

The

CREWKERNE

Flyer

GRATIS

SUMMER 2026

THE FREE AREA GUIDE ABOUT CREWKERNE AND THE HAMSTONE VILLAGES
PRODUCED QUARTERLY: SUMMER • AUTUMN • WINTER • SPRING

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JUDGING BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF ADVERTISERS AND CONTRIBUTORS IN THIS OUR SUMMER 2026 EDITION,



there seems to be much optimism and confidence around Crewkerne and The Hamstone Villages! New businesses opening; others moving or re-branding – bringing more trade and vibrancy to the area.

On **Page 10** The Friends of Crewkerne Station are promoting the Blackmore Vale Line from Tisbury to Crewkerne, and beyond to Exeter, for visitors and locals alike.

CUDOS celebrate a “25 year journey of drama, music, laughter and community spirit”. See their article on **Page 14**.

Local Councillors Mike Hewitson and Oliver Patrick proudly announce the opening of the new Visitor Centre at Ham Hill Country Park. Find full details on **Pages 18 & 19**. Find our handy town and area maps across **Pages 28 & 29**.

Gloving forms a major part of Crewkerne's history, and Crewkerne Museum and Heritage Centre have photos of “gloving ladies” – and more news on - **Page 32**.

There is no doubt that traffic congestion in Crewkerne Town Centre has reached an all-time high. A major contributor is construction traffic – accessing Wool Gardens, and the formation of the new “Relief Road”; further compounded by aggregate trucks from the Mendips, heading for the Foundry Lea development in Bridport. On **Pages 34 & 35** we give 2 insights on what is happening and why; and how traffic issues are being addressed.

Our regular contributor Nikki Copleston brings us more photos of “Old Crewkerne” on **Page 50**.

With best wishes for the Summer months,

Anthony Bucke. EDITOR.

Wednesday 13 May 2026

Email: crewkerne@theantiquetourist.com



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New Hearing Clinic Officially Opens in Crewkerne

South West Hearing Care has officially opened its new Crewkerne clinic with a launch event attended by local dignitaries, neighbouring businesses and community guests. The Mayor of Crewkerne, Councillor Alice Samuel, formally opened the practice by cutting the ribbon alongside owner and Audiologist Simon Swindells.

The new clinic at 27 Market Square will provide independent hearing care services including hearing assessments, ear wax removal, hearing aids and aftercare support. Simon Swindells said: *"We're delighted to open in Crewkerne and look forward to becoming a trusted part of the local community."*



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The Friends of **CREWKERNE** Station

Crewkerne Station: Leisure travel by train

The Friends of Crewkerne Station (FOCS) recommend a summer of discovery along the Blackmore Vale line from Tisbury to Crewkerne and beyond. Have a look at the Blackmore Vale line guide to see places to visit www.blackmorevalerains.com/line-guides/latest-line-guide/

From Crewkerne station it is an easy train ride to Axminster and Honiton, or going further afield down to Exeter. FOCS volunteers took a trip recently to the city of Exeter where they were just in time to take in an exhibition by prestigious artist Grayson Perry at the Prince Albert Memorial Museum. The Museum itself is very interesting and well labelled and the

café can keep you going with refreshment. Some of the many places to visit that the Friends also took in were, the Cathedral, the underground passages, historic hostels the Catacombs and the Roman walls. The train journey along the beautiful Axe valley is so easy, taking you into the centre of the city right next to the Museum.

The FOCS volunteers are preparing a leaflet of walks from the station for visitors and residents and we can be seen here testing out the footbridge over a ford.

If you are a knitter you might like to join in our community project to knit or crochet poppies – red for remembrance, purple for the animals that died or white for peace. The volunteers will

be attaching them to a piece of netting to be displayed in November with the soldier silhouette on the banks and railings one side of the pumphouse so that some will be visible to train travellers and some to residents. If you would like to join in, the British Legion has a pattern.

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Finished poppies can be brought to the station pumphouse, or the Hospice shop or Henhayes in Crewkerne.

And don't forget to ask in the station booking office to help you find the best and cheapest train ticket options.



The Friends of the Station are interested in all things railway and transport and welcome additional members and volunteers.

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Ham Hill Reimagined: A Landmark Investment in Our Community

April marked a proud and long-awaited moment for one of Somerset's most iconic landscapes. The new Visitor Centre at Ham Hill Country Park is now complete, delivering a truly outstanding new facility for residents, families and visitors from across the region and further afield.

