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A day for Christmas shopping, stalls and entertainment for the whole family

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EVERYCARE







DORCHESTER CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Sunday 13th December 2026
11am to 4pm









High West Street and High East Street closed to traffic

DUCHY of CORNWALL

Blanchards Bailey

Supported by Dorchester Town Council

Sponsored by: Dorchester BID

Catch the festive spirit!

Weldmar Hospicecare

Discover Weldmar Treasures for everyone in store this Christmas!

Find us in these locations:

Charity shop (Trinity St)

Book shop (South St)

Superstore (Marabout Trading Est)

Clearance Outlet (Poundbury West Ind Est)



Watch us catch the festive spirit!

Registered Charity No. 1000414

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

weldmarhospicecare.org

Cracker Chair Message



The Cracker team of volunteers and helpers have once again put together a wonderful festive day for the town. You can enjoy around 150 traders covering High West & Trinity Street, the Cornhill, and both floors inside the Corn Exchange. There will be an eclectic mix of items available to buy when looking for those unique Christmas gifts.

Our Santa Hat Parade for the kids is back led by Santa. Turn up at the top of High West Street at 11:45am – we have 200 free Santa hats to give away. There will be festive music outside St Peters Church from local choirs, the Rock Choir and local singer/song writer Nick Capaldi.

We hope to see some beautiful classic cars in High East Street from the Dorchester Classic Vehicle Club, with American and sports cars at the top of High West Street.

A huge thanks to our event sponsors, Coastland College – Kingston Maurward and Everycare Wessex, and Purnells Insolvency Practitioners who are sponsoring the Santa Hat Parade. The event receives support from Dorchester Chamber for Business, Dorchester Town Council, Dorchester BID, KeeP106 and The Resourcery.

This year has been challenging for us all with rising bills, but being with your loved ones is the best gift you can give and doesn't cost a penny. Stay well and have a wonderful festive time and save next year's date Sunday 12 December 2027.

Steve Bulley
Chair – Christmas Cracker
Executive Member – Dorchester Chamber for Business

#PARK4FREE – Free Parking in Dorchester

Saturday 28th November
Saturday 5th December (Small Business Saturday)
Thursday, 10th December
in the following car parks: Acland Road, Colliton Park, Durngate Street, Fairfield, Old Market, Top O Town, Trinity Street (south), Wollaston Field. This excludes on street parking.
Thank you for Shopping in Dorchester.

Dorchester has a unique mix of independent traders. Please support these shops on National Small Business Day, Saturday, 5th December and every day. When you spend with local retailers, the money stays in the local community, benefiting other businesses and people in the area. Let's build on our positive community spirit and pull together to support Dorchester by buying local goods and services.

Find us on Facebook:
dorchesterchristmascracker

Dorchester Christmas Cracker 2026
Editor: Miranda Woodgate
Produced by: The Resourcery
Designed by: Clearlight Design
Contact: dorchester@theresourcery.co.uk

Information correct at the time of publication. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of content, we cannot accept responsibility for information given or claims made by our contributors and advertisers.





THE DUCHY *of* CORNWALL

wishes all those living and working in Dorchester

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS

AND BEST WISHES FOR 2027

Please do visit our website poundbury.co.uk

for information about Poundbury and the many wonderful retail and hospitality venues available







Church Services

As we frantically gather our presents, lovingly prepare our homes and joyfully welcome our guests, it is good to remind ourselves of the central message of Christmas summed up in one word – Immanuel. God-with-us. Christmas is the proof that God is not absent but present, that we can know Him, experience His love and enjoy His peace whatever circumstances we may face. So why not invite Immanuel to be at the centre of your celebrations this year? Invite God-with-us to become God-with-you enabling you to experience His love, joy and peace in this wonderful season and beyond.

Merry Christmas.

