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Flyer

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WINTER 2026

THE **FREE TOWN GUIDE** ABOUT BRIDPORT **FOR BRIDPORT**
PRODUCED QUARTERLY: WINTER • SPRING • SUMMER • AUTUMN



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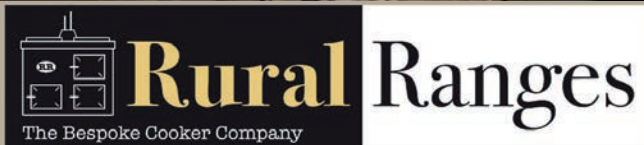
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"I watched a beautiful sunset from Hive Beach at Burton Bradstock last night along with other people, fishermen and an artist who all cut quite interesting silhouettes against Golden Cap - 17/08/2026." A quote from Neil Barnes, Bridport & West Bay photographer, who has kindly allowed us to use on our front cover his photo of the artist. Thank you Neil.

With autumn upon us, and winter fast approaching, we bring you the latest edition of "The Bridport Flyer".

On **Pages 8 & 9**, Tegwyn Jones – a new contributor – brings us news of an exciting fossil coming soon to Bridport Museum. On **Pages 14 & 15** The Bridport Flyer took a walk from Chideock to Thorncombe Beacon during the hot days of July.

Local lepidopterist Paul Butter reflects on the heatwave, and its impact on moths and butterflies. Please see **Page 16**.

Allington Hillbillies have their autumn update on **Page 18**.

On **Pages 20 & 21** we bring you our useful maps of Bridport and the DT6 postcode.

Like so many, we too enjoyed The Melplash Show on 27th August. Find our report on **Pages 24 & 25**.

Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre are gearing up for their annual Craft and Fossil Fair at the end of October – read all about this on **Pages 28 & 29**.

Dorset Council are hosting walking events in Bridport and Charmouth this autumn. Find more details on **Page 30**.

Bridport Youth and Community Centre in St Michaels Lane have a wide range of activities this autumn and winter – find them on **Pages 34 & 35**.

Please keep your copy of "The Bridport Flyer" handy – it holds so much of local interest. Local tradesmen and businesses; town and area maps; information on future events & places to go for days out; exercise and walking opportunities; reviews on summer events.

Best wishes for the coming months.

Anthony Bucke EDITOR.

Email: bridport@theantiquetourist.com
Friday 25 September 2026



1912 Talbot Staff Car, deployed during World War 1.
On HK Law's stand at The Melplash Show.



Tesla Cybertruck at The Melplash Show.

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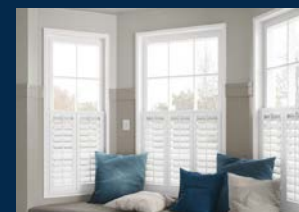


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An Exciting New Fossil coming soon to Bridport Museum

An extraordinary prehistoric discovery is coming to Bridport Museum this autumn, featuring a massive 10-metre ichthyosaur found on a secret local beach by visiting fossil hunters.

The fossil is the remains of a fearsome marine predator that swam in the seas locally at the end of the Jurassic Period, about 185 million years ago.. The fossil will be the subject of an exhibition at Bridport Museum this autumn.

Ichthyosaurs were successful marine reptiles that lived throughout the world's oceans, and mostly hunted squid and fish. But the larger types, like this one, were top predators that ate smaller ichthyosaurs. No one had found such a fossil in this location before. The specimen has now been studied at Bristol University, and their draft findings have been made available to Bridport Museum.

Palaeontologist Sam Scriven, Principal World Heritage Officer, says "Apart from its



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Ichthyosaur - artists impression.
Credit to Surface Vision



Carine Plissart uncovers the fossil on the beach.
credit to Michel Plissart

great size (the animal was nearly 10m long) the Bridport ichthyosaur is unique in that it lived nine million years after an environmental catastrophe that killed off most marine creatures. Its very existence shows that the effect of that environmental crisis on these important marine predators is not well understood by science."

