

## Guide to West Dorset beaches and coastal activities



Along the 25 miles of magnificent West Dorset World Heritage Coastline, you'll find a beach that's perfect for you. There is so much variety on the West Dorset coast that we have produced this information sheet to help you. Whether you wish to bathe, fish, dive, sail, walk or simply admire the stunning views, always remember that the coast can be a dangerous place. Please make sure you holiday in safety.

### Fishing - tackle shops

Revels, Nr Buckland Newton  
The Tackle Box, 18 Marine Parade, Lyme Regis  
Potters Tackle Shop, West Bay  
West Bay Water Sports, West Bay, Bridport

Tel: 01300 345301  
Tel: 01297 443373  
Tel: 01308 428226  
Tel: 01308 421800 (mainly supply anglers but also have diving accessories, divers air & wet suits)

Anyone over the age of 12 fishing in freshwaters in England or Wales must have a valid Environment Agency rod licence. No licence is required to fish from the beach. Rod licences are available from Post Offices or online at [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/fish](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/fish) or tel 0870 1662 662

### Sea fishing

The harbours at Lyme Regis and West Bay provide opportunities for sea fishing: take a mackerel boat around the bay, or seek deeper waters for cod, conger, skate or pollock. You may even see dolphins on your trip!

#### WEST BAY

**Dawn Mist & Tia Maria**                      **01308 428226**  
(Contact the Potters Tackle shop)  
**Duchess II**    **01308 421800**  
(Contact West Bay Water Sports)

#### LYME REGIS

**Blue Turtle**    **07970 856822**  
[www.blueturtle.uk.com](http://www.blueturtle.uk.com)  
Diving trips (wrecks and reefs), shark fishing, wreck fishing, coast trips. 60 mile operating distance. Operates year round (weather permitting)

**Josielee**    **07958 492953**  
Mackerel and deep sea fishing trips and private charter

**Kraken**    **07974 796002**  
Mackerel fishing trips (equipment provided).  
Sightseeing trips to view the World Heritage Coast.  
Operates May to September.

**Marie F**    **07974 753287**  
1, 2 or 3 hour mackerel fishing trips from the Cobb harbour. Also three to eight hour deep sea angling trips.