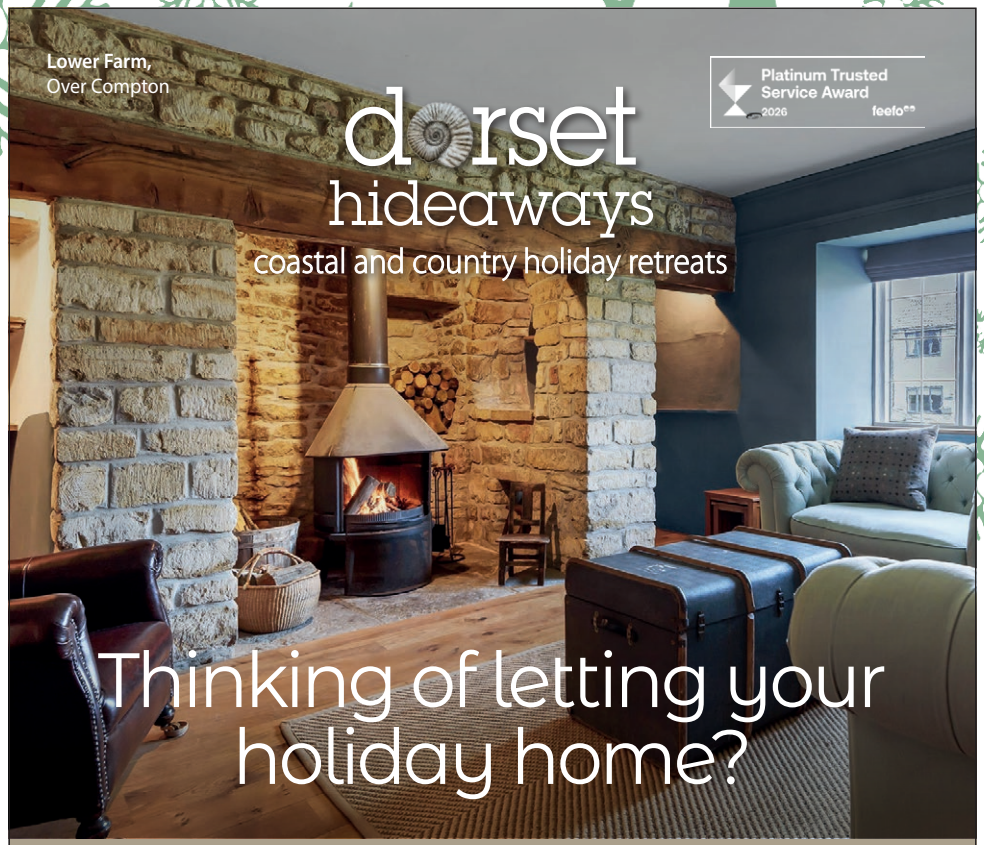
Ben Martin
Senior Elder, Dorchester Family Church

DATE	CHURCH	EVENT	TIME
Saturday, 28th November	St Peter's CofE	Advent Carol Service	**16.30**
Sunday, 29th	St Peter's CofE	Choral Eucharist	**10.30**
	Dorchester Baptist Church	Christmas Tea Service	**15.00**
	United Church Dorchester	Advent Carol Service	**15.00**
Friday, 4th December	St George's CofE Fordington	Carols on the Green	**18.00**
	St George's CofE Fordington	Christmas Tree Festival (until 7th December)	**19.00**
Saturday 5th	United Church Dorchester	Journey to the Stable (interactive space)	**11.00**
	St Mary The Virgin	Christingle Service	**15.30**
Sunday, 6th	The Storehouse Church	Christingle Service	**10.30**
	United Church Dorchester	Family Crib Service	**10.30**
	Dorchester Baptist Church	All Inclusive Christmas Service	**15.00**
Thursday, 10th	United Church Dorchester	Journey to the Stable (interactive space)	**11.00**
	United Church Dorchester	Quiet Christmas	**15.00**
Friday, 11th	United Church Dorchester	Journey to the Stable (interactive space)	**11.00**
Saturday 12th	The Storehouse Church	Christmas Messy Church (0-12 years)	**11.00**
	United Church Dorchester	Journey to the Stable (interactive space)	**11.00**
	St Peter's CofE	Handel's Messiah	**17.30**
Sunday 13th	Dorchester Baptist Church	Morning Service	**10.30**
	St Peter's CofE	Choral Eucharist	**10.30**
	St George's CofE Fordington	Open Christingle Craft Session	**15.00**
	St George's CofE Fordington	Christingle Service	**16.00**
	United Church Dorchester	Cracker Day: Festive Carol Singing and Craft activities for the kids (of all ages)	**12.00pm – 2.00pm**