Visitors Michel and Carine Plissart of Belgium knew they had discovered something very unusual. Michel said "We knew it was something of scientific interest and we immediately contacted the Charmouth Fossil Centre." Experts at the Centre and those at the university have now confirmed that the dark shapes that Michel and Carine had seen in a bed of sandstone were the remains of a giant ichthyosaur – the first one ever found in

these particular rock layers, the Bridport Sand Formation.

The find was gifted by the landowner to Bridport Museum, and a grant was obtained to mount an exhibition about it.

Michelle Caesar, museum manager, said "This is a very generous gift, that, we think, will inspire local people and visitors about the fossil history of our part of the world. The exhibition will open on October 24th, and will run until April 2027, thanks to the kind financial support of many people. It will be of great interest to children and enthusiasts alike. We are making a short film, will trial a VR experience, and hope to run some talks about the fossil during the period of the exhibition."

by Tegwyn Jones

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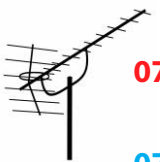
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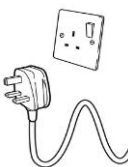


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A Walk to Thorncombe Beacon

"Thorncombe Beacon" is an unusual name for a high-point on The Jurassic Coast, between Seatown and Eype, as it is around 11 miles away - "as the crow flies" - from the West Dorset village of Thorncombe.

A hot afternoon in July took us by bus (route X51) to Broadmead in Chideock. Here we alighted and joined "Meashes Way", on the north side of A35, for the climb to Quarr Lane. Meashes Way was the dream of the late Winston Maskell, who had the vision of a safe walking, cycle and equestrian route from Chideock, eastwards towards Bridport. (*Featured in The Bridport Flyer Spring 2023.*) The first section was opened in Spring 2025, and runs between Park Farm and Quarr Lane. (*Featured in The Bridport Flyer August 2025.*)

Follow the bridleway uphill, in an easterly direction until you reach Quarr Lane. Time for a rest at Meashes memorial bench? Turn right into Quarr Lane. Then carefully cross the A35 and join the bridleway straight ahead. Follow this uphill, soon



bearing left towards Eype Down (*No signpost here*). Follow the bridleway (*rutted by motor vehicles*) in a loop, soon gaining the top and some open ground. From this elevation there are great views of Seatown, Langdon Hill, Quarr Hill, Colmers Hill, Symondsburys and Bridport.



Go diagonally left handed across the open ground and pick up the footpath. Go as far as a crab-apple tree, then turn right. The path now climbs steeply through bracken to the top of the earthworks. Join another path here, turn right and soon descend into tree-cover. Take a left, then a right, joining a path from the left, now walking on the top of a



rampart as far as a farmgate. Pass through into an open field. Follow lefthanded and your destination - Thorncombe Beacon - will be ahead of you on the horizon. Climb over a stile, where a path joins you on the left. Cross the "saddle" and after a short, steep climb, you reach the clifftop at Thorncombe Beacon!

Time to pause and take in the breath-taking views; eastwards over West Bay, as far as The Isle of Portland; westwards over Seatown, past Golden Cap, and along the East Devon coastline. Looking north, pick out Lamberts Castle in the west, The Devils Three Jumps, Pilsdon Pen, Lewesden, and further east Eggardon Hill! Closer to hand are fascinating views of Bridport.

After the obligatory photo-calls, it's time to retrace our steps towards the bus. Or maybe drop down to Seatown; or Eype and then West Bay? Which ever way you return, the

journey will have been worth it!

Distance: 4 mile round-trip.

Difficulty: Steep climbs, brambles, main road to cross.

Footwear: Walking boots.

Pay-off: Stunning views and great photo opportunities!

Dogs: Always on leads.

Date of walk: 27 July 2026



The Big Butterfly Year ?

