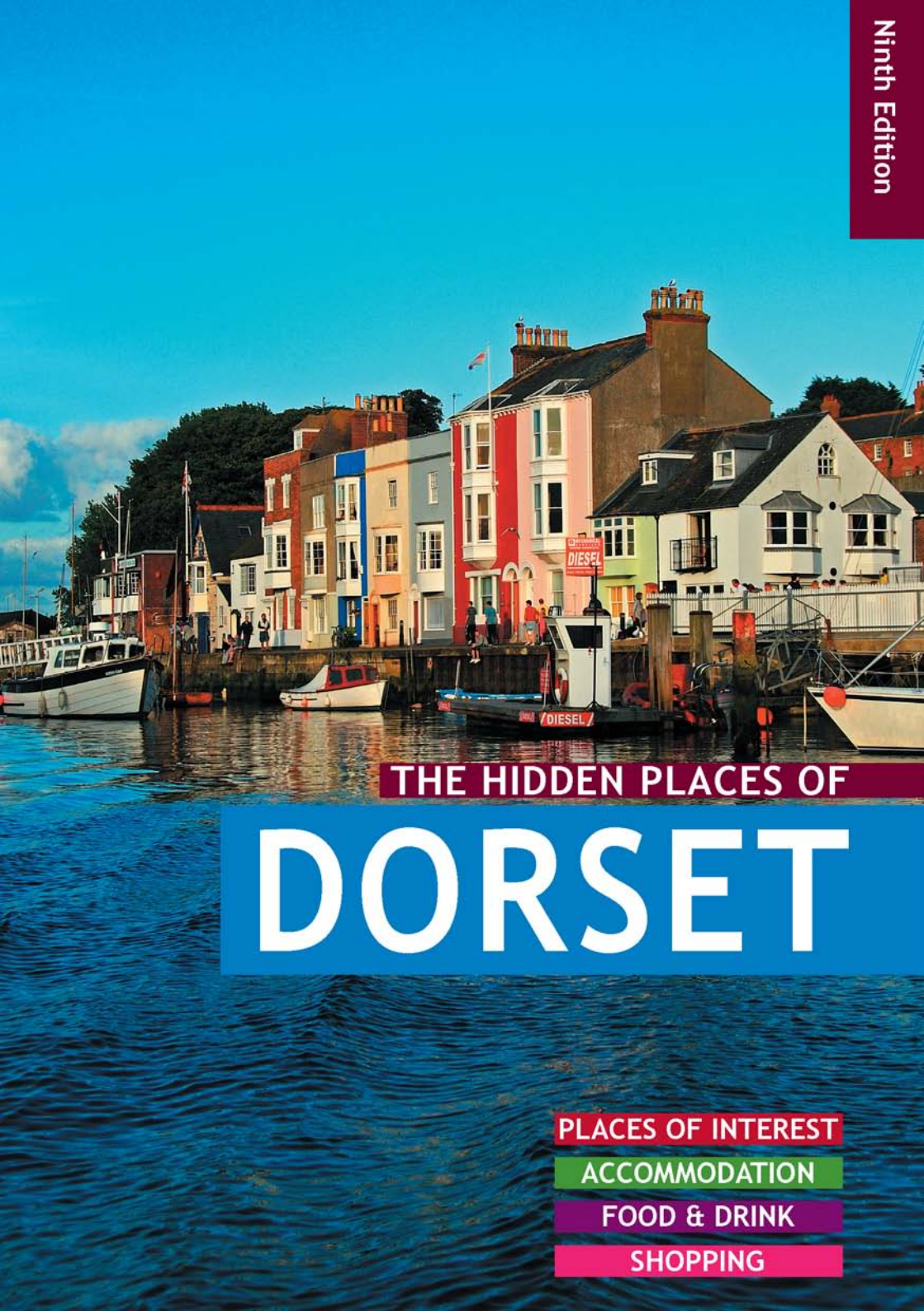




THE HIDDEN PLACES OF

DORSET

PLACES OF INTEREST

ACCOMMODATION

FOOD & DRINK

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THE HIDDEN PLACES OF THE **DORSET**

Edited By
Hilary Weston and Jackie Staddon

FOREWORD

This is the 9th edition of the *Hidden Places of Dorset* but the first time we have published a guide to Dorset as a separate edition. This title is also published as an e-book which reflects the significant growth in the demand for travel information in digital form.

The *free-to-download* digital edition is reproduced in full colour and reflects many of the changes made to the printed version with an attractive new cover and redesigned page layouts. The changes will significantly improve the usefulness, accessibility and appeal of the guide. As an e-book of course readers are able to quickly browse the guide on a page-by-page basis, search for, and locate places of interest using the index and find out more information on our advertisers by clicking on their website or email address. In addition, any part of the guide can be printed off for readers who want information on specific places.

Editorially, the guide continues Travel Publishing's commitment to exploring the more interesting, unusual or unique places of interest in Dorset's countryside, coastline, cities, towns and villages. Twenty-five miles of the county's spectacular coastline has been awarded World Heritage Site status by UNESCO for its geology. The rest of its glorious coastal scenery includes the beautiful Lulworth Cove, the strange natural formations of Durdle Door, the ten-mile long stretch of pebbles known as Chesil Beach and the fascinating Isle of Purbeck. Inland there are gently rolling hills, woodlands and gentle river valleys which typify the charms of unspoilt rural England. In addition the county has many delightful old market towns, its fair share of historic castles, imposing stately homes and fine churches and of course is forever associated with Thomas Hardy the famous novelist. The county certainly has much to offer the visitor!

The Hidden Places Dorset contains a wealth of information on the history, culture and the many interesting places to be found in the county. But it also promotes the more secluded and little known visitor attractions and advertises places to stay, eat and drink many of which are easy to miss unless you know exactly where you are going. These are cross-referenced to more detailed information contained in a separate, easy-to-use section to the rear of the book. This section is also available as a free printed supplement.

We include hotels, bed & breakfasts, restaurants, pubs, bars, teashops and cafes as well as historic houses, museums, gardens and many other attractions throughout the county - all of which are comprehensively indexed. Many places are accompanied by an attractive photograph and are easily located by using the map at the beginning of the book. We do not award merit marks or rankings but concentrate on describing the more interesting, unusual or unique features of each place with the aim of making the reader's stay in the local area an enjoyable and stimulating experience.

Whether you are travelling around Dorset on business or for pleasure we do hope that you enjoy reading and using this book. We are always interested in what readers think of places covered (or not covered) in our guides so please do not hesitate to use the reader reaction form provided to give us your considered comments. We also welcome any general comments which will help us improve the guides themselves. Finally, if you are planning to visit any other corner of the British Isles we would like to refer you to the list of other *Hidden Places* titles to be found to the rear of the book and to the Travel Publishing website (see below).

Travel Publishing

Did you know that you can also search our website for details of thousands of places to see, stay, eat or drink throughout Britain and Ireland? Our site has become increasingly popular and now receives hundreds of thousands of visits. Try it!

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DORSET

*"Dorset has no high mountains and no coal.
Everything else of beauty and almost
everything of utility can be found
within its borders."*

This was Ralph Wightman's description of one of England's most enchanting counties. Twenty-five miles of the county's spectacular coastline has been awarded World Heritage Site status by UNESCO for its outstanding geology, an accolade that ranks it alongside the Grand Canyon and the Great Barrier Reef. The glorious coastal scenery includes beautiful Lulworth Cove, the strange natural formations of Durdle Door and the 10-mile long stretch of pebbles known as Chesil Beach. South of Weymouth, the Isle of Purbeck - famous for the marble that has been quarried here since Roman times - falls like a tear-drop into the English Channel. To the west is the charming resort town of Lyme Regis, famous for its curved harbour wall, The Cobb, its associations with Jane Austen and for the remarkable fossils discovered in what is now known as the Jurassic Coast.

Inland, gently rolling hills, woodlands and gentle river valleys epitomise the charms of unspoilt rural England. Delightful old market towns like Shaftesbury, Bridport, Blandford Forum and Sherborne have a settled graciousness, while villages such as Milton Abbas, Cranborne and Breamore are almost impossibly picturesque.

The county has more than its fair share of historic castles. Corfe Castle, set high on a hill, is one of the most impressive man-made sights in the southwest; Sherborne Castle was the home of Sir Walter Raleigh and Portland Castle is the best-preserved of Henry VIII's coastal fortresses. Stately homes range from the Tudor gem of Athelhampton House, to the splendour of Kingston Lacy House with its outstanding collection of Old Masters. Then there are the magnificent abbeys of Wimborne Minster, Forde and Sherborne, and the fine church at Bere Regis, famed for its superbly carved and painted roof, and the priory at Christchurch with its imposing Norman exterior and wealth of tombs and chantries.

Dorchester, one of England's most appealing county towns, stands at the heart of 'Hardy Country' - most of the scenes in Thomas Hardy's novels are set within a dozen or so miles of the town. Hardy was born in the nearby village of Higher Bockhampton; the humble house where he grew up is open to the public. He spent the last four decades of his life in Dorchester at Max Gate, a modest villa he designed himself, which is now a National Trust property. Many of Dorset's most striking features - the Cerne Abbas hill carving of a naked giant, for example - feature in Hardy's novels, either as themselves or lightly disguised.

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Beach Huts, Bournemouth Beach

BOURNEMOUTH

In 1998, *Harpers & Queen* magazine predicted that Bournemouth was on its way to becoming the 'coolest city on the planet' and another dubbed the town 'Britain's Baywatch', a reference to the comely young lifeguards who patrol the 7 miles of golden beaches.' There are certainly plenty of nightclubs, as well as a huge range of hotels, shops, bars, restaurants and entertainment venues, especially in the Triangle area. The town is also home to the world-renowned Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra. In July 2005, in the hope of attracting more of Britain's 250,000 surfers to the town, Bournemouth council announced the construction of Europe's first artificial reef, made up of 55 giant sandbags and capable of producing breakers up to 16ft-high, and this was duly opened in 2009. Unfortunately in March 2011 it was closed owing to safety issues, with surfers remarking it made 'the wrong sort of waves'. Its future remains uncertain.

Already, some 5.5 million visitors each year are attracted to this cosmopolitan town which has been voted the greenest and cleanest resort in the UK - there are more than 2000 acres of Victorian parks and gardens, and the town centre streets are washed and scrubbed every morning. Despite the recession Bournemouth

remains a popular destination.

Two hundred years ago, the tiny village of Bourne was a mere satellite of the bustling port of Poole, a few miles to the west. The empty coastline was ideal for smugglers and Revenue men were regularly posted here to patrol the area. One of them, Louis Tregonwell, was enchanted by Bourne's glorious setting at the head of three deep valleys, or chines. He and his wife bought land here, built themselves a house and planted the valleys with the pines that give the present-day town its distinctive appearance. Throughout Victorian

times, Bournemouth, as it became known, grew steadily and the prosperous new residents beautified their adopted town with wide boulevards, grand parks, and public buildings, creating a Garden City by the Sea.

They also built a splendid **Pier** (1855), the work of the peerless Eugenius Birch, the most famous of the pier designers. Born in 1818, Birch was an artist and mechanic who worked on bridges and railways in the UK and India before turning skills to the classic English pier. **St Peter's Church** is much visited for its superb carved alabaster by Thomas Earp, and the tomb in which Mary Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein*, is buried along with the heart of her poet-husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley. Bournemouth's premier museum is the clifftop **Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum**, based on the collection of the



Russell-Cotes Art Gallery, Bournemouth

globe-trotting Sir Merton Russell-Cotes and his wife Lady Annie,

The **Oceanarium**, located alongside the Pier, explores the wonders of the natural world beneath the surface of seas, lakes and rivers. Displays include life under the Amazon, the Florida Keys and the Great Barrier Reef. New for 2011 is the Otter Oasis, an especially designed environment for two Oriental small-clawed otters..

And if you're looking for a novel experience, and a really spectacular aerial view of the town and coastline, **Bournemouth Balloon**, in the Lower Gardens near the pier, offers day or night ascents in a tethered balloon, which rises up to 500 feet.

Out of town, 7 miles north at Hurn, and opposite Bournemouth International Airport, are two attractions. The **Bournemouth Aviation Museum** is home to a collection of vintage aircraft - including a Vulcan bomber and a Hawker Hunter - which are flown on a regular basis. Nearby, set in 7 acres of landscaped grounds, is **Adventure Wonderland**. One of the most popular attractions in Dorset, this family theme park, based around the theme of Alice in Wonderland, offers outside rides and an indoor adventure play centre. All the thrills of speedy rides such as Wild Bill's Runaway Train to more gentle rides such as Curvy Caterpillar, plus Animal Cuddle Corner where children can get close to furry creatures. And don't miss the south's largest natural hedge maze.



Castle Ruins, Christchurch

Pride of place on the trail goes to **Christchurch Priory**, a magnificent building begun in 1094 and reputedly the longest parish church in England, extending for 311feet. It has an impressive Norman nave, some superb medieval carving, and a vast 14th century stone reredos with a Tree of Jesse. Other treasures include the magnificent Salisbury Chantry, some fine misericords and, in the beautiful Lady Chapel, a pendant vault believed to be the earliest of its kind in the country. From the Lady Chapel, a stairway of 75 steps leads to St Michael's Loft, originally a school for novice monks and later a grammar school for boys. It now houses **St Michael's Loft Museum**, which tells something of the long history of the priory. Another stairway - a spiral one of 176 steps - winds its way up the tower of the church; from the top there are extensive views out over the town and harbour. Call 01202 485804 for opening times of the museum.

Just north of the priory are the remains of **Christchurch Castle**, built in the late 11th century and slighted (rendered militarily useless) after the Civil War. The site here

AROUND BOURNEMOUTH

CHRISTCHURCH

5 miles E of Bournemouth on the A35

An excellent way of exploring Christchurch is to follow the **Blue Plaques Millennium Trail**, which commemorates sites around the town from Neolithic times to the 20th century. A booklet detailing this trip through time is available from the tourist information centre in the High Street.

1 THE NEW FOREST PERFUMERY GIFT SHOP & TEAROOMS

Christchurch

A traditional family run business where a the quaint tea rooms offers afternoon tea and light lunches.

See entry on page 48



contains the Constable's Hall which boasts the oldest Norman chimney in Britain, constructed around 1150.

Other nearby attractions include the **Red House Museum & Gardens** which is housed in a former Georgian workhouse and provides some interesting local history as well as a peaceful enclave in the heart of the town; and the **Museum of Electricity**, which occupies a stately Edwardian power station and has something for everyone - from dozens of early domestic appliances to a pair of boot warmers. It is also home to a 1914 Bournemouth tram car. Open Monday to Thursday 12 to 4.30 Easter to end September, also on Fridays during school holidays.

On Christchurch Town Quay, at the meeting of the rivers Stour and Avon, is Place Mill, which dates back to Anglo-Saxon times and was mentioned in the Domesday Book. The mill has been restored and although it is unable to grind corn, you can still see the wheel turning when tidal conditions are right. The body of the mill is now an art gallery with different artists in residence each year.

To the south of Christchurch are the ancient ditches known as **Double Dykes**, an area that offers great walking along with superb views. The dykes cut across the heathland of Hengistbury Head which forms the southern side of the town's large natural harbour. The headland is now a nature reserve, one of the few uninhabited parts of this otherwise built-up stretch of coastline. Not far from Double Dykes, Britain's first air show took place in 1910. It was attended by some of the greatest names in early aviation, including Wilbur Wright, Blériot and the Hon Charles Rolls, who was killed when his Wright Flyer crashed at this event.

MUDEFORD

7 miles E of Bournemouth off the A337

Standing at the entrance to Christchurch Harbour, Mudeford has a picturesque quay with piles of lobster pots, a fresh fish stall, fishermen's cottages and an old inn. It is still the centre of the local fishing industry and the quay provides a great vantage point for watching yachts and windsurfers as they come up 'The Run' into the harbour. The beach here is clean and sandy with a lifeguard service during the summer months when beach huts, deck chairs and canoes can all be hired, and ferry services cross the harbour to Mudeford Sandbank. Day cruises to the Needles and Yarmouth on the Isle of Wight are also available.

HIGHCLIFFE

9 miles E of Bournemouth on the A337

The most easterly community in Dorset, Highcliffe has a fine beach and views of the eastern tip of the Isle of Wight. The major attraction here is **Highcliffe Castle** (Christchurch Borough Council), an imposing mansion of gleaming white stone originally



Highcliffe Castle

2 THE MUSEUM OF ELECTRICITY

Christchurch

Everything here is electric, from an old Bournemouth tram to a pair of boot warmers!

See entry on page 47



3 THE AMBERWOOD

Walkford

A fantastic and friendly pub serving traditional home cooked food and real ales with excellent weekly live entertainment and a welcoming and friendly atmosphere.

See entry on page 49



built between 1831 and 1835. It was damaged by fire in the 1960s but the exterior was restored in the 1990s although most of the interior remains unrepaired. Guided tours are available every Tuesday and Sunday afternoon; the visitor centre, exhibition galleries, tea rooms and gift shop are open February-23rd December; the grounds are open all year round.

POOLE

4 miles W of Bournemouth, on the A35/A350

Once the largest settlement in Dorset, Poole is now a pleasant, bustling port. Its huge natural harbour, reputed to be Europe's largest, actually a drowned river valley, has a shoreline of some 50 miles and is the most extensive anchorage in Europe with a history going back well beyond Roman times. A 33feet long Logboat, hollowed from a giant oak tree and dating back to around 295 BC, has been found off Brownsea Island, the largest of several islands dotting the harbour. This is now displayed in **Poole Museum**, which reveals Poole's fascinating history over four floors and offers free entry.

Poole's **Old Town** is an exciting mix of smugglers passageways and elegant houses built by rich merchants in the 17th and 18th centuries. Tour this area using the 'Poole Cockle Trail Guide', available from Poole Welcome Centre, centrally located on Poole Quay

Poole's 3 miles of deep golden sand provides a fantastic location for safe swimming, sunbathing and watersports. Sandbanks Beach is winner of more European Blue Flags than any other British resort. Every Thursday evening in August there's a Summer Breeze beach party with sports, live music, barbecues and a spectacular firework finale. During July Summer Breeze takes place on Poole Quay with live music, family fun, street

entertainment and a fireworks finale to round off the evening.

The **Quay** is a great place to relax with a drink whilst watching the visiting yachts in the marina. Alternatively participate in one of the many watersports available or take a trip on the land train. Internationally famed **Poole Pottery** has been producing high-quality pottery for more than 125 years. You can visit their shop on Poole Quay for the largest collection of Poole Pottery including heritage and second designs. There is a great range of gifts and homeware along with live demonstrations from the master potter, and a café. You can also paint your own piece of pottery in the 'paint-a-pot' area.

Next to Poole Pottery on Poole Quay is **Eileen Soper's Illustrated Worlds**, perfect for some old-fashioned fun this is Poole's most recent interactive attraction, bringing the world of popular author, Enid Blyton to life. Located behind the main shopping area, in Kingland Road, is Poole's centre for the arts, the **Lighthouse**. This is the largest arts centre outside London, which boasts a year-round programme of national and international events. To the north of the town is **Tower Park**, one of the south coast's premier entertainment destinations, with a 10-screen cinema, bowling, Splashdown water park and a host of restaurants.

Poole is well-provided with public parks offering a wide range of activities, and the town also boasts one of the county's great gardens, **Compton Acres**, which was created in the 1920s by Thomas William Simpson who spent the equivalent of £10 million in today's





Footpath on Brownsea Island

money. Amongst its varied themed areas, which include a lovely Italian Garden, the Japanese Garden enjoys an especially fine reputation. Japanese architects and workmen were brought over to England to create what is reputed to be the only completely genuine Japanese Garden in Europe, an idyllic setting in which only the most troubled spirit could not find solace. Magnificent sculptures enhance the grounds which also contain restaurants, a delicatessen, model railway exhibition and shops. From the Colonnade viewpoint there are grand views over Poole Harbour to the Purbeck hills beyond.