Saturday, 19th	St Peter's CofE	Nine Lessons & Carols	**16.30**
Sunday, 20th	St George's CofE, Fordington	Children's Nativity Service	**10.30**
	The Storehouse Church	Carol Service	**10.30**
	United Church Dorchester	Christmas Carol Service	**17.30**
	St Mary the Virgin	Community Carol Service	**18.00**
	Dorchester Baptist Church	Carols by Candlelight	**18.30**
	St George's CofE, Fordington	Christmas Carol Service	**18.30**
Monday, 21st	St Peter's CofE	Blue Christmas	**12.00**
Wednesday, 23rd	Dorchester Community Church	Carols by Candlelight (coffee/mince pies)	**19.00**
Christmas Eve	St Mary the Virgin	Crib Service	**14.00**
	St George's CofE, Fordington	Family Crib Service	**16.00**
	United Church Dorchester	Christingle Service	**16.00**
	St Peter's CofE	Carols around the Crib	**18.00**
	Holy Trinity RC Church	Carol Service	**19.30**
	Holy Trinity RC Church	Christmas Mass	**20.00**
	St George's CofE Fordington	Midnight Mass (Combined Service)	**23.00**
	St Mary the Virgin	Midnight Mass	**23.30**
	St Peter's CofE	Choral Midnight Mass	**23.30**
Christmas Day	Holy Trinity RC Church	Christmas Service Holy Mass	**08.30**
	St George's CofE Fordington	BCP Holy Communion	**08.30**
	St Peter's CofE	Christmas Day Eucharist	**09.30**
	St Mary the Virgin	Christmas Morning Service	**09.45**
	The Storehouse Church	Christmas Day Devotional Service (1 hour)	**10.00**
	Dorchester Baptist Church	Christmas Day Service	**10.30**
	Dorchester Community Church	Christmas Day Family Service	**10.30**
	Holy Trinity RC Church	Christmas Service Holy Mass	**10.30**
	St George's CofE Fordington	Christmas Celebration Service	**10.30**
	United Church Dorchester	Christmas Day Service	**10.30**

Other times when the Churches are open can be seen on church noticeboards



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Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

The Big Christmas Lights Switch On 2026

Saturday 28 November 2026, from 5pm in Brewery Square

Once a year, Brewery Square holds its breath. The crowd counts down, the lights flicker on, and Christmas arrives in Dorchester. It's happening again, and this year it's bigger than ever.

Wessex Theatre raises the curtain with all the sparkle of the stage, before our Michael Bublé tribute fills the Square with festive favourites made for singing along. Then comes the moment everyone's waiting for. Five, four, three, two, one... and Brewery Square bursts into light.

The night's only just beginning. The Brewery Square House Band takes over with their Christmas Special (they always have a surprise up their sleeve), while walking acts weave through the crowd. Keep your camera ready, because you never know who, or what, you might meet. In between, wander the festive stalls for tasty treats and gifts you won't find anywhere else, warm your hands on a hot chocolate or raise a glass at our pop-up bars. Skating in the Square is back and will be open throughout the Christmas season.



Dorchester's Shopfront of the Season

Nominations for the Christmas 2026 Shopfront of the Season Awards are now open! The theme for this season is windows! We are looking for the best Christmassy window display. Public can nominate any Dorchester towncentre business whose shopfront stands out. Closing date for nominations is Monday 7th December 2027. After public nominations close then the top five will be judged by a panel.

The winning business will receive:

- A cash prize of £500 jointly funded by Dorchester Town Council and Dorchester BID
- A printed winners certificate and digital winner's badge
- An invitation to serve as a guest judge in the next season

Five businesses that receive the highest number of nominations will receive:

- A cash prize of £100 jointly funded by Dorchester Town Council and Dorchester BID
- A printed finalist certificate

