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Bideford

TOWN GUIDE
2023-2024



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Contents

A Very Warm Welcome.....	4	Charles Kingsley:	
Bideford is a Great Place To Be	4	A Famous Son	21
A Family Favourite with Good Reason	7	To Our Twin Town in America!	22
Charters and Arms	14	A Perfect Touring Base for all of North Devon	23
Twinning with our French Friends.....	14	Sports For All.....	25
Greetings from Manteo	15	Historic Pannier Market	26
Bideford Town Map	16/17	Interests and Commitments	26
Bideford Street Index.....	18/19	Points of Interest.....	28
Sir Richard Grenville: Elizabethan Adventurer	20	General Information	30

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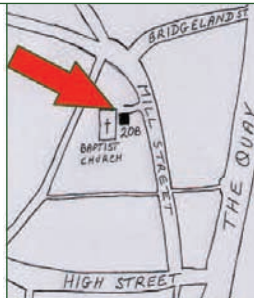
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Official *Bideford*

Town Guide
2023-2024

The Town Hall

A Very Warm Welcome

Bideford has been welcoming visitors for centuries. They have come by both road and sea. Our location, people, heritage and character continue to appeal to guests and residents alike.

This guide is intended to provide a snapshot of Bideford today while introducing the reader to our history and highlighting many of the aspects and elements of a town which should be seen and enjoyed.

Still a working port, our maritime heritage is well charted and, indeed we celebrate in 2023 a Charter from Elizabeth I dated 10th December 1573, permitting "that the Village and Manor of Bedyford is a free Borough by the style of Mayor, Aldermen and Chief Burgesses". And "to Grant the right to hold a weekly Market and three Fairs Annually."

Referred to by Charles Kingsley in 'Westward Ho!' noted in Tennyson's 'Revenge' and immortalised in the verse of Edward Capern, Bideford's postman-poet the "little white town" retains its ability to captivate and charm.

Welcome - Bideford looks forward to being your host.

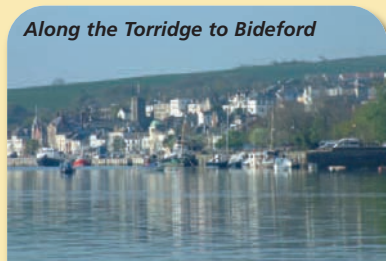


THE MAYOR OF BIDEFORD

Bideford is a Great Place To Be

modern times to hear and pass judgement on the wishes of the townsfolk. **Bideford Bike Show** is held on Whitsun Weekend and has grown enormously in recent years, with bikes from all over the country coming to Bideford to take part. There is something for everyone at this event with music and family fun too. In early June, a new Mayor is appointed, and a ceremony takes place in the Town Hall, followed on the Sunday by **The Mayor's Parade** and service in St Mary's Church. **Bideford Regatta** is a date in the South West Area Rowing championships and can be held between June and September, the Mayor hosts a reception on the Quay in a marquee with invited guests. **Bideford Fair** is a day for the family and takes place in June with a great selection of attractions, games, rides and stalls. A more recent and hugely popular event is the **Bideford Soapbox Derby** held in June on the Sunday closest to Father's Day. The town is abuzz with excitement to see the home-made go-karts hurtling down from the Pannier Market, along Grenville Street and down the steep High Street which has obstacles and jumps – hilarious fun. The Rotary Club **Water Festival** is

Along the Torridge to Bideford



generally held in July and is terrific fun for everyone, all making good use of the river, especially with the **Cardboard Boat Regatta!** **Bideford Music Day** in Victoria Park is very popular with all genres of music from local artistes, this event precedes **Bideford Carnival** which is the last of the big events before the evenings draw in ready for winter and that takes place traditionally on the second Saturday in September. The grand finale of the Carnival is the **Massed Pipes and Drums** parade which brings pipe and drum bands from all over the UK. It is a great finish to what is usually a marvellous afternoon and evening.



Crystal-like lights line Bideford Quay at Christmas time

On the first Saturday in December, the **Signing of the Lease** is another show of modest pageantry, celebrating the Town Council taking on the lease of the Pannier Market from the local Authority. The Mayor and Councillors dispense Mead and Mince pies to the populace. On the first Sunday in December it is time for show and sparkle with **Bideford's Christmas Lights Switch On**. This really is a day to remember, and the event attracts many thousands of people. The main streets which are closed to traffic are filled with surprises to delight and entertain the crowds – clowns, storytellers, wizardry, stilt walkers, and old-fashioned fairgrounds turn the town into a magical wonderland. The smell of baked potatoes, burgers, candy floss, hot doughnuts and toffee apples fills the air and mingles with the sound of carols sung by children from the local junior schools, as well as a road show. When darkness falls the crowd gathers to enjoy the stars of the show – the Christmas Lights being switched on. The atmosphere is warm and friendly, and it is a great family day.

These are the main events but of course Bideford has a variety of entertainments throughout the year. **Bideford Town Band**, Bideford's one and only Brass band, formed in 1853, plays on and performs at events all over North Devon such as fetes, weddings, civic events and carnivals as well as our own concerts of course.

Based adjacent to Victoria Park in their own band room, they rehearse and hold coffee mornings and other events.

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Bideford Town Band

The band continues to enjoy contest success led by our musical director Mark Durham and were, in fact, crowned West of England 4th Section Champions in 2022 and were runners-up at the National Championships in the same year.

They have a brass Training Academy which works with local schools which is a great way to recruit new players, but his works also for the not so young!

As you would expect the Band are a very friendly bunch but of course always need support. If you have an interest in any capacity either as a player or a supporter, do get in touch. You can find them on their Facebook page, website at www.bidefordtownband.co.uk or contact the secretary Becky on 01237 475653.

It is worth keeping an eye out for performances – details of appearances on the website or Facebook.

BIDEFORD 500 is a group run by local volunteers that concentrates on the town's significant heritage of the past 500 years. They arrange guided walks of the town and have produced a **Heritage Trail Guide** for three very informative walks, a great chance to explore some of the least well known, but equally as important areas of Bideford. More details can be found on their website www.bidefordheritage.co.uk

During the summer, rowing teams from across the region congregate in Bideford for the town's annual Regatta Day. This is one of Bideford's oldest sporting events with teams racing towards the Old Bridge.

THE HISTORY OF BIDEFORD REGATTA

Rowing on the River Torridge has been an established part of the town's history for at least 125 years. Recorded minutes show that a public meeting was held in the Town Hall on 27th May 1897 which was attended by a large number of people and some of those attending went on to form the committee where it was agreed that the regatta and sports in that year would be held on 25th August.

In later years the regatta has traditionally been held in early September and forms part of the West of England Championship season which at present involves regattas at 10 different locations around the South West of England.

The town currently boasts two rowing clubs - Bideford Amateur Rowing Club (founded in 1882 and known as the 'Reds') and Bideford Amateur Athletic Club (whose rowing section was founded in 1897 and are known as the 'Blues') both providing a healthy competition between them.

In 1948 Frank Day a prominent member of the Reds wrote a letter to the local newspaper about the forming of a ladies rowing club. As a result of this the Bideford and District Ladies Rowing Club was founded and among its founder Members were Mrs Plumtree, Mrs Grant, Miss J Remington and Miss S Squires. Their boathouse originally was a lean-to next to the 'Reds' but when the Post Office was built in approximately 1956 the club moved to Charles Avenue. In the early 1960's the ladies club ceased to exist when the members and their equipment amalgamated with the Blues.

Trophies for each of the main races in the regatta were donated both by locals in the town and by the two rowing clubs. Some of these cups are still competed for although a number have been withdrawn due to their value. In particular the Orr-Ewing Challenge Cup which was won outright by the Blues and the Bideford Regatta Challenge Cup won outright by the Reds are two examples of the trophies which date back to the early days of the regatta. Although the practice has now ceased it was also commonplace for prize money to be given by the regatta committee to the top crews in each of the races.

In 1955 a national rowing competition was held on the River Torridge in Bideford. Senior coxed fours championship crews from various parts of the country came together to row against each other for the chance to win the prestigious Daily Herald Cup. The 'Reds' crew of Tony Way,

Wally Lee, Lou Bright and Ken Hearn together with cox George Tithecott represented the West region in this race. With thousands of excited people lining the Quay to watch this event it was the "Red's" who held off an exciting last challenge from a North London crew to win the race by three quarters of a length.



The Mayor of Bideford and other local dignitaries from the town are regular attendees at the Regatta and together with Mayors from other towns in the South West come to watch and enjoy the spectacle that rowing on the River Torridge still provides.