From Poole Quay there are regular cruises along the coast and ferries to **Brownsea Island** (National Trust), where there are quiet beaches with safe bathing. Visitors can wander through 500 acres of heath and woodland which provide one of the few remaining refuges for Britain's native red squirrel. In 1907, General Robert Baden-Powell carried out an experiment on the island to test his idea of teaching boys from all social classes the scouting skills he had refined during the Boer Wars. Just 20 boys attended that first camp:

in its heyday during the 1930s, the world-wide Scouting Movement numbered some 16 million members in more than 120 countries. In 1898, in the Haven Hotel at Sandbanks, at the entrance to Poole Harbour, Marconi established one of the world's first radio stations, which received signals sent from a transmitter on the Needles.

CORFE MULLEN

7 miles NW of Bournemouth off the A31

With a population of more than 10,000 Corfe Mullen has a good claim to be the largest village in the country. Much of it is modern housing for commuters to Poole and Bournemouth but the old village beside the River Stour has retained its charm. The word 'mullen' is probably derived from the Old French for 'mill' and Corfe's ancient mill is mentioned in the *Domesday Book*. There's a medieval church whose first rector, Walter the Clerk, was installed in 1162; a delightful 300-year-old manor house (private); and a traditional pub, The Coventry Arms, with a flagstone floor in one of the bars.

WIMBORNE MINSTER

7 miles NW of Bournemouth (on the A349/A31)

Happily, the A31 now by-passes this beguiling old market town set amongst meadows beside the rivers Stour and Allen. The glory of the town is **Wimborne Minster** which, in 2005, celebrated 1,300 years of ministry. It's a distinctive building of multi-coloured stone boasting some of the finest Norman architecture in the county and is also notable for its 14th century astronomical clock, and the 'Quarterjack', a life-sized figure of a grenadier from the Napoleonic wars, which

4 THE WHITE HART

Wimborne

Family friendly establishment offering a well stocked bar, hearty bar meal and a spacious beer garden.

See entry on page 48



strikes the quarter hours on his bells. Inside, the unique Chained Library, founded in 1686, contains more than 240 books, amongst them a 14th century manuscript on vellum.

In King Street you can see Wimborne as it was in the early 1950s - but at one tenth the size. **Wimborne Model Town** presents a meticulous miniature version of the town, complete with an Old English fair and a working small-scale model railway. There are some 300 model buildings and more than 100 shop window displays. In addition there is a putting lawn, a giant outdoor chess game, safe play area, attractive gardens, tea rooms and gift shop. Also in the heart of the town, **Verwood Heathland Heritage Centre** has permanent displays of the local Verwood pottery industry. The centre occupies a former pottery drying shed and visitors may get the opportunity to throw a pot or two themselves.

In the High Street the **Priest's House Museum** is a lovely Elizabethan house set amidst beautiful gardens. The museum tells the story of East Dorset from pre-historic to modern times and which also recreates 400 years of history in a series of rooms where the decoration and furnishings follow the changing fashions between Jacobean and Victorian times. There's also an archaeology gallery with hands-on activities, a Gallery of Childhood, delightful walled garden and summer tea room. The museum has received Lottery funding to add a new 'Open Learning Centre'.

To the north of the centre of the town is Walford Mill Crafts, dedicated to promoting quality contemporary crafts. There is a programme of exhibitions, workshops and a shop selling a range of work. A pleasant riverside restaurant, the Bistro at the Mill,

serves coffees, light lunches and teas.

On the outskirts of Wimborne, **Honeybrook Country Park** has a family yard with lots of pure breed animals, dray and pony rides, an adventure playground, a period farmhouse, a natural maze, river and countryside walks, tea room and picnic areas. The park also hosts events such as country sports days, tug-of-war competitions, beer tasting and barn dances.

A mile or so northwest of Wimborne, **Kingston Lacy** (National Trust) is an imposing 17th century mansion which has been the home of the Bankes family for more than 300 years and exerts an irresistible attraction for anyone who loves the paintings of such Old Masters as Brueghel, Titian, Rubens and Van Dyck. Apart from those owned by the queen, the pictures on display here are generally acknowledged by experts as forming the finest private collection in the country. Kingston Lacy's fabulous gilded-leather Spanish Room and elegant Grand Saloon, both with lavishly decorated ceilings, and a fascinating exhibit of Egyptian artefacts dating back to 3000 BC, all add to the interest of a visit. Outside, you can wander through 250 acres of wooded parkland which contains a genuine Egyptian obelisk of c.150 BC and is also home to a herd of splendid Red Devon cattle. The restored Edwardian

5 ANGELS CAFÉ

Wimborne

Offers wholesome freshly prepared meals at reasonable prices.

See entry on page 50



6 KINGSTON LACY HOUSE

Wimborne

Kingston Lacy House (NT) contains important collections of paintings and works of art, and has wonderful gardens

See entry on page 60



7 HORNS INN

Wimborne

An attractive pub with a large beer garden to keep you cool in the summer, roaring wood burners to keep you warm in the winter and exceptionally warm hospitality all year round.

See entry on page 51



Japanese Tea Garden is a highlight and follows traditional Japanese design with features such as a waiting pavilion, a dry stream raked with gravel, and a tea house. The Stables restaurant, which focuses on local produce, and the shop are located within the grounds. Also within the grounds of the Kingston Lacy estate are **Badbury Rings**, an Iron Age hill fort reputedly the site of a great campaign by King Arthur.

Just to the east of Stapehill are **Knoll Gardens & Nursery** whose gardens were planted some 30 years ago and are famous for the mature trees and shrubs that provide a wealth of colour throughout the seasons. The gardens specialise in grasses and perennials but in all there are more than 6,000 plant species, including many fine trees. Tumbling waterfalls and ponds in an informal English setting add to the appeal.

HORTON

12 miles NW of Bournemouth off the B3078

Just outside the village stands Horton Tower (private), a 6-storey triangular folly built in the mid-1700s by Humphrey Sturt, the lord of the manor, as an observatory from which he could watch the movement of deer. The tower appeared in the film *Far From the Madding Crowd*.

WIMBORNE ST GILES

15 miles NW of Bournemouth off the B3081

A pretty village set beside the River Allen, Wimborne St Giles is notable for its **Church of St Giles**. It was rebuilt after a fire by the distinguished architect Sir Ninian Comper who

also contributed the fine stained glass. Also worth seeing are the marvellous monuments, notably to Sir Anthony Ashley and to the 7th Earl of Shaftesbury (who is even more memorably honoured by the statue of Eros in Piccadilly Circus).

ASHLEY HEATH

10 miles N of Bournemouth on the B3072

On the edge of Ashley Heath village is **Moors Valley Country Park and Forest**, which has something for all the family. There are plenty of opportunities for peaceful walks, cycle rides (cycles for hire) and picnics within the park. For the more ambitious try **Go Ape** (pre-booking essential), a unique tree-top adventure, with zip-wires, climbing nets and tricky crossings using wires, ladders, bridges



and tunnels. You can also take a scenic ride on the narrow gauge steam railway, which covers a mile and takes 20 minutes. Golf and fishing are also available. Other park facilities include a restaurant and barbeque area.

VERWOOD

12 miles N of Bournemouth on the B3081

Just north of Verwood village, **The Dorset Heavy Horse Farm Park** offers a real hands-on experience with these mighty beasts. You can drive a horse and wagon, or a vintage tractor, enjoy a tractor & trailer ride or have a go at logging or ploughing with the heavy horses. Suitable for all ages and weather

8 THE DROVERS INN

Gussage All Saints

This 17th Century traditional Dorset Cob building offers stunning views of the surrounding countryside as you enjoy the seasonal cooking.

See entry on page 52



conditions, the centre also has a display of gypsy caravans, a recreated blacksmith's shop, animal feeding and handling, pedal tractors and go carts, a straw slide barn and a resident menagerie of donkeys, llamas, kune kune pigs, miniature ponies and pigmy goats, and the latest arrivals, alpacas. There's also a café, picnic area and gift shop. Call 01202 824040 for opening times.



CRANBORNE

15 miles N of Bournemouth on the B3078

A picturesque village in a glorious setting, Cranborne sits on the banks of the River Crane with a fine church and manor house creating a charming picture of a traditional English village. The large and imposing **Church of St Mary** is notable for its Norman doorway, 13th century nave, and exquisite 14th century wall-paintings. **Cranborne Manor** was built in Tudor and Jacobean times for the Cecil family, now Marquesses of Salisbury, who still live there. The house is not open to the public but visitors can explore the gardens on Wednesdays, between March and September and the Cranborne Manor Garden Centre, which specialises in old fashioned roses, is open all year, 7 days a week. The present manor house stands on the site of a royal hunting lodge built by King John for his hunting forays in **Cranborne Chase**. Much of the huge forest has disappeared but detached areas of woodland have survived and provide some splendid walks.

To the south of the village lies **Edmonsham Hall**, a superb Tudor manor house with Georgian additions that has been owned by the same family since the 1500s. Guided tours of the house are conducted by the owner; the grounds contain a walled organic garden, a 6-acre garden with unusual trees and spring bulbs, and a stable block that is a fine example of Victorian architecture. Call to check for opening times 01725 517207.

SWANAGE

Picturesquely set beside a broad, gently curving bay with fine, clear sands and beautiful surrounding countryside, Swanage is understandably popular as a family holiday resort. A previous winner of Southern England in Bloom, the town takes great pride in the spectacular floral displays in its parks and gardens, and its other awards include the prestigious European Blue Flag for its unpolluted waters, and the Tidy Britain Group's Quality Coast Award. Swanage offers its visitors all the facilities necessary for a traditional seaside holiday, including boat-trips, (with sightings of bottle-nosed dolphins if you're lucky), water-sports, sea angling and an attractive, old-fashioned pier and bandstand. The **Mowlem Theatre** provides a seasonal programme of films, shows and plays, and on Sunday afternoons the Recreation Ground resounds to the strains of a brass band. On the clifftops, **Durlston Country Park** covers some 260 acres of delightful countryside; on the front, the

9 WINDJAMMERS

Swanage

A quality café by day and a restaurant serving delicious tapas in the evening.

See entry on page 54



Beach Gardens offer tennis, bowls and putting, or you can just rent a beach hut or bungalow and relax. One attraction not to be missed is a ride on the **Swanage Railway** along which magnificent steam locomotives of the old Southern Railway transport passengers some 6 miles through lovely Dorset countryside to Norden, just north of Corfe Castle. There are plenty of special events, too and it is now possible to take a 'Driving

Experience' course for enthusiasts and actually take charge of a train.

In the town itself, the **Town Hall** is worth seeing for its ornate façade, the work of Christopher Wren. Wren didn't build it for Swanage, however. It was originally part of Mercers Hall in Cheapside, London. When the Mercers Hall was being demolished, a Swanage man named George Burt scavenged the fine frontage and rebuilt it here. He also brought the graceful little **Clock Tower** which stands near the pier but once used to adorn



the Surrey end of London Bridge; a gateway from Hyde Park for his own house; and cast-iron columns and railings from Billingsgate Market. No wonder older residents of the town refer to Swanage as 'Little London'.

There is, however, one monument that is purely Swanage - the **King Alfred Column** on the seafront. This commemorates the king's victory here over a Danish fleet in AD 877. The column is topped by cannonballs that would have been of great assistance to Alfred had they been invented at the time.

Collectors of curiosities will want to make their way to Tilly Whim Hill, just south of Swanage, which is also well-known for its murky **Caves**. High above the Caves stands the **Great Globe**, a huge round stone, some 10 feet in diameter and weighing 40 tons, its surface sculpted with all the countries of the world. At its base, stone slabs are inscribed with quotations from the Old Testament psalms, Shakespeare and other poets. They include moral injunctions such as 'Let prudence direct you, temperance chasten you, fortitude support you', and the information that, 'if a globe representing the sun were constructed on the same scale, it would measure some 1,090 feet across'.

A couple of miles north of Swanage, Studland Bay offers a lovely 3-mile stretch of sandy beach, part of it clearly designated as an exclusive resorts for nudists only.

10 ULWELL COTTAGE CARAVAN PARK

Swanage

Fantastic facilities and an unbeatable location, Ulwell Park

offers the ideal choice for a carefree holiday.

See entry on page 53



11 BROOK TEA ROOMS

Swanage Bay

A traditional experience and a truly hidden treasure with uninterrupted views of over Swanage Bay and the majestic Isle of Wight.

See entry on page 55



AROUND SWANAGE

LANGTON MATRAVERS

2 miles W of Swanage, on the B3069

Before tourism, the main industry around Swanage was quarrying the famous Purbeck stone that has been used in countless churches, cathedrals and fine houses around the country. **The Purbeck Stone Museum** at Langton Matravers (10-noon, 2-4, not Sundays) tells the story of Purbeck Marble, a handsome and durable material which was already being cut and polished back in Roman times. This sizeable village is also home to **Putlake Adventure Farm** where visitors are encouraged to make contact with a variety of friendly animals, bottle feed the lambs, or meet the alpacas. There are pony and trailer rides, picnic and play areas, a farm trail, gift shop and tea room.

WORTH MATRAVERS

4 miles W of Swanage, off the B3069

In the graveyard of St Nicholas' Church is the grave of a local farmer, Benjamin Jesty, whose tomb inscription is worth quoting in full: An upright and honest man, particularly noted for having been the first person known that introduced the Cow Pox by inoculation, and who, from his great strength of mind, made the experiment from the cow on his wife and two sons in the year 1774. His family's 'great strength of mind' might also have been noted since the inoculation was made using a knitting needle. The man usually credited with discovering inoculation, Edward Jenner, didn't make his first successful experiment until 1796 - twenty-two years after Benjamin's.

Standing high on the cliffs of St Aldhelm's Head, a couple of miles south of the village and accessible only by a bridleway, the **Chapel of St Aldhelm** stands alone. It is one of the oldest churches in Dorset, a low

square building with a fine Norman doorway and one solitary window. Uniquely, the chapel has no east wall as the corners of the walls are aligned to the points of the compass. In its dank, dim interior the stonework is bare of decoration, just a central column from which eight ribs extend to the walls.

According to legend, the church was built in 1140 by a local man in memory of his newly-married daughter and her husband. He was watching from this clifftop as the boat in which they were sailing to a new home was caught in a sudden squall and capsized. All on board perished.

CORFE CASTLE

5 miles NW of Swanage on the A351

One of the grandest sights in the country is the impressive ruin of **Corfe Castle** (National Trust), standing high on a hill and dominating the attractive grey stone village below. Once the most impregnable fortress in the land, Corfe dates back to the days of William the Conqueror, with later additions by King John



Corfe Castle

12 OLIVERS BED AND BREAKFAST

Corfe Castle

A delightful bed and breakfast offering 4 quality ensuite bedrooms, tasty breakfasts and a reasonable tariff.

See entry on page 54



and Edward I. The dastardly John threw 22 French knights into the castle dungeons and left them to starve to death. Later, Edward II was imprisoned here before being sent to Berkeley Castle and his horrible murder. Corfe Castle remained important right up until the days of the Civil War when it successfully withstood two sieges before it fell into Parliamentary hands through treachery. A month later, Parliament ordered the castle to be 'slighted' - rendered militarily useless.

Although Corfe now stands in splendid ruin, you can see a smaller, intact version at the **Model Village** on the Square. This superbly accurate replica is built from the same Purbeck stone as the real thing and the detail of the miniature medieval folk going about their daily business is wonderful. Surrounded by lovely gardens, this intriguing display is well worth a visit. For some added fun you can try your hand at the giant games, including giant draughts and croquet. You might also want to explore the local museum which is housed in the smallest Town Hall building in the country.

NORDEN

7 miles NW of Swanage, on the A351

About half a mile north of Corfe Castle, Norden Station is the northern terminus of the **Swanage Railway** and there's a regular bus service from the station to the castle. The hamlet of Norden itself is actually another mile further to the northeast, a delightful place surrounded by pine trees and heathland.

13 CORFE CASTLE MODEL VILLAGE & GARDENS

Corfe Castle

A faithful re-creation of Corfe Castle and the village in miniature, as it was in the 17th century.

See entry on page 56



Old Granary, Wareham

WAREHAM

Situated between the rivers Frome and Piddle, Wareham is an enchanting little town lying within the earthworks of a 10th century encircling wall. Standing close to an inlet of Poole Harbour, Wareham was an important port until the River Frome clogged its approaches with silt. Then, in 1726, a devastating fire consumed the town's timber buildings, a disaster which produced the happy result of a rebuilt town centre rich in handsome Georgian stone-built houses.

Wareham's history goes back much further than those days. Roman conquerors laid out its street plan: a stern grid of roads which faithfully follows the points of the compass. Saxons and Normans helped build the **Church of St Mary**, medieval artists covered its walls with devotional paintings of remarkable quality. It was in the grounds surrounding the church that King Edward was buried in AD 879 after his stepmother, Queen Elfrida, contrived his murder at Corfe Castle. Elfrida added insult to injury by having the late king buried outside the churchyard, in unhallowed ground.

Occupying the 12th century Holy Trinity Church near the quay, the Purbeck Information & Heritage Centre offers copious information about the town; while in East Street, the **Wareham Museum** has some interesting displays and artefacts illustrating the town's history.

In the Saxon St Martin's Church, notable

for its early medieval wall paintings, there's a striking memorial to what appears at first glance to be a medieval crusader dressed in Arab robes, holding an Arab dagger and resting his head on a camel's saddle. This is a **Memorial to TE Lawrence**, 'Lawrence of Arabia', who is actually buried at Moreton (qv). An exhibition devoted to Lawrence can be seen in the museum.

Wareham boasts one building that is unique - the privately owned **Rex Cinema** which was built pre-1914 and is the only gas-lit cinema in the country.

An even more ancient survival is the custom of the Court Leet. In Norman times these courts were the main judicial institution in many parts of the country. On four evenings in November, strangely dressed men visit the town's inns to check the quality and quantity of the food and ale on offer. The officials include ale-tasters, bread weighers and 'carnisters' who sample the meat. Although they have no powers nowadays, it is a quaint tradition.

AROUND WAREHAM

FURZEBROOK

4 miles S of Wareham off the A351

If you are interested in natural curiosities, follow the brown and white signs for the **Blue Pool**. Here, in what was originally a

clay pit, tiny particles of clay in the pool diffract light and create an astonishing illusion of colour, varying from sky blue to deepest azure. There's a tea house, shops and museum here and the tree-lined shore is a popular picnic place.

WINFRITH NEWBURGH

9 miles SW of Wareham off the A352

This charming little village stands on a minor road that leads to one of the county's best-known beauty spots, **Lulworth Cove**. An almost perfectly circular bay, the Cove is surrounded by towering 440-ft cliffs. Over the centuries, the sea has gnawed away at a weak point in the limestone here, inadvertently creating a breathtakingly beautiful scene. Best to visit out of season, however, as parking places nearby are limited. The **Lulworth Cove Heritage Centre** is located right on the beach. There are exhibitions about the geology, landscape and wildlife of the area, known as the Jurassic Coast and a new display, the Jurassic Jaws Exhibition, part of the Museum of Jurassic Marine Life's collection based here. You can also reach the cove via the village of **West Lulworth** on the B3070. The Castle Inn here is one of Dorset's oldest pubs, dating from the 16th century. The village gets very busy in summer, as the gateway to the beach and Lulworth Cove.

About a mile to the west of Lulworth Cove stands another remarkable natural feature

which has been sculpted by the sea. **Durdle Door** is a magnificent archway carved from the coastal limestone. There's no road to the coast at this point, but you can reach it easily by following the South West Coast Path from Lulworth Cove. Along the way, you will also see another strange outcrop, a forest of tree-stumps which have become fossilised over the centuries.

