

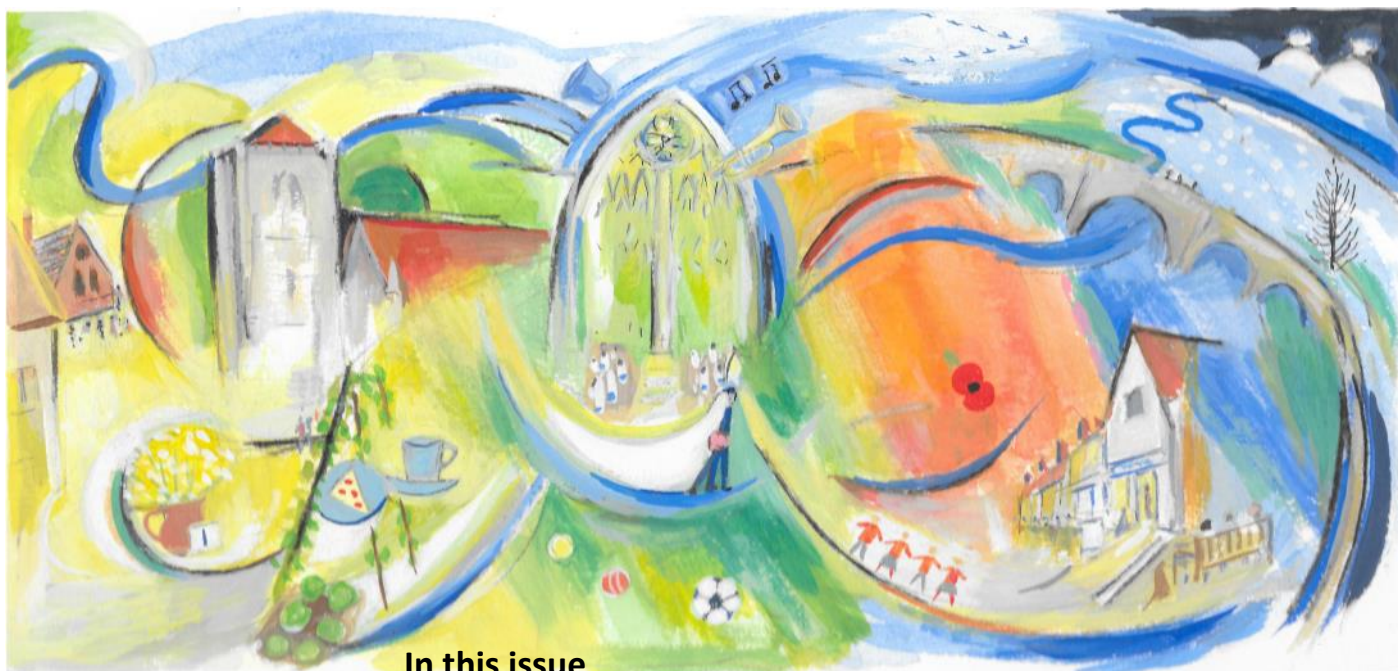
# ***Dorchester News***

*Free to every home in the parish*

*September 2020*







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## DoT view

What a lot of talented people we have in Dorchester and in this issue we highlight just a few of them.

Adrian Brooks needs no introduction. His theatres are well known in the village and to readers of Dorchester News, and he was the instigator of the lockdown limericks that were around the village a couple of months ago. In this issue, we see his latest work, not so much a theatre but a shrine, marking this Covid-19 summer.

Then we have two authors with new works. James Pratt, Dorchester born and bred, tells of his life in motorsport in a beautifully produced book. At the opposite end of the spectrum from the roar of the race track is the book by Melissa Powell of Queen Street and the Dream Research Institute London about using dreams for guidance and inspiration.

A relative newcomer to Dorchester, Peter Firstbrook, provides a second contribution to Dorchester News with a fascinating article about the true source of the Thames.

And finally, well known to Dorchester News readers, is Malcolm Ains. In the June issue we were marking his recovery from a severe bout of Covid-19, but since then he has been busy creating two videos about the older buildings of Dorchester, one concerning the dates that they display and the other their windows. Both videos are to be found on You Tube and well worth viewing.

What a lot of talent.

**Ian Brace**

**Editorial Team**

Ian Brace, Steph Cook

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Maurice Day

**Printed by**

Artisan Print Solutions

Cover picture: The barn in the paddock of Port House in Watling Lane..

## Deadline for October Dorchester News



email:

[dorchesternews@dorchesteronthames.co.uk](mailto:dorchesternews@dorchesteronthames.co.uk)

*This month we have asked Reverend Catherine, who has been working with us since January as a curate to write about her forthcoming Ordination. As a curate it is Catherine's job to work alongside the Team Vicars first as a Deacon – able to lead services, teach and preach and then as a Priest – able to celebrate the Sacraments. Curates are full members of our Team Clergy and are here to learn and to serve. It is a responsibility we share to ensure that they leave us ready to care for parishes of their own. It is a big moment in our lives to be Ordained and we have asked Catherine to write about this for us.*

*Revd Sue Booy*

Hello, I'm Catherine, one of the Dorchester Team curates, and I have been in post here since January and will be around in the Team for the next two years at least. I was ordained deacon last summer and will be ordained priest in September.

On my ordination stole (the white scarf clergy wear for worship at certain times of year) I have a scene embroidered. It has a mountain range in the distance, with a winding path and a pilgrim walking along it through fields. There are flowers in the fields and birds fly overhead. At the end of the path we see a figure running to meet the pilgrim with his arms outstretched in welcome.

In a way ordination feels like that for me. There is a sense of homecoming to be in a role that I have looked forward to for so long (I first felt drawn to ordination over 25 years ago, when there were still no female priests in the Church of England) and which I was made for – which gives me life. I am a round peg in a round hole. I hope you have things or people in your life that make you feel like that. Spending time considering what gives us life and seeking more of that is always a good road to follow.