After years of planning, collaboration and dedication, Ham Hill now boasts a stunning new Visitor Centre, a welcoming café, improved access throughout the site, and a fantastic outdoor education space that will inspire the next generation to connect with nature.

Local Somerset Councillors Mike Hewitson and Oliver Patrick are over the moon to see the project that they voted for finally completed -

one of the last achievements of South Somerset District Council before it was replaced by the new Somerset Council in 2023.

Cllr Oliver Patrick said: *"This is a huge moment for Ham Hill and for Somerset. What's been created here is something really special.*

As a former Classics teacher I'm delighted to see the Roman Villa getting its own interpretation board, too. The Roman coin shadow behind the board when the sun comes is a joy."

Cllr Mike Hewitson added: *"This project shows what can be achieved when people*

work together over the long term. It's not just about buildings, it's about creating a lasting legacy that future generations can enjoy."

The £2.4 million project has been made possible thanks to the commitment and support of a wide range of partners. Funding



from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, the Wolfson Foundation, and Leonardo UK has been instrumental in bringing the vision to life, alongside the hard work of council officers, contractors, architects, rangers, volunteers and the Friends of Ham Hill.

Cllr Patrick said: *"This simply would not have happened without the backing of these organisations and the tireless efforts of so many people behind the scenes. It's a real testament to what can be delivered when investment is matched with passion and commitment."*

Beyond the buildings

themselves, the improvements are about making Ham Hill a place for everyone. Better accessibility means more people can enjoy the site, while the new education facilities will open up opportunities for schools and community groups to learn about the area's rich history, wildlife and geology.

Cllr Hewitson said: *"Ham Hill has always been special, but this investment takes it to another level. It strengthens its role not just as a place to visit, but as a hub for education, wellbeing and community life."*

As hundreds of people

attended the grand opening and events over the Easter holidays in April, the response has been overwhelmingly positive. Families, walkers and long-time visitors alike have been able to experience first-hand what this transformation means.

There are still more events to come, and residents are encouraged to visit, explore and share their experiences.

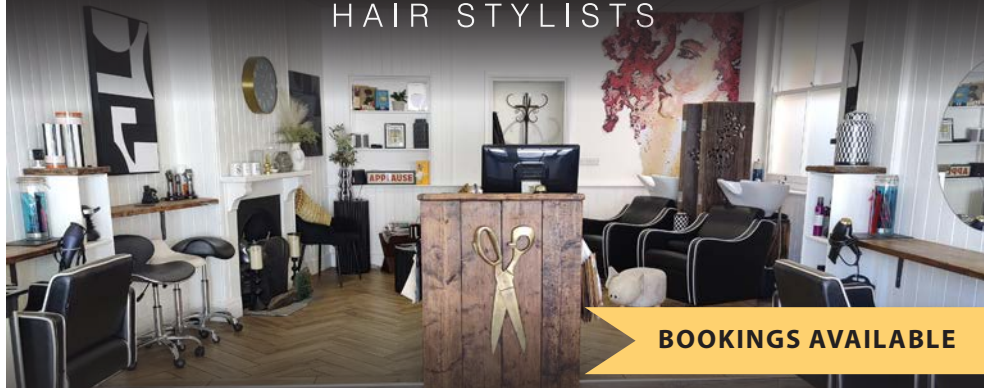
This is more than just an upgrade. It is a celebration of Ham Hill's past, present and future - and a clear sign of Somerset's commitment to investing in the places that matter most.