A couple of miles inland, the privately-owned Lulworth Estate, features **Lulworth Castle**, which looks enormously impressive from



Durdle Door, Lulworth

a distance: close-up, you can see how a disastrous fire in 1929 destroyed most of it. Amongst the remains, though, is a curious circular building dating from 1786: the first Roman Catholic church to be established in Britain since Henry VIII's defiance of the Pope in 1534. Sir Thomas Weld was given permission to build this unique church by George III. The king cautiously added the proviso that Sir Thomas' new place of worship should not offend Anglican sensibilities by looking like a church. It doesn't, and that's a great part of its appeal. There is a parking fee for access to the park, which also includes woodland walks, an adventure playground and picnic areas. Admission to the castle and chapel is by separate ticket. The park and castle are closed on Saturdays mainly for weddings but it may also close on other days for special events.

BOVINGTON CAMP

6 miles W of Wareham off the A352

It was at Bovington Camp that TE Lawrence served as a private in the Royal Tank Corps. Today, the camp is home to the **Tank Museum** which has almost 200 vehicles on display dating from World War I to the present day. Highlights include the Tank Story exhibition, the Discovery Centre and new for 2011 is the Trench Experience, where you can follow in the footsteps of a World War I soldier. Audio tours are available, there's a children's play area, restaurant and gift shop, and during the summer tanks take part in live action displays.



Tank Museum, Bovington

A very different kind of attraction, to the east of Bovington camp, is **Monkey World** whose 65 acres are home to more than 160 primates rescued from all over the world. After ten years of the successful TV programme *Monkey Business*, a new series, *Monkey Life* provides insights into man's closest living relatives and broadcasts the day-to-day life at Monkey World and some of the remarkable stories of rescue and rehabilitation of the primates. The site also includes the largest children's adventure play area on the south coast, an education centre, woodland walk, pets' corner, café, picnic areas and full disabled facilities.

BERE REGIS

7 miles NW of Wareham on the A35

Most visitors to the church at Bere Regis are attracted by its associations with Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*. They come to see the crumbling tombs of the once-powerful Turberville family whose name Hardy adapted for his novel. It was outside the church, beneath the Turberville window, that Hardy

14 BLACK BEAR

Wool, nr Wareham

A cosy pub near Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door. Vistors can always expect a warm welcome here!

See entry on page 57



15 THE DRAX ARMS

Bere Regis

A popular pub in the heart of Dorset serving freshly cooked food and well kept ales which can be enjoyed in a relaxed atmosphere.

See entry on page 58



had the homeless Tess and her family set up their 4-poster bed. A poignant fictional scene, but the church is also well worth visiting for its unique and magnificent carved and painted wooden roof. Large figures of the 12 Apostles (all in Tudor dress) jut out horizontally from the wall and there are a number of humorous carvings depicting men suffering the discomforts of toothache and over-indulgence. There's also a carving of Cardinal Morton who had this splendid roof installed in 1497. The church's history goes back much farther than that. In Saxon times, Queen Elfrida came here to spend the remainder of her days in penitence for her part in the murder of young King Edward at Corfe Castle in AD 979. Further evidence of the church's great age is the fact that around 1190 King John paid for the pillars of the nave to be 'restored'.

TOLPUDDLE

11 miles NW of Wareham on the A35

The small village of Tolpuddle is a peaceful little place today but in the early 19th century, Tolpuddle was far sleepier than it is now. Not the kind of place you would expect to foment a social revolution, but it was here that six ill-paid agricultural labourers helped lay the foundations of the British Trade Union Movement. In 1833, they formed the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers in an attempt to have their subsistence wages improved. The full rigour of the landowner-friendly law of the time was immediately invoked. All six were found guilty of taking illegal oaths and sentenced to transportation to New South Wales, Australia, for seven years. Even the judge in their case was forced to say that it was not for anything they had done, or intended to do, that he passed such a sentence, but 'as an example to others'. Rather surprisingly, public opinion sided with the illegal 'confederation'. Vigorous and sustained protests eventually forced the government to pardon the men after they had served three years of their sentence. They all returned safely to England



Tolpuddle Martyrs' Museum

in 1838, honoured ever afterwards in Trade Union hagiography as the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Only one, James Hammett (1811-1891), returned to Tolpuddle. His grave, with a headstone designed by Eric Gill, is in Tolpuddle churchyard. The **Martyrs' Museum** at Tolpuddle tells their inspiring story using innovative interactive touch screens.

ORGANFORD

3 miles N of Wareham off the A35

The tiny village of Organford stands on the edge of the tree-covered expanses of Gore Heath. The settlement is so small it doesn't possess either a church or a pub, but it does have a Manor House which enjoys a wonderfully quiet and secluded position surrounded by woods. It's also home to **Farmer Palmer's Farm Park** where children can learn about the countryside and feed lambs and goats, watch cows being milked, enjoy a wild trailer ride, drive pedal tractors or work off some energy in the bouncy castles and soft play zone. The park is designed specifically for children aged eight and under.

16 ROSE AND CROWN

Lychett Matravers

Serving, fresh food,
real ales, fine
wines & hot drinks

See entry on page
57



SHAFTESBURY

Set on the side of a hill 700 feet high, Shaftesbury was officially founded in AD 880 by King Alfred who fortified the town and also built an abbey of which his daughter was first Prioress. A hundred years later, the King Edward (Edward the Martyr c962-978) who had been murdered by his stepmother at Corfe Castle was buried here and the abbey became a major centre of pilgrimage. A few remains of **Shaftesbury Abbey** have survived - they can be seen in the walled garden of the **Abbey Museum**, a state-of-the-art museum that contains many interesting artefacts excavated from the site.

Shaftesbury is a pleasant town to explore on foot. In fact, you *have* to walk if you want to see its most famous sight, **Gold Hill**, a steep, cobbled street, stepped in places and lined with 18th century cottages. Already well known for its picturesque setting and grand views across the Vale of Blackmoor, Gold Hill became even more famous when it was featured in the classic television commercial for Hovis bread. Also located on Gold Hill is the **Goldhill Museum & Garden**, which vividly evokes the story of this ancient market town.

The 17th century Ox House, which is referred to in Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*, is just one of a number of interesting and historic buildings in the town. Others include the Church of St Peter, the

Tudor-style Town Hall dating from the 1820s, and the Grosvenor Hotel, a 400-year-old coaching inn.

Shaftesbury boasts one of the liveliest arts centres in the country, the **Shaftesbury Arts Centre** which, remarkably, is completely owned by its membership and administered entirely by volunteers. The results of their efforts are anything but amateur, however. The centre's Drama Group is responsible for several major productions each year, performed in the well-equipped theatre which also serves as a cinema for the centre's Film Society, screening a dozen or more films during the season. One of the most popular features of the centre is its Gallery which is open daily with a regularly changing variety of exhibitions ranging from paintings, etchings and sculpture, to batiks, stained glass, embroideries and quilting. Entry is free.

AROUND SHAFTESBURY

ASHMORE

5 miles SE of Shaftesbury off the B3081

To the northwest of Ashmore is **Compton Abbas Airfield** which is generally considered to be the most picturesque airfield in the country, and surrounded by an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. One of the most popular displays is the collection of famous aeroplanes, special effects and memorabilia from film and television productions. For the more adventurous, flights are available with a qualified instructor for a trip over this scenic part of the county; training courses for a full pilot's licence are also conducted here. The airfield hosts regular events throughout the year, including aerobatic displays; there's a shop selling aviation equipment and a gift shop with plane-related toys, models and books; a bar and restaurant. To the west of



Gold Hill, Shaftesbury

Ashmore are Fontmell and Melbury Downs, two estates that cover an important stretch of chalk downland cut by steep-sided valleys. Both areas are owned by the National Trust.

SUTTON WALDRON

5 miles S of Shaftesbury on the B3081

A mile from the village of Sutton Waldron (turn right at the sign 'Village Centre' when coming from Shaftesbury) is the **Extraordinary Equine Centre** at Vale Farm, set in the lovely Blackmore Vale. Once a working dairy farm, it is now home to more than 25 different breeds of rare and unusual equines, including Mammoth Jackstock riding donkeys, the largest breed of donkey in the world. Representing the smaller end of the equine scale are the American Miniature horses and Shetlands. Add to this zebras, zeedonks, zorses and zonkeys and you are in for a treat! Other animals include miniature Ouessant sheep, tame fallow deer, Kune pigs and pied turkeys. Holiday cottages are also available for let.

MARNHULL

7 miles SW of Shaftesbury on the B3092

The scattered village of Marnhull claims to be the largest parish in England, spread over a substantial area with a circumference of 23 miles. The village itself is well worth exploring for its part-Norman St Gregory's church with a fine 15th century tower, and who knows what you might find along Sodom Lane? This now-prosperous village appears in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* as 'Marlott', the birthplace of the heroine. The thatched **Tess's Cottage** (private, but visible from the lane) is supposedly the house Hardy had in mind, while the Crown Inn (also thatched) is still recognisable as the 'Pure Drop Inn' in the same novel.

STALBRIDGE

9 miles SW of Shaftesbury on the A357

The 15th century church here has a striking 19th century tower which provides a landmark throughout Blackmoor Vale. Perhaps even more impressive is the town's **Market**



Stalbridge Market Cross

Cross standing 30 feet high and richly carved with scenes of the Crucifixion and Resurrection. Just outside the town, **Stalbridge Park** (private) sheltered Charles I after his defeat at Marston Moor. The house (now demolished) was built by Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Cork, and it was here that his 7th son, the celebrated physicist and chemist Robert Boyle carried out the experiments that eventually led to his formulation of Boyle's Law.

STURMINSTER NEWTON

10 miles SW of Shaftesbury on the A357

This unspoilt market town - the 'capital' of the Blackmore Vale - is an essential stop for anyone following in Thomas Hardy's footsteps for it was at Sturminster Newton that he and

17 THE WHITE HART HOTEL

Sturminster Newton

A charming and traditional 18th century Inn with accommodation, traditional ales and delicious home cooked food served all year round.

See entry on page 59



his first wife Emma had their first real home together. From 1876 until 1878, they lived in 'a pretty cottage overlooking the Dorset Stour, called **Riverside Villa**'. Here, Hardy wrote *The Return of the Native* and he often referred later to their time at Sturminster Newton in his poems. It was, he said, 'our happiest time'. The house is not open to the public but is visible from a riverside footpath.



Sturminster Newton Mill

Until Elizabethan times, Sturminster and Newton were separate villages standing on opposite sides of the River Stour. Shortly after the graceful **Town Bridge** linked the two communities, a mill was built some 250 yards upstream. Once again restored to working order, **Sturminster Newton Mill** offers guided tours (Sunday, Monday, Thursday and Saturday 11-5) explaining the milling process, and the delightful setting attracts many amateur and professional artists and photographers. There are lovely riverside walks here, too. The **Sturminster Newton Museum** is located in a thatched house in the town centre and houses displays featuring the life and history in and around this small market town. Incidentally, the fine old 6-arched bridge still bears a rusty metal plaque carrying the dire warning: 'Any person wilfully injuring any part of this county bridge will be guilty of felony and upon conviction liable to be transported for life by the court. P. Fooks'.

18 THE PLOUGH

Manston

A traditional country free house with regular entertainment and onsite camping area.

See entry on page 59



LYDLINCH

13 miles SW of Shaftesbury on the A357

The small hamlet of Lydlinch in the Blackmore Vale features in a poem by the Dorset dialect poet, William Barnes. He recalls as a young boy hearing the sound of Lydlinch church bells wafting across meadows to his home in nearby Bagber: *Vor Lydlinch bells be good vor sound, / And liked by all the neighbours round*. The five bells he heard still hang in the tower of the 13th century church.

EAST STOUR

4 miles W of Shaftesbury on the A30

East Stour's literary connections are not with Dorset's omnipresent Thomas Hardy but with the man who has been dubbed 'Father of the Novel', Henry Fielding. When he was 3 years old, Fielding's family moved to the Manor House here which stood close to the church. Fielding spent most of his childhood in the village before leaving to study at Eton and Leyden. He then spent a few years in London writing plays before returning to East Stour in 1734 with his new young wife, Charlotte Cradock, who provided the model for Sophia Western in his most successful novel, *Tom Jones*. By the time that book was published in 1749, Charlotte was dead, Fielding was seriously ill and he was to die just five years later while visiting Lisbon in an attempt to recover his health.

GILLINGHAM

4 miles NW of Shaftesbury on the B3081

The most northerly town in Dorset, Gillingham was once an important centre for the milling of silk and the manufacture of the distinctive Victorian red-hot bricks. The parish church has a 14th century chancel but the rest of the building, like much of the town, dates from after the arrival of the railway in 1859. **Gillingham Museum** charts the history of the town and the surrounding villages from prehistoric times; an interesting exhibit here is a manual fire engine dating from 1790.

SHERBORNE

One of the most beautiful towns in England, Sherborne beguiles the visitor with its serene atmosphere of a cathedral city, although it is not a city and its lovely **Abbey** no longer enjoys the status of a cathedral. Back in AD 705 though, when it was founded by St Aldhelm, the abbey was the Mother Cathedral for the whole of southwest England. Of that original Saxon church only minimal traces remain: most of the present building dates back to the mid-1400s which, by happy chance, was the most glorious period in the history of English ecclesiastical architecture. The intricate tracery of the fan vaulting above the nave of the abbey looks like the supreme culmination of a long-practised art: in fact, it is one of the earliest examples in England. There is much else to admire in this majestic church: 15th century misericords in the choir stalls which range from the sublime, (Christ sitting in majesty on a rainbow), to the scandalous, (wives beating their husbands); a wealth of elaborate tombs amongst which is a lofty 6-poster from Tudor times, a floridly baroque late-17th century memorial to the 3rd Earl of Bristol, and another embellished with horses' heads in a punning tribute to Sir John Horsey who lies below alongside his son.

In 2005 Sherborne celebrated 1300 years



Sherborne Abbey

since St Aldhelm founded the Abbey with a great festival. A statue to St Aldhelm was commissioned and placed in a niche over the porch. As well as founding the Abbey, St Aldhelm is also credited with establishing Sherborne School, which numbered among its earliest pupils the two elder brothers of King Alfred (and possibly Alfred himself). Later alumni include the Poet Laureate Cecil Day-Lewis and the writer David Cornwell, better known as John le Carré, author of *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* and many other thrillers.

Perhaps the best-known resident of Sherborne however is Sir Walter Raleigh. At a time when he enjoyed the indulgent favour of Elizabeth I, he asked for, and was granted, the house and estate of **Sherborne Old Castle** (English Heritage) and now a ruin. It is well worth a visit for its scenic views and perfect picnic spots. Sir Walter soon realised that the medieval pile with its starkly basic amenities was quite unsuitable for a courtier of his sophistication and ambition. He built a new castle alongside it, **Sherborne New Castle**, a strange three-storeyed, hexagonal

19 SHERBORNE CASTLE

Sherborne

Sherborne Castle was once the home of Sir Walter Raleigh and the castle and gardens provide a fascinating day out.

See entry on page 60





Castle is open from April to October, and also offers visitors an attractive lakeside tearoom, a well-stocked gift shop, and various special events throughout the year.

This appealing small town with a population of around 9,300 has much else to interest the visitor. The **Almshouse of Saints John the Baptist and John the Evangelist**, near the abbey, was founded in 1437 and the original buildings completed in 1448 are still in use as an almshouse, accepting both men and women.

structure which must rate, from the outside, as one of the most badly-designed, most unlikeable mansions to be erected in an age when other Elizabethan architects were creating some of the loveliest buildings in England. Inside Sir Walter's new castle, it is quite a different story: gracious rooms with elaborately-patterned ceilings, portraits of the man who single-handedly began the creation of the British Empire, and huge windows which at the time Sir Walter ordered them proclaimed a clear message that its owner had the wealth to pay the enormous cost of glazing such vast expanses. After Sir Walter's execution, the castle was purchased in 1617 by Sir James Digby and it has remained with his descendants ever since. They added exquisite gardens designed by 'Capability' Brown and in the late 1800s re-decorated the interior in Jacobean style. Amongst the castle's greatest treasures is the famous painting by Robert Peake depicting Elizabeth I on procession, being carried on a litter and surrounded by a sumptuously dressed retinue. The old cellar of the castle is now a museum housing an eclectic display of items, most gruesome of which is the skull of a Royalist soldier killed in the siege of 1645. A bullet is still lodged in his eye socket. Sherborne New Castle, incidentally, is one of several locations claiming to be the genuine setting for the old story of Sir Walter enjoying a pipe of tobacco and being doused with a bucket of water by a servant who believed his master was on fire. Sherborne

The almshouse chapel boasts one of the town's greatest treasures, a late-15th century Flemish altar triptych, which can be viewed on afternoons (except Wednesday and Sunday) during the summer. Close by, the **Conduit House** is an attractive small hexagonal building from the early 1500s, originally used as a lavatorium, or washroom, for the abbey monks' ablutions. It was moved here after the Reformation and has served variously as a public fountain and a police phone box. The Conduit House is specifically mentioned in Hardy's *The Woodlanders* as the place where Giles Winterborne, seeking work, stood here in the market place 'as he always did at this season of the year, with his specimen apple tree'. Another striking building is the former **Abbey Gatehouse** which frames the entrance to Church Lane where the **Sherborne Museum** has a collection of more than 15,000 items relating to local history. Particularly notable are two major photographic collections recording events and people in the town since 1880.

To the south of Sherborne, near the railway station, Pageant Gardens were established in 1905 using funds raised by a great pageant of that year celebrating the 1,200th anniversary of the founding of the town by St Aldhelm.

About 2 miles north of Sherborne, **Sandford Orcas Manor House** is a charming Tudor building with terraced gardens, topiary and herb garden. Since it was built in honey-coloured Ham Hill stone in the 1550s, only

three different families have lived here. The present owner, Sir Mervyn Medlycott, whose family has lived here for more than 250 years, personally conducts guided tours in May, and from July to September on Sunday and Monday afternoons that take in the manor's Great Hall, stone newel staircases, huge fireplaces, fine panelling, Jacobean and Queen Anne furniture and family portraits.

AROUND SHERBORNE

MELBURY OSMOND

6 miles SW of Sherborne off the A37

It was in the Church of St Osmund in this pretty village that Thomas Hardy's parents, Jemima Hand and Thomas Hardy, were married in 1839. At the northern end of the footpath through the churchyard is a thatched house where Hardy's mother is thought to have lived as a child. In Hardy's novels the village appears as Great Hintock which provides the setting for *The Woodlanders*. Melbury Osmond is still unspoilt and picturesque with many oak trees - find time to walk down from the church to the water splash, and beyond to some 17th century thatched stone cottages.

BLANDFORD FORUM

Blandford Forum, the administrative centre of North Dorset, is beautifully situated along the wooded valley of the River Stour. It's a handsome town, thanks mainly to suffering the trauma of a great fire in 1731. The gracious Georgian buildings erected after that conflagration, most of them designed by local architects John and William Bastard, provide the town with a quite unique and soothing sense of architectural harmony.

Two important ancient buildings escaped the fire of 1731: the **Ryves Almshouses** of 1682, and the splendid 15th century **Old House** in The Close which was built in the Bohemian style to house Protestant refugees from Bohemia. The old parish church did not



survive the fire, but its 18th century replacement, the **Church of St Peter & St Paul**, crowned by an unusual cupola, now dominates the market-place. It's well worth stepping inside the church to see the box pews, an organ presented by George III, the massive columns of Portland stone, and the elegant pulpit, designed by Sir Christopher Wren, removed here from St Antholin's Church in the City of London.

In front of the church, the **Fire Monument** (known locally as Bastard's Pump) has a dual purpose - to provide water for fire fighting and as a public drinking fountain. Opposite the church, the **Blandford Museum** features a diorama of the Great Fire along with a wonderful collection of artefacts illustrating many aspects of life in and around Blandford over the years.