MS Oldenburg – Morning Departure to Lundy

A Family Favourite with Good Reason

It is Bideford's good fortune that the elements tend to smile on North Devon. You may have to contend with a bracing breeze, laced with the salt of the nearby sea, but, by English standards, it is an enviable place to live and work. And, of course, this is not lost upon the thousands of visitors who return each year to enjoy the charm and character of the town and surrounding area. The tourism figures show Bideford is a particular favourite with families, indeed all age groups, and that is, perhaps, not surprising when you consider the "season" here hardly ends.

Do not be misled by the town's Victorian facade. It is a perky little town, steeped in history - true, but fully alive to the modern needs of today's tourists. Bideford is a working port with substantial throughput of aggregates, raw materials and clay extracts, which are delivered by road for loading onto modern, purpose-built container vessels. Alongside these container vessels there is a small but flourishing local fishing industry as well as the regular service of MS Oldenburg serving as a vital link to Lundy Island and providing pleasure cruises for tourists throughout the season.

First mention in the history books of the Quay was in 1619 when there were beaches at the river's edge. As the ship-building trade boomed, the Quay was developed and there are still marker stones in the pavement as a testament to that reconstruction.

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Bideford's historic Long Bridge at low water, looking downstream

Sir Walter Raleigh is believed to have brought his first cargo of tobacco to Bideford and the town soon became one of the largest tobacco-trading centres of that period.

Local merchants also imported vast quantities of wool during the reign of Charles I and had so great a share of the trade with Newfoundland that, in 1699, they sent out more ships than any other in England apart from London and Topsham.

Spanning the Torridge is Bideford's most notable land (or water) mark, the ancient **Long Bridge**, with its 24 arches. First built in about 1280 as a pack horse bridge, it gave up its wooden origins centuries ago and, in its current metamorphosis, is a sturdy, stone structure. The original wooden bridge replaced a ford, and it is generally believed that this ford was the source of the town's name (by the ford). It was in the 16th century that a genuine attempt to establish the crossing as a monument of permanence was made. It was rebuilt in stone and widened, thus taking on the shape which is now familiar today.

It underlined the need for another crossing to share the load of burgeoning traffic and so, in 1987, the new **Torridge Bridge** was opened and now there is no more spectacular sight of the town than that which greets you as you drive over the new bridge (and even now it is still called the new bridge). Appealing craft and gift shops jostle for your attention in the heart of the town. Character-filled pubs and tempting eateries vie for the contents of your pocket (traditional fish and chips or the humble pasty to a sumptuous cream tea to local shellfish). Notable moments of Bideford's history are recorded in the museum which forms part of the splendid Burton Art Gallery in Victoria Park.



Torridge Bridge is still the "new" bridge

The Burton at Bideford Art Gallery and Museum is a free community venue open to everyone to visit. Featuring three galleries, it is also home to the Bideford Museum and Tourist Information Centre. With the addition of a Craft Gallery, Shop and Café it is the perfect venue to soak up the very best in arts, culture and local history on your visit to Bideford.



The Burton at Bideford

The Burton plays host to Local, National and International shows and has been showcasing and nurturing local artists ever since it was set up over 70 years ago by Thomas Burton, a local businessman, and Hubert Coop, a successful artist. The Burton regularly showcases its own Permanent Collection and gallery three is renowned for pushing a programme of contemporary ceramics.

The Museum illustrates Bideford's rich historical past, challenging new narratives with old objects and their relevance in today's society. The Craft gallery showcases the very best in contemporary art and craft from a host of talented artists. Complete your visit at the Burton shop and treat yourself or a loved one to a range of beautiful cards, books, gifts and homeware.

The Gallery is open all year round and entrance is free with all donations gratefully received. For more information please visit: www.theburton.org

For those looking to enjoy a picturesque stroll the **Tarka Trail** (once Bideford's railway track) is a meandering track stretching for 180 miles along the Taw/Torridge estuary and inland – an irresistible attraction. The tranquil countryside is obviously a major reason and routes to the north towards Barnstaple, and south towards Great Torrington, are tackled by visitors of all ages.

As you might have guessed, the trail is named after the story of **Tarka the Otter** and, although rare, these endearing creatures are still to be seen by the patient observer. You can join Tarka, the bronze statue who sits at the south end of the Quay, to just sit and enjoy the river going by.

If you would like to enjoy a breathtakingly beautiful view of Bideford, the river and the surrounding countryside then take a walk up to **Chudleigh Fort** over the Long Bridge to East-the-Water (the climb will be worth it!) This eight-gun fort was erected in 1643 in the Civil War by Captain Chudleigh to defend Bideford. It is a five-sided enclosure of unequal sides, the longest being 25 metres and the shortest side 8 metres. Largely rebuilt in the 19th Century, it is now an ornamental garden and well worth a visit. The **Chudleigh Memorial** was erected in 1921, after WWI, to commemorate those Bidefordians lost in that war, and dedicated to the people of Bideford. A Roll of Honour commemorated the Bideford Fallen.



The Memorial, given to the people of Bideford in 1921

A stroll down from Chudleigh Fort you will see the old railway line and **Bideford Railway Heritage Centre**. Bideford lost its railway connection in 1965 and although the railway continued as a freight line until 1982, the line was dismantled shortly afterwards.

The old railway route now serves as the popular Tarka Trail footpath/cycle-way but the railway hasn't been forgotten and for the past 30 years the former Railway Station has been open as the Bideford Railway Heritage Centre.

Sited in the Town Centre at the east end of Bideford's historic Longbridge, it has been restored by volunteers, complete with re-laid track, a rebuilt Signal Box and a museum based in a historic railway parcels van.



Railway Gala

A 1950s railway carriage sits on the track and offers refreshments, either take-away or sit inside the historic railway vehicle for a pasty and a cup of tea!

On selected days the Group offer cab rides in their 1950s diesel locomotive along the short length of re-laid railway track with views down to the River Torridge.

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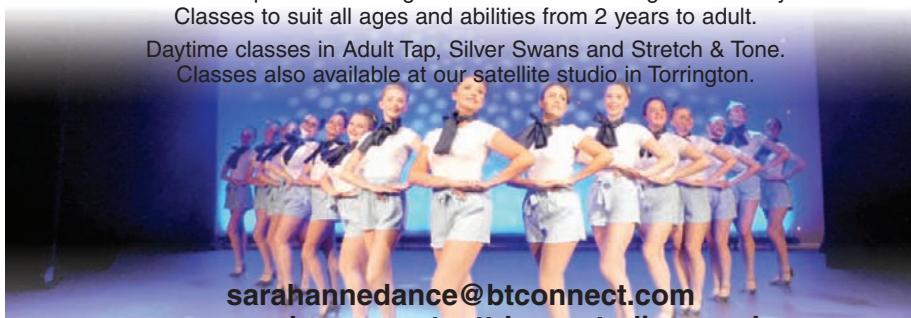
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Restored and Resplendent

The Museum is run entirely by volunteers and is open throughout the year (weather permitting) 10-4pm. Volunteer working parties are held each Wednesday from 10am. For further details, please visit www.bidefordrailway.co.uk

Back down in the Town, **Bideford Library** is a bustling, friendly library run by the reading charity Libraries Unlimited, housed in a beautiful Grade II listed building, established in 1905 as a gift from the famous library benefactor Andrew Carnegie. The library is open five days a week and offers the full range of library services for adults and children.

Adults can enjoy a variety of fiction, non-fiction and audio books to hire. If you are looking for a quiet place to study, the non-fiction room has tables and public-access computers, with free Wi-Fi throughout the building. The public-access PC's give members two hours free usage each day, printing and scanning facilities are also available.

When you join Bideford Library you haven't joined just one library - you have joined all 54 libraries throughout Devon! So, if you can't find the book you want you can request items from the other Devon libraries either online, by phone or in-person.

Children have their own library at Bideford, with a fantastic range of books and audio books available for tots to teens. The friendly library staff host regular Storytimes, Lego club, crafts and lots more fun activities.

Your Libraries Unlimited membership also gives you access to digital services such as e-books, e-audio books, magazine and newspaper downloads, music and online reference materials.

Libraries Unlimited was set up as a charity in 2016 and aims to bring ideas, imagination, creativity and knowledge to enrich and build thriving communities.

For more information about Bideford Library do pop in and see us, follow us on Facebook or check out the webpage devonlibraries.org.uk

Perhaps the place to read your book or newspaper is **Victoria Park**, so named to commemorate the reign of Queen Victoria and officially opened in 1912. On the entrance gates can be seen the old Bideford Seal which was originally in use more than 400 years ago.

Nine cannon, believed to be captured from the Spaniards in the Armada, surround the bandstand and neatly tended flower beds adorn the park to emphasise the peaceful surroundings.