But I also recognize how long the journey can be to that point. It feels as if we've been on a very long and difficult journey this year and it's not over yet. The winding path on my stole has a spring of water beside it up in the mountains because the Bible contains promises by God to "make rivers flow on barren heights...[to] turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs" (Isaiah 41.18) and I have found unexpected refreshment, sometimes even in the most difficult times.

The small gold tree beside the path on my stole represents my mother, who died a year before I was ordained deacon. Her life circumstances were hard and she felt like she had grown out of shape – like one of those trees blasted by strong winds that are visible on exposed moorland. And yet she was beautiful (little though she saw herself that way) and her faith nourished



and inspired mine. Those who go before us and encourage us are very precious.

Having spent a year being a deacon (the servant role that underpins all of ordained ministry) I'm looking forward to the extra privilege of becoming a priest on 20 September, to being able to bless and declare God's forgiveness and to preside at the Eucharist, to offering the blessings of baptism and marriage and continuing to lead funeral services, being involved in the life events of those who live in the Team. Life is a journey and it's one I'm looking forward to continuing to walk alongside you all, in community, with the God who travels with us.

## Appointments

We are delighted to report that the appointment of Reverend Paul Wignall as Associate Team Vicar for the Bridge Group of Parishes was announced in August.

Paul writes:

'I'm writing this from the chaplain's flat in Las Palmas on the island of Gran Canaria where my wife and I live. I'm the Anglican chaplain here – the furthest south the Church of England reaches in the Diocese of Europe. But our thoughts are with you as we prepare to move back to the UK to join the Dorchester Team, and most particularly the Bridge Group. It has been a slightly odd experience, being interviewed by Zoom. Stranger still to have a virtual tour of the vicarage – especially as the house kept swinging through 90 degrees, but I think that was Tom's camera! Unusual circumstances for unusual times, but thank you to everyone for their confidence in offering me the job with you. We are really looking forward to it, to meeting you all, and working closely with you.

I'm Paul – and that's what I like people to call me. My wife is Carlynn. I was born in Cornwall but my family were originally

from Lancashire and what is now Cumbria. Carlynn is from Peterhead, a fishing town in the north east of Scotland. There are three grown-up children – Tim, Lucia and Peter – and one grandchild – Delila. What do we enjoy? Walking, exploring, travelling. I've written plays, poems and books for young people (and adults) on Shakespeare amongst other things. I've been lucky enough to have had plays for young people performed in many places, from the RSC to schools, which tells you something about my other passion, and something I hope I can offer to you. We both enjoy working with children and young people, in and out of school. But most of all we want to get to know you, find the right way to keep churches alive and well and at the heart of community life. We hope to travel back to the UK in mid-September in time to join you all at the beginning of October. As we say in Spain, ¡Hasta pronto! – See you soon.'

Advertisements have now been placed for our Families and Youth Worker to support Ministry across the Team and we hope that interviews will take place in early September

## Getting back to Church

After the initial lockdown we have gradually been able to return to parish worship and this has been a joy and delight for some but an anxiety for others. You will realise that at the time of writing we are still in a time of uncertainty so we are publishing a Calendar of Worship for September which includes services across the Dorchester Team. Wherever you live you may go to any of these services to worship. All we ask is that you make sure that we know you are coming by emailing or telephoning the parish office. We are committed to offering each parish two

services each month. Local arrangements are being made for Harvest. There will continue to be a weekly service broadcast on Zoom which it will also be possible to attend in person. Obviously if further restrictions emerge we will have to pull back in line with government guidelines.

This is the Pattern of Services for September. The services at 10.30am will be broadcast on Zoom .

### 6 Sept

- 10.30am Festival of St. Birinus (Preacher Canon Sarah Foote)
- 8.00am Holy Communion Warborough
- 9.00am Holy Communion Drayton  
Holy Communion Long Wittenham

### 13 Sept

- 8.00am Holy Communion Dorchester
- 9.00am Holy Communion Berinsfield
- 9.30am Short Parish Prayers Clifton Hampden
- 10.30am Holy Communion at Stadhampton
- 5.00pm Marsh Baldon

### 20 Sept

- 8.00am Holy Communion Warborough
- 9.00am Holy Communion Drayton  
Holy Communion Long Wittenham
- 10.30am Ordination of Rev Catherine Schneider as Priest  
(regretfully there will be no places for this service)

### 27 Sept

- 8.00am Holy Communion Dorchester
- 9.00am Holy Communion Stadhampton
- 10.30am Berinsfield Communion  
'Muddy' Church Clifton Hampden
- 4.00pm Marsh Baldon

### 4 Oct

- Bishop Colin's Farewell  
(in the morning of his formal Farewell Bishop Colin will join us for a service in the Abbey)
- 8.00am Holy Communion Warborough
- 9.00am Holy Communion Berinsfield  
Holy Communion Long Wittenham

## Dorchester Team Discretionary Fund

The clergy have at their disposal a limited fund which we are able to spend to support people who are in financial difficulties. It is particularly helpful in an emergency as we are able to be flexible and turn around funding very quickly. If you feel this fund could help someone you know talk to one of the clergy to find out more. Referrals are through the clergy and local health/ social provider professionals.

## Wallingford Food Bank

Wallingford Food Bank is a charity which has been supplying food and other essentials to the vulnerable and needy for the past 8 years. Although it is based in Wallingford, the Food Bank serves a wide area, from Berinsfield to Watlington, Chalgrove to Woodcote, Goring and Streatley. At this time of high unemployment and redundancy, demand is increasing. Your donations are urgently needed. In addition to food there is a need for shampoo, toothpaste, shower gel and other toiletries.

Please leave any donations in the yellow box in my garage at 26 Manor Farm Road..

Thank you for your generosity.

**Judy Parker**

## What did you do in Lockdown?

We know that many people learned and achieved new things during Lockdown. It doesn't matter what it was we would like to invite you to bring your project – or a photograph of it – to the Abbey for display over the weekend of **11-13 September**.



If you would like to join in please tell us what you are bringing and roughly how much space it needs. This is an informal exhibition and most items will be displayed on tables and available for people to see during the weekend. Obviously we will need to be very aware of social distancing both when items are delivered and in managing visitors but we hope that you would like to see this celebration of talents!