**Neptune**    **07768 570437**  
Deep sea and mackerel fishing trips. 60 mile operating distance.

**Sunbeam**    **07775 530973**  
Deep Sea Angling and Mackerel Fishing Trips.

**Frances Jane**    **07890 739625**  
Scenic trips, mackerel fishing and private charter

**Harbourmasters**  
**Lyme Regis**    **01297 442137**  
**Bridport**    **01308 423222**



# beaches



West Dorset beaches	Dog bans*	Car park	Cafe	Toilet	Safety advice
<p><b>ABBOTSBURY - CHESIL BANK AND FLEET LAGOON NATURE RESERVE</b> A shelving beach made up of pebbles and shingle. Close to the beach is the village of Abbotsbury, where there are three main attractions - Swannery, Sub Tropical Gardens and Children's Farm. The village is approximately one mile from the beach. Services &amp; cafés/pubs in the village.</p> <p>It is also the site of the Chesil and Fleet Nature Reserve. There are stunning views across to Weymouth and Portland and to the east is the beautiful site of Golden Cap.</p>	No	Yes (Seasonal)	Yes (Seasonal)	Yes Radar Key	Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge.
<p><b>BURTON BRADSTOCK</b> A shelving shingle beach, close to the village of Burton Bradstock.</p> <p>On a clear day visitors can enjoy breath-taking views round to Portland and right the way round to the East Devon Coast.</p>	Yes No dogs 01 May - 30 Sept inc	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge.
<p><b>CHARMOUTH</b> This beach is slightly shelving and is made up of pebbles and sand.</p> <p>Charmouth is famous, along with Lyme Regis, for its fossils, especially in winter months due to the rough seas. Charmouth is located 2 miles from Lyme Regis and 6 miles from Bridport.</p> <p>At the Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre you can find out how to hunt for your own fossils by joining one of the regular guided fossil walks. Guided walks are held Feb - Sept (tides permitting).</p> <p>The coast path continues eastwards to Lyme Regis and East Devon and westwards to Seatown and Golden Cap.</p> <p><b>ALWAYS FOLLOW THE FOSSIL COLLECTING CODE OF PRACTICE: COLLECTING FROM FALLEN OR BEACH MATERIAL IS ACCEPTABLE PRACTICE. DIGGING IN THE CLIFFS IS NOT ACCEPTABLE PRACTICE.</b></p>	Yes No Dogs East Beach July & August 1000 - 1800 West Beach 01 May - 30 Sept included	Yes	Yes (seasonal)	Yes Within walking distance	Often used for bathing, depending on weather conditions. When red flag is showing it is not suitable for inflatables. In the beach car park there is a bridge over some deep water leading to the coast path and beach. Take care. Coast path - risk of landslip/ mudslides. Risk of being cut off by tides. Danger of falling rocks.
<p><b>COGDEN</b> Owned by the National Trust, this steep shelving, shingle beach is located on the coast road between Burton Bradstock and Abbotsbury (B3157). Car parking is free with direct access to the beach via a footpath across a field.</p>	No	Yes	No	No	Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge.
<p><b>EYPE</b> A steeply shelving pebble beach. Located three miles from Bridport. Walkers can enjoy breath-taking views across the West Dorset coast.</p>	No	Short walk from beach	Yes (seasonal)	No	Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge.
<p><b>LYME REGIS</b> Lyme Regis is a picturesque and historic seaside town set in an area of outstanding natural beauty. A town of steep streets, its most outstanding feature is a delightful 13th century harbour known as the Cobb.</p> <p>The beaches in Lyme Regis are a mixture of sand and pebbles. Monmouth beach is very pebbly and shelves. The Front beach is a flat, sandy beach, as is Cobb Gate.</p> <p>Lifeboat &amp; coastguard station. Walk along the historic Cobb for exquisite views back along the West Dorset and East Devon Coast.</p> <p>Fossil hunting is popular - Contact the TIC for more information.</p>	Yes No dogs 01 May - 01 Oct on Front Beach from Cobb Gate Car Park west to the Lifeboat slipway	Yes Short stay car park near Cobb Gate and 2 short stay & 1 long stay near Monmouth beach.	Many cafés and pubs close by	Yes	Front beach - Often used for bathing, depending on weather conditions. The Cobb - uneven surfaces, ground slippery in wet weather. No railings around the edge of Cobb. Monmouth beach - Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge. Tides can cut off people between Lyme Regis and Charmouth - EXTREME CARE TO BE TAKEN
<p><b>RINGSTEAD</b> A protected shingle beach overlooking Weymouth Bay.</p>	No	Yes	Yes (Seasonal)	Yes	Often used for bathing, depending on weather conditions.
<p><b>SEATOWN</b> A steep shelving beach with pebbles and shingle.</p>	Yes No dogs at any time	Yes	Yes (seasonal) Pub close by	Yes	Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge.
<p><b>WEST BAY</b> Shingle, sand and pebbles. Steep shelving.</p> <p>Slipway and Harbour.</p> <p>Auxiliary coastguard.</p>	Yes No dogs 01 May - 01 Oct East Pier to Freshwater, West Pier to West Cliffs.	Yes	Yes	Yes	West Beach - often used for bathing. East Beach - Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge. Stay away from the base of the cliffs due to risk of falling rocks. Do not climb the cliffs.
<p><b>WEST BEXINGTON</b> A National Trust Beach, made up of shingle and shelves steeply. Walking is popular around this area and like many of the other beaches in the area the views to the East and West are superb.</p>	Dogs allowed in restricted area	Yes	Yes (Seasonal)	Yes	Bathing can be dangerous. The beach shelves steeply & there is a strong undertow. Take care on the shoreline because sudden large waves can engulf persons at the water's edge.