2026 has been breaking records all year, we have had the driest, the sunniest, and warmest records being broken one after the other. One thing that a lot of insects like, especially butterflies and moths is lovely sunny days and warm balmy nights of which we have had a plenty this year. So it is not surprising that everyone has been commenting on how many more butterflies they have been seeing in their gardens and out and about. Moths are less obvious to most people, but they have also had a bumper year so far.

In May there was a huge influx of a usually rare migrant, the fabulous Striped Hawk-moth. Moth enthusiasts in Cornwall were recording up to 30 of these superb insects and they soon turned up throughout the south-west and eventually well up into the northern counties. Accompanying them were lots of Hummingbird Hawk-moths usually seen by day hovering in front of flowers like Red Valerian and Buddleia. As the warm weather continued through the summer months more and more often rare migrant species have been turning up on our shores, perhaps escaping

the severe droughts and fires in Europe. I had planted a bed of white Tobacco plants hoping to attract the huge Convolvulus Hawk-moth and was really



pleased to watch these fantastic moths swooping around the flowers every evening at dusk.

Painted Lady and Clouded Yellow butterflies have also had an extraordinary year reaching our shores from north Africa and Europe respectively. In most years most of these refugees arrive later in the year and eventually die out in the cooler months but this year they have all been busy breeding here and so by August there were thousands of home bred butterflies adding to the numbers. Painted Ladies will soon be heading back to Africa but perhaps a mild winter will allow the Clouded Yellows to survive as caterpillars along the south coast.

Although this all sounds great news for these wonderful creatures there have been concerns that it might be another 1976 when the droughts went on and on into autumn. Withering plants meant no food for caterpillars and it caused the biggest single crash in insect numbers from which they have never really recovered. Luckily I think the rains came just in time this year but we will have to see what the effects of this extraordinary year will have been until next year.

by Paul Butter

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ALLINGTON HILLBILLIES

Following on from the success of the Country Fair, we are getting ready for our next event on the Hill, which is very much in tune with the coming of Autumn: **'Allington Autumn Harvest'**, on **Saturday 10th October, 10am - 2pm**. If you're looking for a good way to use some of the glut of apples and pears we have enjoyed this year, then this is the ideal opportunity to bring them along and get juicing!

There will also be a Dorset Apple cake competition, with prizes for the winners. The classes are: Traditional Dorset Apple Cake, Modern Dorset Apple Cake with a twist, Under 11 and 11-16 children's classes. For more details and entry forms, please see our Allington Hillbillies Facebook page.

We will be selling locally produced products, such as jams and chutneys, home-made cakes and refreshments, with profits going to Bridport Community Orchard and Allington Hillbillies. Jo Burlington will be providing fun art activities for adults and children.

On **October 10th, November 8th and December 13th**, Cathy Harvey and Max Cantrell will be running **Nature Clubs** for age eights and above (maximum 2 children per adult) to create wildlife habitats, such as log

piles and dead-hedging, and to search for wildlife that might make use of these habitats.

We hold two regular volunteering sessions each week on Wednesday and Thursday mornings. All working parties start at 10am.

The Wednesday group is a very hands-on session, focusing on the more strenuous work that needs doing around the Hill, such as hedge-laying, coppicing, clearing paths or bramble bashing.

There will be a taster session for this group on **Wednesday, November 18th at 10am**. Meet at the main gate, Hospital Lane. What3Words salutes.toasters.shrub.

The Thursday group is a more gentle working party. For example, preparation for activities and crafting using natural materials. The taster session for this group is on **Thursday 15th October at 10am**. Meet at the main gate, Hospital Lane, as above.

New volunteers are always welcome and we very much look forward to seeing you at one of our events or taster sessions this Autumn. Allington Hill is a beautiful, natural environment, rich in diverse wildlife, woodland and open meadow for everyone to enjoy. More information about our group can be found on our website, www.allingtonhillbillies.org.uk, or on our Allington Hillbillies Facebook page.