Depending on the level of interest we may need to ask you to come at a specific 'drop off' time for the exhibit you are bringing.

To avoid people handling things please bring your own handwritten label no larger than a postcard to put beside your exhibit.

Please tell us that you are planning to join in this community venture not later than **Monday 7 September** by emailing [admin2@dorchester-abbey.org.uk](mailto:admin2@dorchester-abbey.org.uk) or telephoning **01865 340007**.



## Lunch Club

I very much regret that it is not possible to re-start the Lunch Club in October until social distancing has been stopped. Unfortunately, it is only possible to accommodate three people per table in contrast to eight people before lock down. Also, the space in the kitchen would make it impossible to keep social distancing properly. When the necessity to keep social distance has been stopped then it is hoped to restart the lunch club

The Lunch Club in Dorchester was started over 40 years ago by Lettice Godfrey for retired single people living on their own, since then we have welcomed couples especially those with health problems who may feel isolated. Many of the existing cooks and helpers have been helping almost since it started and so are now over the age of 80 themselves and therefore we need younger helpers to become involved to keep the Lunch Club going. If you have recently retired please consider volunteering. We need help in the following ways: an organiser; help in putting out the tables and chairs and laying the tables; cooks; washing up; and a driver to transport disabled people. The helpers as well as the participants of the lunches find it a very social and enjoyable club. If you could help please contact Susan Jupp who will tell you more about it.

**Susan Jupp (organiser)**  
01865 341066  
susan@jupp13dot.force9.co.uk

## Dorchester Defibs

You may have noticed that a yellow box has recently been installed in the old phone box at Bridge End. This houses a new public access defibrillator, which has been provided by the Parish Council, assisted by a local member's grant from SODC – thanks Cllr. Robin Bennett.

This brings to three the number of defibrillators in the village. The other two are at the White Hart, and the sports pavilion near the playground on Drayton Road.

We hope that they never need to be used! But if someone does suffer from a cardiac arrest or heart attack, phone 999 immediately. They will tell you what to do, and will direct you to a nearby defibrillator if there is someone available to get it. They will also give you the code to open the box and get the machine.

Public access defibrillators are fully automatic and have simple voice instructions. You can't harm anyone by wrongly giving them a shock – the machine monitors the heart rhythm and will only operate if a shock is needed.

Time is absolutely vital in a cardiac emergency. Chances of survival are hugely improved if intervention is done fast. So don't be afraid to use a defibrillator if the situation arises!

We are hoping to arrange an awareness session about CPR and defibrillators later in the year, covid permitting!

### Save a Life

The local ambulance service has an Android & Apple app called Save a Life that anyone can access via their smartphone or tablet. The app shows where the nearest defibrillator is as well as a list of others in the area. It also features videos, CPR instructions and a section that will answer many of your cardiac arrest and heart attack questions.



## Hempcroft Allotments September

This is the time when we alert allotment holders about the AGM. Pre-Covid we would be saying that the AGM will be held in the Village Hall on **Thursday 24 September 2020** at 7.30pm and prior to this time rents and subscriptions can be paid and seed catalogues can be collected. The Committee has considered a) going ahead with the AGM in the Village Hall, b) holding the AGM by Zoom, c) not holding an AGM this year.

The Village Hall is re-opening on about the 20 August and so would be available for hire. We normally get about 30 to 40 people attending the AGM and rather more people turn up to pay their rent etc. We could therefore go ahead with a meeting in the Village Hall with appropriate social distancing with a smaller number of people (sub 30) but enough for a quorum to discharge the necessary duties at the AGM such as the Treasurer's Report and election of officers. People could also turn up and pay their rent and collect seed catalogues with an appropriate queueing one way system. It should be no more constraining than going to the pub. By the way subscriptions could also be paid by bank transfer.

These are the current thoughts but no decision has been made yet. Please look out for notices on the village notice boards and on the allotments closer to the proposed time.

**Edward Metcalfe**  
edmetcalfe@yahoo.co.uk

THE HEAD GARDENER'S WIFE  
TEL: 0790 7740670

## Spring Bulbs For Sale!

Hayley will be selling Spring flowering bulbs this September/October. From Alliums to Zantedeschia and everything in between delivered to your door at no extra charge! Small amounts for pots or large quantities for naturalising. E.G. bag of 1000 mixed/named varieties daffodils – from £80.

If you are interested in receiving a list to order from or interested in a quote please email: [Hayley@theheadgardenerswife.com](mailto:Hayley@theheadgardenerswife.com)

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## Courts Upgraded Come and join us for a game

DoT Tennis Club members do not like to sit around. Our Club has been back in active operation for two months. We have been really glad to see current players and friends returning as well as new members joining. If you haven't got round to signing up for club membership yet, do come along and experience our fantastic newly reconditioned and upgraded tennis courts, which will undoubtedly tempt you into regular play. Both courts have been extensively repaired and repainted to meet exacting LTA standards, thanks to funds from club members, the Parish Council and SODC. All abilities very welcome. We so look forward to meeting you soon.

### Wednesday

10.00am – 12.30pm Open club mixed session

### Friday

10.30am – 12.30pm Ladies' morning

### Saturday

Gentlemen's morning

### Sunday

10.30am to 12.30pm - Open club mixed session

Enquires to Chris Smith  
[chrissmith@btinternet.com](mailto:chrissmith@btinternet.com)  
Tel. 01865 341947



## Dorchester Abbey Museum News

**We're Open  
please come and see us!**

We're now open every Saturday and Sunday 2.00-5.00pm until the end of September.

Please be assured that you'll feel safe in the Museum as we have careful Covid-19 protection protocols in place: hand sanitizer, one-way system, social distancing, only a small number of people allowed entry at the same time, etc.

We hope to continue opening on Sat and Sun until half term at the end of October, subject to volunteers' availability and government guidelines

Remember our Museum shop stocks a wide variety of greeting cards for birthdays and other occasions as well as books and a range of gifts for children and adults.