Cllr Mike Hewitson and Cllr Oliver Patrick

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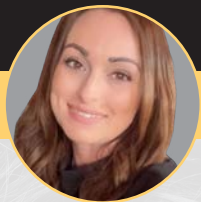
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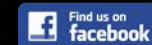
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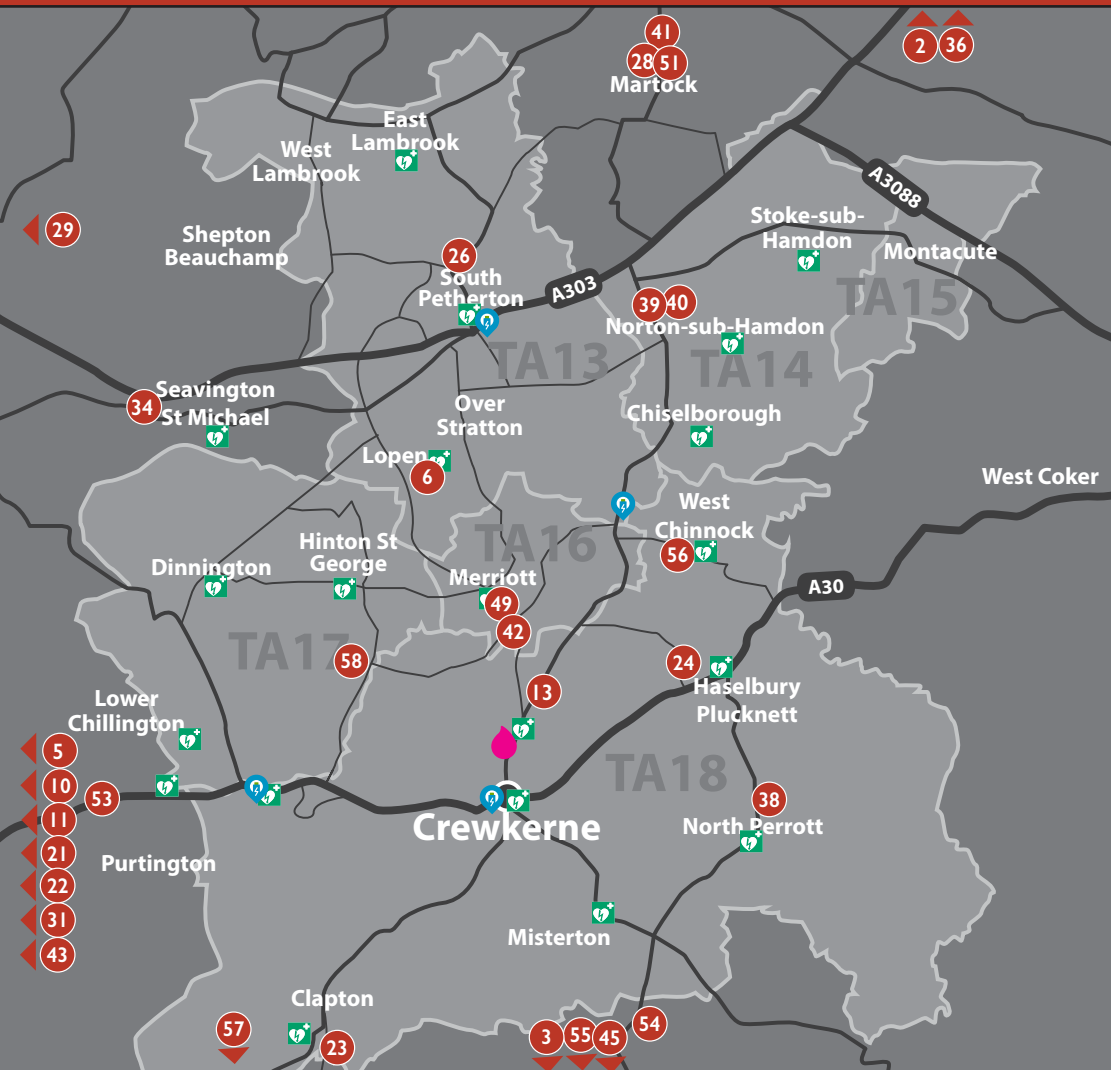
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CREWKERNE MUSEUM & HERITAGE CENTRE

An interesting **new exhibition opens** at the museum on **6th June**. Many local people will be familiar with the gloving factory in North Street and our researchers have been discovering more about how the gloving industry grew in Crewkerne and how it worked. Sadly, this has become an historic industry here but many women gained employment when they left school and were able to contribute towards the family income. Work was also carried out in the homes with bags of parts of gloves being delivered weekly and payment made for each piece completed. As we are a district museum we are pleased to include exhibits from Merriott which show how many people were involved in gloving in the village.



Our Heritage Centre thrives on the stories of the area and during this year we are happy to host activities and to support work being carried out by two organisations in the town. **"Flagship Crewkerne"** will bring together groups to create banners/pennants to be hung around the town later in the summer. The flags will celebrate the industrial history and stories of makers in Crewkerne. Meetings are being held and schools are showing an interest in involvement in the project, so if you would like to join in the creativity contact organisers via the Hub in West Street for more information.

Another community project that involves all age groups is **"Once upon a time"**. The plan for this project is to encourage us all to use our imaginations, to look at the world around us and find ways of story telling that we can all join in with. The museum will host a **meeting on Tuesday 2nd June at 7pm** to talk about the plans for this exciting project that will continue throughout this year into 2027. The spoken and written words will link with creative ways of telling a tale. Think back to your childhood, how did you experience stories - from books, your parents, listening to others, hearing "Uncle Mac" on the radio, or watching clouds shapes in the sky? We all have a story to tell so join us to have some fun and bring the generations together.

