

# Working for Axminster



Axminster Chamber of  
Commerce is back in business  
after a quiet couple of years.  
These are our plans and why we  
hope you will join.

## Promotion

One of the Chamber's key roles will be to promote both business and the town itself. Axminster has a good story to tell and it is getting better all the time. It is now important that it is told in an effective fashion and that opportunities are taken to put the spotlight on individual businesses.

While 'selling' Axminster externally, there are also benefits to communicating more locally so that local people enjoy a positive image of their own town.

Promotion may also mean initiating events that add to the rich local mix and in doing so make Axminster a place where locals and visitors alike want to spend time.

Ensuring Axminster businesses receive due recognition is key and we hope that will include a continuation of the successful Axminster Business Awards run in 2021 by Marketing West in partnership with Totally Locally Axminster.

We also aim to promote high standards of trading and in doing so build the confidence of the community in which we operate.

## Now is the time

**There has never been a more important time for the business community in Axminster to work together with the common cause of making the town a better place in which to live, work and trade.**

After some difficult years, there is now general agreement that the town's economy is on the turn and that the potential is there for a more positive and prosperous future.

We have an important part to play in working with local authorities in particular, and it is important that the voice of the trading community is heard and that our interests are protected and our ideas properly evaluated.

To be effective, we have to work together. The strength we gain from working as a united team is considerable. If we help to make the Axminster brand a strong one then our individual businesses will each in turn enjoy the benefits.

Please consider joining the revived Chamber, take advantage of the services we are offering ... and if you are able to input some personal energy that's better still!

## Partnering with Totally Locally

Totally Locally Axminster has run a series of successful initiatives over the past two years – four loyalty events, a promotional website, new shoppers map, benches on the Minster Green and filling empty shop windows with positive messaging. It has more plans for the future including the introduction of bright street banners for the summer of 2022.

The good news right now is that the two groups will be working in tandem. Under the wider Chamber remit covering all businesses, Totally Locally Axminster will specifically drive promotions affecting retail businesses. By combining our efforts in this way under one overall membership we hope to offer real value to businesses of all types.

When you join Chamber you will also enjoy the Totally Locally Axminster initiatives at no extra cost.

# THE SKILLS TO SUCCEED

Success in business depends upon an increasingly diverse range of skills that aren't always easily available individually at a competitive cost. From the many implications of human resources to finance, presentation skills and social media, staying up to date is not easy. Falling behind the curve can be the difference between business success and failure.

Our plan is first to make an assessment of what areas of training are needed and then to consider how that can be satisfied in an economic group fashion. We will signpost opportunities that are often free from bodies like the Business Information Point consider initiating local training where it is sensible to do so, all the time ensuring the highest standards from professional and fully qualified trainers and consultants.

## REPRESENT

The Chamber will represent Axminster's businesses in a variety of ways, including in issues that are under discussion (or should be raised with) local authorities. We have a right to be consulted on local planning applications and may also input to the East Devon Local Plan and to the Axminster Neighbourhood Plan plus a variety of transport, environmental and other strategies that may affect our members.

We will actively identify policy areas where we can ensure a meaningful Axminster business voice is placed at the heart of local decision-making.

## WHO'S WHO AT YOUR CHAMBER

We aren't yet up to full strength and will welcome others but the current management committee consists of: Jane Rockett (Acting Chair), Karen Hussey (Acting Deputy Chair), Jess Brooks (Treasurer), Barrie Hedges (Acting Secretary), Aneesa California, Naomi Eden, Alison Hayward, Annette Heath-Coleman, Karen Hussey, Jan Rowe and Emma Rowe. We welcome Cllr Steve Holt to our meetings as a representative from Axminster Town Council.

## PLEASE JOIN OR RENEW NOW

We really hope your business will be a part of the newly refreshed Axminster Chamber of Commerce and enjoy the various business benefits that are set out here. By doing so, you will also be contributing to the resurgence of the local economy in Axminster and to the wider community of which your business is a part.

These are the annual membership costs:

- Large Company (20+ Employees) - £100
- Medium Business (10 -19 Employees) - £70
- Small Business (1-9 Employees) - £50
- Sole Trader (No Employees) - £40
- Not for Profit/Charitable - £20

Please join or renew your membership via our website [www.axminster.biz](http://www.axminster.biz).

## ACTION

While pursuing our own projects to boost Axminster, we will also play our part in initiatives such as *Action in Axminster* which is bringing forward a host of new ideas. We will similarly work with local authorities and other community groups - anyone whose aim is to boost the town.

## CONSULT

It is crucial that the Chamber listens to its members and addresses the issues you are concerned about. Please complete the questionnaire (available from our website and social media) and let us know what matters to you. Once we have a consensus we will raise the issues in the appropriate places and action what we can. We are stronger by working together.

## INFORM

Businesses don't always get to see the information that is out there to help them. The Chamber will, therefore, aim to bring together the host of material that is out there and put it through a filter so that busy members receive only what they need in a timely fashion. This may include national guidance from the British Chambers of Commerce through to local output from our town, district and county councils. We will keep a watch on special areas of interest such as business rates and also on grants from all sources that may be relevant to members.