

Minehead Bay

Discover Hidden Treasure

and beyond...

Minehead Coastal Community Team

was established in 2015 in response to the Government's launch of specific funding for coastal communities.

The Coastal Community Team brings together the commitment of local businesses, the Chamber of Commerce, the BID, the Voluntary & Community Sector together with Town, District and County Councils.

Following a successful bid to the first round of Coastal Communities Funding, MCCT worked with PerConsulting to create

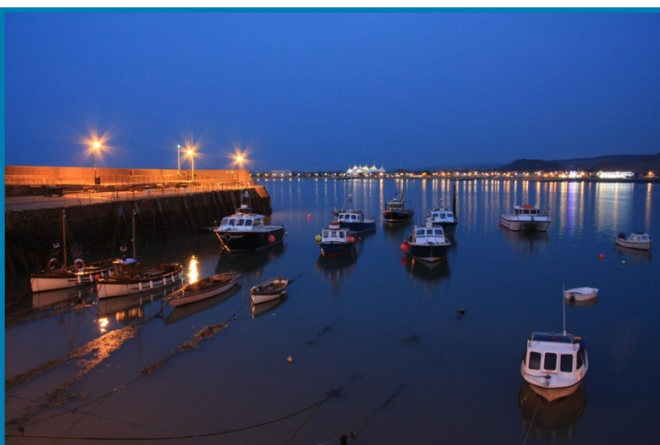


an economic plan to inform the development of future projects for the town.

Elements of the initial plan were further developed and in March 2016 a feasibility study into the potential to enhance the seafront area, entitled: Minehead's Enterprising Esplanade, was published.

The Coastal Community Team in Minehead then took forward a development to significantly raise the quality of the visitor offer in the town. The Enterprising Minehead project aimed to revitalise the seafront, offer customer focused skills training, boost marketing for the area and assist the Chamber and local businesses with the Business Improvement District. This project (which secured £131k from the Coastal Communities Fund and £0.5m from the Hinkley C Community Impact Mitigation fund, £80k Leader and £200k in other match funds in August 2017) has its own Business Plan, entitled Enterprising Minehead.

Minehead Coastal Community Team is continuing to develop new project proposals in readiness for funding opportunities. Members are particularly concerned by the climate emergency and feel that coastal communities need



Picture by Sarah Williams



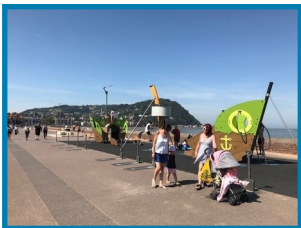
Key Achievements

Enterprising Minehead



Initiatives supported by MCCT include:

Eastern Esplanade Enhancements: Hard landscaping, soft landscaping with planting around a clear strategy based upon Beth Chatto's dry gardens, bicycle shaped bike racks, various seating options, some designed on raised platforms to see over the sea wall and others refurbished, projector lighting to pick out the new blue landscaped strips, central



lighting in the central plaza area, two children's play areas, new seats and floor treatment in roundels.

Artisan Markets: 6 markets held 2018 summer season, with over 400 visitors recorded at each market held. This was expanded to 9 markets over 2019 season, starting at Easter, with over 500 visitors recorded at each market held.

Guided Walk Ambassador Scheme: 10 walks took place between March–

Sept 2018, with 70 people participating. 11 walks so far for 2019 season (numbers not yet collated for 2019) Details of guided



walks can be found on www.mineheadbay.co.uk

Minehead Summer Festival Event: Summer festival August 2018, featuring thunder cats ribbed racing boats.

Minehead Maritime Mile Heritage Trail: Launched June 2018 - seafront heritage interpretation trail with seashell way marking along the Esplanade. Open air gallery, augmented reality App for android and IOS devices and a children's quiz.

Minehead Bay Branding: Minehead Bay brand developed and launched in 2018. We now have a quality set of brand guidelines and branded merchandise, which is sold in the Minehead Information Centre and used on all marketing collateral.

Minehead Bay website: new destination website
www.mineheadbay.co.uk
launched June 2018.



Edwardian Shelters and concession: Six Edwardian shelters refurbished in 2018, with one converted into a pop-up trade post, where a deck

chair concession was run during the 2019 season.



Activity Centre: Supporting refurbishment of seafront adventure activity centre.

YMCA: Supporting the

YMCA theatre kitchen.

West Coast 360: Branding and website have been developed
www.westcoast360.co.uk
and an **Online Training** for



Minehead Ambassador Scheme launched. **West Somerset Schools' Bake Off** - 1100 pupils in six local schools took part in an activity and Cookery



Masterclass. Pre-employment programme - 8 participants completed an intensive week of customer service and cookery training.

Places of interest

Old Hospital/Community Hub: The Old Hospital in Minehead has a 75 year lease for community use. This provides a building of circa 30,000 square metres and, whilst requiring extensive refurbishment with approximate £4 million pounds of grant aid, will deliver significant areas for community use: function suite, art gallery, conference facilities, community café and many other services. The building already has over 15 tenants, including a community radio station. It is being managed by Minehead Connect, a CIC, with local people fully committed to creating a hub, Managed By the Community, For the Community.