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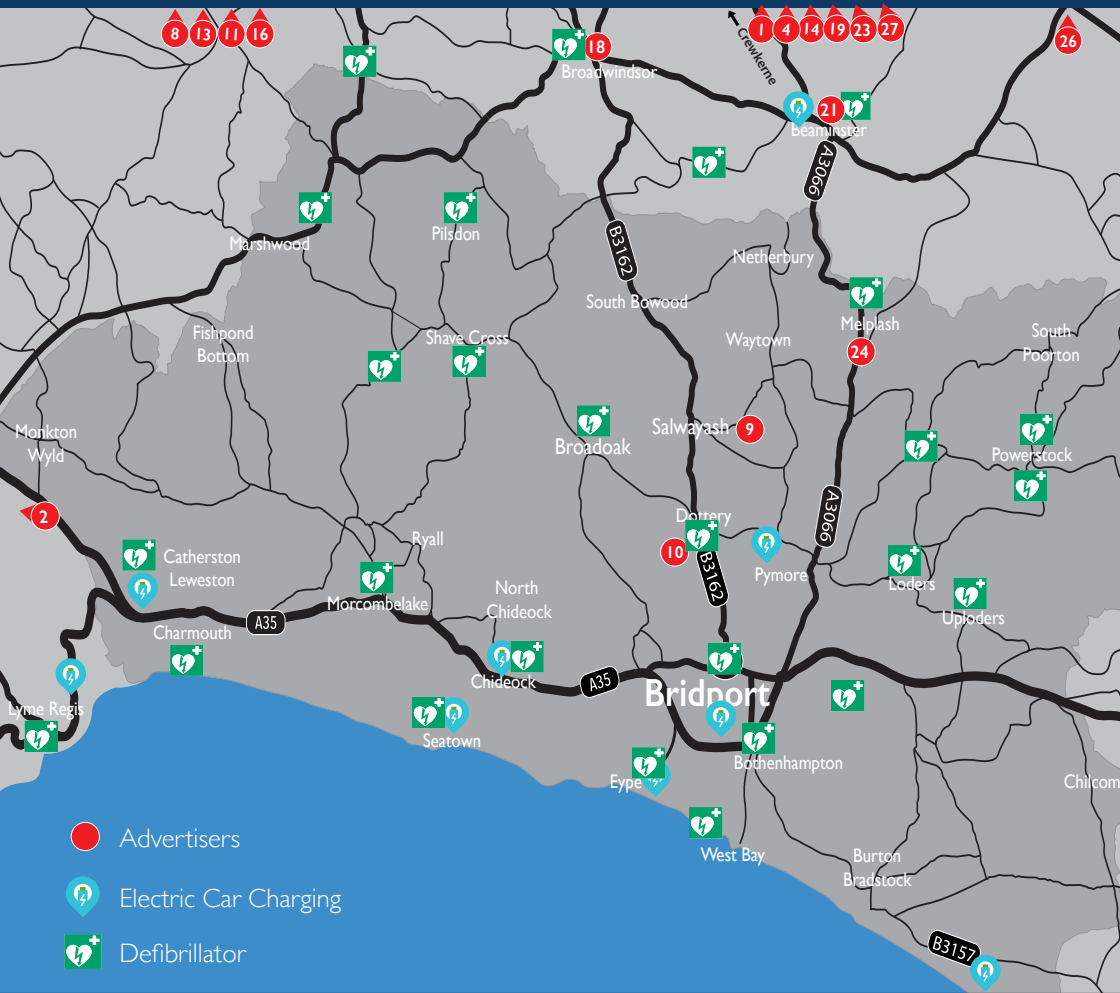
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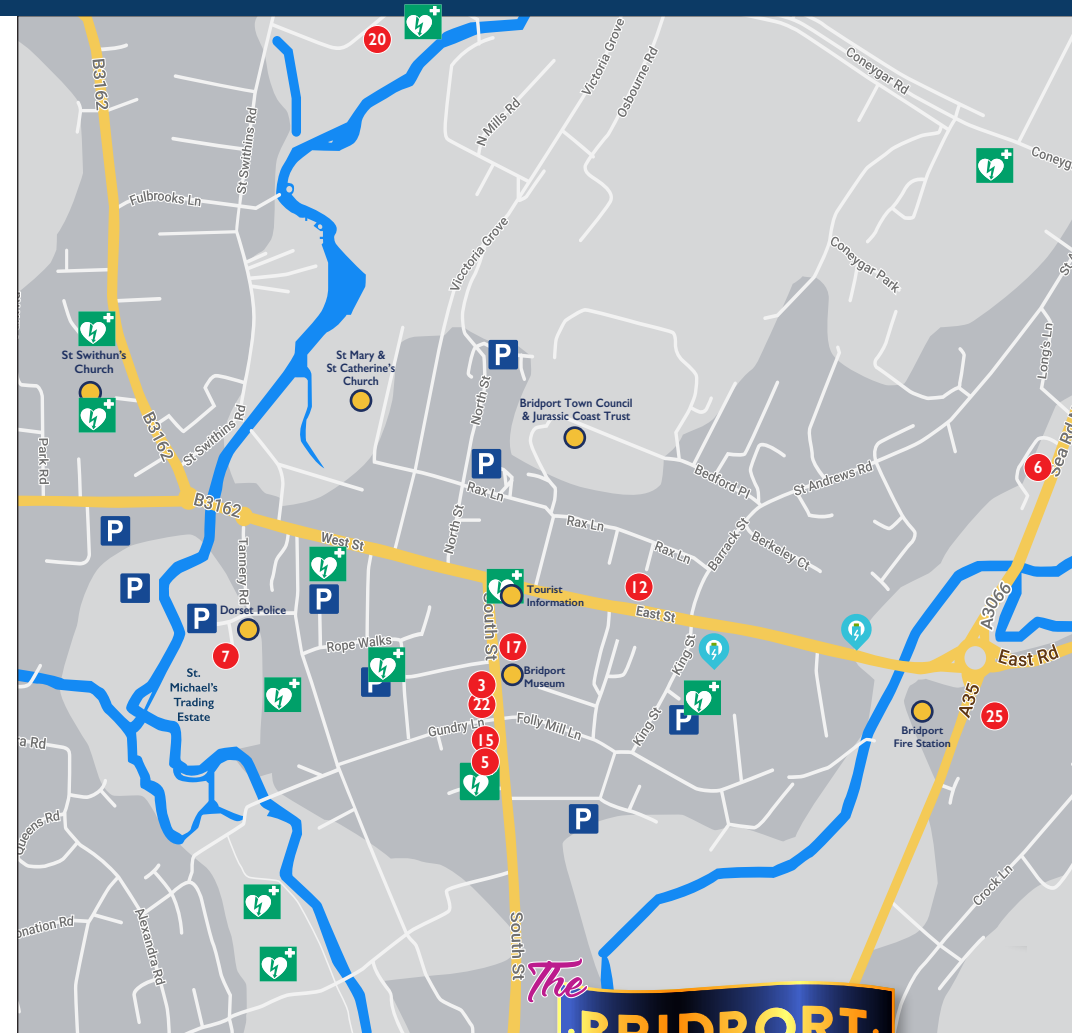
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***"A true country show...."
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Melplash Show, Thursday
27th August 2026.***