Housed in a Blandford town house designed by the Bastard brothers, The Blandford Fashion Museum displays a fantastic collection of costumes from the 1730s through to the 1970s. Originally amassed by the late Mrs Betty Penny, the

20 THE RAILWAY HOTEL

Blandford Forum

The Railway Hotel - It's your reason to go out! Offering fine food, well kept ales and plenty of sports to get involved in

See entry on page 61



collection comprises more than 500 items, including a large archive of accessories. It is managed entirely by volunteers, and archiving the material is an important part of the museum's work. The Dressed to Impress exhibition is the latest to grace the Ballroom, and comprises two dresses representing the 1800s, plus dresses from the Edwardian period through to the 1960s. The museum also has a garden, shop and tea room. Open Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Monday.

Just outside the town centre, at Blandford Camp, the **Royal Signals Museum** explores the arcane world of military communications with displays featuring spies, codes and code-breaking, the ENIGMA machine, Women at War and Dorset's involvement in the preparations for D-Day. There are lots of hands-on opportunities such as driving a simulator, guiding a laser beam and practising Morse code.

AROUND BLANDFORD FORUM

TARRANT HINTON

5 miles NE of Blandford Forum on the A354

This small village is the setting for the **Great Dorset Steam Fair**, held in late-August/early September. Occupying a huge 600-acre site, this is one of the world's largest international steam events, attracting some 200 steam engines and more than 200,000 visitors. The

annual extravaganza includes working engine displays, an old-time steam funfair, demonstrations of rural crafts, displays of working Shire horses and live music.

CHETTLE

7 miles NE of Blandford Forum off the A354

A picturesque village with a charming manor house, **Chettle House**, designed by Thomas Archer in the English baroque style and completed in 1720. Archer's work includes the north front of Chatsworth in Derbyshire and the Church of St John in Smith Square, London, and his buildings are typified by lavish curves, inverted scrolls and their large scale, a style that owed much to the Italian architects Bernini and Borromini. Chettle House was bought in 1846 by the Castleman family who added an ornate ceiling. The house contains portraits of the Chafin family, earlier owners, and the beautifully laid out gardens include herbaceous border, a rose garden and croquet lawn. The house has also been used as a film and TV location. Chettle House and Gardens are open on Easter Sunday, and then on the first and second Sunday of each month, April-October, from 11.00am-5.00pm. There are tea rooms in the basement of the house.

BLANDFORD ST MARY

1 mile SW of Blandford Forum off the A354

The main attraction here is the **Hall & Woodhouse Brewery** of Badger Beer fame,

which was founded at Ansty near Dorchester in 1777 but moved to its present site here beside the River Stour in 1899. The original brewery was founded by Charles Hill, a farmer's son who learnt the brewing art along with farming. The brewery expanded quickly thanks to a contract to supply ale to the Army during the Napoleonic Wars. It is still thriving and visitors can take a tour of the premises and explore the displays in the Visitor Centre and of course buy bottles of Badger beer in the shop.

Great Dorset Steam Fair





Milton Abbas Abbey and School

MILTON ABBAS

6 miles SW of Blandford Forum off the A354

This picture postcard village of thatched cottages was created in the 1770s by Joseph Damer, 1st Earl of Dorchester. The earl lived in the converted former abbey from which the village takes its name but he decided to demolish the medieval buildings, and build a more stately mansion surrounded by grounds landscaped by 'Capability' Brown. The earl's ambitious plans required that the small town that had grown up around the abbey would have to go, so more than 100 houses, 4 pubs, a brewery and a school were razed to the ground. The residents were moved more than a mile away to the present village for which Brown had made the preliminary plans. The earl's new mansion is now a private school and the only part of the abbey that survived is the **Abbey Church** which contains some wonderful Pugin glass and an extraordinary tomb to the earl and his wife Caroline designed by Robert Adam. Exquisitely carved by Agostino Carlini, the monument shows the earl propped up on one elbow gazing out across his beautiful wife.

21 THE MILTON ARMS

Winterborne Whitechurch

Where good company, warm atmosphere, food and drink meet.

See entry on page 60



MILBORNE ST ANDREW

9 miles SW of Blandford Forum on the A354

An attractive village in the valley of a tributary of the River Piddle, Milborne St Andrew was owned in medieval times by the Morton family. One of them gave his name to the expression 'Morton's Fork'. As Lord Chancellor to Henry VII (and Archbishop of Canterbury), John Morton devised a system of parting the rich, and the not-so-rich, from their money. He

proposed the thesis that if a man was living in grand style he clearly had money to spare; if he lived frugally, then he obviously kept his wealth hidden away. This ingenious argument became known as Morton's Fork and many a citizen was caught on its vicious prongs. However, the system enriched and delighted the king who made Morton a Cardinal in 1493. Morton spent his remaining years spending lavishly on the building and restoration of churches, most notably in the magnificently carved and painted roof of Bere Regis church.

DORCHESTER

One of England's most appealing county towns, Dorchester's known history goes back to AD 74 when the Romans established a settlement called Durnovaria at a respectful distance from the River Frome. At that time the river was much broader than it is now and prone to flooding. The town's Roman origins are clearly displayed in its street plan, in the beautiful tree-lined avenues

22 THE ROYAL OAK AT MILBORNE ST ANDREW

Milborne St Andrew

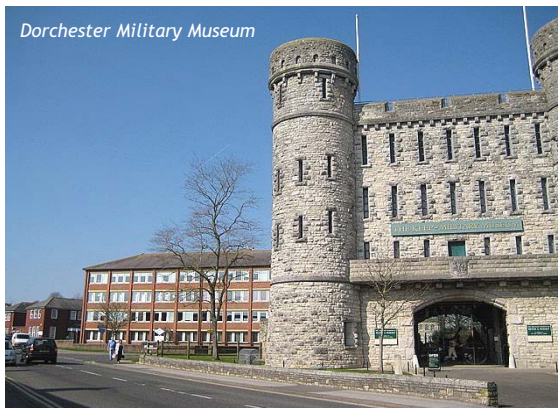
A family friendly, family run pub offering freshly prepared homemade food, well kept ales, a takeaway menu and a warm welcome.

See entry on page 62



known as **The Walks** which follow the course of the old Roman walls, at **Maumbury Rings**, an ancient stone circle which the Romans converted into an amphitheatre, and in the well-preserved **Roman Town House** behind County Hall in Colliton Park. As the town's most famous citizen put it, Dorchester 'announced old Rome in every street, alley and precinct. It looked Roman, bespoke the art of Rome, concealed dead men of Rome'. Thomas Hardy was in fact describing 'Casterbridge' in his novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge* but his fictional town is immediately recognisable as Dorchester. One place he describes in great detail is **Mayor Trenchard's House**, easily identified as what is now Barclays Bank in South Street and bearing a plaque to that effect. Hardy made his home in Dorchester in 1883 and two years later moved into **Max Gate** (open April-October, Wednesday to Sunday) on the outskirts of the town, a strikingly unlovely 'two up and two down' Victorian villa designed by Hardy himself and built by his brother at a total cost of £450. Here Hardy entertained a roll-call of great names - Robert Louis Stevenson, GB Shaw, Rudyard Kipling and HG Wells amongst many others - to tea at 4 o'clock.

The most accessible introduction to the town and the county can be found at the excellent **Dorset County Museum** in High Street West. The award-winning museum houses a comprehensive range of exhibits spanning the centuries, from a Roman sword to a 19th century cheese press, from dinosaur footprints to fine art works dating from the



17th century. Founded in 1846, the museum moved to its present site in 1883, into purpose-built galleries with lofty arches of fine cast ironwork inspired by the Great Exhibition of 1851 at the Crystal Palace. The building was designed by GR Crickmay, the architect for whom Thomas Hardy worked in 1870. The great poet and novelist is celebrated here in a major exhibit which includes a fascinating reconstruction of his study at Max Gate, his Dorchester home. The room includes the original furnishings, books, pictures and fireplace. In the right hand corner are his musical instruments, and the very pens with which he wrote *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, *Jude the Obscure*, and his epic poem, the *Dynasts*. More of his possessions are displayed in the Gallery outside - furniture, his watch, music books, and some of his notebooks. Also honoured in Writers' Dorset, in the Literary Gallery, is William Barnes, the Dorset dialect poet, scholar and priest, who was also the first secretary of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society which owns and runs the museum. Plans to develop the Natural History Gallery are underway.

Just outside the museum stands a statue of William Barnes, and at the junction of High West Street and The Grove, is a statue of Thomas Hardy. There are more statues outside St George's Church, a group of lifesize models by Elizabeth Frink representing Catholic martyrs who were hanged, drawn and quartered in the 16th century.

23 OLD TEA HOUSE

Dorchester

Packed full of character and charm the Old Tea House offers a delightful array of homecooked food, hot and cold drinks and comfortable accommodation.

See entry on page 62



Opposite the County Museum, in the 17th century half-timbered building now a restaurant, is where Judge Jeffreys (1648-89) tried 340 Dorset men for their part in Monmouth's Rebellion of 1685. As a result of this 'Bloody Assize', 74 men suffered death by being hanged, drawn and quartered. A further 175 were transported for life. Jeffreys' ferociousness has been attributed to the agony he suffered from gallstones for which doctors of the time could provide no relief. Ironically, when his patron James II was deposed, Jeffreys himself ended up in the Tower of London where he died. A century and a half after the Bloody Assize, another infamous trial took place in the Old Crown Court nearby. Six farm labourers who later became known as the Tolpuddle Martyrs were condemned to transportation for their part in organising a 'Friendly Society' - the first agricultural trade union. The **Court and Cells** are open to the public where they are invited to 'stand in the dock and sit in the dimly-lit cells...and experience four centuries of gruesome crime and punishment'. Blue Badge Guides take visitors on tours of the cells and stocks.

At the **Dorset Teddy Bear Museum** in Eastgate, on the corner of High East Street and Salisbury Street, visitors join Mr Edward Bear and his family of human-size bears as they relax around the house or busy themselves making teddies in the Old Dorset Teddy Bear Factory. Hundreds of the cuddly creatures are on sale in the exhibition's period shop. In Salisbury Street, the **Terracotta Warriors Museum** is the only museum outside China dedicated to these astonishing figures, regarded as the 8th wonder of the ancient world. As well as the unique life-size museum replicas from China, the exhibition includes costumes, armour and multi-media displays.

Off High East Street, in Icen Street, is the **Dinosaur Museum**, where actual fossils, skeletons and life-size reconstructions combine with audio-visual and hands-on displays to inform and entertain. Also well worth a visit is **The Keep Military Museum** housed in an interesting, renovated Grade II listed building. Audio technology and

interactive computerised displays tell the remarkable story of those who have served in the regiments of Dorset and Devon. An additional attraction is the spectacular view from the battlements across the town and surrounding countryside.

There can be few churches in the country with such a bizarre history as that of **Our Lady, Queen of Martyrs, & St Michael**. It was first erected in Wareham, in 1888, by a Roman Catholic sect calling themselves the Passionists, a name derived from their obsession with Christ's passion and death. When they found that few people in Wareham shared their fixation, they had the church moved in 1907, stone by stone to Dorchester where it was re-assembled and then served the Catholic community for almost 70 years. By the mid-1970s the transplanted church had become too small for its burgeoning congregation. The Passionists moved out, ironically taking over an Anglican church whose communicants had become too few to sustain it. A decade later, their abandoned church was acquired by a Dorchester-based organisation called World Heritage, which has transformed its interior into the **Tutankhamun Exhibition**. It includes a reconstruction of the magnificent tomb of the boy-king including his famous golden mask, with 'sight, sound and smell combining to re-create the world's greatest discovery of ancient treasure'. With the help of a running commentary, visitors can follow the footsteps of the archaeologist Howard Carter who discovered the real tomb in 1922. The tour ends beside a life-size facsimile of the youthful Pharaoh's mummy constructed from a genuine skeleton covered with organic-substitute flesh and animal skin.

24 OCTAGON CAFÉ

Poundbury

A delightful café offering freshly prepared lightbites, hot drinks and a warm welcome.

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AROUND DORCHESTER

CHARMINSTER

1 mile N of Dorchester on the A52

An attractive town on the River Cerne, it has a 12th century church with an impressive pinnaced tower added in the 1400s. Inside are some striking memorials to the Trenchard family whose noble mansion, **Wolfeton House**, stands on the northern edge of the town. A lovely medieval and Elizabethan manor house, it is surrounded by water meadows near the meeting of the rivers Cerne and Frome. The house contains a great stone staircase, remarkable plaster ceilings, fireplaces and carved oak panelling - all Elizabethan - some good pictures and furniture. Opening times are restricted so it best to enquire at the tourist office in Dorchester.

PIDDLETRENTHIDE

6 miles N of Dorchester on the B3143

Mentioned in the *Domesday Book*, this village is named after the river beside which it stands and the '30 hides' of land for which it was assessed. A beautiful place in a beautiful location, Piddletrenthide is believed to have been the home of Alfred the Great's brother, Ethelred.

CERNE ABBAS

7 miles N of Dorchester on the A352

This pretty village beside the River Cerne takes its name from **Cerne Abbey**, formerly a major Benedictine monastery of which an imposing 15th century gatehouse, a tithe

25 ABBOTS

Cerne Abbas

A delightful tea rooms and bed and breakfast offering a wide selection of tasty homemade food and comfortable ensuite accommodation.

See entry on page 63



barn of the same period, and a holy well still survive, all well worth seeing. So, too, are the lofty, airy church with grotesque gargoyles and medieval statues adorning its west tower, and the old Market House on Long Street. In fact, there is much to see in this ancient village where cottages dating back to the 14th century still stand.

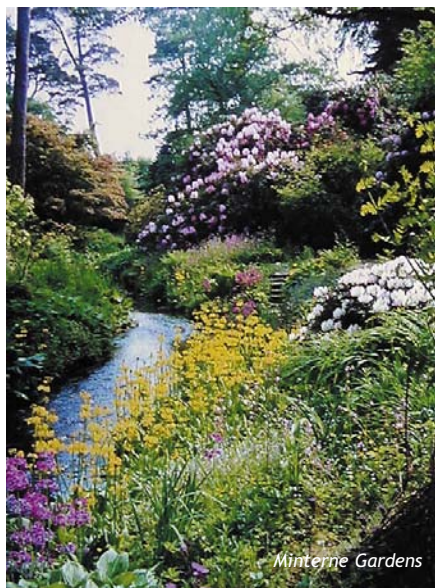
But the major visitor attraction is to be found just to the north of the village - the famous **Cerne Abbas Giant** (National Trust), a colossal 180 feet-high figure cut into the chalk hillside, brandishing a club, naked and full-frontal. An ancient tradition asserts that any woman wishing to become pregnant should sit, or preferably sleep the night, on the giant's huge erect penis, some 22 feet long. The age of this extraordinary carving is hotly disputed but a consensus is emerging that it was originally created by ancient Britons as a fertility symbol and that the giant's club was added by the Romans. (There are clear similarities between the giant and the representation of Hercules on a Roman pavement of AD 191, preserved at Sherborne Castle). As with all hill-carvings, the best view is from a distance, in this case from a layby on the A352. A curious puzzle remains. The giant's outlines in the chalk need a regular scouring to remove grass and weeds. Should this be neglected, he would soon fade into the hillside. In medieval centuries, such

a non-essential task of conservation could only have been authorised by the locally all-powerful Abbots of Cerne. What possible reason did those Christian advocates of chastity have for carefully preserving such a powerful pagan image of virility?

MINTERNE MAGNA

9 miles N of Dorchester, on the A352

A couple of miles north of the Cerne Giant, Minterne Magna is notable for its parish church, crowded with memorials to Napiers, Churchills and Digbys, the families who once owned the great house here and most of the Minterne valley. The mansion itself, rebuilt in the Arts & Crafts style around 1900 is not open to the public but its splendid **Minterne Gardens** are. The gardens are laid out in a horseshoe below the house and landscaped in the 18th century style of Capability Brown. They contain an important collection of Himalayan rhododendrons and azaleas, along with cherries, maples and many other fine and rare trees. The gardens are open daily from March to early November. On Batcombe Hill, to the west of Minterne Magna, stands a stone pillar known as the Cross and Hand,



Minterne Gardens

thought to date from the 7th century. Its purpose is unknown, but in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* Hardy relates the local legend that the pillar marks the grave of a criminal who was tortured and hanged there, and whose mournful ghost appears beside the column from time to time.

STINSFORD

1 mile NE of Dorchester, off the A35

It was in **St Michael's Church** at Stinsford that Thomas Hardy was christened and where he attended services for much of his life. He sang hymns to the accompaniment of the village band, (amongst whom were several of his relatives), which played from a gallery at the back of the church. The gallery was demolished in Hardy's lifetime, but many years later he drew a sketch from memory which showed the position of each player and the name of his instrument. A copy of this drawing is on display in the church, alongside a tablet commemorating the Hardys who took part.

Also buried in the churchyard is the Poet Laureate Cecil Day Lewis (1904-72). To the east of Stinsford, **Kingston Maurward Gardens** are of such historical importance that they are listed on the English Heritage Register of Gardens. The formal Edwardian gardens include a croquet lawn, rose garden, herbaceous borders and a large display of tender perennials, including the National Collections of Penstemons and Salvias. Here too is the animal park, which has a collection that includes donkeys, Dartmoor ponies, pot bellied pigs, goats, alpacas, rabbits and guinea pigs. Facilities include a play area, shop, light refreshments and plant sales. Entrance to the gardens and park is via the Visitor Centre.

HIGHER BOCKHAMPTON

2 miles NE of Dorchester off the A35

In the woods above Higher Bockhampton, reached by a series of narrow lanes and a 10-minute walk, is a major shrine for devotees of Thomas Hardy. **Hardy's Cottage** is surrounded by the trees of Puddletown

Forest, a setting he evoked so magically in *Under the Greenwood Tree*. The delightful thatched cottage and gardens are now owned by the National Trust and the rooms are furnished much as they would have been when the great novelist was born here in 1840. Visitors can see the very room in which his mother gave birth only to hear her child proclaimed still-born. Fortunately, an observant nurse noticed that the infant was in fact breathing and so ensured that such classics of English literature as *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *The Return of the Native* saw the light of day. This charming cottage was Hardy's home for the first twenty-two years of his life until he set off for London to try his luck as an architect. In that profession his record was undistinguished, but in 1871 his first novel, *Desperate Remedies*, was published. An almost farcical melodrama, it gave few signs of the great works that would follow but was sufficiently successful for Hardy to devote himself thereafter to writing full time.

PUDDLETOWN

5 miles NE of Dorchester off the A35

Originally called Piddletown ('piddle' is the Saxon word for 'clear water') the village's name was changed by the sensitive Victorians. It was here that Hardy's grandfather and great-grandfather were born. Renamed 'Weatherbury' it features in *Far From the Madding Crowd* as the place where Fanny's coffin was left out in the rain, and Sergeant Troy spends the night in the porch of the church after

covering her grave with flowers.

Just to the east of Puddletown, **Athelhampton House** is a delightful, mostly Tudor house surrounded by a series of separate, 'secret' gardens. It's the home of Patrick and Andrea Cooke, having been in the Cooke family since 1957 and has the lived-in feeling that adds so much interest to historic houses. One of the finest houses in the county, Athelhampton's most spectacular feature is its magnificent Great Chamber built during the reign of Elizabeth I. In the grounds are topiary pyramids, fountains, the Octagonal Garden designed by Sir Robert Cooke in 1971, and an unusual 15th century circular dovecote. It is almost perfectly preserved, with its 'potence', or revolving ladder used to collect eggs from the topmost nests, still in place and still useable.