### Edith Stedman's Cookbook

To mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Museum's opening by Edith, we've reissued her charming *Monastery Guest House Cook Book*.

Price £7.50. Available from the Museum or Linda Hender, 11 Page Furlong, tel **01865 340032**, email: [linda.hender@btinternet.com](mailto:linda.hender@btinternet.com)

## DADS

Dorchester Amateur Dramatics Society

## Weekly fun during Lockdown

When we moved our monthly play readings online, I really didn't know what to expect. Like everyone else I was new to Zoom and was a little nervous as to how it might work. In the event it has proven to be ideal for play readings and the readings became so popular that they quickly became weekly events, every Monday evening. This is because we all treat them as being just for fun. Everyone is welcome, whether you would like to read or just want to listen. You don't have to have any previous acting experience nor do you need to be a member of DADS.

Since going online we have read a wide variety of plays, and uncovered some gems. Although, it isn't the intent, no doubt one or two will be considered for future DADS productions, especially the pantos. Along the way we have read plays from well known authors such as A. A. Milne, Noel Coward, Jerome K. Jerome, and J. M. Barrie as well as plays from relative unknowns, both old and contemporary.

Unlike other groups we do not cast the play in a conventional way. The play is split into roughly equal sections and the roles are rotated. In this way, everyone who wishes to read gets a fair opportunity to do so. After all, some roles only speak a few lines.

After a short summer break, our online play readings will recommence at 7.30 pm on **Monday, 7 September** when we will be reading *Easy Virtue* by Noel Coward. If you would like to read or listen, you will need to register.

You can do this via the relevant link on our Facebook page **@DorchesterAmDramSocietyDADS** and our website **www.dads.org.uk**. For updates on what we are reading next, follow the DADS Facebook page, or email **membership@dads.org.uk** and ask to be put on the play reading mailing list.



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## Massage Matters

Due to current circumstances and the need to keep everyone safe and healthy, Massage Matters will be closed until further notice.

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Please take good care – very best wishes Karen

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## A Shrine for these Times

Unquestionably 2020 will be forever remembered as the year of the COVID global pandemic. Our daily lives changed beyond recognition in just a few short weeks, never to be the same again. We have seen tragedy, anger, humour, camaraderie, fear, heroism and frustration in a way we didn't expect in 2019. Every aspect of our lives has been altered both globally and locally.

As somebody who makes visual art, I couldn't help but respond to these events. So with a nod to the successful Abbey exhibition - *LIGHT - a spiritual journey*, I drew upon the universal appeal of shrines and created *A Shrine for these Times*.

I would like my shrine to be a visual expression of our experiences. Set against an interpretive map of the Village are the familiar mantras, 'We'll meet Again', 'Save the NHS' and 'Stay Alert'. There is social distancing at the CO-OP, camaraderie on the Hempcroft, daily dog walking along the Dyke Hills' one way system, yoga on the recreation ground and familiar updates from professor Chris Whitty, and of course some of the inspired limericks by villagers succinctly reflecting our shared feelings. Inside is an Asian NHS worker in PPE offering a blessing and above a comic/ tragic angel contemplating the scene.

The *Lockdown Limericks* have been archived on the Village website; what will happen to *A Shrine for these Times*, I'm not sure. If nothing else it will remain an aide-memoire hopefully to be reviewed in ten years' time.

**Adrian Brooks**



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## St Birinus School

### A message from our new headteacher

I am feeling proud and privileged to be joining the Dorchester St Birinus Primary School community from September in the role of Headteacher.

I have over twenty years of experience in primary teaching and I'm really looking forward to having a positive impact on both the school and the community, in addition to continuing the great work that Mr Leigh and his team have achieved.

The well-being of the whole school community is very important to me. I know there will be some worries about the return to school after such a long time for many in the community. In the first instance, our main priority will be the safety of the children and staff in the school. A thorough risk assessment has been undertaken with government guidance being followed and, at the time of writing, we are looking forward to welcoming all the children back into school in September.

The first couple of weeks will see all the children in school working on a whole school topic based on a beautiful book by Oliver Jeffers called '*Here We Are*'. The book investigates our place on the planet and in our communities and I'm really looking forward to seeing the ways in which the children explore the issues that the book opens up. Reading is one of my passions so I'm pleased that this is the chosen vehicle for helping our children back into their school routine, or for their first step into school for our children joining Hedgehog Class.

In addition to reading I love going for long walks, especially in forests or by water, and I enjoy cooking (and eating!).

I am really excited about getting to know the children in school and their families and I hope to be able to create plenty of community links too. I am looking forward to the ongoing opportunities for our children to be engaged in learning, excited about coming to school, celebrated and achieving.

I am sure there will be plenty more for me to share with you in the next Dorchester News and I am optimistic about a positive, safe and healthy return to school.

**Jo Staples**



### Pre-School

Our lovely village Pre-School is run by a small number of dedicated staff and a committee made up of local volunteers. The number of children has decreased over the past few years, which is challenging our financial position and hasn't been helped by not being able to run the fundraising events we had planned over the last few months due to Covid-19.

We've been able to continue providing childcare to the children of our key workers so they could do the very important jobs they do, and we're now open for all children again and are looking to increase our numbers.

We have spaces available for 2-4 year olds, with up to 30 hours government funding available for 3 & 4 year olds and eligible 2 year olds.

Can you help?

Do you have any time available to help us ensure Pre-School looks as good as it possibly can in the centre of the village, such as with some gardening?

Would you like to join the friendly Management Committee in October to help with the running and shaping future plans?

Are you able to support in any other way to increase our numbers, such as spreading the word about the Pre-School, local advertising or any donations?

If you're able to help in anyway then please send me an email to [eshrimpton@yahoo.com](mailto:eshrimpton@yahoo.com).