Within the park is a tree planted on September 1, 1944, by Lt Col F Holmes, of the US Army, as a token of friendship. It marked the good relations between the residents of Bideford and the officers, warrant officers and NCOs who were stationed in the town from 1940 to 1944. It was joined by a further gesture of friendship when the Twinning Association in Landivisiau presented the town with a shrub. Another commemorative feature are the rose beds dedicated to the late Diana, Princess of Wales.

By the War Memorial is the Roll of Honour of those from Bideford who lost their lives in the First World War. This was set in place to commemorate 100 years since the end of WWI (in 2018). A new Memorial was added in 2020 with the following inscription: "In Memory of All Civilians Killed as a result of Conflict and War" and a further Roll of Honour for the Second World War and Other Conflicts was installed in 2022.



Victoria Park, popular with everyone

On the path outside the Park, in the middle of the railings, is the tribute to HM Queen Elizabeth II on her 90th birthday. The Town Council arranged a procession through the town, headed by the Mayor and the Town Crier made a proclamation. The event was filmed and sent to Her Majesty. The Council received a thank you back from the Palace.

A Millennium Time Capsule is buried close to the park entrance and holds amongst other memorabilia from the year 2000, tapes and messages to serve as a record of the period in Bideford. Extensive play and recreational facilities including an open-air pool for young children and a large fort can also be enjoyed. The outdoor Gym Equipment is very popular with

*Restoration in progress
that you can visit*

all ages and has become part of some sports enthusiast's fitness regime.

Take a stroll along Landvisiau Walk (heading north) and you will see **ss Freshspring** – a historic steamship, recognised as being a vessel of National Importance. Built in 1946, she is the last of 14 Fresh Class water carriers.



The steamship is being restored and managed by the charity, SS Freshspring Trust and has been based in Bideford since 2016. Local volunteers are always on hand to show off some of their handiwork and more volunteers are always welcome.

The fascinating, historically important SS Freshspring is open to the general public on Sundays (11am-4pm) from April through to October (see website www.ssfreshspring.co.uk to check these details). The ship welcomes all ages, children can board for no charge and the cost is kept to a minimum for adults. There are often events through the year and children's activities, so check these out on Facebook. Wheelchair access is available to some areas and a virtual reality experience means you can take a look around even if you can't climb the ladders or step into the cabins!

Visitors can enjoy a self-guided ship tour, interactions with the knowledgeable onboard team as well as experiencing the 10-minute, 360/VR film viewed via Oculus headsets. The experience immerses you in a feeling of what life would have been like onboard ss Freshspring during 1947 and you can be part of things as the crew prepare for their first mission to Malta.

Group appointments can be made outside of opening hours. Please contact info@ssfreshspring.co.uk for more information if you'd like to make a group booking or to arrange a talk and VR experience at your own location.

A walk around the town will reveal the following areas of interest, starting at Long Bridge:

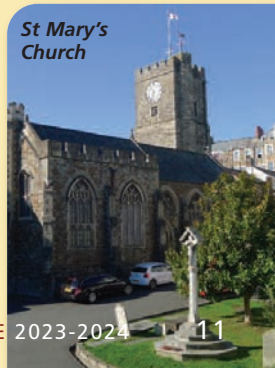
Bridge Buildings: Built on the site of the previous Bridge Hall, the premises were opened in 1882 by Sir George Stucley and retains a sundial from the former hall dated 1692. Once the home of Torrridge District Council, it is now in private ownership.

Municipal Building (Town Hall): This Elizabethan-style building was constructed in two phases, the first in 1850 when the rear section was erected. It contains the room known as the Town Hall (which was previously the Bideford Magistrates Court). The section, which fronts the riverside, incorporates the lower offices, with the Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour above. It was opened in 1906. Internally, these rooms have been "tied-in" very well with the original building.

St Mary's Church: This is the third church to be built on the site. Initially, there was a Saxon building, followed by a Norman church, built in 1259. That was demolished, with the exception of the tower, after it fell into disrepair and the present building was consecrated in 1865. Special celebrations were held in 2015 to mark the 150th anniversary. The font has been dated to about 1080 and, as such, is regarded as the oldest relic in the town. The tower is medieval. The Grenville family, lords of the manor of Bideford, were associated with St Mary's Church from as early as 1200 and a memorial to Sir Thomas Grenville (who died in 1513) can be seen, bearing the shields of the family. Thomas Grenville was the grandfather of Sir Richard Grenville and great grandfather of Sir Roger Grenville who drowned when the Mary Rose sank in 1545.

Bridge Street: This steep road has housed many different dwellings and churches over the years. At No 1 you will find a plaque commemorating the building as being the home of Sir Richard Grenville. When this house was being renovated after its previous use as a pub, coats of arms were found on the walls in one of the rooms, flanking the fireplace – a form of decoration in those times. Now the building is private residences.

Grenville Street: Formerly known as Market Street, because it led up to the market place, the street was eventually widened and renamed after the local family. During alterations, a vein of culm (anthracite) was exposed. Culm was mined locally from the end of the 18th century, mainly for use in lime burning, but a type of paint, known as "Bideford Black", was also made. Grenville Street, and indeed part of Buttgarden Street, were dressed up and transformed into film sets for The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society.



**St Mary's
Church**

Silver Street: Another of Bideford's oldest streets, with interesting designs on the frontages of a number of houses – in particular a cherub and an eagle. History recalls that John Wesley preached on the corner of Silver Street and Honestone Street on Monday, October 3, 1757.

Bridgeland Street: A fine street this, with several distinctive houses, designed about 1690 for the wealthy merchants at the height of the tobacco trade with the New World. The “Red House” is of note, constructed with tiles to resemble brick work, thus avoiding the brick tax of the day. The Masonic Hall was the home of Rose Salterne, a character in Charles Kingsley's Westward Ho! and close by is Lavington Chapel, with its twin spires.

Prospect Place: Situated along the Quay between Jubilee Square and Bridgeland Street, easily identified by the presence of a café with tables outside. This delightful spot is perhaps so named because the view along the river would see the arrival of trade and so good prospects!

Rope Walk: Ropes up to 500 yards long were made in the street which runs off the Quay. The sailing ships which came into the town needed all they could get and posts on which the ropes were stretched stood along the whole length of the road. Strand Collar Works were built in 1898 with a frontage of 320 feet and the premises provided work for 800 employees until it closed in 1922. As you enter Rope Walk from the Post Office, glance up to your right and you will see “The Ropemaker” looking down – he is one of the many metal sculptures that have been installed.

An interesting property in the roadway is Strand House, built in the 17th century. Dr Ellis Pearson, the local medical officer of health, lived here from 1902 for about 50 years. He was the pioneer of radiology in the West Country and operated a gas-powered X-ray machine at his home.

Allhalland Street: Long before the adjacent Quay was established, Allhalland Street provided the only route from the riverside to the parish church. The street contains the town's smallest house, consisting of one room up and one down. Also nearby is the Merchant's House.

Mill Street: This is one of the main shopping streets of the town and sells a whole range of items including arts and crafts, fresh local produce, jewellery and unusual curios for the home. There are cafes, restaurants and takeaways serving food to suit every taste and traditional inns and theme bars where you can partake of the local hostelry. If you look up, however, you will notice how older facades have survived above the modern plate glass frontage and a mix of old and new can be enjoyed. Mill Street runs parallel to The Quay and may have been the site of the earliest quay with the gardens and warehouses of its properties running down to the ancient riverside.

The Pill: This area was formerly a creek off the River Torridge and clay was unloaded here for the potteries. The land was reclaimed, and Victoria Park built upon the adjacent marshland. Between 1901 and 1917, the Bideford, Westward Ho! and Appledore Railway ran along The Pill, and it was not until 1927 that Kingsley Road was built and opened. In 2015 the Town Council commissioned an extensive renovation of the Port Memorial, with terracotta plaques adorning the stone depicting the maritime history of Bideford. Smart paving and extra seating have refreshed this area of the town and a time capsule has been planted, to mark the occasion. A raised flower bed has been formed and is planted each year depicting an event or occasion.



Hanging Baskets adorn Cooper Street

Cooper Street: Most recently regarded as the “gateway to Bideford”, this street has its origins steeped in history, and so named for the coopering of barrels that was conducted along its narrow thoroughfare. Hanging baskets in the summer and Christmas trees during the Festive time, adorn this street but all year round four characters look down at the comings and goings, from the bottom there is the Cooper with his barrel, then the Merchant, a short way up is Sir Richard Grenville and at the very top is the Salmon Fisher.

The Cooper welcomes you to Cooper Street



The Royal Hotel: Few buildings in Bideford can boast such an historically interesting and varied career as this hotel at the east end of the Long Bridge.