**THERE ARE NO LIFEGUARDS ON WEST DORSET BEACHES**

Always check the tide times before exploring the West Dorset coastline - [www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide.html](http://www.ukho.gov.uk/easytide.html) or contact your local TIC. **In an emergency dial 999 and ask for the Coastguard.**

\*Dogs Fouling of Land Act 1996 Max Penalty £1000 Dog Warden Patrolled Areas. Please remove dog faeces from all above areas. Bagged faeces may be placed in any litter bin.

**SAFETY ADVICE**

West Dorset is a popular rural location for visitors to enjoy the freedom of the countryside. The majority of visits are incident free and these notes are included so that visitors can make an informed judgement about their safety:



- Wind and tidal effects can create hazardous sea conditions including large waves breaking on shelving beaches and an undertow. Consider the conditions before swimming or approaching the water's edge.
- Incoming tides can trap the unwary. Check the tide before walking on beach footpaths.
- Cliff rock falls and mudflows sometimes occur on the coast. Do not enter known problem areas. Keep away from the base of cliffs.
- Sea walls and harbours are often not fenced. Take care not to fall from the edge.

## Walks (Guided)

Hunting for fossils is especially good in the winter months. The Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre, together with the Lyme Regis Museum and Dinosaurland in Lyme Regis, give advice and run regular guided fossil collecting walks. This is the best and safest way to hunt for fossils.

### FOSSIL WALKS

Brandon Lennon	Tel: 01297 444405	<a href="http://www.lymeregisfossilwalks.com">www.lymeregisfossilwalks.com</a>
Charmouth Heritage Coast Centre	Tel: 01297 560772	<a href="http://www.charmouth.org">www.charmouth.org</a>
Dinosaurland	Tel: 01297 443541	<a href="http://www.dinosaurland.co.uk">www.dinosaurland.co.uk</a>
Lyme Regis (Dr. Colin Dawes)	Tel: 01297 443758	
Lyme Regis Museum, Bridge Street, Lyme Regis	Tel: 01297 443370	<a href="http://www.lymeregismuseum.co.uk">www.lymeregismuseum.co.uk</a>

**COASTAL WALKS** Dorset Heritage Coast Team organises walks throughout the year. Contact your local Tourist Information Centre for details, or pick up a copy of the Dorset Countryside Guide.

## Water Sports (sailing, canoeing, windsurfing, etc)

The harbours at West Bay and Lyme Regis afford safe anchorages for visiting crafts as well as launching facilities for dinghies and small boats of every kind. Slipway and launching fees are payable to the harbourmaster at both harbours. Tel Lyme Regis (01297) 442137 and Bridport (01308) 423222. Care is necessary when entering or leaving the harbour at West Bay and an outboard motor is needed to manoeuvre the harbour entrance. Extreme care must be exercised even when the sea is comparatively calm. It is possible to launch a small boat direct from various beaches, but this also must be done with care.

**Windsurfing** is normally conducted on the eastern side at West Bay & Lyme Regis with caution, weather permitting.

## Tourist Information Centre contacts

### Bridport Tourist Information Centre

47 South Street, Bridport, Dorset, DT6 3NY  
Tel: 01308 424901 Fax: 01308 421060  
Email: [bridport.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:bridport.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)

### Dorchester Tourist Information Centre

Antelope Walk, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1BE  
Tel: 01305 267992 Fax: 01305 266079  
Email: [dorchester.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:dorchester.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)

### Lyme Regis Tourist Information Centre

Church Street, Lyme Regis, Dorset DT7 3BS  
Tel: 01297 442138 Fax: 01297 444668  
Email: [lymeregis.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:lymeregis.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)

### Sherborne Tourist Information Centre

Digby Road, Sherborne, Dorset DT9 3NL  
Tel: 01935 815341 Fax: 01935 817210  
Email: [sherborne.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:sherborne.tic@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)

Community Enabling,  
West Dorset District Council, Stratton House,  
58/60 High West Street, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1UZ  
Tel: 01305 252241  
Fax: 01305 257039  
Email: [tourism@westdorset-dc.gov.uk](mailto:tourism@westdorset-dc.gov.uk)  
Website: [www.dorsetforyou.com](http://www.dorsetforyou.com)



Tourism website:  
[www.westdorset.com](http://www.westdorset.com)