The weather forecast was cautious over the "rain-versus-sunshine" situation for the show, but as it transpired, despite a few cloudy interludes, we all enjoyed another dry and sunny day.

Yes, a true country show! In the Main Arena we watched show-jumping, shetland pony jumping, heavy horses and beagles.

In the Countryside Sports Arena ferrets, gun dogs, terriers, dog trainers and falcons were all put through their paces.

The marquees were home to craft, baking, art, photography and floral displays, plus horticultural and farming produce (including an interesting selection of silage - with a winner!)

The trade stands were many and varied, including plants, garden supplies, outdoor clothing and fashion, garden furniture, and buildings. Nearby,

"professionals" included solicitors, estate agents, accountants, insurers, auctioneers, veterinaries, and financial planning. Then local manufacturers, food producers and suppliers, support businesses and agricultural machinery dealers. We even found a "sinister" looking vehicle - the Tesla Cybertruck! But not yet available for legal use on British roads!

Throughout the day the showground was busy, with crowds thronging the site. It was obvious

that so many were locals, country and farming families, alongside visitors, all quite rightly enjoying the spectacle of fairground rides, food vendors, trade stands, livestock lines, Morris dancers, live music. Then a chat and a drink at a trade stand or favourite supplier..... perfect summer pastimes.

Bridport Muesum were demonstrating rope-making, and seeking information on flax; West Bay Discovery Centre were on show, along with Bridport Football Club,

U3A and nearby the West Dorset Young Farmers.

A "best in show" was awarded to Rural Ranges (Stand EW4) for their imaginative trade stand, displaying and demonstrating AGA and Rayburn appliances. Congratulations Steve and Alison!

The animal lines were well supported with strong entries in the livestock classes - sheep, cattle, pigs and goats all competing for awards. The Grand Parade in the Main Arena, was on

time at 3.15, with winning animals and their handlers receiving their awards.

The Melplash Show may be unique with its commitment to the "Discover Farming Marquee" which introduces youngsters to the principles of farming and land conservation, with the long-term possibility of farm scholarships.

I am sure that President Peter Hardwill, his Committee and Directors are quietly celebrating another very successful Melplash Show.





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CHARMOUTH HERITAGE COAST CENTRE

We are gearing up for our annual Craft and Fossil Fayre at St. Andrew's Hall in Charmouth on Saturday 31st October 10am-5pm.

Local Fossil Collectors Lizzie Hingley and Chris East will be back again selling and displaying their amazing locally collected and prepared fossils. New for 2026 local collector Jake Dean will also be joining the fayre. Every fossil makes a unique gift for someone in the run up to Christmas or adds something new to your own collection. There are more expensive unique pieces and plenty of smaller pocket money pieces or 'stocking fillers'.

As always, we are joined by our devoted stall holders offering their locally made arts and crafts, from glassware, pottery & ceramics, jewellery, art prints and greetings cards, willow, and much more! There are many unique seashore themed gifts including gorgeous hessian beachcombing and fossil hunting bags.

We will be running our raffle, with a chance to win one of many prizes. All the proceeds from the raffle to go supporting our educational charity.

Prizes include luxury hampers, handmade pottery pieces, bottles of wine and whiskeys, prints and more. If you would like to donate a prize for this year's raffle, then please let Ali Ferris know ali@charmouth.org

Our Heritage Coast Centre Volunteers will be busy in the refreshments room at the back of the hall providing much needed Halloween cakes and hot drinks throughout the day. Bacon rolls will be served over lunchtime with a cream tea during the afternoon.

It wouldn't be Halloween without



*Fossil of the month July
Found by Tony Gill*

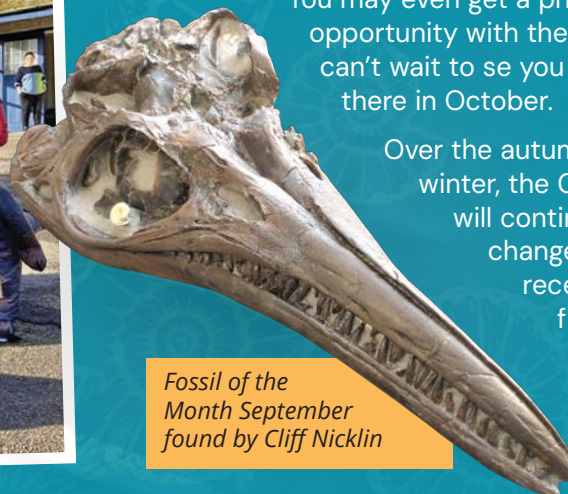
a pumpkin competition! We would like families to bring in a carved pumpkin, featuring a fossil or dinosaur! They will go on display in the hall for the day, and judges will choose a 1st, 2nd and 3rd place with prizes

to be won. So put your best carving skills forward! There are so many fossil designs to choose from, intricate ammonites, delicate sea lilies or monstrous megalosaurs! We can't wait to see your designs.

