

Get around for

PLUS: MEGABUS RETURNS TO WEYMOUTH!

PLUS: CHANGES TO ROUTE 6 ON THE WAY

£2!

WATAG News 12

WEST DORSET WESTERN AREA TRANSPORT ACTION GROUP

WATAG MEETINGS & CONTACT

PUBLIC MEETINGS HAVE RESUMED AT THE WI HALL, BRIDPORT. These take place every two months, with details sent out in advance.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

We are currently experimenting with Zoom meetings as we know many people can't attend due to bus times, please bear with us as we adapt.

You can contact WATAG via email or visit our website.

Website: <https://watag.org.uk/>

Email: watag@hotmail.co.uk

Your local journey planner:

TRAVELINE SOUTH WEST

<https://www.travelinesw.com>

LOCAL TRANSPORT ROUTES

Service updates on Page 2

X51/X53

Operated by First Wessex and marketed as the Jurassic Coaster.

X51 operates Mon-Sat from Weymouth to Axminster via Dorchester, Poundbury, Winterbourne Abbas, Bridport, Chideock, Charmouth and Lyme Regis.

X53 operates Mon-Sun* from Weymouth to Axminster via Abbotsbury, Burton Bradstock, West Bay, Bridport, Chideock, Charmouth and Lyme Regis,

*on Sundays service operates from Weymouth - Lyme Regis (to Holmbush Car Park)

6

Operated by First Wessex, Mondays to Fridays. These buses operate from Bridport to Beaminster, Crewkerne, and Yeovil.

CB3

Operated by Beaminster Town Council, every Saturday, connecting Beaminster with Bridport and Crewkerne.

7

Operated by Dorset Community Transport on behalf of Bridport Town Council on Wednesdays and Saturdays, as the 'Bridport Town Circular'.

14

Operated by Dorset Community Transport, every Thursday, from Birdsmoorgate and Thorncombe to Chard.

71

Operated by Damory, on behalf of Lyme Regis Town Council, Mondays to Fridays, as the 'Lyme Regis Town Service'

378

Operated by AVMT from Lyme Regis to Seaton. Until 7th April, twice daily, Monday to Friday

688

Operated by Dorset Community Transport, every Thursday, from Thorncombe to Axminster.

PlusBus

Operated by Dorset Community Transport, the PlusBus service provides transport for people who are unable to easily access public transport: young or old and including those with mobility difficulties and offers a weekday trip from neighbouring villages to local destination towns. To book, call 01258 287980. Further details here: <https://bit.ly/37hK7hB>

YOUR LOCAL RAIL ROUTES

South Western Railway

Axminster & Crewkerne to/from Exeter and London Waterloo.

Weymouth, Upwey, and Dorchester South to Poole, Bournemouth and London Waterloo.

Great Western Railway

Weymouth, Upwey, and Dorchester West to Bath, Bristol and Gloucester.

LONG-DISTANCE BUS ROUTES

National Express operates twice daily from Weymouth and Dorchester to London

Megabus will offer services from Weymouth to London from 27th March 2023. See page 2

Service Updates

The latest news on our local buses and trains

Route 6: This continues to take up most of WATAG's time. From 3rd April:

The **0747** Schoolday trip from Bridport to Beaminster/**0800** Non-Schooldays trip from Bridport to Monmouth Gardens will both operate **ten minutes earlier** throughout. The **0830** Schoolday and Non-School days trip from Monmouth Gardens to Bridport will operate **10 minutes earlier** throughout. The **1700** trip from Bridport Community Hospital to Monmouth Gardens will operate **ten minutes later** throughout. The timetable to 31st March is here: <https://bit.ly/3kP3loK>

Routes X51/X53: The winter timetable continues with the X51 serving Dorchester Monday to Saturday. **WATAG** secured the X53 Sunday services between Lyme Regis and Weymouth. The timetable is here: <https://bit.ly/3OuKFVS> **Part of the government £2 fares scheme**

Beaminster Town Council's CB3 continues every Saturday between Crewkerne, Beaminster and Bridport, with connections to Yeovil with South West Coaches. Due to the level of admin required, the CB3 is not part of the £2 fares scheme. The timetable can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/3oyPctz>

Service 71 operates as Lyme Regis' "Town Service", Mondays to Fridays.

The timetable can be viewed here: <https://bit.ly/3lUMgU9> **Part of the government £2 fares scheme**

AVMT operates a service, Mondays to Fridays from Lyme Regis to Seaton. For the winter, there is a maximum of two services per day. The timetable is here: <https://bit.ly/3PrhBOa>. Services may increase for the summer (including a possible Saturday service) but that timetable is not yet available. Meanwhile, a Monday to Saturday connection via Axminster is available by joining route 885. Timetable here: <https://bit.ly/3UZ2Khs>. **Part of the government £2 fares scheme.**

Rail services may be impacted by strike action. See Rail Strikes update below for the latest details. Between **Weymouth, Dorchester, Bournemouth, Southampton and London:**

The current timetable is here: <https://bit.ly/3EKYXNI>

A line guide for Dorchester-Holton Heath is here: <https://bit.ly/3RVNFvf>.