The **6th June Coffee morning** will be an extended event from 10am - 3pm when we invite the public to join us for free refreshments and discover how the Heritage Centre operates. Our volunteer Researchers, Collection team, Stewards, Maintenance team and Committee members will be around the building to chat to visitors. We have a band of loyal volunteers that enable the Museum and Heritage Centre to provide a welcoming and interesting space for people to visit and use. Many of us have volunteered for several years, so if you are a person that loves to be involved in community projects and you can spare some time that will fit in with your diary, then why not come along and find out all about our centre?



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CREWKERNE KEY SITE DEVELOPMENT

Post-Industrial Crewkerne

For centuries Crewkerne was an industrial powerhouse! The steep slopes surrounding the town, blessed with high rainfall, provided fast-running streams. These provided free power to drive waterwheels. The relatively wet climate was ideal for growing flax – an important ingredient for the production of rope, twine, webbing and sail-cloth. So mills and factories sprung up. Saddle girth, webbing and military belts in South Street; sail-cloth, sheepskin and tanning in North Street; shirts in South Street and pyjamas in Abbey Street.

Industry required workers, housed in small cottages - still visible today along South Street, North Street, Hermitage Street and West Street.

Post WW2 things changed. By the 1980's Crewkerne was like so many small towns – industry in decline, jobs changed; mobility, affluence and expectations grew. Crewkerne became desirable, factories and mills closed, new homes were built at Wadham Park, Redgate Park, Kingswood Road, Charlton Close etc.

Forward-thinking planners identified Crewkerne as a "Key Site", and this was written into the South Somerset Local Plan for the period 2006 – 2028.

Now the "Crewkerne Key Site" at Wool Gardens is well underway with Phase 1 built and occupied. Phase 2 – Centurion Rise - on the Yeovil Road is due for release soon. Construction of a 66-bed care home has commenced, and the much-awaited "Relief Road" is under construction! The Relief Road will link Station Road with Yeovil Road, and help ease traffic congestion in Crewkerne town centre by largely removing north-south traffic,

whilst providing excellent access to the new "Key Site".

Crucially the completion of the relief road (June 2027?) will trigger improved town centre traffic management. North Street will become one-way out of town, including wider pavements already designed. East Street could become one-way inbound, and Market Street one-way westbound – further opportunities for wider pavements and an improved pedestrian experience.

The recent planning proposal for "325 dwellings, a mobility hub and additional train station car parking, and Class E floor space, and associated infrastructure" in Station Road should further contribute to improved traffic flows in and around our town.

At last! A cohesive plan to bring new homes AND vital infrastructure to Crewkerne is here!

Anthony Bucke EDITOR
Wednesday 13 May 2026.



We approached Cllr Oliver Patrick for his insights. Cllr Patrick is the Vice Chair of Planning Committee South at Somerset Council and an outspoken advocate for new homes.

Why Crewkerne Needs New Homes – A Personal View.

"My first home was an identikit new-build in Crewkerne, and I'll always be grateful for what it gave me. It meant I could live near the school I was teaching in and be part of that community. Now as Vice Chair of Somerset Council's Planning Committee South, I often remind my Planning Committee colleagues about the need for new homes across Somerset, including Crewkerne, so that people can have the same opportunity that I had.

So, what is Somerset's housing need?

Housing need is set by central government using the Standard Method, which sets higher targets in areas where homes are least affordable. That's why Somerset's requirement has risen significantly in recent years (around +42%).

Crucially, if you can't afford to buy or rent privately in Somerset, you can join the Housing Register via Homefinder Somerset. Around 12,000 households are on it, but only a fraction of that number of homes become available each year. It's not uncommon for a single flat in Crewkerne to attract hundreds of applicants with only one "winner". That gap represents real people who cannot find somewhere suitable to live.

One criticism I often hear is that new homes don't come with infrastructure. Yet in Planning Committee I regularly see millions secured for schools, highways, sports facilities and GP surgeries through Section 106 (S106) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). S106 is negotiated to mitigate specific impacts, often including contributions like £1m for education or £500k for highways.

CIL is calculated per square metre, so larger developments generate more funding, often running into millions, which can be spent more broadly on local infrastructure. Where this money goes is publicly available in the Somerset Council Infrastructure Funding Statement.