MORETON

7 miles E of Dorchester off the B3390

Thomas Hardy may be Dorset's most famous author, but in this small village it is another distinguished writer, (also a scholar,

Athelhampton House, Puddletown



26 THE BLUE VINNY

Puddletown

A modern restaurant with old roots, The Blue Vinny provides a first-class dining experience in spectacular settings.

See entry on page 64



archaeologist and military hero), who is remembered. In 1935 T.E. Lawrence, 'Lawrence of Arabia', left the RAF where he was known simply as Aircraftman T.E. Shaw and retired to a spartan cottage he had bought in 1923. It stands alone on the heath outside Moreton village and here Lawrence lived as a virtual recluse, without cooking

facilities and with a sleeping bag as his bed. He was to enjoy this peaceful, if comfortless, retreat for only a few weeks. Lawrence loved speeding along the Dorset lanes on his motor-cycle and one sunny spring day his adventurous driving led to a fatal collision with two young cyclists. The King of Iraq and Winston Churchill attended the hero's burial in the graveyard at Moreton, where a tree was planted and later a stone memorial. The home Lawrence occupied for such a short time,



Cloud's Hill (National Trust), is now open to the public. Lawrence remains a fascinating figure, and at an auction in 2008 letters in which he writes how well his Brough Superior motor-cycle is running (he owned several down the years) and of his love of books were sold for £10,000. He wrote the letters to an RAF flight sergeant while stationed on the Isle of Wight in 1932/33. There are good walks around here and Cloud's Hill is on the Lawrence of Arabia walking trail.

WINTERBORNE CAME

2 miles SE of Dorchester off the A352

This tiny hamlet is a place of pilgrimage for admirers of Dorset's second most famous man of letters who is buried in the graveyard here. William Barnes was Rector of Winterborne Came from 1862 until his death in 1886 and in the old Rectory (not open to the public) he entertained such luminaries of English literature as Alfred Lord Tennyson and Hardy himself. Although Barnes was highly respected by fellow poets, his pastoral poems written in the distinctive dialect of the county never attracted a wide audience. At their best, though, they are marvellously evocative of the west Dorset countryside:

*The zwellen downs, wi' chalky tracks
A-climmen up their zunny backs,
Do hide green meads an zedgy brooks...
An' white roads up athirt the hills.*

Winterborne Came's unusual name, incidentally, derives from the fact that in

medieval times the village was owned by the Abbey of Caen in France.

OWERMOIGNE

6 miles SE of Dorchester off the A352

Just north of the village is a dual attraction in the shape of **Mill House Cider Museum** and the **Dorset Collection of Clocks**. Housed in a mill that featured in Hardy's *The Distracted Preacher* (he called the village Nethermoynton), the Cider Museum has a collection of 18th and 19th century cider-making mills and presses, reflecting the importance of cider as a main country drink in bygone days. The Collection of Clocks showcases numerous timepieces ranging from longcase clocks (more than 30) to elaborate turret clocks displayed in date order. Visitors get the opportunity to see the intricate movements that are usually hidden away in the large clocks found on churches and public buildings.

MAIDEN CASTLE

2 miles SW of Dorchester off the A35

Maiden Castle (English Heritage) is one of the most impressive prehistoric sites in the country. This vast Iron Age fortification covering more than 45 acres dates back some 4,000 years. Its steep earth ramparts, between 60 and 90 feet high, are nearly 2 miles round and together with the inner walls make a total of 5 miles of defences. The settlement flourished for 2000 years until AD

44 when its people were defeated by a Roman army under Vespasian. There is also evidence that a small Roman temple was built here in the 4th century AD. Excavations here in 1937 unearthed a war cemetery containing some 40 bodies, one of which still had a Roman arrowhead embedded in its spine. The Romans occupied the site for some 30 years before moving closer to the River Frome and founding Durnovaria, modern Dorchester. Maiden Castle was never settled again and it is a rather forbidding, treeless place but the extensive views along the Winterborne valley by contrast are delightful.

WINTERBOURNE ABBAS

4 miles W of Dorchester

The village of Winterbourne Abbas stands at the head of the Winterborne valley, close to the river which is notable for running only during the winter and becoming a dry ditch in summer. The second part of the name, Abbas, comes from having been owned by the abbots of Cerne. The village is surrounded by ancient barrows, amongst which are the **Nine Stones** (English Heritage), Dorset's best example of a standing stone circle and constructed some 4,000 years ago. Not the best location, however. The circle lies beside the busy A35, isolated from the village to the west and surrounded by trees. Despite the constant din of passing traffic, the circle somehow retains an air of tranquillity of its own.

WEYMOUTH

No wonder the good citizens of Weymouth erected a **Statue of George III** to mark the 50th year of his reign in 1810. The troubled king had brought great kudos and prosperity to their little seaside resort by coming here to bathe in the sea water. George had been advised that sea-bathing would help cure his 'nervous disorder' so, between 1789 and 1805, he and his royal retinue spent a total of 14 holidays in Weymouth. Fashionable society naturally followed in his wake. The imposing statue is unusual in being painted. Not far away, at the head of King Street, his

grand-daughter Victoria's own 50th year as queen is commemorated by a colourful **Jubilee Clock** erected in 1887. Nearby, the picturesque harbour is always busy - fishing boats, paddle steamers, pleasure boats, catamarans servicing the Channel Islands and St Malo in France and, if you're lucky, you may even see a Tall Ship or two.

One of the town's premier tourist venues is **Brewers Quay**, an imaginatively redeveloped Victorian brewery offering an enormous diversity of visitor attractions within a labyrinth of paved courtyards and cobbled streets. This whole area, which includes the Timewalk Journey and Weymouth Museum, is being redeveloped, the plans being approved in early 2011. Proposals include a new 85-room hotel, plus a larger venue for the museum and shops. During the redevelopment the museum, which reflects the social, maritime and cultural history of Weymouth, will relocate to temporary premises until it can return to Brewers Quay. Check for information with the Weymouth Tourist Office in the Pavilion Theatre in the Esplanade. Weymouth Bay, together with Portland Harbour, will host the sailing events for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.

From Brewers Quay, a path leads through **Nothe Gardens** to **Nothe Fort**, built between 1860 and 1872 as part of the defences of the

27 BREWERS QUAY

Weymouth

Imaginatively converted Victorian Brewery containing a museum and over 20 shops and attractions.
See entry on page 64



28 CAFÉ ROYAL

Weymouth

Prominent seafront café/bar with function room for hire. Offering freshly prepared food and a relaxed atmosphere.
See entry on page 65



Nothe Fort, Weymouth



new naval base being established on Portland. Ten huge guns face out to sea; two smaller ones are directed inland. The fort's 70 rooms on three levels include many interesting displays and exhibits illustrating past service life in the fort, history as seen from the Nothe headland, and the part played by the people of Weymouth in World War II. There are also audio-visual displays and a newly refurbished restaurant. The fort will be one of the best vantage points to view the sailing events in the 2012 Olympics. Nothe Fort is owned and operated by the Weymouth Civic Society, which also takes care of **Tudor House**, just north of Brewers Quay. One of the town's few remaining Tudor buildings, the house originally stood on the edge of an inlet from the harbour and is thought to have been a merchant's house. It's now furnished in the style of an early-17th century middle class home and the guided tour gives some fascinating insights into life in those days.

Only yards from the waters of Weymouth

Bay, **Lodmoor Country Park** is another popular attraction. Access to most of the park is free and visitors can take advantage of the many sport and recreation areas, wander around the footpaths and nature reserve, or enjoy a picnic or barbecue. Set within the park and surrounded by beautiful gardens complete with a bird aviary, **Model World** is a quite unique attraction which has been more than 25 years in the making. Back in 1972, Colin Sims conceived the idea of creating a model village

and during the course of the next nine years constructed hundreds of finely detailed hand-made models from a variety of materials: stone, concrete, specially treated wood and plastics to withstand all kinds of weather. All built to a scale of 1:32 of life size, together the models create a complete world in miniature.

Another major family attraction in the park is **Sea Life Weymouth**. This is more than just an aquarium, and features both indoor and outdoor enclosures. There's lots to see and lots of fun to be had but there is a serious side to marine conservation here. Outdoor highlights include the otter, seal and Humboldt penguin sanctuaries and Adventure Ireland with four children's rides and Splash Lagoon, with water jets and slide. Inside features a Tropical Shark Nursery, the Turtle Sanctuary and one of the first National Seahorse Breeding and Conservation Centres. There is also an interactive rock pool, underwater walkway and Crocodile Creek log flume ride. The Shark Breeding Centre for

29 EDENHURST GUEST HOUSE

Weymouth

A real home from home offering a good breakfast and quality accommodation.

See entry on page 65



30 THE T SHOP

Weymouth

A delightful tea shop offering a selection of freshly prepared food created using local produce.

See entry on page 66



bonnet head sharks is new for 2011.

Sharky's, located in an 1840s warehouse, is another attraction in Lodmoor Country Park. It's a huge, all-weather soft-play area with slides, ball pools and four floors of fun. The latest attraction in the park is **Sandworld**, where amazing sand sculptures, ranging from 6 to 16 feet high, and sculpted by leading international sand artists, will be showcased in a giant marquee. There is also a sand play area for budding artists.

AROUND WEYMOUTH

OSMINGTON

3 miles NE of Weymouth on the A353

There are several 'White Horses' carved into hillsides around the country, but the **White Horse** near Osmington, apart from being one of the largest, (354 feet high and 279 feet wide), is the only one which also has a rider. The horse was created in 1807; the rider was added about 3 years later. Wearing a tall cocked hat and carrying a whip, the horseman represents George III. The king was a frequent visitor to nearby Weymouth and his royal patronage naturally attracted many free-spending courtiers to the town. The town fathers of Weymouth decided to express their appreciation by paying the local militia to add the royal rider. The result was an unrecognisable, if undoubtedly loyal, tribute to His Majesty. Like all the other White Horses in England it looks much better when seen from a few miles away; close up, it is meaningless.

A mile south of Osmington, at Osmington Mills, the area's notorious history in trading

contraband liquor lingers in the name of The Smugglers Inn. Unlike many similarly-named hostelrys, this one really was a regular haunt for smugglers. Dating back to the 13th century, this former fisherman's cottage enjoyed a secluded position and the nearby beach provided safe landing. The inn's landlord in the early 1800s was Emmanuel Carless who, together with his French partner, Pierre Latour or 'French Peter', ran a thriving business importing thousands of gallons of brandy each year. Unfortunately, the liquor was so inferior locals refused to drink it and the spirit had to be carried inland on stage coaches, disguised as luggage, to be distilled again.

ISLE OF PORTLAND

4 miles S of Weymouth, on the A354

Portland is not really an island at all, but a 4.5-mile long peninsula, well known to devotees of shipping forecasts and even more famous for the stone from its quarries. It is a Unesco World Heritage Site, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and a European Special Area of Conservation. Quarrying has been an industry here for centuries and the earliest reference to the stone being used outside the area is 1300, in the building of Exeter Cathedral. Numerous buildings in London are constructed of Portland stone, among them the Cenotaph, St Paul's Cathedral, Inigo Jones' Banqueting Hall in Whitehall, and Buckingham Palace, and the stone was also favoured by sculptors such as Henry Moore. (The stone was also used for the graves of British servicemen killed in both World Wars; the stone used for these graves proved vulnerable to erosion and in 1998 the Commonwealth War Graves Commission

31 THE LOOK OUT CAFÉ - BISTRO

Bowleaze Cove, nr Weymouth

A popular watering hole for sea-watchers, dog walkers and kite flyers.

See entry on page 66



32 QUIDDLES CAFÉ

Chesil Cove, Portland

Seafood is the speciality here, and the location makes it an ideal place to watch the sun set during the summer months.

See entry on page 67



Portland Castle



tours during the season and also has a visitor centre. Nearby are some particularly fascinating natural features: the tall, upright Pulpit Rock which can be climbed, and some caves to explore.

The Isle provides some good cliff-top walks with grand views of **Chesil Beach**, a vast bank of pebbles worn smooth by the sea which stretches for some 10 miles to Abbotsbury. Inexplicably, the pebbles are graded in size from west to east. Fishermen reckon they

began to use a type of marble instead.) In the **Tout Quarry Sculpture Park** some 50 pieces in the local stone are on display - watch out for Anthony Gormley's figure of a man falling down the rock face!

The island's most famous building is **Portland Castle** (English Heritage), one of the finest of Henry VIII's coastal fortresses. Its active role lasted for 500 years, right up to World War II when it provided a D-Day embarkation point for British and American forces. Oliver Cromwell used the castle as a prison and in Victorian times it was the residence of Portland's governors. Visitors can meet 'Henry VIII' in the Great Hall, view the Tudor kitchens and enjoy the special events that are held regularly throughout the year. The battlements overlook superb views of Portland Harbour whose breakwaters were constructed by convict labour to create one of the largest man-made harbours in the world.

At the southernmost tip of the island, the Bill of Portland, the first lighthouse to be built here is now a base for birdwatchers. The current Portland Bill Lighthouse offers guided

can judge whereabouts on the beach they are landing by the size of the pebbles. In the west they are as small as peas and usually creamy in colour; at Portland they have grown to the size of cooking apples and are more often grey. The long, narrow body of water trapped behind the beach is known as **The Fleet**. It is now a nature reserve and home to a wide variety of waterfowl and plants, as well as fish that can be viewed by taking a trip in a glass-bottomed boat, the *Fleet Observer*. On the highest point of Isle of Portland is Verne Citadel, which was a

Bill of Portland Lighthouse



33 THE GEORGE INN

Portland

A friendly family run local pub with character and charm.

See entry on page 68



base for troops defending Portland and Weymouth. It became a prison on 1950.

At Southwell, near the tip of Portland Bill, St Andrew's Avalanche church was built in 1879 chiefly as a memorial to those who perished when the clipper *Avalanche* sank off the Portland coast at the beginning of a passage to New Zealand. Also in Southwell is the Portland Museum, which was funded by the birth control pioneer Marie Stopes who lived on the Ireland. Housed in a charming pair of thatched cottages, the museum has had a major overhaul and its displays centre on the themes of Stone, Sea and Shipwrecks, Local Archaeology and Famous Portland People.

CHICKERELL

3 miles NW of Weymouth off the B3157

A pretty village of thatched cottages, Chickerell is best known for **Bennetts Water Gardens**, which were created in 1959 by Norman Bennett. He began by growing water lilies in the disused clay pits of a brickworks and the gardens are now home to the National Collection of Water Lilies. Within the gardens is a museum telling the story of the village which featured in the *Domesday Book*.

PORTESHAM

6 miles NW of Weymouth on the B3157

On the Black Downs northeast of Portesham stands **Hardy Monument** (National Trust) which commemorates not Thomas Hardy, the great novelist of Wessex, but Sir Thomas Hardy, the flag-captain of *HMS Victory* at Trafalgar to whom the dying Lord Nelson spoke the immortal words, 'Kiss me, Hardy', (or possibly, 'Kismet, Hardy'). Sir Thomas was born in Portesham and, like his novelist namesake, was descended from the Hardys of Jersey. After Trafalgar, he escorted Nelson's body back to London and soon afterwards was created a baronet and,

eventually, First Sea Lord. Sir Thomas's stunningly graceless memorial has been variously described as a 'huge candlestick', a 'peppermill', and most accurately as a 'factory chimney wearing a crinoline'. But if you stand with your back to it, there are grand views over Weymouth Bay.

ABBOTSBURY

8 miles NW of Weymouth on the B3157

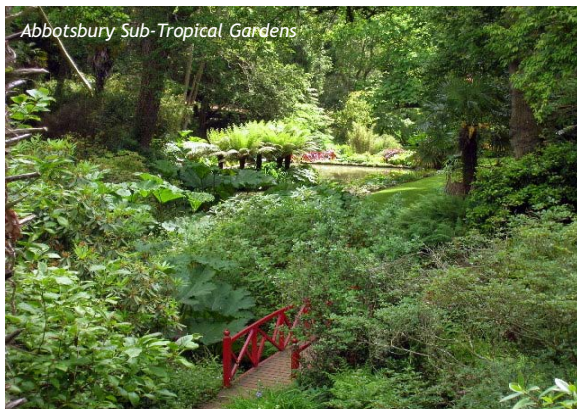
Surrounded by hills, picturesque Abbotsbury is one of the county's most popular tourist spots and by any standards one of the loveliest villages in England. Its most striking feature as you approach is the 14th century **St Catherine's Chapel**, perched on the hill-top. Only 45 feet by 15 feet, it is solidly built to withstand the Channel gales with walls more than 4 feet thick. St Catherine was believed to be particularly helpful in finding husbands for the unmarried and in medieval times spinsters would climb the hill to her chapel chanting a dialect jingle which concludes with the words '*Arn-a-one's better than Narn-a-one*' - anyone is better than never a one.

Abbotsbury takes its name from the important Benedictine Abbey that once stood here but was comprehensively cannibalised after the Reformation, its stones used to build the attractive cottages that line the village streets. What has survived however is the magnificent **Great Abbey Barn**, 247 feet long and 31 feet wide, which was built in the



Abbotsbury Swannery

Abbotsbury Sub-Tropical Gardens



complete the Abbotsbury experience visit the Children's Farm, where there are numerous farm animals to meet, greet and feed. There are pony and tractor rides, opportunities to cuddle small furry creatures and bottle-feed goats. A large play area, café and gift shop completes the picture. The Abbotsbury Passport Ticket enables visitors to visit each of the three attractions on any day or days of their choice.

1300s to store the abbey's tithes of wool, grain and other produce. With its thatched roof, stone walls and a mightily impressive entrance it is one of the largest and best-preserved barns in the country.

About a mile south of the village is the famous **Abbotsbury Swannery**, established in Saxon times to provide food for the abbey during the winter months. More than 600 free-flying swans have made their home here and visitor figures rocket from the end of May to the end of June - the baby swans' hatching season. Don't miss the mass feeding daily at noon and 4pm. Another highlight, the Giant Willow Maze, opens during the May half-term holiday.

Just to the west of the village, **Abbotsbury Sub-Tropical Gardens**, which comes under the umbrella of the Abbotsbury Swannery, enjoy a particularly well-sheltered position and the 20 acres of grounds contain a huge variety of rare and exotic plants and trees. Other attractions include an 18th century walled garden, beautiful lily ponds, quality gift shop and plants sales area. To

BRIDPORT

With its broad streets, (inherited from the days when they were used for making ropes), Bridport is an appealing little town surrounded by green hills and with a goodly number of 17th and 18th century buildings. Most notable amongst these are the stately Georgian **Town Hall**, and the pleasing collection of 17th century houses in the street running south from the Town Hall. An even older survivor is the medieval **Chantry**. If you visit the town on a Wednesday or Saturday you'll find its three main streets chock-a-block with dozens of stalls participating in the regular Street Market. The Town Council actively encourages local people who produce goods at home, which are not part of their regular livelihood, to join in. So there's an extraordinary range of artefacts on offer, anything from silk flowers to socks, fossils to fishing tackle. Another popular attraction is **Palmers Brewery** in West Bay Road. Established in 1794, part of the brewery is still thatched. Between Easter and the end of September visitors are welcomed daily at 11am (not bank holidays) for a 2-hour tour of the historic brewery, the charge for which includes a commemorative tankard, an inscribed certificate and a beer tasting (or a soft drink).

Bridport Museum is good on local history and family records and also has an interesting collection of dolls. You can also learn about

34 THE EGGCUP TEAROOMS

Swyre

A great place to relax and take afternoon tea indoors or al fresco - try their famous fresh homemade Dorset cream tea.