Minehead Methodist Church works closely with activities in the Regal Theatre and the Old Hospital. It is also a venue for promoting music events and other performance arts. A possibility for the regeneration of areas of Central Minehead exists between these three important public venues through to Blenheim Gardens. Consultation, followed by a public meeting, was held to explore these possibilities, facilitated by town planning expert Ben Hamilton-Baillie. Central to the delivery of this plan was, that by adjusting traffic and pedestrian flows, accessible safe spaces generating vibrancy through social activities and events would be created.

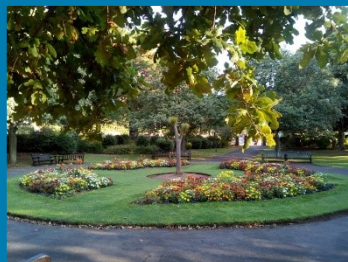


The Regal Theatre: is a volunteer led performing and visual arts venue for community based activity situated in Minehead town centre. It is a well-used resource by local organisations and is home to 6 performing arts companies and The Regal Film Society, the largest film society in the West Country which is now able to screen live event cinema. Approximately 25,000 residents and visitors purchase tickets each year for its wide ranging programme of professional and community entertainment that includes drama, film, comedy, dance, music and performance of all kinds. The entrance halls and bar often feature displays of work carried out by local artists



Blenheim Gardens is Minehead's largest park, created in 1925, following the generosity of Mr Magnor of Northfield House. Alexander Fownes Luttrell provided the land in 1911, stipulating that it should be used only as a public park or pleasure ground for the Town of Minehead.

The grounds are level and largely as originally laid out with the exception of a row of elm that fell victim to Dutch elm disease. A new bandstand was created in the late 1960s. This is used for a variety of performances and is considered to be one of the best bandstands in terms of acoustics in the SW.



Arthur C Clarke's Birthplace: One little-known fact about Minehead is that science fiction author Sir Arthur C Clarke (of 2001: A Space Odyssey fame) was born here.



Western Esplanade: Minehead has a mile long promenade with the western end falling within the Quay Town conservation area, which retains an old-world charm. This area is home to the town's two Hobby Horses, one at The Quay Inn and the other at the Old Ship Aground. It also includes the hands sculpture, installed in 2001 to mark the start of the South West Coast Path.

Heritage Harbour: Minehead Harbour is located on the Somerset coast between Porlock Weir and Watchet marina. Minehead Lifeboat Station can be found just beyond the harbour. There has been a Harbour at Minehead since the late 1300's and it is now home to a busy charter boat fleet and has an active leisure boat community. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, some forty vessels were trading regularly between Minehead and Ireland, South Wales, Bristol and Bridgwater. There was also a herring fishing industry of some importance; it is recorded that some 4,000 barrels were exported annually. (Picture: Stephen Hooper)



Places of Interest

Culvercliffe is one of the largest open spaces in Minehead. It covers an area of approx. 12 acres of open space nestled below the wooded slopes of North Hill and provides great views over the Bristol Channel towards South Wales. It is currently managed as a wildflower and conservation area. With a surfaced path and seating which runs from end to end, known locally as the Culvercliffe Walk. It is owned by Somerset West & Taunton Council and is an area with much potential sitting close to the start of the South West Coastal Path.



Eastern Esplanade is part of the Enterprising Minehead project, providing hard and soft landscaping, planting, improved seating, lighting and children's play areas. It is also the start of the new Minehead Maritime Mile interpretation trail that has the following: a mile long heritage trail along the seafront promenade, waymarked with shells to guide you to the harbour, and an open air gallery in the central plaza area. There is an augmented reality App at key points that also has a children's quiz. The trail is linked to the new Minehead Bay destination website: www.mineheadbay.co.uk

Channel Adventure is part of the Channel Group and operates from a seafront centre in the coastal town of Minehead and from an urban centre on the river in Taunton. It offers a range of innovative outdoor challenge and lifestyle events that engage people with adventure, with our natural environment, with others and, crucially, with themselves. Channel staff have been involved in the world of outdoor learning for decades and have seen how powerful it is in terms of re-engaging people with the essence of being a down to earth, useful, happy human.



West Somerset Railway: Minehead Railway Station was first opened in 1874. It was closed by British Rail early in 1971 and reopened in 1976 as the West Somerset Heritage Railway. Running for 20 miles, it is Britain's longest standard gauge heritage railway. Today it carries over 200,000 passengers a year making it one of the largest attractions in South West England. There are some 50 paid staff and 900 volunteers and is a key driver for visitor numbers in the town. The railway runs numerous events during the year including the Santa Train. The recent 40s weekend saw associated events running throughout the town working with and supported by local businesses.

Minehead Eye, a multi-purpose indoor skatepark and youth centre, opened in August 2010, after many years of volunteer time and effort by the skaters who grew-up during the project, leaving a legacy for the young people of Minehead. The skatepark, bouldering cave and café operate as a CIC, enabling it to generate non project-based income.