Visit **discoverdorchester.co.uk** to nominate your favourite

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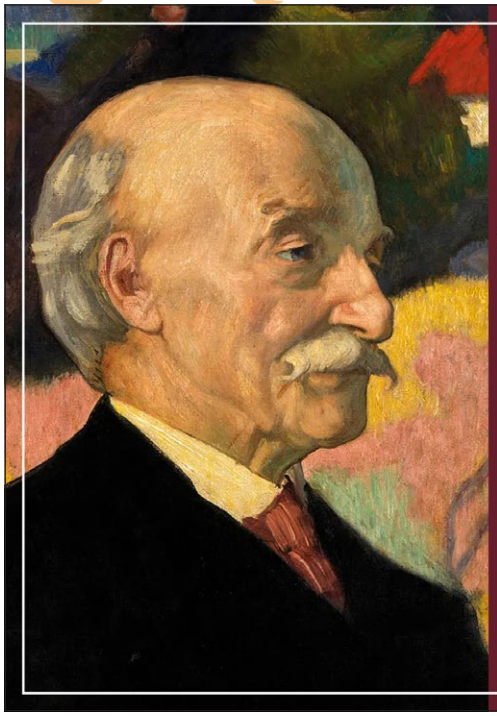
Dorset Christmas Ceramics Market

Unique handcrafted pottery from artisan makers

Free Entry



The Corn Exchange,
Dorchester
DT1 1HF
Saturday 5th December
10am - 4pm
@dorsetclaycooperative
www.dorsetclaycooperative.com



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What's On

11:00 **FESTIVE STREET STALLS**

11:00 **CRAFT FAIR**
Corn Exchange

11:00 **CLASSIC CAR CLUB**
High East Street

12:00 **SANTA HAT PARADE**
Leaving from the Old Tea House, top of High West Street

12:30 **CRACKER LIVE**
Outside St Peter's Church
- **KeeP 106**
- **Dorchester Rock Choir**
- **Dorchester Family Church Choir**
- **Nick Capaldi**

16:00 **CLOSE**

KeeP 106, Local and Community Radio, will be outside St Peter's Church from 12.00pm, keeping you up to date with events throughout the day, playing great music and managing Cracker Live.

Dorchester Rock Choir, led by vocal tutor, Sadie Kerslake, will again be performing at Cracker during the day.

St Peter's Church – Refreshments and "Crafts & Jigsaws" from 12pm.

United Church Dorchester will be providing carols, crafts and mince pies from 12pm to 2pm.

Santa's Grotto will be outside the Horse with the Red Umbrella .

...and lots more.

All performances subject to availability.



Rock Choir

Santa Hat Parade

Led by Santa

Meet: 11:45 (outside the Old Tea House)
Start: 12:00 Santa Hat Parade
End: 12:30 at St Peter's Church.

Join us – All welcome
Santa Hats provided





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Street Stalls

High West Street & Trinity Street

Ali's Homemade Produce
Ali Shawls
Almost Peachy
Amy's Crystals & Crafts
Ashleigh Olivia Crafts
Ava White Art
Bakes by Tess
Bambi's Bakes
Blundell Bakes
Bottle House Crafts
BrambleWood Soap
Buckshaw Sweets and Treats
Bumblebee Cottage
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Chris Frost Photography
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Dorset Magazine
Dorset Seaside Silver
Dorset Seaglass Jewellery
Dorset Shortbread
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Floozy Couture
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Redbridge Crafts
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RNLI
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Shroton Fair Gin
SJJ Art
South Paddocks
Succulent Difference
Sue's Handmade Dog Collars, Leads & Blankets
Starry Night Sewing
Taylor's Rehoming Centre
The Botanist Box
The Compton Candle Company
The Peacock Emporium
The Silver Shed
The Village Blacksmith
Tropic Skincare with Serena
UK Wearable Crystals
Viv Hughes
WaggyWolf
Wendy's
Weymouth 51
Wonderlust Wishes
Wooden Stag Interiors
Yeovil Blood Bikes











Coastland College

Happy Holidays to all of our Students, Staff, and Customers!

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Coastland.ac.uk
Welcome@coastland.ac.uk
01305 761100

Kingston Maurward Campus, Dorchester, DT2 8PY
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Wishing a
Happy Christmas and New Year
to our past, present and future clients!

