

Sidmouth

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Sidmouth	
Looking east along Sidmouth Beach	
Population	12,569
<u>Police</u>	
<u>Fire</u>	

Sidmouth is a town situated on the English Channel coast in Devon, South West England, 14 miles (23 km) east of Exeter. In 2004, it had a population of about 15,000, of whom 40% were aged 65 or over.^[1] By the time of the 2011 census the population was 12,569.^[2] It is a tourist resort and a gateway to the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site. A large part of the town has been designated a conservation area.

History

Sidmouth remained a village until the fashion for coastal resorts grew in the Georgian and Victorian periods of the 18th and 19th centuries. A number of Georgian and Regency buildings still remain.^[5] In 1819, George III's son Edward, Duke of Kent, his wife, and baby daughter (the future Queen Victoria) came to stay at Woolbrook Glen for a few weeks. In less than a month he had died from an illness. The house later



became the Royal Glen Hotel; a plaque on an exterior wall records the visit.^[6] In 1874, Sidmouth was connected to the railway network by a branch line from Sidmouth Junction, which called at Ottery St Mary and Tipton St John. This was dismantled in 1967 as a result of the Beeching Axe.^[7]

Geography

Sidmouth lies at the mouth of the River Sid in a valley between Peak Hill to the west and Salcombe Hill to the east. It is surrounded by the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is on the Jurassic Coast, a World Heritage Site and the South West Coast Path. The red-coloured rock indicates the arid conditions of the Triassic geological period.

Erosion remains a serious concern east of the mouth of the Sid. The cliffs have been heavily eroded, threatening homes and the coastal footpath.^{[10][11]}

The wide esplanade has been a prominent feature since Regency times. A series of southwesterly storms in the early 1990s washed away much of the shingle beach protecting the masonry. A series of artificial rock islands was constructed to protect the sea front, and tons of pebbles were trucked in to replace the beach.^[12]



Sidmouth seafront; the red cliff is Salcombe Hill exposing Jurassic rocks