Between **Crewkerne and Axminster and Exeter/London:**

The current timetable is here: <https://bit.ly/3kmYmM4>

Rail services may be impacted by strike action. See Rail Strikes update below for the latest details.

The current timetable for the Weymouth-Bristol route is here: <https://bit.ly/3XDbtYp>. **Engineering work from 27 February to 3 March** and the following week - see link below.

The line is covered by the South Wessex Community Rail Partnership.

Their website is here: <https://www.southwessexcrp.org.uk/>

The **Weymouth-Dorchester-London operates twice daily**. Timetable: <https://bit.ly/3lZ2UZF>. You must book in advance, either via the website or at Bridport Tourist Information Centre, where no booking fee is charged. At the time of publication, there is still no date for Bridport services resuming although the National Express website states 2023 as a planned return to Bridport and Raymond's Hill.

Megabus has announced a return to Weymouth from 27 March. Operating **four buses a day** from Weymouth to London via Poole, Bournemouth and Heathrow. This will include an overnight service in each direction. Bookings via <https://uk.megabus.com/> The service is run by a company called Air-Sym, who are based at Heathrow and have a fleet of electric buses. It is unclear if these will operate from Weymouth, although electric buses now have the range to do so.

WEST BAY BUS STOP UPDATE

(by The George Hotel)

First Wessex has announced that the shelter has been demolished as it is deemed unsafe. Customers should instead use the temporary bus stop between the original bus stop and St. John's Church. Work to replace the original shelter will begin in the autumn, by Dorset Council.

ENGINEERING WORKS

There are planned works affecting South Western Railway and Great Western Railway in our area.

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY INFO:

<https://bit.ly/3XI306g>

GREAT WESTERN RAILWAY INFO:

<https://bit.ly/3XGOefS>

RAIL STRIKES NEWS UPDATE

Rail strikes are ongoing, the next dates are 16, 18, 30 March and 1 April. SWR (except Island Line) and GWR staff are not striking but services may be affected.

14 days notice is required before the strike date.

More details here:

<https://bit.ly/3FaCqLX>



£2 Fares

Government funded scheme operates until 30 June 2023

The eye-watering fare increases from First Wessex have been mitigated somewhat by a current government scheme where all single fares are £2.00. This applies to services where no change is necessary.

This means in practice that a direct bus from Axminster to Dorchester is £2. If a change of bus is required in Bridport, the fare would be £4.00 (£2.00 for each bus used). In either case, a significant saving is offered.

On 17th February it was announced that the scheme would be extended to 30 June, there are calls for the scheme to be extended further to encourage more bus use.



#TRYTHEBUS

WOW!
ALL TICKETS
£2

**ON ANY DIRECT FIRST WESSEX SERVICE INCLUDING
AXMINSTER - WEYMOUTH**

ABBOTSBURY
AXMINSTER
BEAMINSTER
BURTON BRADSTOCK
DORCHESTER
LYME REGIS
WEST BAY
WEYMOUTH
YEOVIL and more!

A Grand Day Out – Part 3

Bridport to Beaminster, Crewkerne and Yeovil

In a previous issue we highlighted some of the towns and villages on the X52/X53 route from Bridport to Axminster.

We now head north, using the 6 which operates, Mondays to Fridays, to Yeovil. On Saturdays the CB3 bus operates to Crewkerne.

Leaving the market town of Bridport, our bus heads down South Street – a picturesque street full of independent shops, eateries and three pubs. (The George, The Greyhound (side entrance) and The Woodman. Apart from the cars, pictures of South Street from 100 years ago show the same recognisable buildings.

The bus then heads along Sea South South before reaching St. Andrews Road towards Beaminster. If you have time, to be sure to stop off at the Half Moon Inn, Melplash, a local pub serving excellent food. The writer can confirm this!

We are now in Somerset – Crewkerne, an historic and attractive stone built country Market Town in the South
Somerset Hills, Crewkerne has its origins in Saxon times.

Yeovil, a large town in Somerset has everything you need when it comes to shops – with a wide range of high street stores and independent options. Yeovil is also home to the Octagon Theatre, home to the Yeovil Literary Festival and a plethora of other musical and theatrical events, including an annual pantomime. Sadly bus times do not permit visiting an evening show by public transport.



The countryside around Beaminster is beautiful with lush green fields as far as the eye can see. Beaminster is a pretty town with a host of eateries and pubs.

Try Ollerod, a restaurant specialising in locally sourced ingredients, or three pubs – The Red Lion, The Greyhound and the independent Knapp Inn.

Add in some delightful cafes like Cilla & Camilla, The Trading Post, Tangerine Café and Brassica, local walks and Beaminster Museum (open April to October) and you have a grand day out! Do check opening times before you leave!



<https://discoverbeaminster.co.uk>

FREE e-book from Good Journey

A website full of ideas from a non-profit company championing car-free leisure travel. Sign up for their newsletter and download a free e-book, full of scenic rail and bus journeys, that features our very own Jurassic Coast route! Click the link below and scroll down for details.