In 1698, the premises were built as the Colonial Buildings by a wealthy merchant, John Davie, as his private residence. In time it became the town's workhouse, prison, and now, finally, an hotel.

Within the building there are panelled rooms with moulded plaster ceilings, ornamented with foliage, figures of cherubs, festoons of fruit and flowers, serpents and birds. There is a magnificent oak staircase which leads up to the Kingsley drawing room, where, it is said, Charles Kingsley wrote part of 'Westward Ho!'

In more recent years, the building has had a wider sphere of importance. In its "Green Room" is to be found the official plaque of "Combined Operations", recording the fact that many far-reaching decisions were made there by officers during World War II. In 1949, a plaque was also placed on the building commemorating its origins as the Colonial Building.

Lavington Church: In about 1648 a section of the local parish church left the congregation. Initially, they had no place of worship, but, in 1696, a site in Bridgeland Street was leased from the Bridge Trust and a building erected known as "The Great Meeting." Eventually, it was decided to build a new chapel, and, in consequence, the present Lavington Church was built on the site. It was opened on October 26, 1856, as a memorial to Rev Samuel Lavington, who had a long and noble ministry within the former church.

Buttgarden Street: The origin of this street's name has two possibilities – it is suggested that archers fired their arrows from butts in the area across the valley at targets on the opposite hillside or, quite simply, that the street abutted the other streets in the town. The older buildings in the street date from about 1670. The former veterinary practice premises were purpose-built. Many properties in the street are in the ownership of the Bridge Trust.

Visitors to the town can also get to know all the nooks and crannies by following the **Heritage Trail**. This leads you around the town giving an insight into some of the colourful and surprising stories that have made Bideford such a fascinating place. Copies of the Trail are available from the Tourist Information Centre, or you can go online for further information at www.bidefordheritage.co.uk

LUNDY ISLAND

Enjoy a wonderful day trip

Three miles long and half a mile wide, Lundy lies 10 miles off the coast of North Devon where the Atlantic Ocean meets the Bristol Channel. Sail on our classic passenger ship, *MS Oldenburg*, and have 4-6 hours to explore this beautiful island.



Bookings: 01271 863636

For more information and timetables visit www.lundyisland.co.uk
info@lundyisland.co.uk

Look out for our Vans on
Bideford Quay and
Around North Devon

Hocking's

North Devon's Bronze
Medal Winning Dairy
Cream Ices

www.hockingsicecream.co.uk



*Bideford
Town's Crest*

Charters and Arms

BIDEFORD has several charters and arms to its name, on view in the Town Hall, as well as housing several notable paintings and pieces of silver. Guided tours for parties are by appointment only with the office and organised by the mace bearer, with donations welcomed towards the Mayor's charity.

ARMS OF THE EARL OF BATH:

Sir Bevil Grenville, the grandson of Sir Richard, fought in the English Civil War (1642 - 1652). He died as a result of injuries sustained in the Battle of Lansdown in 1643 and, in recognition of his service, Charles I bestowed upon his son, John, the Earldom of Bath in 1661. This title became extinct in 1711. These arms were restored by Cllr D Vickers, a former mayor of Bideford.

ROYAL CHARTER, 1573:

This was obtained for Bideford by Sir Richard Grenville from Queen Elizabeth I, creating Bideford as a borough with the power to elect a mayor, alderman and burgesses and permitted Bideford to hold a weekly market and annual fairs.

ROYAL CHARTER, 1609:

This was granted to Bideford by James I on his accession to the throne – increasing the numbers of aldermen and burgesses. It further granted a Town Seal and the power to make bye-laws.

ROYAL PARDON, 1643:

Charles I granted this charter on the surrender of the town of Bideford to him in the Civil War on August 28, 1643.

FRAMED BIDEFORD CREST OVER DAIS:

This is a hand-stitched representation of the Town's official crest and hangs above the Mayor's chair in the Council Chamber.

PLAQUE OF ROYAL ARMS (FRONT OF BALCONY):

The plaque denotes the authority to hold courts within the Town Hall.

PAINTING OF THE ROYAL COAT OF ARMS OF KING GEORGE II

This was discovered secreted in a small room at the top of the Town Hall, and at the time it was hoped that it could be restored. It dates from George II (1742) and was a gift to the Corporation in 1936 by Mrs Milsom in memory of her husband who had been a rating officer for the Borough.

The Coat of Arms was restored in 2015 by local art restorer, Sophie Brummitt who found the letter of provenance. The painting now hangs in pride of place in the Council Chamber.



*George II's Coat of Arms
beautifully restored to
its former glory*



Landivisiau
Capitale du cheval

The Crest for Landivisiau

Twinning with our French Friends

Bideford has been twinned with the French town of Landivisiau in Brittany since 1976. Landivisiau is situated about 25 kilometres south of the ferry port of Roscoff.

Very strong links with Landivisiau have been built up over the last thirty five years by the Bideford Twinning Association which organises the twinning on behalf of the Town Council.

Each year members participate in the two exchange visits (one in each country) over a long



The Twinners enjoy Morris Dancing

weekend. These trips provide an opportunity to experience French culture whilst renewing old friendships and making new ones. The Association also provides an annual award to a young person visiting France and coordinates occasional visits by sporting associations.

The name 'Landivisiau' first appeared in 1292. It started as a monastic foundation with the building of a castle which was destroyed during the 16th century. The trading of heavy horses began in the 18th century and was very successful and every Whitsun there is a large horse fair in the town. The most popular breed being the Percheron, and a statue of one stands proudly outside the Town Hall. Landivisiau is an excellent place to base your holiday in France from – to find out more visit www.landivisiau.fr.

Physical evidence of Bideford's pride in its twinning can be seen in various places – the charters, horse statues, gifts and paintings received from Landivisiau held in the Town Hall, Landivisiau Walk alongside the river, the signpost to Landivisiau behind the Kingsley Statue, the French pillar box outside the Burton Art Gallery and Museum, the plaques in Victoria Park, and a display in the Pannier Market.

2021 saw a landmark with the Bideford-Landivisiau Twinning Association reaching its 45th Anniversary and in 2022, to celebrate this event the Landivisiau Twinners visited Bideford on August Bank Holiday. An evening of celebration was hugely enjoyed by all, with wine, cider, canapés and Morris dancing – special gifts were exchanged and everyone had great fun. A minute's silence was observed for the former Mayor of Bideford, Mr Clifford Coates, who started the Twinning in 1976.

If you would like to join the Association please visit bidefordtwinning.webplus.net.



Manteo Jetty with the iconic Marshes Light

Greetings from Manteo



Crest

The Town of Manteo, located on Roanoke Island on the north eastern part of the Outer Banks of North Carolina is a waterfront community that was incorporated in 1899. The downtown waterfront wraps around Shallowbag Bay and is a welcome harbour to those coming by boat and on foot. It is a lively town with delightful waterfront shops, eateries and historical sites.

Manteo is named after one of the Native Americans that befriended Raleigh's lost colony is the metropolis of the Outer Banks. Its appearance today reflects the past history of the first settlers, the fishing and boating industry, and waterfront transportation and local businesses. It was known as a busy wharf with steamers coming into port with supplies, mail and visitors.

Manteo today still offers a lovely place to visit, relax and enjoy. Along the downtown waterfront places of history can be found with the Marshes Lighthouse and the Roanoke Island Maritime Museum featuring the Creef Davis Boathouse known for the beginning of wooden boatbuilding on Roanoke Island. While there you can always look up to the sky and see the weather flag that is flying from the restored US Weather Bureau tower. This tower played an important role in the late 1800's when radio was the only communication on the island.

"In Manteo, if you to take a moment to say hello, you may well make a friend."