**Ed Shrimpton**  
Chair

## Great News

**Berinsfield Library is Now Open**  
Please note the slight change in opening hours

**Monday – closed**

**Tuesday 10.00-12.30 & 2-5.00pm**

**Wednesday 10.00-12.30 & 2-5.00pm**

**Thursday 2.00-5.00pm**

**Friday 10.00-12.30 & 2.00-5.00pm**

**Saturday 10.00-12.30**

**Our community activities are all on hold for the moment, but we will be back.**

**Pop in and see us.**

**We will meet and greet you, have a one-way system and books are quarantined for 72 hours.**

**All welcome.**

**Visit your local library and see what we have on offer**

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries)

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# DORCHESTER-ON-THAMES

## AUTUMN FLOWER SHOW

### VIRTUAL SHOWING

**Saturday 12th September 2020**

Anticipating ongoing restrictions of social distancing due to coronavirus it is unlikely that we will be able to host the Autumn Flower Show 2020 in its normal format.

Exhibitors are therefore invited to join a celebration of their horticultural and domestic achievements during these unprecedented times by submitting entries in new and exciting ways. Entries will be judged anonymously by local experts, as our usual judges will not be available.

#### **Section 1 – Vegetables (photographed entry)**

**A collection of 4 different types of vegetables in a container**

Competing for: The Vegetable Collection Plate

#### **Section 2 – Flowers (photographed entry)**

**One dahlia, any size**

Competing for: The HC Smith Dahlia Cup.

#### **Section 3 – Flower arrangements (photographed – two photos per entry)**

**A posy for bees. Max 6 x 6 x 6 inches**

Competing for: The Floral Art Cup

#### **Section 4 – Domestic (Entries to be submitted and donated to the Dorchester Abbey tearoom; please label with your name)**

**Sponge cake, any flavour, buttercream filling**

Competing for: Victoria Sandwich Award

**A pot of jam**

#### **Section 5 – Photography**

**A subject beginning with F** (unmanipulated image)

**A funny photo** (unmanipulated image)

Competing for: The Blackwell Photography Cup

#### **Section 6 – Children, all ages (photographed entry)**

**Halloween mask**

Please state age.

#### **All entries should be submitted by 12 noon Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September**

All entries must have been grown or home produced by the exhibitor. One entry per exhibitor in each category.

Sections 1 to 4 will be judged on content not photographic quality.

All photographic entries should be sent to:

**flowershow@dorchesteronthames.co.uk**

Entries for the domestic classes should be delivered to the Dorchester Abbey tearoom between 10 am and 12 noon Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> September.

Queries to Christina 01865 341150

**Winners will be announced and the show open for virtual viewing on the Dorchester on Thames website at 2.00pm on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> September.**





## The thrills and spills of a life in motorsport

When I was a teenager I spent many a happy Saturday evening watching stock car racing at Harringay Stadium. It was much more exciting than the greyhounds that were there the rest of the week, and definitely more exciting than the Sainsbury's store which is there now. The drivers seemed to be absolute dare-devils, risking life and limb to win these crazy races. Little did I know that many years later I would come to know one of those dare-devil drivers and get to hear from him how dangerous it really was. And now we have it all in his, James Pratt's, new book.

Last year we saw a second book of poetry from James. This year, the prolific Dorchester author has given us his auto-biography in automotive racing. Can nothing stop this man?

In this book he tells of his life in motorsport, from banger racing at age 15 and progressing through stock cars, autocross, rallying, speed testing and oval racing. And it is not just James. His father and three brothers and nephew all raced cars at various levels, at various times, so it was real family passion.

And James's passion comes through clearly in this book, as he tells about getting started as a teenager, the engineering modifications needed to optimise the power to weight ratio without compromising safety (too much). And then there were the rivalries and the dirty tricks played by rival drivers.

Rallying with Minis took James all over the place, including Switzerland and the South of France, and there always seemed to be a photographer on hand.

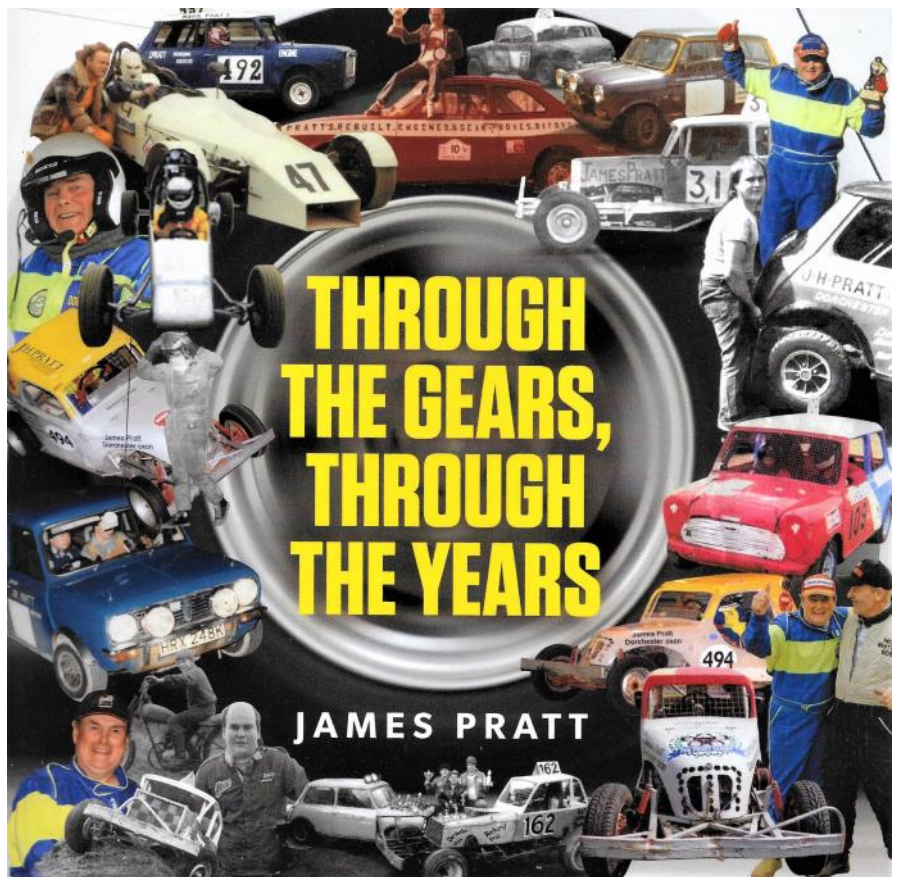


Indeed one of the fascinations of this book is the wealth of photographs, all beautifully reproduced throughout the 88 pages of the book and covering almost his whole racing life.