See entry on page 68



two distinguished visitors to the town. One was Joan of Navarre who landed at Bridport in 1403 on her way to become queen to Henry IV; the other, Charles II who arrived in the town after his defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. He was fleeing to France, pretending to be the groom in a runaway marriage. As he attended to his horses in the yard of an inn, an ostler approached him saying 'Surely I know you, friend?' The quick-thinking future monarch asked where the ostler had been working before. When he replied 'In Exeter', Charles responded 'Aye, that is where we must have met'. Charles then excused himself and made a speedy departure from the town. If the ostler's memory for faces had been better, he could have claimed the £1,000 bounty for Charles' capture and subsequent English history would have followed a very different course.

Bridport has become something of a foodie town, being hailed as Dorset's Best Food Town and awarded Beacon Town status for the quality and diversity of food produced and available here. Many local producers appeared on the TV River Cottage series and the town now hosts an annual food festival for a week in June.

WEST BAY

1 mile S of Bridport off the A35

When Bridport's own harbour silted up in the early 1700s, the townspeople built a new one at the mouth of the River Brit but retained the name Bridport Harbour. During the 19th century, hundreds of ships docked here every year, and Bridport Harbour had its own shipbuilding industry until 1879. The harbour was renamed West Bay when a railway station opened here in 1884. The little town never became a fashionable resort but the beach, backed by 100 feet high sandstone cliffs, is much enjoyed by holiday-makers, and there's still a stall at the little harbour where you can treat yourself to a tub of



West Bay Harbour

cockles. From the harbour you can take a mackerel boat (West Bay Charters) round the bay or go for the deeper waters in search of cod, conger, skate or pollock - and keep a lookout for one of the playful dolphins.

Close to the harbour is the Bridport Arms Hotel, a historic old thatched building that in parts dates back as far as the 1500s. The inn's picturesque qualities - it has been used as a film location - make it an excellent place to stay.

BEAMINSTER

5 miles N of Bridport on the A3066

In Hardy's novel, when Tess Durbeyville arrives in Beaminster, (Emminster in the novel), she finds a delightful little market town. Visitors today will find that remarkably little has changed. The whole of the town centre is a conservation area and contains, astonishingly, more than 200 listed buildings. The 17th century almshouse, the majestic church tower in gold-tinted Hamstone, the 16th century Pickwick's Inn, and the charming

35 BRIDGE HOUSE HOTEL

Beaminster

13th Century property, walled garden, renowned for good food using fresh local produce and friendly.

See entry on page 69



Market Square with its stone roofed market cross are all much the same as Hardy knew them. What have disappeared are the many small industries that thrived in those days - rope and sailcloth, embroidered buttons, shoes, wrought ironwork and clockmaking were just some of the artefacts produced here. Housed in the former Congregational Chapel of 1749, **Beaminster Museum** displays objects relating to the life of the town from medieval times to the present day

Visitors to Beaminster's imposing 15th century church tend to be overwhelmed by the grandiose, over-lifesize sculptures of the Strode family who lived at **Parnham House**, a gem of Tudor architecture about a mile south of the town. The house was owned by furniture designer and maker John Makepeace and with his wife, Jennie, set up Parnham College and the John Makepeace Furniture Workshops were run from here. He sold Parnham in 2001 when he bought Farris, a listed house in Whitcombe Road, Beaminster. Here they have their home, gardens (which are open to the public for a few days a year under the National Gardens Scheme), design studio and gallery (check for specific opening days).

MAPPERTON

5 miles NE of Bridport off the A3066

It's not surprising to find that the house and gardens at **Mapperton** have featured in three major films - *Tom Jones*, *Emma* and *Restoration*. Home of the Earl and Countess

of Sandwich, this magnificent Jacobean mansion set beside a lake is stunningly photogenic. The Italianate upper gardens contain some impressive topiary, an orangery, dovecote and formal borders descending to fish ponds and shrub gardens. The house stands in an area of outstanding natural beauty with some glorious views of the Dorset hills and has become a popular wedding venue. The gardens are open from the 1st April until the end of September; the house has limited opening from mid-July to mid-August and some bank holidays.

LYME REGIS

Known as the Pearl of Dorset, Lyme Regis is a captivating little town enjoying a setting unrivalled in the county, an area of outstanding natural beauty where the rolling countryside of Dorset plunges to the sea. The town itself is a maze of narrow streets with many charming Georgian and Regency houses, and the picturesque harbour will be familiar to anyone who has seen the film *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, based on the novel by Lyme resident, John Fowles. The scene of a lone woman standing on the wave-lashed Cobb has become one of cinema's most enduring images.

The Cobb, which protects the harbour and the sandy beach with its clear bathing water from south-westerly storms, was first recorded in 1294 but the town itself goes back at least another 500 years to Saxon times when there was a salt works here. A charter granted by Edward I allowed Lyme to add 'Regis' to its name but during the Civil War the town was staunchly anti-royalist, routing the forces of Prince Maurice and killing more than 2,000 of them. Some 40 years later, James, Duke of Monmouth, chose Lyme as his landing place to start the ill-fated rebellion that would end with ferocious reprisals being meted out to the insurgents by



Mapperton Gardens

the notorious Judge Jeffreys. Happier days arrived in the 18th century when Lyme became a fashionable resort, famed for its fresh, clean air. Jane Austen and her family visited in 1803 and part of her novel *Persuasion* is set in the town. The **Jane Austen Garden** on Lyme's seafront commemorates her visit.

A few years after Jane's visit, a 12-year-old girl called Mary Anning was wandering along the shore when she noticed bones protruding from the cliffs. She had discovered the first ichthyosaur to be found in England. Later, as one of the first professional fossil collectors, she also unearthed locally a plesiosaur and a pterodactyl. The 6-mile stretch of coastline on either side of Lyme is world famous for its fossils and some fine specimens of local discoveries can be seen at the award-winning **Lyme Regis Museum** - featuring the displays Science, Art and Landscape - in Bridge Street and at **Dinosaurland Fossil Museum** in Coombe Street. The privately run Dinosaurland, housed in the magnificent former church where Mary Anning was baptized and worshipped, boasts some 8,000 specimens and has one of the best fossil displays in the south west.

For themed tours of Lyme Regis contact Literary Lyme, which specializes not only in the literary connections of the town through novelists Jane Austen and John Fowles but also includes a tour dedicated to Mary Anning. You can book tours through the Lyme Regis Museum.

Just around the corner from Dinosaurland,

The Cobb, Lyme Regis



in Mill Lane, you'll find one of the town's most interesting buildings. It was in January 1991 that a group of Lyme Regis residents got together in an effort to save the old **Town Mill** from destruction. There has been a mill on the River Lim in the centre of the town for many centuries, but most of the present buildings date back to the mid-17th century when the mill was rebuilt after being burned down during the Civil War siege of Lyme in 1644. Today, back in full working order, and manned by volunteers, Town Mill is one of Lyme's major attractions with its ancient working flour mill and modern hydroelectric system. It also incorporates two art galleries which stage a wide range of exhibitions, concerts, poetry readings and other live performances. Other highlights include a pottery, fashion studio, cheesemonger, microbrewery and gift shop.

For its size, Lyme Regis has an extraordinary range of activities on offer, too many to list here although worth mentioning is the famous week-long Carnival and Regatta held in August. Bands play on the Marine Parade and events include displays by Morris Men and activities for all the family.

Lyme has maintained a **Town Crier** for over a thousand years without a break and the current incumbent in his colourful 18th century costume can be seen and heard throughout the town during the summer months.

If you enjoy walking, the South West Coast Path passes through Lyme; if you follow

36 THE COBB ARMS

Lyme Regis

A very busy Cobb, harbour side pub with excellent bed and breakfast facilities.

See entry on page 70



it eastwards for about 5 miles it will bring you to Golden Cap (617 feet), the highest point on the south coast with spectacular views from every vantage point. Or you can just take a pleasant stroll along Marine Parade, a traffic-free promenade stretching for about a mile from the Cobb.

CHARMOUTH

2 miles NE of Lyme Regis off the A35

What better recommendation could you give the seaside village of Charmouth than the fact that it was Jane Austen's favourite resort? 'Sweet and retired' she called it. To quote Arthur Mee, 'She loved the splendid sweep of country all round it, the downs, the valleys, the hills like Golden Cap, and the pageantry of the walk to Lyme Regis'

Charmouth remains an attractive little place with a wide main street lined with Regency buildings, and a quiet stretch of sandy beach that gradually merges into shingle. This part of the coast has yielded an amazing variety of fossils, many of which can be seen at the **Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre**. The Centre provides information on fossils, fossil hunting and the local coastal and marine wildlife. Facilities at the centre include interactive computers, hands on displays, marine tanks and a video microscope. The centre is run by three wardens who, throughout the season, organise a series of guided fossil-hunting walks and rockpool rambles along this scenic stretch of the Jurassic Coast.

WHITCHURCH CANONICORUM

4 miles NE of Lyme Regis off the A35

Clinging to the steep hillside above the valley of the River Char, Whitchurch Canonicorum is notable for its enchanting setting and for its **Church of St Candida and the Holy Cross**. This noble building with its Norman arches and an imposing tower built around 1400 is remarkable for being one of only two

Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre



churches in England still possessing a shrine to a saint. (The other is that of Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey). St Candida was a Saxon woman named Wite - the Anglo-Saxon word for white, which in Latin is Candida. She lived as a hermit but was murdered by a Viking raiding party in AD 831. During the Middle Ages a major cult grew up around her memory. A large shrine was built of golden Purbeck stone, its lower level pierced by three large ovals into which the sick and maimed thrust their limbs, their head or even their whole body, in the hope of being cured. The cult of St Wite thrived until the Reformation when all such 'monuments of feigned miracles' were swept away. That might have been the end of the story of St Wite but during the winter of 1899-1900 the foundations of the church settled and cracked open a 13th century tomb chest. Inside was a lead casket with a Latin inscription stating that 'Here rest the relics of St Wite' and inside the casket the bones of a small woman about 40 years old. The shrine still attracts pilgrims today, the donations they leave in the openings beneath the tomb now being devoted to causes which aid health and healing.

BROADWINDSOR

9 miles NE of Lyme Regis on the B3163

Just to the south of this pretty terraced village is a trio of hill forts, Pilsdon Pen, Lambert's Castle and Coney's Castle (all

Forde Abbey



National Trust). They are connected by a network of paths and all provide magnificent views out across Marshwood Vale to the sea. William Wordsworth took a house on Pilsdon Pen for a while and declared that there was no finer view in England.

FORDE ABBEY

11 miles N of Lyme Regis off the B3162

About as far west as you can get in Dorset, **Forde Abbey** (gardens open all year; house from April-October) enjoys a lovely setting

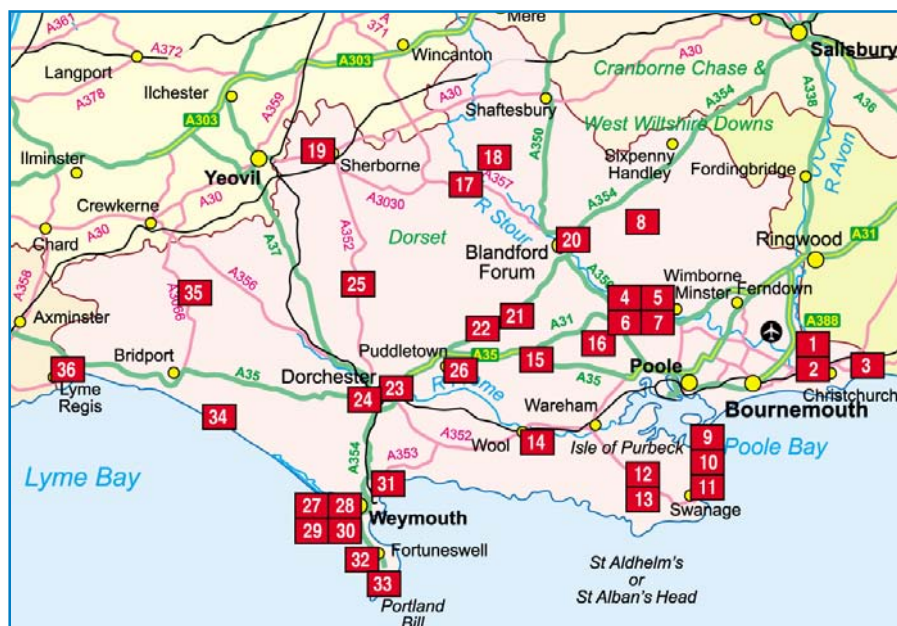
beside the River Axe, which is also the start of the Jubilee Trail, a 90-mile walking route across the county and over the Hampshire border, Forde Abbey was founded as a Cistercian monastery more than 800 years ago and is now the home of the Roper family. The abbey church has gone but the monks of those days would still recognise the chapter house, dormitories, kitchen and refectories. The Upper Refectory is particularly striking with its fine timbered roof and carved panelling. After

the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the abbot's residence became a private house and was greatly extended in 1649 by Cromwell's Attorney-General, Sir Edmond Prideaux. The mansion's greatest treasures are the superb Mortlake tapestries of around 1630, which are based on cartoons by Raphael and have borders probably designed by Rubens. Gardens extending to 30 acres and with origins in the early 1700s, are landscaped around this enchanting house - a suitably peaceful place to bring our tour of the county to an end.

Accommodation, Food & Drink and Places to Visit

The establishments featured in this section includes hotels, inns, guest houses, bed & breakfasts, restaurants, cafés, tea and coffee shops, tourist attractions and places to visit. Each establishment has an entry number which can be used to identify its location at the beginning of the relevant county chapter.

In addition full details of all these establishments and many others can be found on the Travel Publishing website - www.findsomewhere.co.uk. This website has a comprehensive database covering the whole of the United Kingdom.



2 THE MUSEUM OF ELECTRICITY

*The Old Power Station, Bargates,
Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1QE
Tel: 01202 480467 Fax: 01202 480468
website: www.electricmuseum.com*

Only five minutes walk from the centre of Christchurch, in the setting of a genuine Edwardian Power Station, the **Museum of Electricity** is a must for all ages. Everything here is electric, from an old Bournemouth tram to a pair of boot warmers! There really is something to interest everyone, with hands-on exhibits and the demonstrations for children tie in with the national curriculum. Car parking is free on site and picnic tables are available.



1 THE NEW FOREST PERFUMERY, GIFT SHOP & TEAROOMS

11 Castle Street, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 1DP

Tel: 01202 482893

e-mail: info@newforestperfumery.co.uk

website: www.newforestperfumery.co.uk

Afternoon tea in our traditional tea room or beautiful sheltered courtyard is a truly memorable treat enjoyed by many. Homemade scones freshly baked on the premises 7 days a week is something you will rarely find. Our cakes are also homemade to traditional recipes and we source fresh local produce and products from local suppliers wherever possible.

We grind our coffee to order so it is as fresh as possible and to the highest standards. Tea is served in traditional teapots with a selection of speciality teas and decaffeinated options available.

Breakfast is served until 11am Monday to Saturday and until noon on Sundays. Lunches from freshly made sandwiches and toasties to order, Welsh rarebit, salmon and broccoli pasta bake, ploughmans, soups and jacket potatoes are just some of the mouth watering selection awaiting you.

The jams and chutneys used in the tearooms are from an award winning Dorset company and are available to purchase in the shop.



4 THE WHITE HART

6 Cornmarket, Wimborne, Dorset BH12 1JL

Tel: 01202 886050

Making its home in the heart of Wimborne Minster, within the old Cornmarket area is **The White Hart**. Licensees Steve and Jane took over the establishment in 2010 and ever since its popularity has increased by the day. Open all day everyday, the bar offers an extensive range of tipples including 4 real ales from the Ringwood Brewery. A 'sun-trap' beer garden provides the ideal place to relax and enjoy a drink or meal in the sunshine. Excellent Bar food is available from 12 - 9pm during the summer and 12 - 3pm and 6 - 9pm in the winter. Children and dogs are welcome, and all forms of payment are accepted.



3 THE AMBERWOOD

154 Ringwood Road, Walkford, Christchurch, Dorset BH23 5RQ

Tel: 01425 272627

e-mail: mcewen.amberwood@talktalk.net

website: www.theamberwood.co.uk

Formerly a Coach House, **The Amberwood** is located just a short distance from the A35 in the town of Walkford. It is within easy reach of both The New Forest which is great for walking, cycling and horse riding, and the Dorset and Hampshire coastline with its stunning beaches, quaint harbours and magnificent views of the Solent and the Isle of Wight.

Hosts Gill and John along with their team of excellent staff offer a warm welcome into this relaxed and friendly pub with a classic local atmosphere. At the bar they serve award winning Hall & Woodhouse Real Ales and there is also an excellent selection of fine wines and other alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages.

Traditional home cooked food is prepared fresh to order by John and his excellent kitchen team. Diners can choose to eat in the bar area or in the restaurant, which seats up to 100 people and offers a full table service. Both the bar and the restaurant have easy level access and enjoy comfortable modern furnishing. The wide and varied menu here is complimented by a specials board and both are frequently updated to reflect the seasonal local produce on offer, including freshly caught fish. Ever popular is the traditional Sunday roast dinner and from Monday to Saturday there is a two course lunchtime special offering great value at £8.50. In the bar there is a Pick'n'Mix lunchtime snack menu available from Monday to Saturday from 12 Noon until 2:30pm.

The Amberwood Restaurant is also available to hire for private functions, John and his catering team can provide a delicious buffet or a formal meal to suit the occasion. Whether it's a family celebration, a business meeting or a social gathering, Gill and her team of helpful staff will happily discuss your requirements to ensure your event is a success.

Entertainment is also high on the agenda here with weekly live music events on Fridays from 9pm. There is also a fun and light-hearted quiz night every Monday hosted by Eddie, who doles out cash or drink prizes to triumphant winners. On the first and third Tuesday of every month you can come and enjoy a night of Jazz music with Bernie Farrenden's Jazz Quartet which starts at 8pm.

There are excellent disabled facilities here, children are welcome and dogs are also welcome in the bar. Cash and card payments are accepted, with the exception of American Express and Diners cards.



5 ANGELS CAFÉ

10 East Street, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 1DS
Tel: 01202 849922

Angels Café is situated along the Stour River in the historic market town of Wimborne; the glory of the town is Wimborne Minster, which has been a centre for pilgrimage, prayer and worship for over 1300 years. Manager, Margaret Philp took over the café in June 2008 after she fell in love with this attractive building and it's courtyard overlooking the river.

The menu caters for modern tastes, hosting gluten free and dairy free menus. This along side the delicious weekly specials means you will have great difficulty in choosing! Should you prefer something lighter there is a selection of scrumptious homemade cakes, scones and teacakes, as well as a choice of surroundings, there is a riverside terrace or a courtyard terrace along with the main eating area.

Along the high street is the award winning Museum of East Dorset Life, which tells the story of life in East Dorset through a series of period rooms. After the sightseeing it would be difficult to pass up a meal and the Angel Café is perfect for hungry travellers.

The café is open from 8am - 4pm daily and from 8am - 11.30am offering a selection of breakfasts. Closed on Sundays.



6 KINGSTON LACY HOUSE

Wimborne, Dorset BH21 4EA
Tel: 01202 883402 Fax: 01202 882402
website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

The Kingston Lacy estate was bequeathed in 1981 to the National Trust, along with 8,000 acres on the Isle of Purbeck, in the will of Ralph Banks. Much of the land has been declared inalienable, meaning that it can never be sold, developed or mortgaged. Kingston Lacy House, home of the Banks family for over 300 years, is a beautiful 17th century building with an outstanding collection of Old Masters, Egyptian artefacts and the amazing Spanish room with gilded leather hanging on the walls. All four floors are open to visitors, and the Edwardian laundry gives a fascinating insight into life below stairs 100 years ago.

The garden has two formal areas, the parterre and the sunken garden. The Victorian Fernery supports over 25 types of fern, the Blindwalk contains flowering shrubs and groundcover plants, and the 18th century Lime Avenue leads to Nursery Wood, where specimen trees, rhododendrons, azaleas and camellias grow. The landscaped park covers 250 acres and is home to the North Devon herd of cattle. There are lovely walks through the woodland areas, some suitable for wheelchairs, and Coneygar Copse has three different areas of woodland play equipment.