For further information and to view the webcam : <http://www.townofmanteo.com/>



H Bideford District Hospital	P Parking	WC Toilets
Pedestrianised Road	Tarka Trail	Passenger Ferry

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- 1 Baptist Church
- 2 Bethel Church (Evangelical)
- 3 Bideford College & Devon Hall Theatre
- 4 Bideford Town Mission
- 5 Bowling Clubs
- 6 Burton Art Gallery and Museum
- 7 Chudleigh Fort
- 8 Football Ground
- 9 Kenwith Valley Nature Reserve
- 10 Methodist Church
- 11 Rugby Ground
- 12 Pannier Market
- 13 Post Office
- 14 Bideford Railway Heritage Centre
- 15 Roman Catholic Church
- 16 St Mary's Parish Church
- 17 Torridge District Council Offices
- 18 Town Hall and Library
- 19 United Reformed Church
- 20 Victoria Park
- 21 Pollyfield Centre
- 22 MS Oldenburg for Lundy
- 23 SS Freshspring

Bideford

BIDEFORD STREET INDEX

Buckleigh Road	A1	Cooper Street	D3
A386 Clovelly Road	B4 / C4	Coronation Road	C4 / D4
A39 Atlantic Highway	A3 / A2 / B2 / C1 / D1 / E1 / F1	Cottingham Crescent	D3
Abbots Drive	F4	Devonshire Park	D4
Abbotsham Road	A3 / B3 / C3	Dursley Way	B3 / C3
Acacia Close	B3	Dymond Road	C3
Adrian Close	D2	Elm Grove	D3
Alexandra Terrace	D2	Elmdale Terrace	D2
Allhalland Street	D3	Ethelwynne Brown Close	E3
Alverdiscott Road	F4	Eton Close	C3
Ash Plants Close	B3	Ferndown Close	B3
Avon Road	E4	First Raleigh	C2
Ayres Close	E3 / E4	Fordlands Crescent	C2
B3233	E1	Four Acres	B3
Backaborough Lane	C4	Gammaton Road	F4
Barnstaple Street	E3	Geneva Court	C3
Barton Tors	E4 / F4	Geneva Place	C3
Beech Bank	B4	Glen Gardens	C2 / D2
Belvoir Road	C3	Glenburnie Road	D2
Bideford Bridge	D3	Glenfield Road	D2
Bowden Green	B4	Glentorr Road	D2
Brecon Close	F4	Goaman Road	F4
Brennacott Road	B4	Graynfyld Drive	E3
Bridge Plats Way	B3	Grange Road	E3 / E4
Bridge Street	D3	Grenville Estate	B4 / C4
Bridgeland Street	D3	Grenville Street	D3
Broadlands	F4	Hamilton Close	C4
Brookfield Street	E4	Hanson Park	D1 / D2
Brookfields	C4	Heathfield Road	E3 / E4
Bull Hill	D4	Heywood Road	C2 / D1
Buttgarden Street	D3	High Park Close	B4
Capern Road	C4	High Street	D3
Cedar Way	B4	High View	C4
Chanters Lane	D2	Higher Gunstone	D3
Chestnut Drive	B4	Hillcrest Road	F4
Chingswell Street	D3	Hilltop Road	B2 / C2
Chopes Close	F4	Honestone Street	D3
Chubb Road	E4 / F4	Hyfield Place	D3
Chudleigh Avenue	E4	Karen Close	F4
Churchill Road	E4 / F4	Kenwith Road	C2
Clewood Drive	F4	Kenwith View	B3
Clifton Street	E4	King Street	D3
Cliveden Road	F4	Kingsley Road	D2 / D3
Clovelly Close	C4	Kingsley Street	D3
Clovelly Gardens North	C4	Lane Field Road	B3
Coldharbour	D3	Lansdowne Terrace	C3
		Laurel Avenue	B3 / B4

Lenwood Park	C2	Orchard Gardens	D2
Lime Grove	C3 / D3	Orchard Hill	D2
Littlefield	B3	Orchard Rise	D2
Little Meadow Way	B3 / C3	Osborne Close	B3
Lombard Close	B4	Park Avenue	D2 / D3
Love Lane	C3	Park Lane	D2
Lower Gunstone	D3	Pitt Lane	D3
Lower Meddon Street	D3 / D4	Pynes Lane	C4
Main Road	E1 / E2	Quarry Close	B3
Malvern Way	B3	Queen Street	D3
Manteo Way	E2 / F4	Railway Terrace	E4
Market Park	D3	Raleigh Hill	B1 / C2
Marland Terrace	C4 / D4	Rectory Park	C3 / D3
Marlborough Court	D2	Ropewalk	D3
Marlen Court	D4	Rowe Close	C4
Meadow Place	B4	Royston Road	C3 / C4
Meadowville Road	D2	Sentry Corner	E4
Meddon Street	D3 / D4	Silver Street	D3
Merryfield Road	E3	Slade	B3 / C3
Metherell Road	C3 / C4	Solomon Drive	C4 / d4
Middleton Road	C2 / C3	South Avenue	F4
Mill Street	D3	Southcott Road	C2
Milton Place	C3	Southfield Road	E3 / E4
Mines Road	F3 / F4	Southwood Drive	D2
Monks Close	F4	Stanbridge Park	B3
Montague Place	C4	Stucley Road	B4 / C4
Moreton Avenue	B4	Sunnyside	E4
Moreton Park Road	B3 / B4	Tennacott Heights	F4
Mount Pleasant	E2	The Quay	D3
Mount Raleigh Avenue	C2	The Strand	D3
Myrtle Gardens	D3	Torridge Bridge	E1
Myrtle Grove	D3	Torridge Close	E4
New Road	D4	Torridge Hill	D4
New Street	D3	Torridge Mount	E4
Newport Terrace	E4	Torrington Lane	E4
Newton Road	D2	Torrington Street	D4 / E4
Nigala Close	C2	Trent Close	F4
North Avenue	F4	Upcott Hill	D4
North Road	D3	Upton Road	E4
North View Hill	C3	Valley View	B3
Northam Road	D2 / D3	Victoria Gardens	D3
Northdene	C2	Victoria Grove	D3
Northdown Drive	C3	Water Park Road	B3
Northdown Road	A2 / B2 / B3 / C3 / D3	West View Avenue	E3
Northfield Road	E3	Willow Grove	B4
North View Avenue	C3 / D3		
Nutaberry Hill	D4 / E4		
Ochil Close	F4		
Old Barnstaple Road	E3 / F3		
Old Town	C3 / C4 / D3		

Sir Richard Grenville Elizabethan Adventurer

Portrait of Sir Richard Grenville held in the Town Hall



The Grenville family were Lords of the Manor of Bideford from the 11th century until the title was handed over to the Town Council in the late 17th Century. Sir Richard was born in Bideford on 15th June 1542 at the Grenville Manor House in Bridge Street. His father drowned aboard the 'Mary Rose' in 1545. He married local girl Mary St Leger in 1565. Between 1566 and 1568, our Sir Richard distinguished himself fighting the Ottoman Empire in Hungary. On his return he set about creating the Port of Bideford and the Town Council (of which he was an alderman), following his application for a Charter in 1572; which is now in the Burton Art Gallery (with a copy in the Town Hall). He was also heavily engaged with developing Buckland Abbey (later to become the home of Sir Francis Drake.)

In 1574 Sir Richard purchased a ship with the intent of sailing around the world to plunder the Spanish Assets in South America and to find a short cut to the Spice Islands. The Privy Council declined his request. His plans were later used by Sir Francis Drake in his renowned voyage of 1577 – 1580.

In 1585, Sir Richard was called upon by his cousin, Sir Walter Raleigh, to lead the Colonisation of America. His attempts and exploits over the next four years, included the settling of 117 men, women and children on what is now the town of Manteo on Roanoke Island, North Carolina. This may yet prove that Bideford is home to the true founding fathers of America, 33 years before the 'Mayflower' set sail. Legacies from this period of Sir Richard's life include: the Cannons in Victoria Park, which almost certainly came from the 'Santa Maria De Vincenze' a Spanish treasure ship he captured off Bermuda in 1585; a Native American ('Rawly') whose remains now lie in St Mary's Churchyard as the first Native American buried on English soil. A plaque commemorates this friend of Sir Richard's; and the fleet Sir Richard sent from Bideford to fight the Spanish Armada in 1588; (the third largest from any port in England; but which had been intended to resupply Roanoke Island.)

Sir Richard was killed at the Battle of Flores in 1591. His legacy was the Port here in Bideford, which went on to import thousands of tons of tobacco from America and similarly to export vast amounts of pottery back to the burgeoning settlements in New England, Virginia and North Carolina. Studies in America confirm that the trade driven by Bideford was largely responsible for creating the American Economy.



*Rawley, reputedly
the first Native
American in England*



*Charles
Kingsley's Statue*

Charles Kingsley: A Famous Son

In 1854, the famous Devon author, Charles Kingsley, came to Bideford, hired a house at the end of the Strand, and wrote his best-seller 'Westward Ho!' - or to give the work its elaborate full title: 'Westward Ho! Or The Voyages and Adventures of Sir Amyas Leigh, Knight of Burrough, in the County of Devon, in the reign of Her Most Glorious Majesty, Queen Elizabeth, Rendered into Modern English'. Kingsley also wrote the classic children's story 'The Water-Babies' and other books, but the notoriety brought to Bideford by the swash-buckling, sea-faring characters from the Elizabethan age depicted in 'Westward Ho!' raised the profile of the town to a wider world.

He eloquently described it as "the little white town... which slopes upwards from its broad tide river." So successful was it, that readers came to Bideford as early tourists on the newly installed railway from Exeter to see the real sites used by Kingsley for his story's setting - thus starting the town's tourist industry.