And will you spot our dinosaurs running around Charmouth? They have been on the streets at our last two fayres, engaging with visitors and inviting them along to the hall and to the Centre on the sea front. You may even get a photo opportunity with them! We can't wait to see you all there in October.

Over the autumn and winter, the Centre will continue to change our recent finds

*Fossil of the Month September
found by Cliff Nicklin*



Annual Craft and Fossil Fair

regularly as new fossils come in, including the fossil on the month display. Remember entry to the centre is **FREE** so you can come along and see what is new on display as often as you like. We will be announcing the 2026 winners of the Children's Fossil Competition, so keep a look out on our social media platforms (*Instagram, Facebook and Bluesky*). These will go on display next year.

From November 1st we revert to our winter opening hours (please see www.charmouth.org/chcc/opening-times/) On the days we close we carry out renovations to the centre and build new displays for the following season. This winter we are developing a new look for our marine displays.

Ali Ferris.
Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre.



Volunteer dinosaurs for the fair

GET ACTIVE OUTDOORS

Helping you to move more

The Get Active Outdoors 2026 programme offers entry-level activities designed to make moving more accessible, enjoyable and social. From Nordic walking and health walks to cycling and Tai Chi, there are plenty of ways to improve your health and wellbeing in a supportive outdoor environment.

You can view the full programme online or collect a printed brochure from your local library or community hub.

1. GENTLE HEALTH WALKS - BRIDPORT

Every Wednesday at 9.45am, the group meets at the United Church, East Street, Bridport for a 20 to 40-minute walk on mainly flat, firm surfaces with gentle slopes and no steps or stiles.

A longer walk also takes place every Thursday, starting at 9:45am from the United Church and lasting around 60 minutes. These routes may include moderate slopes, steps and uneven surfaces.

After both walks, walkers and leaders often enjoy a social catch-up at a nearby café.

Just turn up — we look forward to seeing you there!

2. GET INTO NORDIC WALKING — CHARMOUTH

With the support of a qualified Nordic Walking Instructor, these friendly courses will help you master the basics and improve your technique while enjoying the outdoors.

Charmouth Recreation Field, Barr's Lane, Charmouth, DT6 6PS

Cost: **£15 per person**

Booking: Call the Dorset Council Health and Activity Team at Moors Valley Country Park, Golf and Activity Centre on **01425 480811**

COURSE DATES

Wednesday 11 November
1:30pm–3pm

3. BECOME A VOLUNTEER HEALTH WALK LEADER

Do you enjoy walking, meeting new people and helping others become more active?

We are looking for friendly volunteers to support and lead local health walks. Full training and ongoing support are provided, and no previous experience is necessary.

Volunteering is a great way to stay active, build confidence, learn new skills and make a positive difference within your community. Join our team of volunteer health walk leaders and help others enjoy the benefits of getting active outdoors.

Email: dorsethealthwalks@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk or call: **01425 480811**

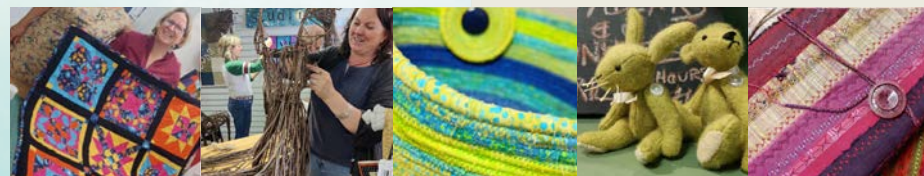
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From 7pm on Friday 11th & Friday 18th December

The restaurant is available for larger parties on other evenings – please contact us for more details.