And if Councils don't plan to meet housing need,



decisions are taken out of local hands at appeal. If too many refusals are overturned at appeal then Councils get put into special measures. Central government Planners then take over, leaving the Council to process applications while the fees (paid by developers) that would normally support that work go to central government.

The question is not whether homes should be built, but how do we shape that growth properly? Because without new homes, competition for homes goes up, waiting lists grow, and younger generations are pushed out of the communities they grew up in.

Somerset Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan to meet the housing targets set by central government. That will mean making difficult decisions about where development should go. But avoiding those decisions doesn't make the need disappear, it simply means they are taken out of our hands.

For me, this is not an abstract policy debate by Councillors or Government Ministers sat in ivory towers. It's about whether someone starting out today has the same chance I had on Kingswood Road. The chance to live near their work. To put down roots. To be part of their community.

If we want Crewkerne to remain a living, working town and not a place people are priced out of then we have to face this honestly. I, too, have to accept that housing growth in the small villages I represent (between Crewkerne and Yeovil) is also going to be necessary. After all, this is a county-wide challenge which we all have to face."

Cllr Oliver Patrick - Coker Ward

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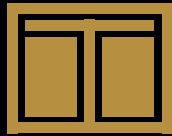


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Open Tuesday - Saturday 9:00am - 4:00pm

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Crewkerne and District Branch

Invite you to join us at our family Tea Party on Saturday 4th July 2026 at Severalls War Memorial Green 1045 - 1530 for tea, coffee and cakes provided by the RBL with further catering provided by Sheilas Cafe Numerous Stalls and Competitions Featuring Music by The Silver Band until midday Singing by The Poppettes



There will be a very short Service by our Branch Chairman Tony Samuel at 1100

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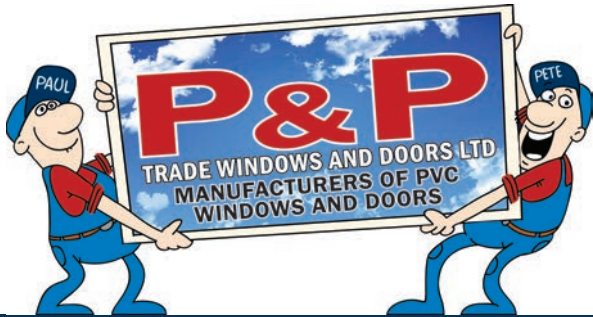
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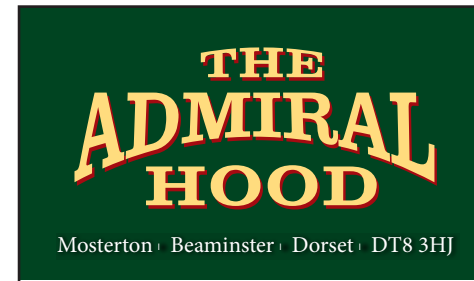
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SUDOKU 1

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 5 | | | 1 | | | | | |
| | | 3 | 4 | | | | | |
| 9 | | | | 6 | 2 | | | |
| | 2 | 4 | | | 6 | | | |
| | | 8 | | 4 | 5 | 7 | | |
| | 9 | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | 1 |
| | 4 | | | 7 | 3 | | | |
| 1 | | | 6 | | | | 9 | |

Level: **Easy**
 Date: _____
 Start time: _____
 Time to solve: _____

SUDOKU 2

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| | 2 | | | 7 | | | | |
| | | | 8 | | | | | 5 |
| | 7 | 1 | 3 | | | | | |
| 7 | 3 | | | | | | | 4 |
| | 4 | 5 | | | | | | |
| | 9 | | | 2 | 8 | 1 | | |
| 6 | 9 | | | 5 | | 3 | | |
| | | | | 1 | | | | |
| 4 | | 9 | | | | | | |

Level: **Hard**
 Date: _____
 Start time: _____
 Time to solve: _____

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| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 5 | 9 | 7 | 2 | 6 |
| 6 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 7 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| 4 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| 6 | 9 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 8 |
| 8 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 1 | 6 | 9 | 3 | 2 |
| 2 | 8 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | 6 | 8 | 7 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 3 | 1 |
| 5 | 1 | 9 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 4 | 2 |
| 3 | 2 | 7 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 8 | 5 | 1 |
| 8 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 2 |
| 4 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |

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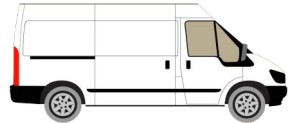
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