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Craft Fair

Corn Exchange
11am to 4pm

CORN EXCHANGE (Ground Floor)

Black Ven Distillery
Buddy and Ben
Craftybird Designs
Curiosity Home Crafts
Handmade by Maureen
Figgy's Crafts
Grinning Dog Records
Jurassic Fudge
Keen & Crafty
Magic Meltz
Marjorie in Dorset
MJ loves crafting
Nashira Jewellery
Paddock21
Pumpkin Kat Creates
Rosemarys Handmade Homewares
SGCreative
Sue's Crafts
Sunshine et Buttercups
The Roarsome Hoodie Company
Utazo Spirits
Wax N Co
Woodturning by Barbara



CAFÉ AREA (Ground Floor)

Coastline Soaps & Skincare
Crochet By C
Dorchester Men's Shed
Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance
Dorset Nectar Cider
Kat's Crafts
Memory Lane
The Quiet Wild

TOWN HALL (First Floor)

Beguiling Bee's Emporium
Crafty Lyn
Eastment Woodworking
Flowers of Joy
Kate's Delicious Honey
Light Up Mushrooms
Love Your Rocks
Mac & Betsy
Made by Jem
Nick Dale Artist
Quirky Zebra
Reindeer with Sunglasses
Sally's Delightful Knits
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The Colliton Club would like to wish all our customers a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

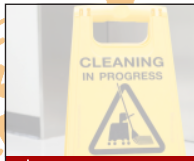
Membership is available to all at £10 per year plus members get 10% OFF ALL DRINKS!

Join us at the Colliton Club for NEW YEARS EVE with the SKIMMITY HITCHERS plus support act Kid Carpet

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Colliton House, Colliton Park, Dorchester
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As a proud local business, we're thankful for the continued support from our community. This holiday season, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our valued customers, dedicated local suppliers, and - most importantly - our incredible team here at Legg and Son.

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Blanchards Bailey

Looking back on Blanchards Bailey's first year partnership with Dorset County Hospital Charity

From our famous wheelbarrow raffle and creative office fundraising, to building site visits and art in our Dorchester office, Blanchards Bailey is marking the first anniversary of our partnership with Dorset County Hospital Charity; and showing our gratitude to everyone who has supported us along the way.

Over the past year, colleagues, clients and supporters have contributed through fundraising, volunteering and sponsorship, helping support hospital care for our Dorset community.

What does the money raised go towards?

Our partnership supports Dorset County Hospital Charity's £2.5 million Emergency and Critical Care Appeal, which will fund enhanced equipment and facilities for Dorset County Hospital's new Emergency Department and Critical Care Unit.

Ben Jones, Partner and Head of Marketing at Blanchards Bailey, said: *"Dorset County Hospital serves the communities where we live and work. Supporting its charity gives us a practical way to contribute to something that matters to our colleagues, our clients and the people who choose to visit the county we call home.*

"What has made this first year special is the enthusiasm of the people involved. Whether they have organised an office fundraiser, bought a raffle ticket or volunteered their time, each contribution has helped.

"We are grateful to everyone who has supported the partnership so far and look forward to building on that support in the year ahead."

Looking ahead to our second year

Our partnership continues with our colleagues setting ambitious targets across Blandford Forum, Shaftesbury, Dorchester and Weymouth offices supporting the appeal.



Thank you to everyone who has bought a raffle ticket, donated, volunteered or helped organise an activity. Your support has made this first year possible.

You can learn more about our charity partnership and find links to donate to the Emergency & Critical Care Appeal on our website at **blanchardsbailey.co.uk/about-us/charity**.

On behalf of the partners and staff at Porter Dodson, we wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

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Carols in the Gardens

17 December 2026 at 18:30

Nothing will get you in the mood for Christmas quite like an evening of Christmas classics!

Join us for a free carol concert in Borough Gardens, where you can enjoy live music and sing along to classic Christmas carols. Carol books will be provided, so everyone can take part. Mulled wine and snacks will be available to purchase, making it a cosy and enjoyable evening for all. It's a great chance to gather with the community and celebrate the festive season in a relaxed, friendly setting.

Organised by Friends of Borough Gardens and Dorchester Town Council.



A Victorian Christmas at Poxwell Manor

Traditional Dickensian "Christmas Carol" Entertainment



Date: Sunday, 20th December
Time: 2pm to 5pm
Cost: £30 THS members
£40 non-members
Venue: Poxwell Manor

Step back in time for a Victorian Christmas at Poxwell Manor. Join The Thomas Hardy Society for a fun, participatory adaptation of Charles Dickens' much loved cherished classic. The celebration concludes with joyful community singing and the sharing of festive crackers. Period costume is encouraged to enhance the festive atmosphere, though it is by no means compulsory.

Book Online: **hardysociety.org/events**







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