7 HORNS INN

Burts Hill, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 7AA

Tel: 01202 883557

e-mail: martinehastings@btinternet.com

Horns Inn is a very attractive and well kept pub set in a scenic village location on the outskirts of the Dorset town of Wimborne. It is popular with both locals and visitors to the area, who are always impressed by the traditional home cooked food and the warm hospitality of hosts Martine and Martin Hastings. They took over here in early 2008 and have over 20 years experience in the hospitality business.

Inside the pub has a traditional and cosy atmosphere, with antique furniture and a wood burner in each bar. The mouth-watering menu and specials board concentrates on freshly prepared food that is locally sourced where

possible. The Sunday roast is always popular, with a choice of roast meats served with roast potatoes, Yorkshire puddings and all the trimmings. Booking is essential on Friday and Saturday evenings and on Sunday lunchtime. At the bar there are two real ales on offer, Badger Ale and a rotating seasonal Brewery ale.

There is a real family feel to this pub, with an excellent children's menu on offer as well as highchairs, colouring packs and a family-friendly play area where children can amuse themselves in safe surroundings whilst the adults enjoy a relaxing drink. Horns Inn also welcomes dogs outside and in one of the bar areas.

The large and attractive beer garden is decorated with hanging baskets, tubs and shrubs, making it a delightful place where you can enjoy a meal and a drink on those warmer summer evenings. With an abundance of rolling fields nearby, you could even enjoy a bite to eat in the Horns Inn followed by a picturesque walk.

The inn is less than a mile from the centre of Wimborne and with its famous Minster and Model Village it's a great place to explore if you have a few hours spare. It is also about 8 miles from historic Poole and a mere 4 miles from Bournemouth Airport if you are visiting the area from further afield. Food is served here from Monday to Saturday between 12pm and 2pm and from Tuesday to Saturday from 6:30pm to 9pm. Sunday lunch is served between 12pm and 3pm. If you are looking for freshly prepared dishes, a welcoming atmosphere to enjoy a pint or simply somewhere that your dog can accompany you, then a visit to the Horns Inn is a must.



8 THE DROVERS INN

Gussage All Saints, Dorset BH21 5ET

Tel: 01258 840084

e-mail: info@thedroversgussage.co.uk

website: www.thedroversgussage.co.uk

Voted Dorset's country pub of the year, The Drovers, is well known for its homemade food and friendly welcome in the countryside village of Gussage. Local seasonal produce is used wherever possible and the chefs prefer to use pans and ovens rather than microwaves. Last year the owners, Jason and Jo, planted a kitchen garden and orchard so they could use the freshest of ingredients. As well as the extensive menu there is a good selection of additional dishes listed on the daily specials blackboard. All of the dishes are reasonably priced and starters include garlic mushrooms served on toast with baby leaves and balsamic reduction; and ham hock terrine served with piccalilli, homemade bread and a hazelnut. Steak and kidney pie and home cooked ham served with free range eggs and hand cut chips are among the more traditional dishes on the main menu. There is also a wide range of steaks that come served 'on the hot rock' and chorizo & mushroom tagliatelle topped with dolcelatte & hazelnut oil served with garlic bread and salad is a popular choice.



Inside, the pub, which dates back to the 17th century, has plenty of character with English oak floors, beamed ceiling and a large inglenook fireplace, offering the perfect place to relax with loved ones and friends. During the warmer months visitors are able to enjoy their meal or beverage outside in the pleasant beer garden.

The Drovers is open between 12pm-3pm and 6pm-12am Monday - Thursday and between 12pm-3pm and 4.30pm-12am on Fridays. On Saturday, Sundays and bank holidays the opening hours is 12am-12am. Food is served between 12pm-2pm and 6pm-9pm.

To keep up to date with all the latest on events and entertainment, please check the website or alternatively follow The Drovers Inn on Twitter @Drovers Inn.



10 ULWELL COTTAGE CARAVAN PARK

Ulwell Road, Swanage, Dorset BH19 3DG

Tel: 01929 422823

e-mail: enq@ulwellcottagepark.co.uk

website: www.ulwellcottagepark.co.uk

Nestling under the Purbeck Hills, surrounded by picturesque countryside and a breathtaking coastline is the family friendly Ulwell Cottage Caravan Park. Having earned itself numerous awards the park offers excellent facilities for a relaxing and carefree holiday.

The park is equipped with everything one would need including an indoor heated swimming pool, extensive outdoor play area; on site shop, restaurant offering lunch time snacks as well as a full evening menu; bar with family room and outdoor patio area, showers and toilets; two launderettes and WiFi access.

The caravans are modern and spacious and there are two or three bedroom versions available sleeping up to seven people. Each has a bathroom with shower and toilet, unlimited hot and cold water, heating, fully fitted kitchen, colour TV and DVD player, duvets and pillows and free electricity and gas. Guests are welcome to park their vehicle beside the caravan, weather permitting.

With its gently sloping, terraced land, the park is both very attractive and practical for tourers and campers. Hard standing pitches are available, some with water and drainage. Facilities available to campers are electric hook-ups, hard standing pitches, toilet/showers, family cubicles, baby changing, disabled unit and normal camping supplies and gas are readily available from reception.

The onsite Village Inn Bar and Restaurant offers an ideal place for those wishing to have an evening off from cooking. Guests can grab a lunchtime snack from the Village Inn Bar or reserve a table in the intimate restaurant and enjoy a delicious meal. There is also a takeaway service available for those wishing to eat in the comfort of their holiday home.

The surrounding area offers so much to do and explore, and is sure to keep visitors entertained for the duration of their stay. Take a trip on a steam train to historical Corfe Castle, enjoy walks along the spectacular coastline and National Trust countryside, or enjoy a spot of birdwatching, fishing, watersports or even sandcastle building, all within 3 miles of the park.



9 WINDJAMMERS

42 High Street, Swanage, Dorset BH19 2NX

Tel: 01929 421472

e-mail: windjammers.swanage@gmail.com

Windjammers has that unique ability of being café during the day and a restaurant at night, simply by changing the ambience and menu.

You can rest assured that whether you're escaping for a quiet break or having a gathering Windjammers can cater for your needs - whatever the age - you'll be welcomed. During the day there is a selection of breakfasts, lunches, afternoon teas or simply drinks and cakes. Everything is freshly prepared on the premises.

From 6pm there is an evening Tapas menu available. The meatballs served in a tomato and red wine sauce is extremely popular, as is the chicken and chorizo salad...whilst not forgetting those who prefer not to eat meat, you'll find over half a dozen dishes suitable for vegetarians. Booking is advisable.

And for the perfect compliment to your dinner, Windjammers provides an impressive wine list, including a selection of Red wines, White wines, Rose wines plus several fizzy options, such as Cava. Don't hesitate to book a table, it's time to grab a corkscrew and bottoms up as they say!



12 OLIVERS BED AND BREAKFAST

5 West Street, Corfe Castle, nr Wareham, Dorset BH20 5HA

Tel: 01929 477111

website: www.oliverscorfecastle.co.uk

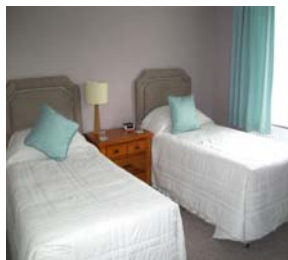
Situated in the picturesque, conservation village of Corfe Castle, and just a short walk to the Castle and Private Railway is a delightful bed and breakfast named Olivers, after Oliver Cromwell.

The b&b has been personally run by Donna and Mark for the past 3 years and offers an ideal base for those wishing to explore this tranquil part of Dorset.

Open all year round, the establishment boasts 4 quality en-suite bedrooms, three doubles and one twin. All rooms have been decorated to the highest quality, are light and spacious and present beautiful beam work and large bathrooms.

The reasonable tariff includes a hearty breakfast, created using locally sourced produce and is sure to keep guests satisfied until tea time. The rear patio offers an idyllic setting in which to relax during the warmer evenings.

A stay at Olivers is a truly memorable experience, and one which must be repeated!



11 BROOK TEA ROOMS

15 The Parade, Swanage Bay, Dorset BH19 1DA
Tel: 01929 422061

The White family, who have been supplying the Swanage area with goods from their bakery in Langton Matravers since 1866, opened the **Brook Tea Rooms** some thirty years ago. Many of the older generation still remember the days when Peter White and his staff did door to door deliveries, and still tell Peter that his Whites bread gave their families a good start in life.

At the grand age of 73 Peter sadly, decided to scale down his business but having been a baker for over 55 years he couldn't retire the rolling pin. Even today he and his family still make many of the products that you will find in the tea rooms today and still believe in using local meat and produce. That's why their suppliers include, Whites Bakery, Compact Farm, Afflington Manor Farm, Swanage Dairy, Country Foods at Poole and Country Fair (Bournemouth)

The Brook Tea Rooms, is warm and welcoming with a friendly, homely atmosphere and is also well situated with uninterrupted views over Swanage Bay and the majestic Isle of Wight.

The popular breakfast menu is available between 9am -11.30am, and it is well worth getting up for, offering large Fisherman's and English breakfasts as well as vegetarian and children's options.

Freshly made sandwiches are always available. Pies and pasties are freshly baked on site in their ovens and all served with a salad garnish. Pastries and pies are served piping hot from the oven. Dorset cream teas are very popular as are the variety of homemade cakes. Also see the black board for daily specials. With such a large variety, even a picky eater will have trouble deciding. And the real cherry on the top is having the option to bring your own bottle to this favourite tea rooms & cafe.

The beautiful setting and delicious food attracts a whole host of visiting walkers and cyclists and coach parties as well as the locals. Bookings can be made for that special occasion.

Open 7 days a week, 9am - 5pm plus extended hours in the summer.



13 CORFE CASTLE MODEL VILLAGE & GARDENS

The Square, Corfe Castle, Dorset BH20 5EZ

OTel: 01929 481234

website: www.corfecastlemodelvillage.co.uk

Corfe Castle is an attraction that draws many thousands of visitors to this delightful part of Dorset each year, but almost literally in the shadow of the magnificent ruins is equally fascinating sight for tourists. Described as '3 Great Venues in One', the attractions include **Corfe Castle Model Village**, Traditional Dorset Gardens and The Courtyard Café. The real castle was destroyed by Cromwell's troops in 1646, but the Model Village faithfully restores both the castle and the village. Visitors can therefore make the intriguing comparison between the heritage castle laid out at their feet and the imposing ruin that towers above, dominating the landscape even in its ruined state.

It was Eddie Holland who built the model, which took two years to complete and was opened to the public for the first time in 1966. The detail in the 1/20th scale model, built with Purbeck stone, is extraordinary, right down to the miniature 17th century folk going about their daily business and the music playing gently in the miniature church. In one corner of the site, several of the original village stocks are on display, a reminder of how minor offenders were dealt with in times gone by. The model village is a delight for visitors of all ages, and just a few steps away is an enchanting traditional Dorset garden - life-size in this case.

The gardens have been restored and landscaped and many rare trees and shrubs have been planted, which along with the glorious borders provide a variety of wonderful colours and scents throughout the season. A woodland area attracts an abundance of birds and wild animals.

After exploring the village and gardens, visitors can relax in the Courtyard Café over a cup of tea or coffee, or tuck into a filled jacket potato, home made soup, a well-filled sandwich or a full Dorset cream tea. All three venues - the model village, the gardens and the café - are open daily from April to the end of October. The model village is without doubt one of the most fascinating attractions of its kind in the whole country, and no visit to the area would be complete without spending a few hours peeping back into history.



14 BLACK BEAR

**High Street, Wool, Wareham,
Dorset BH20 6BP**

Tel: 01929 405541

e-mail: westwood705@hotmail.com

website: www.theblackbearwool.co.uk

The Black Bear is in an ideal location, situated on the High Street in the heart of Wool village near Lulworth Cove and Durdle Door which lies on the Jurassic Coast. Due to the pubs proximity to these famous features, it's not surprising that the Black Bear is popular with tourists during the summer months. There's also a good following of local regulars who feel relaxed coming in at teatime for a well earned pint after work and to regale visitors with many a 'good old fashioned tale' about the Black Bear and surrounding area.

Originally a 19th century coaching inn this venue now offers traditional cask ales and is rightly proud of the good value, quality food which is served in relaxed surroundings. The decor is traditional, in keeping with the age of the building and there is a bright yet cosy public bar. There are two separate areas to enjoy your homemade food or if you wish you can sit outside in the



quaint fenced off garden and take in the delights of Wool, al fresco style.

16 ROSE AND CROWN

**178 Wareham Road, Lytchett Matravers,
Dorset BH16 6DT**

Tel: 01202 625325

Lytchett Matravers is an attractive and historical place to visit, The Church of St Mary, lies just outside the village; its location is a reminder that the village was relocated from that area in the 14th century following the devastation of the Black Death. The present Rose and Crown is over one hundred years old (built in 1902), but a licensed house has stood on the site for over one hundred and seventy years, since 1838. The locals give this pub a good community atmosphere and the new licensees, Heather & Neal, having taken over in February have received a warm welcome. Heather was no stranger to the locals though having been the manager here a few year ago.

Heather is your cook and she has introduced a comprehensive range of bar meals from freshly made sandwiches to succulent premium steaks, many dishes are homemade, including selections for vegetarians and children. All dishes are very competitively priced. Come and visit the Rose and Crown and you will want to come back again and again.



15 THE DRAX ARMS

Bere Regis, nr Wareham, Dorset BH20 7HH

Tel: 01929 471386

e-mail: thedraxarms@gmail.com

website: www.thedraxarms.co.uk

Now 400 years old, this charming traditional Dorset inn has seen its fair share of landlords and ladies, the current tenant, Ben, has in just six months, ensured the reputation of **The Drax Arms** will last another 400.

Bought up in the trade, Ben has definitely put the place back on the map and now offers a minimum of three real ales, As for the atmosphere; filled with ancient features such as the low ceilings and log burning stove in the inglenook fireplace, the Drax Arms is the perfect place to sit awhile and unwind with a pint of excellent real ale.

The pub sits in the heart of the Dorset village of Bere Regis, which gained its royal suffix when it was a favourite stopping place for monarchs on their way to the West Country. All of the delicious food is cooked fresh to order and utilises the best of local produce, in particular, the Dorset Lamb chops on a tangy mint & pea gallette has to be sampled and the Steak & Kidney pudding is *"without doubt the best thing to come out of England since the National Trust"*. Also, the Sunday roast is not to be missed (booking is advisable).

As for the entertainment; a general knowledge quiz is held every third Thursday a month from 7.30pm and all are welcome. As well every sunday there's a selection of ever changing events.

The Drax Arms is well situated on walking and cycling routes making it the ideal venue for a lunchtime drink and a snack or to relax after a day in the open air.



17 THE WHITE HART HOTEL

*Market Cross, Sturminster Newton,
Dorset DT10 1AN*

Tel: 01258 472593

e-mail: kev5596@hotmail.com

website: www.whitehartstur.vpweb.co.uk

Situated in the heart of the historic market town of Sturminster Newton, the picturesque and traditional **White Hart Hotel** is a place to enjoy outstanding hospitality. Although owners Kev and Gill have only been here a short time, they are already establishing a great reputation as hosts of this popular pub that is loved by locals and visitors alike.

This unspoilt thatched Inn dates back to the 18th century and benefits from a large garden and ample parking. The interior is bursting with character and charm with a unique copper topped bar and a feature copper topped fireplace.

The extensive menu includes hot and cold food which is served on a daily basis and features classic pub favourites with the traditional Sunday lunch a popular choice. The bar offers three real ales including Badger, Tanglefoot and a rotating guest ale.

Upstairs there are three comfortable guest bedrooms and the tariff includes a hearty home cooked breakfast. There is also a skittle alley, a function room and a pool table, darts board and television in one area of the pub. The White Hart Hotel is open for business seven days a week with longer opening hours during the summer and children are welcome.



18 THE PLOUGH

*Shaftesbury Road, Manston,
nr Sturminster Newton, Dorset DT10 1HB*

Tel: 01258 472484

e-mail: mail@theploughatmanston.co.uk

website: www.theploughatmanston.co.uk

The Plough at Manston is on the B3091 between Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton. It's a fine old building of mellow grey stone dating back to around 1800, this attractive building is made even more so by having hanging baskets and flower pots outside. On entering you will find that the traditional character is continued throughout with old beams, brasses and bygone memorabilia on display.

It is a truly lovely pub to visit with friends for a tasty meal or a quality drink. It's also a very sociable pub that holds year round entertainment, including; special dining events, quizzes and various live music events. Plus an annual summer party and beer festival with a great selection of live bands, games and a BBQ. There are plenty of real ales on tap plus an outside bar. It's a great day out for the whole family.

And if you're looking for a short break in the Dorset countryside, or you'd like to stay over at one of the pubs events, there is a Caravan Club Certified Location camping area adjoining the pub. Electric hook-ups are available if required. And booking is essential - please call for more details.



19 SHERBORNE CASTLE

Sherborne, Dorset DT9 3PY

Tel: 01935 813182

e-mail: enquiries@sherbornecastle.com

website: www.sherbornecastle.com

As soon as Sir Walter Raleigh was given the Old Castle and its estates by Queen Elizabeth I, he realised that the stark, comfortless castle was not his ideal residence, and instead of restoring it he built a new castle alongside the old one. He called it Sherborne Lodge to distinguish it from the Old Castle, and this unusual rectangular, six-turreted building became his home. Upon Sir Walter Raleigh's death on the block his estates were forfeited to the Crown, but in 1617 King James I allowed Sir John Digby to purchase the new castle and this gentleman added four wings in a similar style to the old building. During the Civil War, the Old Castle was reduced to a ruin by Cromwell's Parliamentary forces - the siege in 1645 lasted 16 days and prompted Cromwell to talk of this 'malicious and mischievous castle'. The name Sherborne Castle came to be applied to the new building, where today splendid collections of Old Masters, porcelain and furniture are on display.

Other attractions at the castle, which is still in the care of the Digby family, include the library, a Tudor kitchen and an exhibition of finds from the Old Castle. Lancelot 'Capability' Brown was called in to create the lake in 1753 and gave Sherborne the very latest in landscape gardening. The Castle, which was a Red Cross Hospital for wounded soldiers in the First World War and the HQ for D-Day Commandos in the Second, was opened to the public in 1969 and hosts a variety of events in the summer season. The gardens, tea room and shop are open every day except Mondays and Fridays (open Bank Holiday Mondays), from April to October.



21 THE MILTON ARMS

Dorchester Hill, Winterborne Whitechurch, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 0HW

Tel: 01258 881784

website: www.themiltonarms.co.uk

Set in the heart of rural Dorset, **The Milton Arms** is an ideal spot to stop and have lunch, a creamed tea or an evening meal. Danny, Richard and the team offer a warm welcome to all.

This is very much a food orientated pub with a very popular main menu and specials board to choose from. The Milton restaurant gives you a chance to sit and relax with full table service. Head chef, Kevin, specialises in fresh fish which is sourced only from boats that fish the Dorset coast. Enjoy food from an à la carte menu or something extra special from the specials board, or even try something from the lunch menu in the bar. Each menu offers good quality and value. All food where possible is locally sourced and meals are prepared to order making it possible to meet all your dietary requirements. Plated roasts are also added to the menu on Sundays.

The bar offers real ales and a wide selection of coffees and teas, that perfect compliment to end your meal.



20 THE RAILWAY HOTEL

Oakfield Street, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7EX

Tel: 01258 456374

e-mail: gary@railwayblandford.com

website: www.railwayblandford.com

As the name suggests, **The Railway Hotel** was built to service passengers alighting at the Blandford Forum Station opposite. The building eventually lost its function as a hotel when the Somerset & Dorset Line closed in 1966 thanks to Dr. Beeching. The Railway Hotel is now an independent freehouse with a late license, time at the bar is at 1am Sundays through Thursdays, 2am on Fridays and 2:30am on Saturdays.