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- Twice-Baked Goat's Cheese Soufflé
- Duck & Orange Pâté with Homemade Chutney
- Prawn Cocktail with Bloody Mary Sauce
- Mushroom stuffed with Caramelised Onions & Dorset Smoked Cheddar, served on Leaves

Mains

- Roast Turkey Breast with Cranberry & Orange Stuffing, Pigs in Blankets & Roast Potatoes
- Confit Duck with Port & Redcurrant Sauce & Roast Potatoes
- Salmon Fillet with Lemon Herb Crust, Sautéed New Potatoes & Dill Sauce
- Beef Bourguignon with Horseradish Mash
- Mushroom, Stilton & Chestnut Pie with Roast Potatoes

All mains served with seasonal vegetables.

Desserts

- Homemade Christmas Pudding with Brandy Cream
- Tia Maria Chocolate Torte
- Vanilla Panna Cotta with Mixed Berry Compote
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AS THE AUTUMN CLOSES IN...YOUR COMMUNITY CENTRE IS THERE FOR YOU WITH A WEALTH OF OPPORTUNITIES.

As BYCC continues to celebrate its 10th Anniversary, we are delighted to announce funding success with recent grants from the District Council Youth Funding and the Police and Crime Commissioner Operation Relentless Community Fund.

Gemma Collis, the Youth Club Manager & Lead youth worker, has engaged the youth club members in imaginative ways, encouraging them to take part in consultations leading to exciting new activities. This has led to an increase in numbers attending youth clubs. Gemma enthused "We are incredibly grateful to receive this funding, which will help us continue to grow and provide positive opportunities for the young people in



our community, and a huge thank you to our amazing staff team."

Last Autumn BYCC responded to an increase in youth anti-social behaviour in Bridport by stepping up and offering a safe space as a first response, then worked in partnership with other partners to find ways to support young people to try and reduce the problem. This response helped BYCC in securing funding from the PCC for Outreach at West Bay specifically in order to reduce anti-social behaviour.

The centre has been working in collaboration with Colfox school and multiple partners across the Bridport community partnership as part of their Cradle to Career initiative. Ian Bark, chair of the BYCC, "Cradle to Career is a really exciting ten year project aimed at giving our young people the best support and opportunities possible, and BYCC will play a pivotal role in delivering

this multi-faceted whole community initiative.'

On the community front, the Not So Youth Club, 3rd Wed of every month, 11am to 2pm, is building up participants. Come and give us a go. £3 a session for sports hall activities such as table tennis, a cooking group to pick up affordable, scrumptious ideas, Art and craft sessions, café and more. We have funding till next April to give the over 50's of Bridport a chance to suggest and sample what they would like to have on offer at their club. For £5 you can book a shared lunch. (limited numbers)

ANYONE FOR PICKLE BALL?



We are very grateful to Simon Wood of Lumley and Wood Dental Practice for his generous donation of pickle ball kit.

This sport is growing in popularity because it's: Easy to learn, low cost, gentle on joints, very Social and for all ages.

What we need are some experienced pickle ball players who could pass on

their skills and enable us all to learn a new sport and fun doing it. Please contact Lesley Windsor, if this could be you?

The Forget Me Not Singers group, exudes joy! It's for people with memory loss and their carer. Start with a cup of tea and biscuit and join Jane Silver Corren for a happiness boost as you sing songs old and not so old. £5 a session. A huge thank you to the Art @ Eype artists who let us run the café at their July exhibition. We raised £465. We dearly want to continue this thriving group and extend the range of activities and support but funding is a key issue. If memory loss is a cause close to your heart and you have fundraising ideas, please get in touch.

By the time you read this article, BYCC's 10th anniversary open day will have happened but check out our Facebook, Instagram and Website for information about the quarterly BYCC Quiz many more groups and events coming up.

Contact COMMUNITY@BRIDPORTYCC.ORG for more information.





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