And James was a winner. That is evident from the number of cups and trophies in the picture, left.

If you want to know more about James and his passion for motorsport, or just to read up what being a motorsport competitor is like, and has been like over the last 50 years or so, then you'll want to get a copy of this.

This is a limited edition book, and is currently available only from James himself, on **01865 341503**, and costs £12.00.



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## The historic buildings of Dorchester

Regular contributor to Dorchester News, Professor Malcolm Airs, resident of the High Street, has been busy during the Covid-19 pandemic. In the last issue of Dorchester News we congratulated him on his recovery from a severe bout of the virus, and you may have seen him on BBC Oxford News talking about it. Since then he has created two new videos on his passion, historic architecture, both about the history of buildings in Dorchester. Here he, and his crew, otherwise known as his family, tell us how they came to make these videos, and importantly, where you can find them. They are well worth careful viewing.



Malcolm says, 'The original idea was to film the walking tours around the village which I used to do for my students, and for various other organisations such as the Dorchester History Society and the Festival. These were always over-subscribed and the idea was mooted at a History Society meeting early this year to make a film of the tour. It was quite an ambitious project for which we were going to seek funding from the National Heritage Lottery Fund. Then along came coronavirus!'

Megan takes up the story. 'During Malcolm's convalescence post Covid-19, my brother sent me a link to a series of videos produced by the art historian Philip Mould. It was a very simple concept – he invited us into his house to look at his very eclectic art collection, picture by picture. In other words, an expert talking about what they know best. It was a winning formula. Quite far into the series he revealed that his son Oliver, was filming it all on his smart phone. Such a simple idea yet so effective.'

'Our son Thom earns his living as a print journalist and a videographer, so I thought we can do something similar. It seemed to me that in lockdown people wanted uplifting and interesting short films about subjects they might not know they were interested in until an expert pops up to explain it. I think we all needed some distraction in those early days of lockdown. So, rather than a filmed tour of the village, we could do something short and snappy.'

Thom added 'I watched my dad give a lecture in Oxford late last year and it struck me that his knowledge deserved a wider audience. When the idea of filming his walking tour came up I thought we should create a free YouTube film about the village in the hope that it could inform visitors and residents now and for years to come. I'm glad we settled on shorter thematic videos. The topics are specific to this very special village but universal enough to apply elsewhere and attract a much wider audience. The response has been fantastic and the lovely comments from across the world have shown the positive side of social media. I'm looking forward to making more!'

'Recently, Michael "Mossie" Davis has begun uploading old videos from Dorchester onto YouTube (search Stardream Video) and they are a fascinating snapshot of village life, so I wanted to continue that visual history in some way.'

The response has been so positive – boosted by a recommendation on Twitter by Lucy Worsley - that we are thinking about what other aspect of Dorchester's buildings we might cover.

Malcolm emphasised that it has been very much a team effort although Megan's name hasn't yet appeared on the credits. She suggested the format in the first place and it goes without saying that she has been multi-tasking, taking on lighting, continuity, content adviser and catering duties! It has been a family affair and has given us a lot of pleasure. We have all appreciated how special this village is. The closer one looks, the more interesting it becomes.

See below for links to both films or go to YouTube.

*Why dates on old buildings can be misleading*  
<https://youtu.be/7tzPADmRlls>

*A history of windows - evil spirits, fire, form and function*  
<https://youtu.be/sJHYPOH7kLQ>

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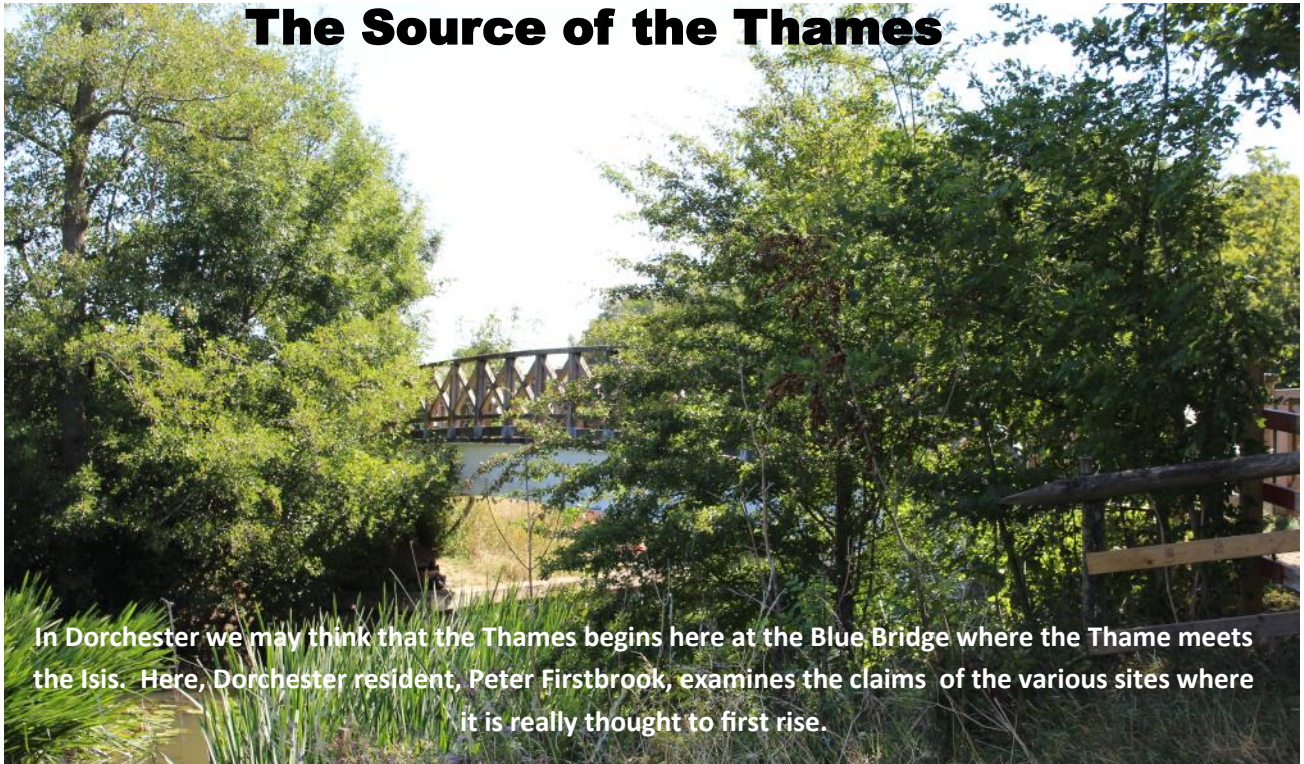
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# The Source of the Thames