Hollie & Gary took over the freehouse at the end of 2010 and have made good on their promise and mission to provide a comfortable and friendly environment for an enjoyable, entertaining and safe day or night out.

Popular with sports fans, you can come and enjoy a big match shown simultaneously across 22 screens including two huge projector screens. All major sporting fixtures are shown here, so you need never miss an important game. Please call to book your preferred sporting event on their screens (to check the time and channel go to www.livesportontv.com for more information).

If sporting events on television isn't your idea of entertainment the Railway also have live music Saturday nights from 9:30pm as well as a monthly poker evening and charity fundraisers and events. Hollie & Gary want to re-establish the Railway as a beacon of the community and support local sporting teams, schools and businesses.

Food is served from 10am until late at night every day, the menu is a mix of traditional pub food and late night 'takeaway' food (e.g. pizza, burger's and chips) plus all food can either be eaten in or takeaway. For the full menu please refer to their website, www.railwayblandford.com. However, one item we won't fail to mention is the 'Black Rock Grill', the Black Rock Grill is a unique dining concept that enables diners to cook their meal just the way they like it at the table, all meats served with the grills are locally butchered. It's cooking on Volcanic Rock, no oil or fat is used making it a healthier option as well as a tastier option.



22 THE ROYAL OAK AT MILBORNE ST ANDREW

Dorchester Hill, Milborne St Andrew, Blandford, Dorset DT11 0JG

Tel: 01258 837248

e-mail: theroyaloakmilborne@hotmail.com

website: www.theroyaloakmilborne.co.uk

Making its home on the old Dorchester to Blandford Forum & Salisbury route is the Royal Oak at Milborn. At the heart of the village, this pub offers a range of freshly prepared, homecooked food, a well stocked bar and a large beer garden to enjoy your meal or beverage during the warmer months.

Sarah and Andrew took over the premises in 2009, and due to their hospitality and quality of food and ale on offer, they have really put this place back on the map.

The restaurant is full of charm and offers a relaxed atmosphere in which to dine. Dishes such as 'proper' pie and chips, whole tail breaded scampi, sweet potato curry and sausages, mash and gravy adorn the menu. There is also a takeaway menu which is available 7 days a week and the hand-made pizzas are extremely popular.

The bar offers three real ales with Sussex Ale the regular along with the usual choice of hot and cold soft drinks.



23 THE OLD TEA HOUSE

44 High West Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UT

Tel: 01305 263719

Deborah and Derek bought the premises in January 2008, and along with the help of their son Jon, have spent 7 months restoring **The Old Tea House** back to its former glory. Built in 1635, the tea house features magnificent oak beams, panelled walls; featuring Medieval Tapestries, a famous Inglenook fireplace (the Abbots Bible was found in it) and a 'friendly spirit' said to haunt the place! Packed full of character, it is said to be the oldest freestanding building in Dorchester, with hanging baskets and white front oak beams decorating the exterior. Packed full of character, the food here is second to none and presents a selection of homecooked food created using locally sourced produce.

The Old Tea House contains 8 comfortable and cosy rooms, and the place makes a perfect base for tourists looking to explore the surrounding countryside.

Open between 7.30am - 5.30pm for breakfasts, lunches, afternoon teas and high teas, this Tea House is perfect for contemplating the many famous people who have lived and visited the place over the years; Thomas Hardy, William Barne, George Bernard Shaw, Robert Louis Stevenson and the Dorchester Abbot.



24 OCTAGON CAFÉ Poundbury

4 Pummary Square, Poundbury, Dorchester DT1 3GW
Tel: 01305 261555

e-mail: jane@octagon-cafe.com

website: www.theoctagoncafe.co.uk

Nestling in the corner of Pummary Square, just off the Bridport Road in Poundbury, you'll find the much-loved Octagon Café. Having served coffee and light meals for more than 10 years it has built up an enviable reputation for excellent food at down-to-earth prices. This unique eight-sided building offers a friendly atmosphere with space for al-fresco dining under the trees when the weather is kind. Parking is free throughout Poundbury, and there are many interesting local and specialist shops within walking distance of Pummary Square.

You'll find that the Octagon has a simple aim - to select, cook and serve classic light meals using fresh ingredients from a range of local suppliers. The menu includes a tempting array of chef's specials that changes daily as well as breakfasts, baguettes, sandwiches, paninis and jacket potatoes, all of which are offered with an extensive choice of fillings. Afternoon tea is also a treat, with many different types of tea accompanied by scrumptious cakes and slices.

The Octagon is proud to be an integral part of the Poundbury community, supporting local charities and providing an oasis of peace and calm in a busy world. The café is open Mon - Sat 08:30 - 17:00, and is fully licensed for the sale of alcohol.

The Octagon can be hired for functions in the evenings and on Sunday, and is also able to provide outside catering from banqueting in public venues to private dining in your own home. For more information, please contact Jane by telephone or email to discuss your requirements.



25 ABBOTS

7 Long Street, Cerne Abbas, Dorset DT2 7JF

Tel: 01300 341349

e-mail: info@abbotsbedandbreakfast.co.uk

website: www.abbotsbedandbreakfast.co.uk

Friendly couple Nicola and Adam took over this quaint tea rooms and bed and breakfast in 2010 and the premises has grown in popularity ever since. Nicola is a splendid cook and has put together a fantastic menu of homecooked food including delicious cakes. For those looking for somewhere comfortable to stay, Abbots offers five quality guest bedrooms, 4 of which are ensuite and the other with a private bathroom. A hearty morning breakfast is included in the tariff setting guests up for the day ahead.



26 THE BLUE VINNY

12 The Moor, Puddletown, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 8TE

Tel: 01305 848228

website: www.thebluevinny.co.uk

Alex Ford and Nicky Boltwood took over this traditional village pub in Puddletown in June 2008, and have increased its popularity ever since. Keeping the very best of the old, they set about combining its warm, friendly country ambience with a cool, airy modern interior - part of a style that is reflected in their approach to the food and hospitality at the **The Blue Vinny**.

The food is home cooked, and where possible the ingredients are seasonal and sourced locally from the family farm, friends or trusted specialist suppliers. Head Chef John Shrigley and his team have created a menu that reflects their personal tastes, with a truly international approach.

The wines have been chosen to compliment the menu, and there is always a range of excellent guest ales on tap. The menu, too, reflects their very personal tastes, with an international approach to the cooking, a style that owes as much to the hot islands of the Mediterranean as it does to the classic and everyday dishes of Britain and mainland Europe. Having only recently returned to their home county of Dorset, Alex and Nicky are passionate about producing the very best food at accessible prices, as well as extending a warm and friendly welcome to locals and visitors alike.



27 BREWERS QUAY

Old Harbour, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 8TR

Tel: 01305 777622 Fax: 01305 761680

website: www.brewers-quay.co.uk

Brewers Quay is an imaginatively converted Victorian brewery in the heart of the picturesque Old Harbour. Amid the paved courtyards and cobbled alleys is a unique under-cover shopping village with over 20 specialist shops and attractions.

The Timewalk tells the fascinating story of the town as seen through the eyes of the brewery cat and her family, and in the Brewery Days attraction Hope Square's unique brewing heritage is brought to life with an interactive family gallery, audio-visual show and Victorian-style Tastings Bar.

Weymouth Museum contains an important record of local and social history; its latest exhibition is called Marine Archaeology and Associated Finds from the Sea. The Discovery Hands-on Science Centre has over 60 interactive exhibits, and this entertaining complex also has a bowling alley, gift shops, a traditional pub and a self-service restaurant.



28 CAFÉ ROYAL

78 The Esplanade, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 7AA
Tel: 01305 766866

Café Royal is located on the Esplanade in the middle of Weymouth's Sea Front. Adjacent to bus stops and the top entrance to Weymouth's shopping area the café is ideally located for passers by to drop in for coffee and cake. The restaurant is privately owned and run by Carol and Keith, and they do their utmost to make sure guests leave planning their next visit.

Open for breakfasts, lunches, sandwiches, snacks and homemade cakes as well as offering catering for weddings and birthday parties and function room hire. Patrons can choose to dine off the main menu or from the specials blackboard. The café creates all dishes on the premises that very same day, and uses delicious, locally sourced, seasonal ingredients.

Children are more than welcome and there is also a menu just for them.

This delightful establishment is open Monday to Sunday 9am to 4pm during the winter and 8am til late during the summer.



29 EDENHURST GUEST HOUSE

122 The Esplanade, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 7ER
Tel: 01305 771255

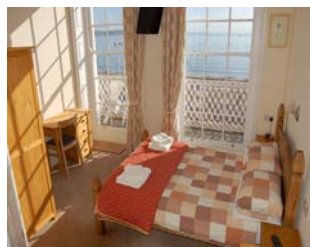
e-mail: enquiries@edenhurstweymouth.com

website: www.edenhurstweymouth.com

The Edenhurst Guest House is ideally located on Weymouth's Esplanade, not far from the famous Victorian clock tower and across the road from the sandy beach. This friendly, family-run guest house offers a good breakfast and quality accommodation.

The guest house has 12 comfortable guest bedrooms, some with sea views and balconies, and all with en suite facilities. All rooms have colour television, radio alarm and tea/coffee-making equipment and an information pack. Hair dryers, high chairs, irons and ironing boards can be provided on request.

With the beach a mere 20 yards from the front door, there are glorious views to be enjoyed from the dining room with its large Georgian windows. It's just a short walk to the historic harbour and the town centre with its many shops, bars, restaurants; the railway and bus stations are also conveniently close if you are travelling by public transport. Parking can be a problem during the summer months but the guest house has a limited number of 'on street' parking permits these are free and issued on a 'first come, first served' basis.



30 THE T SHOP

11a Trinity Street, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 8TW
Tel: 01305 788052

Situated adjacent to the old harbour, in an unbeatable position is **The T Shop**. Attentive owners Geoff and Sarah bought the premises in 2008 and since then, The T Shop has gone from strength to strength.

The menu is created using local produce and offers a fantastic selection of freshly prepared light bites, cakes and biscuits. The homemade scones are extremely popular and can be enjoyed on their own or as a cream tea with a pot of jam and generous helping of clotted cream.

There is seating for 16 inside, and 30 outside for those wishing to enjoy the sunshine and watch the boats bobbing on the water.

Open everyday 10.30am - 4pm throughout the summer months except on Tuesday. Open for long weekends during the winter.

Children are welcome and cash or cheque is the only form of payment currently accepted.

Whether you're looking for a light lunch, a coffee with friends or a cream tea with a loved one, The T Shop is definitely worth a visit.



31 THE LOOK OUT CAFÉ - BISTRO

Bowleaze Cove, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 6PL
Tel: 01305 833459

Without doubt **The Lookout Café - Bistro** at Bowleaze Cove has the most spectacular views over Weymouth. The view is equalled only by the popularity of the café, which is purely down to owners Jim and Debbie and, lest we forget, their hard-working staff.

The Lookout is an all-year-round café - bistro, though for a while this year, it has been closed while a complete refurbishment took place and the new look Lookout is nothing short of tremendous! New furniture, a new colour scheme all round and new flooring to combine to present a picture of comfort.

Here you can enjoy food all day long including good wholesome breakfasts, morning coffees and snacks, a delicious range of lunches, afternoon teas including Dorset cream teas and later-in-the-day dinners; made all the more enjoyable with those splendid panoramic views.



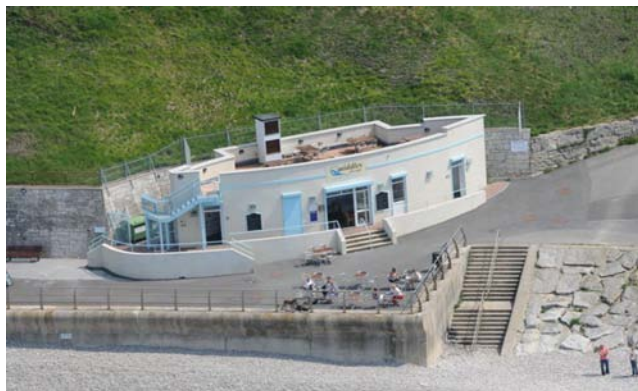
32 QUIDDLES CAFÉ

The Esplanade, Chesil Cove, Portland, Dorset DT5 1LN
Tel: 01305 820651

On the sea wall immediately behind Chesil Beach stands a superbly sited place to eat and drink. The boat-shaped **Quiddles Café** is a small seafood café offering a retreat from the Weymouth crowds. The fantastic selection of quality shellfish is hand picked daily by owner Steve and his business partner Matthew who are professional divers.

The dishes back at the café are prepared simply but expertly by Adam (head chef) and the traditional seafood paella has already become a firm favourite with visitors and locals alike. Plus for those who have a sweet tooth there is also a selection of delicious homemade cakes and cream teas.

The food is not the only attraction here. The philosophy of providing a high level of quality, friendly efficient service and great value for money that has proved such a success in recent years is evident here also. The café has been designed to achieve an informal, relaxed atmosphere with simple café style furniture and extends a warm welcome to everyone. It's an excellent place to relax with a coffee and watch the fisherman collecting crab pots. Even better is sitting out on the balcony in the summer evenings to watch the sun set over Chesil Beach. Quiddles is open Friday and Saturday evenings (during summer months) making it the perfect destination to watch the sun set from.



33 THE GEORGE INN

133 Reforme, Portland, Dorset DT5 2AP

Tel: 01305 820 011

e-mail: contact@thegeorgeinn.org

website: www.thegeorgeinn.org

West Country Community Pub of the Year 2011

Portland, the jewel of the Jurassic coast, is a tombolo 5 miles south of Weymouth and it's also where you will find the **The George Inn**. This is one of the oldest pubs on Portland and is reported as being the oldest inhabited building on the Island. Previous residence of the Court Leet, much of this history is in evidence around the building, including an original reeve staff which was used to record rent payments.

These days at The George Inn you can also expect to find a warm friendly welcome, traditional pub food and drink - plus an ever-changing selection of real ales. Good food has always been integral to any inn and never more so than today. There is a hearty full cooked breakfast available 12.00 - 15.00 that will set you up for a day of walking the Portland Coast Path. Evening food is available Thursday - Saturday only 17.00 - 20.00 and Sunday roast 12.00 - 16.00.

Situated opposite the Red Triangle Cricket Club pitch, the pub is a great place to relax with a pint and enjoy a game. The beer garden is also a beautiful, peaceful place to relax and have a refreshing drink during the summer months.



34 THE EGGCUP TEAROOMS

Vurlands Farm, Coast Road, Swyre, Dorset DT2 9DB

Tel: 01308 897160

e-mail: ives14@btinternet.co.uk

Take a morning or afternoon out from your busy day and step into a haven of tranquillity in the bright and comfortable **Eggcup Tearoom**. With both indoor and outdoor seating it is the perfect place to unwind and take in the undulating landscape with views across Bride Valley.

Open all year round, the Eggcup Tearoom (a licensed premise) offers everything from light lunches and home baked meals to breakfast, tea and cake. Many of the delicacies are locally baked and items such as sandwiches are freshly made to order. Along with daily specials and traditional favourites, such as scones and toasted teacakes both served with butter and locally produced strawberry jam.

As for surroundings; the Eggcup Tearoom is hidden away at the back of Vurlands Farm, you have to go past all the old farm building to find it but once you do you'll discover an incredibly clean tearoom run by a very friendly and welcoming family who make it their mission to ensure that your experience is an excellent one. So why not take a break from your day and drop in to this gem of home-cooking?



35 BRIDGE HOUSE HOTEL & RESTAURANT

Beaminster, Dorset DT8 3AY

Tel: 01308 862200 Fax: 01308 863700

e-mail: enquiries@bridge-house.co.uk

website: www.bridge-house.co.uk

The **Bridge House Hotel** has the ingredients for a get-away-from-it-all break. Not only does the BridgeHouse have an award winning restaurant, comfortable rooms and charming staff, it's perfectly located for the Jurassic Coast. Much of the surrounding countryside hasn't changed since Thomas Hardy's day 100 years ago, therefore the hotel finds favour with serious walkers and stressed out city escapees alike.

Food & wine are at the heart of BridgeHouse life. Blessed with some of Britain's finest farmers, growers & fisherman literally on the doorstep, the hotel's restaurant - the **Beaminster Brasserie** - has an enviable reputation for home grown food served in a wonderful choice of dining areas including al fresco.

The Brasserie obviously takes its culinary cues from France, but with a British take on what a brasserie menu should contain. Changing seasonally, the menu offers dishes such as: Lyme Bay crab & citrus linguini; Cornish moules marinières; Ribeye steak with roast vine tomatoes, Dorset Down flat mushrooms and frites; Calves liver with local crispy bacon, balsamic onion gravy & creamed potatoes.

Homemade breads, sweets and puddings are de rigueur at the Brasserie. White chocolate & blueberry cheesecake, raspberry ganache tartlets and the world famous Dorset apple cake are pure temptation. Passion has clearly played a part here, too, and more than one guest has said that the team has succeeded in its declared aim to not compromise on quality.

But, if this was not enough, the restaurant must be applauded for its approach to dining. The emphasis here is on simplicity - from the beautifully- presented dishes using products from locally-sourced suppliers to the menus which describe exactly what is on offer.

BridgeHouse has 13 bedrooms, all ensuite with new bathrooms offering superb holiday and corporate accommodation in this part of Dorset. All have the finest Egyptian cotton linen as well as waffle guest robes, Molton Brown toiletries, flat screen TVs, Wi-Fi, digital telephones, tea and coffee making facilities. Dinner Bed & Breakfast rates available all year subject to minimum two night stay and two person occupancy.



36 THE COBB ARMS

Marine Parade, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3JF

Tel: 01297 443242

e-mail: cobbarms@lymeregis.com

Situated on the waters edge only a few metres from the lovely sandy beaches, **The Cobb Arms** is fully licensed with an extensive food menu and accommodation. Your hosts, John and Linda McClements have been here since 1996 and have an enviable reputation for accommodating their patrons every need.

Food is served all day throughout the summer, so it's convenient if you want a late lunch or an early dinner, and offers everything from sandwiches, light snacks to three course meals at the bar or in the restaurant. There is a good choice of wines available to accompany any type of food you require. During the winter a full menu is still available but at reduced opening times. Children are made very welcome and are catered for with their own menu.

The Cobb Arms has three excellent letting rooms, each room has a double bed and a single bed that can sleep 3, but extra beds or travel cots can be added by arrangement.

All rooms have been decorated to a high standard and include colour TV, tea and coffee making facilities and hair dryer. Towels are changed daily.

Room 1 overlooks the patio and garden area with views of the marine parade. It has a full bathroom which is fully tiled and has both shower and bath facilities.

Room 2 enjoys sea and coast views over the Cobb and harbour area. It has a full bathroom which is fully tiled and has both shower and bath facilities.

Room 3 has lovely sea and coast views over the Cobb wall and cobb harbour area. It has a fully tiled double shower with full bathroom facilities.

Breakfast can be served between 8am and 10am; when checking in, you will be asked the time you would like it. Arrangements can be made for fishing and diving parties to have early breakfast. Packed lunches can also be catered for.

Well-behaved dogs are welcome with well placed water bowls dotted around the pub and garden areas. Ample **car parking** is available in local authority parks less than 2 minutes walk away and is checked regularly. Parking permits are available from the car-parking attendants.



TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES

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BRIDPORT

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e-mail: bridport.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk
website: www.visit-dorset.com

CHRISTCHURCH

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website: www.visit-dorset.com

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WEYMOUTH

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Tel: 01305 785747 Fax: 01305 788092
e-mail: weymouthtic@visitweymouth.co.uk
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