In March 1903 Mayor E. Tattersill set up the Kingsley Memorial Committee which decided on 'something to look at' i.e. a statue rather than a building named after the author. By June funds were coming in and the Mayor suggested placing the statue where today's library now stands - even though one councillor suggested it might look like an extension of St. Mary's graveyard! By May 1904 some £400 had been collected and the Committee were inspecting models of the proposed statue and proposing to site it at the bottom of High Street on The Quay facing up the hill.

In August of that year Joseph Whitehead's design was accepted - this being an 8 foot high Sicilian marble statue with a 9foot high Portland Stone plinth at a cost of £530. Work pressed ahead and on February 7 1906 Mayor Tattersill and Lord Clinton unveiled the completed statue at the site where it still stands today. - a proud monument to a famous Victorian.

In 2013, the statue was the subject of a Manor Court presentment, and Bideford Town Council was asked by residents give it a clean. Specialist stone masons were duly hired for the restoration work and Charles Kingsley's finger and writing quill were also repaired to their former glory. You may also come across street names, buildings and even a local pub named after characters from Charles Kingsley's novel in the town today, so Bideford hasn't forgotten its famous son.

A further Manor Court presentment recognised Charles Kingsley's 200th birthday in 2019 with a commemorative plaque depicting a scene from the Water-Babies. As the statue is a Listed Structure the plaque could not be attached to it, but instead it takes pride of place on the north facing wall of the red brick Arts Centre near the Port Memorial. The plaque was designed and crafted by local historical ceramicist Maggie Curtis who also produced the marvellous plaques on the Port Memorial itself and the Railway commemorative work on the Art Centre wall.



*To celebrate Charles
Kingsley's 200th Birthday,
this plaque was
commissioned and is
installed on the Art
Centre wall*

Official *Bideford*

Town Guide
2023-2024

*Aerial View
over Manteo*



To Our Twin Town in America!

Back in 1982, delegates from the town of Manteo, North Carolina, USA visited Bideford with a view to Twinning - gifts, documents and tokens were exchanged. Then in 2007 Bideford received a presentation clock from the people of Manteo celebrating our 'Twinning' of 25 years. This came as a complete surprise to the Town Clerk of the time, and the national press hailed Bideford as "The town that forgot it was twinned." Thankfully, the people of Manteo had a bumper year of tourist enquiries and saw the funny side and in April 2010 the then Mayor of Bideford travelled to Manteo and signed a new Twinning Charter.

Why Manteo? Well, Manteo, situated on Roanoke Island, is the location where, in 1585 Sir Richard Grenville, Lord of the Manor of Bideford, left the Military Colony who built Fort Raleigh (now a National Site of Historic Interest), and to where Sir Richard returned in 1586 to leave 15 'men of Bideford', who, along with the 119 colonists deposited there in 1587, had disappeared by 1590 to become America's greatest mystery.

A reception was held on the evening of May 13th 2014 at the Creef Memorial Boathouse in Manteo. The event was marked by a traditional Outer Banks 'Pulled Pork' barbeque. (Note for the connoisseurs of pulled pork that on the outer banks they prefer to make the dish with a viniagrette not a sauce!) The evening was marked by a fantastic full moon which settled over the iconic 'Marshes Light', a building as symbolic of Manteo as the Longbridge is to Bideford.

As for the search for Bideford's colonists, that continues with new archaeological discoveries coming to light every year. The archaeological quest presently continues on the nearby island of Hatteras. However, there is now a new impetus focused on the island of Roanoke where latest research indicates there may be evidence relating to the colonists' early occupation of the island.

In recent times delegations have periodically "crossed the water" with the last such visit being from Manteo Rotary members who were given a tour of the Town and the Town Hall by the Mayor and Macebearer followed by a traditional Devon cream tea in the Council Chamber, where gifts were exchanged for the two Towns.

Today, Manteo and Bideford have come to realise that it is not just this amazing 438 year old story that links us together, nor is it the extraordinary story of the first Native American, Rawley, (from Manteo's island) being buried on English soil here in Bideford, but it is for a whole host of comparable facts; and a warmth of welcome that only long lost friends can show. These ties are referenced in the charter which states: "we are and shall remain twinned by history, now and for all time." So, if you are from Manteo, do please come and say hello - you'll receive a warm welcome.

The Town Council's planters are hugely admired



A Perfect Touring Base for all of North Devon



Affinity Shopping, with a wide range of leading brand discount outlets.

Bideford is ideally positioned for touring North Devon. Around the town, within easy driving distance, lie numerous places of interest.

Affinity Devon – Outlet Shopping in Bideford is North Devon's unique indoor outlet shopping centre located on Clovelly Road just off the A39. It's home to over 25 stores offering up to 50% off RRP every day from famous name brands with incredible discounts.

As well as being a haven for bargain lovers, it's also a great day out for the family with an indoor soft play centre, specialist animal centre and a selection of eateries. Affinity Devon provides free parking and Wi-Fi and is open every day except Christmas Day.

Re-branded as Affinity Devon in 2018 (previously known as Atlantic Village), the shopping centre is popular with both the local community and tourists in Devon. The centre hosts many fun, family-focused events throughout the year so there is always something to enjoy. affinityoutlets.com/devon 01237 422544



Indoor and outdoor racquet sport facility

The **Atlantic Racquet Centre** is a brand new community racquet & fitness centre where everyone can exercise, socialise and learn together.

Located in Caddesdown industrial estate, near the recycling centre, ARC is a volunteer led community business and charity focused on improving the health & wellbeing of all local people. We offer court & gym hire, memberships, coaching and



Indoor Fitness Suite at the Racquet Centre

volunteering opportunities across our 10 tennis courts, 3 badminton courts, 2 squash courts and table tennis tables. We've also recently opened a brand new functional fitness gym space offering both membership & classes. With a new community café set for completion soon, it is a fantastic time to get involved and join Team ARC.

For more information on the centre, any of our sessions or to book a drop-in session please visit www.atlanticracquetcentre.co.uk. For enquiries please call 01237 879688 or email info@atlanticracquetcentre.co.uk.

For families, **The Big Sheep**, a couple of minutes west of the Torrridge Bridge on the A39, is a great day out with its sheep racing, sheep dog trials and woolcraft centre.

There is an indoor playground with slides and a café, while the shop offers unique gifts; plus lots of outdoor activities. A great selection of rides for all ages with Pedalos, Tractors and the thrilling Rampage Rollercoaster and the Twister. Recently the Big Sheep has become a brilliant music venue with mini festivals, gigs and shows. And now you can stay in one of the Boutique Retreats. For more information visit <http://www.thebigsheep.co.uk>

The **Milky Way Adventure Park** - with over 85,000 sq ft of indoor fun and acres of outdoor activities there is plenty to do and see here - plus nearly everything is included in one entrance fee. They say: "You'll love the challenge of our Ninja Stars Family Play Arena! Then ride the Cosmic Typhoon roller coaster, have fun on the gravity rider donut slide, explore the maze and



*Lundy, 3 miles long, 1/2 a mile wide,
25 miles from the North Devon Coast*

experience fantastic outdoor displays from the North Devon Bird of Prey Centre. Pilot a Cyber Scooter and shoot lasers on Ziggy's Blast Quest, giggle on the Droid Destroyer Dodgems, leap around on the Jumping Jupiters and kick back on the Milky Way Railway - there's something here for everyone!" The Milky Way Adventure Park is located just off the main A39, a ten minute drive from

Bideford towards Clovelly. Visit <http://themilkyway.co.uk>

Right next door is the exhilarating **Wake Park**, from beginners to professional, the lake offers huge fun with Wakeboarding, Ringo rides and the Aquapark. <http://northdevonwakepark.co.uk>

If it's scenic charm you seek, picturesque **Clovelly**, clinging to the cliffside, will take your breath away ... well, at least perhaps make you puff a little as you negotiate the steep cobbled streets, although there is a fare-paying Land Rover service available (seasonal). The Fisherman's Cottage, where you will learn what it was like to be a fisherman in the last century, and the Kingsley Exhibition, which relates the life story of Charles Kingsley (he lived in Clovelly when his father was Rector at the church), are enlightening interludes on your stroll down to the quaint 14th century quay.