In Dorchester we may think that the Thames begins here at the Blue Bridge where the Thame meets the Isis. Here, Dorchester resident, Peter Firstbrook, examines the claims of the various sites where it is really thought to first rise.

Like all good stories, a river has a beginning, a middle, and an end. Finding the right beginning to a story is notoriously difficult, and the same so often applies to a river. Many years ago, the irreverent TV comedian, Michael Bentine, set off with fellow 'explorers' and trekked through the impenetrable forests of Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire to find the source of the Thames; all they found was a leaking tap. Disappointed, they did the right thing and turned it off, only to find that the river dried up, leaving boats aground, high and dry on the mud.

If only finding the real source was that simple. There is no doubt that the river rises somewhere in the Cotswolds, an area of rolling meadows and limestone escarpments which produce numerous springs. But a river is like a tree, with

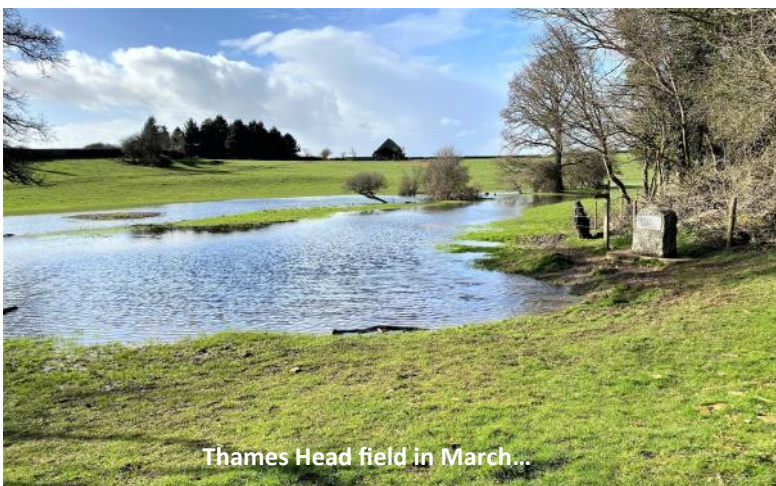
every tributary a branch, and every stream a twig. The challenge is to find the twig furthest away from the bottom of the trunk.

Traditionally, the rather unimaginatively-named 'Thames Head' claims to be the source of the river, 356-ft above sea level. This spot lies a few miles southwest of Cirencester in a meadow known as Trewsbury Mead, near the village of Kemble. The site is also very close to another watering hole—the Thames Head Inn—which serves a fine range of local ales. Thames Head (the source, not the pub) is also the favoured choice of such august institutions as the Environment Agency, the Ordnance Survey, and several other authorities. They have measured the river, and they agree it is 215 miles long, making it slightly shorter than the River Severn,

Britain's longest river. But are they correct?

Traditionally, geographers define the source of a river as the most distant point upstream which provides the biggest *constant* flow of water to the river. But small tributaries are fickle and they often dry up during the summer, and this is exactly what happens at Thames Head. In March this year, the spring flooded the farmer's field, but by June the water had gone and you could walk down the first two miles of the Thames on its dried-up river bed.

A good 15 miles north of Kemble is a hamlet called the Seven Springs, 4 miles south of Cheltenham. Here, the locals claim, is the *real* source of the Thames. Strictly, Seven Springs is the source of the River Churn which flows into the Thames at Cricklade, but its location is 14



Thames Head field in March...



...and then in June



miles further from the mouth of the Thames than Thames Head, and at 685.7 ft above sea level. So should Seven Springs be the true source of the Thames? The proof is in the flow of water, and even during the peak of our very dry June this year, Seven Springs had a healthy flow of water.

So why then does Thames Head still claim to be the true source? For this, we need to go back more than 70 years. On 25 February 1937, the issue was debated in the House of Commons by two local MPs, Sir Walter Perkins (Conservative MP for Stroud), and William Morrison, 1st Viscount Dunrossil (Conservative MP for Cirencester and Tewkesbury), who happened also to be the incumbent Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