Minehead Museum opened in March 2014, in partnership with the YMCA and Minehead Development Trust, in part of the Beach Hotel. The museum was able to increase its display space in 2017, with visitor numbers increasing to almost 11,000 in 2019. Entirely volunteers run, it opens between March and the end of October with no entry charge. It hosts educational visits and is registered with the Children's University as a learning centre. It stages public talks and has an active publication programme of local history booklets.

Minehead Information Centre (MIC) has been in its present form and location (as part of the shared space within The Beach Hotel) since 2012. Managed by Minehead Development Trust and funded through a SLA with SWT Council and its own income-generating activities, it provides a personal, human service for every visitor who calls in. September footfall to MIC is up by 1,442 on the same time last year which demonstrates the value visitors place on speaking to a friendly advisor.



Beach Hotel: This derelict hotel that was brought back to life by the YMCA Dulverton Group, enabled by a variety of funding including: Homes and Communities, Coastal Community Fund, and investment from the YMCA DG and the District Council. It has had further investment from EDF CIM fund and Power to Change. It is a multi-award winning hotel in its own right, but also acts as a social enterprise and community hub. It combines luxury hotel accommodation whilst providing supported housing for 26 young people, and training apprentices. In the 5 years since it opened it has had 25,000 guests, trained 38 apprentices, held 15 community events, 8 local art exhibitions and provided over 50,000 safe and secure bed nights for vulnerable young people.



The Future



Our vision is for Minehead to be a welcoming, visible, easy to get to, easy to understand, fun, family destination with UK wide appeal.

For Minehead residents, we want to create a supportive, cohesive and progressive community that puts social mobility and opportunity first to

create the right conditions for the visitor and local economies to thrive.

The launch of the Coastal Communities Fund in 2015 enabled Minehead to



maintain the impetus of the Minehead Vision Project, which delivered a variety of initiatives during the preceding 3 years, under the headings of Culture, Community and Commerce.

Minehead Coastal Community Team was built on the pre-existing Vision Group partnership, while enabling both membership and priorities to be refreshed. The achievements listed in this publication are testimony to the success of this transition. But there is still more to do.

We are already linking with our neighbouring CCTs in Watchet and Porlock, so that opportunities can be developed that benefit the wider West Somerset community.



As with all consultations, our conversations with the community about the projects that should be prioritised, drew out some very exciting ideas for potential future developments. We are already working on some of these, with the Enterprising

Minehead Phase 2 project looking to provide roll out further east to complete the esplanade

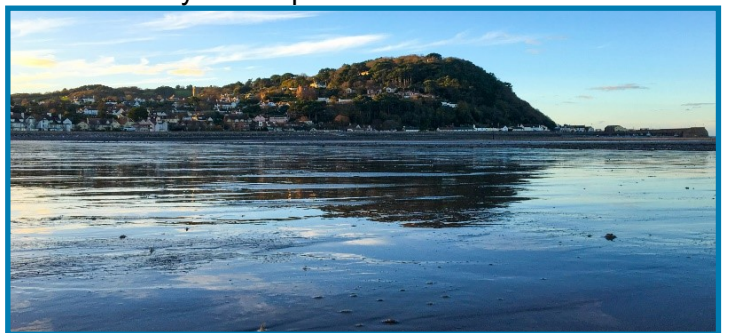
enhancements, further visitor attractions and opportunities to support the tourism and hospitality sector. We are



currently looking for match funding opportunities to progress the project.

MCCT member, Minehead Connect is working on the next phase of the Old Hospital development plan and will be applying for Heritage Lottery Funding to provide an art gallery and multi-functional exhibition facility, a conference facility and rooms providing community services, all of which will also deliver local employment.

Potential projects highlighted by our consultations include: providing an outdoor skatepark, restricting areas of the seafront to pedestrian access during the summer season, a row of beach huts at the Warren Road (Butlins) end of the Esplanade and reinstating a tidal pool that was lost when the beach was reprofiled in 1997. All would need to be checked for feasibility, but we are very excited at the potential to work with and for the community on some ambitious projects for this area, which has been highlighted as lacking in social mobility and aspiration.



The work to date has only been made possible with the support of the District Council – Previously West Somerset, now Somerset West & Taunton. The council officers' invaluable time has been instrumental in the production of bids, managing the funding and delivery of projects. Our MCCT members volunteer their time and support, but fully recognise the need for capacity and funding to drive these ambitions. We look forward to hearing news of a CCF Round 6 and would appreciate access to seed funding, enabling the team to obtain the essential skills and resources needed to support delivery of ambitious future plans for Minehead.

Core Members

Engage Voluntary Sector Development

Minehead BID

Minehead Chamber of Trade

Minehead Connect

Minehead Development Trust

Minehead Town Council

Regal Theatre

Somerset County Council

Somerset West and Taunton Council

Transition Minehead & Alcombe



Wider Stakeholders

Avon & Somerset Police

Butlins

Dulverton Group YMCA (Beach Hotel)

Exmoor Tourism Association

Foxes Academy Hotel

Friends of the Steam Coast Trail

Minehead Hoteliers Association

Somerset Tourism Association

West Somerset Railway



Copies of all relevant documents can be found at: <https://mineheadcct.co.uk>