RHS Rosemoor, beautifully developed and enhanced by the Royal Horticultural Society, near Great Torrington, is a riot of colour in the spring and summer. The gardens are also a venue for many diverse and interesting events throughout the year. Further information at www.rhs.org.uk/gardens/rosemoor

More adventurous souls can turn to the sea for enjoyment... on a daytrip to nearby Lundy Island where the seals play, puffins watch over the old pirate haunts and a warm welcome awaits you in the Marisco Tavern. The supply and passenger vessel ms Oldenburg leaves Bideford Quay or Ilfracombe Harbour (depending on the tide times) and takes around two hours to reach this beautiful Island. Sailings run from Easter until the end of October but you can stay in one of the Island's remarkable Landmark properties any time of year. More information can be found at www.lundyisland.co.uk

The Gnome Reserve and wild flower garden, has moved from its original home in West Putford. Over 2,000 gnomes were re-homed recently to the Merry Harriers in Woolfardisworthy (Woolsery). With a garden centre, restaurant and shopping the gnomes have plenty to do, and so will you - visit <https://www.merryharriers.co.uk>

Kenwith Valley Nature Reserve, on the outskirts of the town, is a popular haunt for those who love the solitude of lakes and trees. It was established in the 1980s after the introduction of a local flood prevention scheme and now flourishes with birdlife and nature trails.

Shopaholics would not, indeed, could not, go home happy without a lingering visit to the **Dartington Crystal** site at Great Torrington. This is one of the area's leading tourist attractions and is open throughout the year. Brand name outlets and the Dartington glass shop are a must as is a visit to the Garden Gift Shop and Pavilion Café. Further information at www.dartington.co.uk

Ford House Ancient Woodland can be found on the edge of Bideford, just off New Road. The site which is recorded in the Doomsday Book is of high historical and environmental value. It comprises of a large number of trees of considerable age as well as a substantial list of flora and fauna. Its beauty changes with the seasons and is well worth a visit at any time of year.

Westward Ho!, originally known as Burrough Farm and named by the Victorians after Charles Kingsley's book, is another haven for beach lovers, surfers and golfers, too, who can enjoy a relaxing round at the oldest Links course in the country, **The Royal North Devon Golf Club** www.royalnorthdevongolfclub.co.uk. Take a hike up onto Kipling Tors for the best views of Bideford Bay, Hartland Point and Lundy or take a stroll along the golden sands - Westward Ho! is the spot for the best sunsets.

Or, of course, there is sea fishing from **Appledore** and **Clovelly**. Fishing trips operate up or down the coast. Or there is angling – for game or coarse fish – on the Torridge and Taw Rivers and various ponds, lakes and reservoirs in the immediate area.

On the other side of the estuary, at **Instow**, the beach stretches for almost as far as the eye can

see and a look back, past the restored railway signal box, is rewarded with a superb view across the water towards the Torridge Bridge.

The **North Devon Maritime Museum**, in Odun Road, Appledore, is a past winner of the Small Museums Award and boasts a fascinating insight into the rich shipbuilding and seafaring history of the area. In seven exhibition rooms, visitors can discover the WWII beach landing experiments, sail and steam vessels, shipwrecks, a display about Sir Richard Grenville and much more. www.northdevonmaritimemuseum.co.uk

And so the list of localities to explore goes on... and should you ever tire of wandering, a delicious Devon cream tea or a Hockings ice cream is never far away.

If this brief canter around the delights of the coast and countryside has whetted your appetite, remember it is but a mere introduction to the wealth of diverse attractions which form the rich tapestry of North Devon, a magical corner of England with a welcome as warm as its climate.

** Full details of the above locations are available at the **Tourist Information Centre**, which can be found within the Burton at Bideford, Victoria Park, where staff will be pleased to suggest more ideas of things to do and places to go, or telephone 01237 477676.*



Sports For All

Sport in all its forms – from pub pastimes and rugby to the Bideford Association Football Club – thrives in Bideford and its environs.

The affinity the area has with water is well illustrated by the Bideford Amateur Rowing Club, the Bideford Canoe Club and the North Devon Yacht Club, all offer tremendous facilities.

Sea fishing is available from Bideford, Appledore, Clovelly and further afield at Ilfracombe, with plaice, mackerel, bass and conger among the likely catches.

The rivers Torridge and Taw each have a character of their own for anglers. The Torridge offers up its rich treasures of salmon and trout in its middle and lower reaches. The Taw, too, is noted for its salmon and is also a haven for the wild native brown trout.

There are several independent Gym clubs in Bideford as well as the Torridge Pool for swimming, sauna, gym and wellness.

Bideford is also home to the first Olympic compliant BMX track in the South West. Situated close to the Pollyfield Centre at East-the-Water the track has been heralded as a brilliant facility by one of the best BMX riders in the UK.

The Atlantic Racquet Centre, badminton, table tennis, athletics and the thriving Cricket Club are just a few more of the wealth of activities available.

For skaters, skateboarders, roller skaters and bladers, the Wheels Park is the place to be heading for. Situated to the side of the Bideford Football Club ground on Kingsley Road (opposite Morrisons supermarket).

Golf attracts a lot of visitors to North Devon and there are plenty from which to choose; The Royal North Devon, at Westward Ho!, is the oldest links course in England and the "olde worlde" atmosphere pervades its clubhouse. Libbaton is the home of North Devon School of Golf with all ability coaching and floodlit facilities.

Other courses, such as Bude & North Cornwall, Holsworthy, Torrington, Portmore and Saunton are all within about 30-45 minutes' drive from Bideford.

Rowing is a big part of Bideford and the Regatta is part of the WEARA calendar





Historic Pannier Market

The historic covered Pannier Market Complex includes the Market Hall, Butcher's Row and the Market Place Shops. Built in 1884 at a cost of £4,200 to house a fish market, butchery stalls and corn exchange, the then Mayor, G W Vincent, performed the opening ceremony followed by a public dinner for almost 200 people. The day ended with a promenade concert and later that week nearly 2,000 children had a tea party there.

Now, each year in early December, the Mayor and councillors dispense mince pies and mead at the Signing of the Lease Civic Ceremony to commemorate the Bideford Town Council assuming the management of the Market in 1991.

You will find the Pannier Market by walking up the High Street and taking a left turn into Grenville Street. The building stands fair and square ahead of you. The Pannier Market is so named after the wicker baskets, or panniers, in which farmers' wives carried their wares and a market has been held in Bideford since the granting of the Charter of Incorporation in 1573.

Butchers Row is now home to an eclectic mix of artisans and gift shops where you can see artists, wood carving, painting, stained-glass work and pottery. Although the butchers have all gone now, you can still see some of the original meat hooks, if you look closely in the shops. There are also a couple of takeaway food outlets.

The Market Hall is home to a friendly café and provides the opportunity for market trading, specialist markets and an area which can be hired for events. Facilities include free Wi Fi, toilets (disabled, also), and a baby changing area; dogs are welcome but must be on their lead. Outside of market trading, the Hall is used to host community events or club activities including the Annual Flower Show and more regularly hosts the Kenwith Company of Archers; it can be hired for private functions.

Stalls in the market can be hired on a casual daily basis. For further details contact Bideford Town Council on 01237 428817 or log onto the website at www.bideford-tc.gov.uk

Interests and Commitments



Bideford is committed to being plastic-free. The Town Council and the District Authority, together with many retailers, cafes and public houses have taken steps by showing that they no longer use single use plastic. Butchers, supermarkets and greengrocers have joined "Refill Devon" and are happy for customers to take in their own bags, containers and bottles rather than using plastic wrap or bags.

With Kingsley School being one of the first in the country to be Plastic Free, Bideford is already an accredited town. With being so closely linked with the rivers and seas, it is even more important that Bideford maintains a "Clean Seas" approach. Please help us to maintain our plastic-free status and take your plastic home with you.

SUPPORTING CARBON NEUTRAL INITIATIVES

Bideford Town Council supports Carbon Neutral Initiatives. As part of this and In order to become more energy efficient, the Pannier Market took a step into the modern renewable energy world by installing solar panels on the roof and having automatic glass doors fitted to the Market Hall entrances. As the Pannier Market complex is a Listed Building, permission was sought and granted by the District Conservation Officer. The original doors are still part of the Market Hall with the glass ones being inside, creating a bright and welcoming ambience (without the draughts) as well as a more energy efficient environment.



Your guide to all things Bideford

Visit our website and truly discover the vibrant and passionate community at the heart of Bideford.

- ♥ See latest events: Festivals, workshops, exhibitions and markets.
- ♥ Find things to do: Entertainment, attractions, historic sites and the art & crafts scene.
- ♥ Locate shopping experiences: Independent homewares and gift boutiques.
- ♥ Explore food and drink: Quirky cafes, characterful restaurants, deli's and bakeries.

There's so much to love about our riverside town.

♥ discoverbideford.co.uk



Points of Interest



TARKA

Just to the right of the West end of the Long Bridge (old Bridge), along the Quay is a beautiful bronze otter installed in March 2017. Named after the story Tarka the Otter, this was an initiative of Tonia Quance and Chrissie Room of Businesses of Bideford. They fundraised to have this beautiful cast made to immortalise Tarka from the story. They made this a proper community project and produced a book about how the bronze came about – it's worth a read. And so Tarka sits patiently with his fish by the river. He is hugely popular with the visitors who love to have their photo taken beside him.

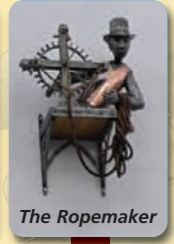


The Cooper

The Salmon Fisherman

CHARACTERISED SCULPTURES

When you go through Cooper Street or if you are near the Post Office, take a look at the upper part of the buildings and you will see the fabulous creations of Peach and Bill Shaw, local metal sculptors. From Jubilee Square, going into Cooper Street, the Cooper will welcome you, further up on the left is The Merchant, and on your right Sir Richard Grenville, overseeing proceedings. At the top you will see the Salmon Fisherman.



The Ropemaker



Sir Richard Grenville

Coming out of the Post Office on the right, on the Red Rowing Club wall, is the Ropemaker, hard at work. Ropemaking was essential for the Town's busy ships.

The sculptures are an ongoing project which has been funded by a private businessman, Bideford 500 as well as the Town and District Councils.

The Merchant



The Port Memorial was refurbished & embellished with two fabulous terracotta plaques

PORT MEMORIAL

At the north end of the Quay, on the corner opposite the statue of Charles Kingsley, is a relatively austere monument. This is Bideford's beloved Port Memorial. It signifies the dark times when Bideford temporarily lost its Port status and regained it thanks to a local ship owner who encouraged trade through Bideford Port, bringing the trading quota up to an acceptable level.

The terracotta plaques, beautifully hand made by local artist Maggie Curtis, on two sides of the Port Memorial depict the ships and goods that were traded here in what was the third most important Port in the country before Bristol was established.

Maggie Curtis has, in fact, produced a brief booklet of how she designed these beautiful plaques and a little of the history behind the images.

The terracotta theme carries on to the north-facing wall of the red brick Art Centre where you can see the plaque showing recognition of the railway that once ran through Bideford. Bideford is used as a Port still, by Ms Oldenburg for ferrying passengers to and from Lundy as well as goods and livestock. Also, visiting cargo ships come in to be loaded with aggregate, a pleasure to watch on a sunny day when you have some time on your hands!



VICTORIA PARK DECORATIVE RAILINGS

A small project that just grew! The bicycle racks outside the Burton Art Gallery were earmarked to be installed and Councillors decided to mark the occasion of HM Queen Elizabeth II's landmark birthday of 90 years. It was agreed to renew a section of railings on Victoria Park and to embellish them with designs put forward by a local blacksmith and the Town Clerk. The result has been quite stunning. The Town Council then gave the railings all the pomp and circumstance they could muster for the unveiling with a Mayoral procession to the Park and a film made of the occasion and sent to Her Majesty for a birthday present.



To commemorate Her Majesty's 90th birthday in 2016



Hanging Baskets in Mill Street

HANGING BASKETS

During the summer months, Bideford is a floral picture with the ongoing project of the hanging baskets through the main shopping areas. A scheme originally set up between the Town Council and Bideford Bay Chamber of Commerce, this is gradually expanding through the Town, currently Allhalland Street, Mill Street and Cooper Street (the latter being privately installed). The baskets, together with the three-tier Planters create a beautiful floral display throughout the Town which brings a smile to so many faces – great for photos too!

WAY OF THE WHARVES

Just a couple of paces along from Tarka and installed into the Quay wall is a very informative interpretation panel initiated by Bideford Bay Creatives, giving the history of the Bideford Wharves, where they were situated and what they were used for. The wharves were in fact on the East side of the river, but of course this installation is the best way to visualise where the work was carried out.

TOWN HALL TOURS

A Manor Court Presentment prompted the requirement for more visibility of the Town Council artefacts, the Town Hall and indeed the role of the Mayor and the Civic duties. These very popular tours are fully subscribed each time and take in the Council Chamber, Mayor's Parlour and Town Hall Room (previously the Magistrates Court). These Tours are by appointment only and full notice is given on the Town Council website and social media pages when the dates have been set.

GAMES TABLES AND OUTDOOR TABLE TENNIS

As you enter Victoria Park from the main gates and walk straight along the main path you will come across a great section of outdoor games tables, and a Table Tennis table. Funded by Mrs Tonia Quance as well as Town, District and County Councillor grants, there is a great selection for everyone to play – from Chess to Snakes and Ladders. You can help yourself to the pieces or take your own and that is the same for the Table Tennis.

General Information

HARBOUR AUTHORITY

Torrige District Council (01237) 428700

POLICE

New Road, Bideford.
Central Information 08452 777444

TORRIDGE VOLUNTARY SERVICES (TTVS)

14 Bridgeland Street,
Bideford (01237) 420130

TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRE

Burton at Bideford,
Victoria Park,
Bideford (01237) 477676

PUBLIC LIBRARY

New Road,
Bideford (01237) 476075

TORRIDGE, NORTH MID & WEST DEVON CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU

13 Bridgeland Street,
Bideford (01237) 473161

POST OFFICE

Bideford Post Office,
The Quay,
Bideford 0845 722 3344

HOSPITALS (MINOR INJURIES UNIT)

Bideford Hospital,
Abbotsham Road,
Bideford (01237) 420200

North Devon Hospital,
Raleigh Park,
Barnstaple (01271) 322577

CINEMAS

Scott's Cinema,
Boutport Street,
Barnstaple 08712 303200

THEATRES

Devon Hall
Bideford College
Abbotsham Road,
Bideford (01237) 429535

The Landmark Theatre,
The Seafront,
Ifracombe (01271) 316523

The Queen's Theatre,
Boutport Street,
Barnstaple (01271) 316523

The Plough Arts Centre,
9 Fore Street,
Torrington (01805) 624624

HALLS

Bideford Pannier Market Hall,
Market Place,
Bideford (01237) 428817

Pollyfield Centre,
Avon Road,
Bideford East (01237) 478734

CHURCHES

Bideford Baptist Church (01237) 473195

Bideford Methodist
Church (01237) 478453

Lavington
(United Reformed)
Church (01237) 479642

St Mary's Parish Church
(Church of England) (01237) 474078

The Sacred Heart
(Roman Catholic) (01237) 472519

DOCTORS

Bideford Medical Centre,
Abbotsham Road,
Bideford (01237) 426300

Wooda Surgery,
Clarence Wharf
Bideford East (01237) 471071

Northam Surgery,
Bayview Road,
Northam (01237) 474994

DENTISTS

The Quay Dental Practice,
NatWest Bank Chambers,
The Quay,
Bideford (01237) 473638

Queen Anne's Dental Practice,
4 Queen Annes,
High St,
Bideford (01237) 472159

C R Ryan,
The Dental Surgery,
39 Abbotsham Road,
Bideford (01237) 473705

Pollyfield Dental Practice,
Pollyfield Centre,
Avon Road,
Bideford (01237) 421323

CHEMISTS

Asda Pharmacy,
(Affinity) Atlantic Village,
Bideford (01237) 427720

Lloyds Pharmacy
Bideford Medical Centre,
Abbotsham Road,
Bideford (01237) 472002

Lloyds Pharmacy Wooda
Clarence Wharf,
Bideford East (01237) 421221

Boots Your Local,
2 High Street,
Bideford (01237) 472019

Well
9 High St,
Bideford (01237) 473635

VETS

East the Water Veterinary Centre
Alvrdiscott Road Ind Estate
Alverdiscott Road
Bideford (01237) 422657

Torbridge Veterinary Centre,
Unit 9,
Caddsdow Industrial Park,
Bideford (01237) 472075

Witten Park Vets
Heywood Road,
Northam (01237) 473 278

TAXIS / CABS

All Areas Taxis (01237) 470211

Barry's Taxis (01237) 472724

Mr & Mrs Taxis (01237) 424294

Number 6 Taxis (01237) 666666

Scott's Taxis (01237) 421487

SCHOOLS

Bideford College
Abbotsham Road,
Bideford (01237) 477611
Principal – Dr C. Ankers

Kingsley School
Northdown Road,
Bideford (01237) 426200
Headteacher – Mr R Pavis MA Ed

East-the-Water Primary School
Mines Road, Bideford (01237) 475178
Headteacher – Mr A Buckeridge

St Mary's Primary School
Chanters Road, Bideford (01237) 477288
Headteacher – Miss N Tottle

West Croft School
Coronation Road, Bideford (01237) 473548
Headteacher – Mr Page

CLUBS AND SOCIETIES

The Leisure Dept. of Torridge District
Council hold a list of local clubs

Contact them on www.torridge.gov.uk or
email leisure@torridge.gov.uk



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