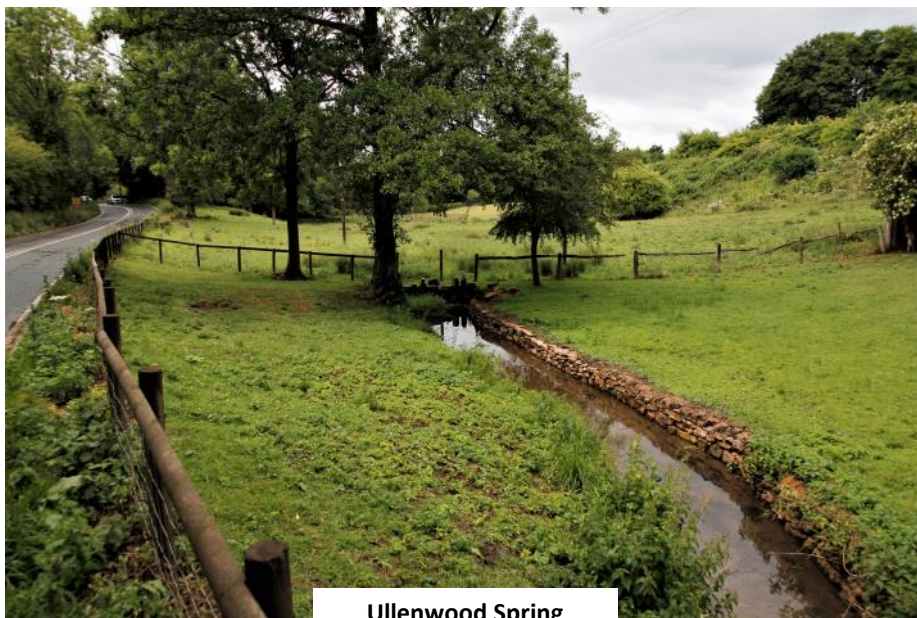
Perkins opened the debate by asking the Minister whether 'in view of the fact that the source known as Seven Springs, in the parish of Coberley, is further from the estuary, he will undertake that in the next edition of the Ordnance Survey Maps the correct source will be marked?' The location of the Seven Springs was, of course, within the MP's own constituency. Sir Walter pressed his case: 'Is the Right Honourable Gentleman aware that the source known as Thames Head periodically dries up as in 1935, and is he also aware that the source known as Seven Springs is twice as high above sea level as the source known as Thames Head, as well as being farther from the estuary?'

You might think that Perkins had a cut-and-dried case, but the Minister of Agriculture was having none of it: 'I am aware of these considerations,' conceded Morrison, 'but they do not alter in my view, as confirmed, that the River Thames rises in my constituency and not in that of my Honourable Friend.' The Minister then used his influence in Cabinet to make sure the official source of the Thames did not change; to this day, Thames Head is the source shown on Ordnance Survey maps. It was hardly pistols-at-dawn stuff, but the two local MPs did at least metaphorically cross swords in Parliament, and the Minister of Agriculture won the day.

But here things become just a little more complicated. About a mile south of Seven Springs is the village of Coberley. Here, an even longer tributary joins the Churn, and the stream can be traced back to the nearby village of Ullenwood. In June this year, there was a very healthy spring still



Seven Springs June 2020



Ullenwood Spring

flowing through a private garden adjacent to the A436, which runs between Ullenwood and Seven Springs. So why has this location not been claimed to be the true source?

During both World Wars, Ullenwood was the site of a US military camp, and therefore out-of-bounds to civilians. In the 1950s, the camp became the site of a secret civil defence bunker, intended as a 'Regional Seat of Government' in the event of nuclear war. Once again, amateur explorers were discouraged.

Since the end of the Cold War, the extensive grounds of the military camp have become home to an independent school and a private golf club. There is therefore every good reason why the local residents here prefer not to attract attention to themselves by declaring their spring to be the true origin of the

Thames—but they certainly have a very strong claim.

If the true source of the Thames is indeed Seven Springs, it would add another 14 miles to its official length of 215 miles, making it longer than the River Severn (220 miles), and therefore officially the longest river in the United Kingdom. If you accept the secretive Ullenwood site as the official source, then you can add a couple more miles to its length. Either source would make the Thames longer even than the River Shannon in Ireland, which is officially 224 miles long.

So contrary to popular belief, could the River Thames actually be the longest river in the whole of the British Isles? Or for the sake of international harmony, should we go with the flow and let the Severn and Shannon take the records?

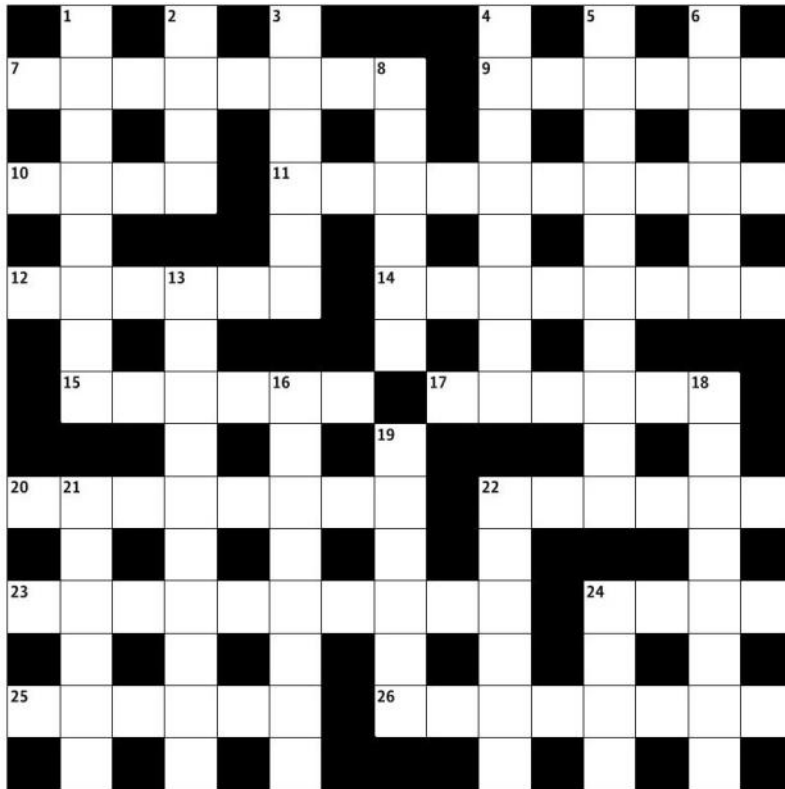
**Peter Firstbrook**



# Dorchester News Crossword No. 13

Compiled by Slider

26 This is a posh spread of the French queen- stop the car! (4,4)



## Down

- 1 Two rivers in front of the camp could be signs of things to come. (8)
- 2 A day in 1945 to refuse to sanction. (4)
- 3 Redress the Chinaman with a drug. (6)
4. Get reorganised about the defensive position. (8)
5. O for a trampoline to jump about in the house (10)
- 6 Twit new at the wheel - quite a prickly thing. (6)
- 8 Profit from another go- round. (6)
- 13 Work -time shelter for the garden perhaps. (5,5)
16. The man in charge rose, waited and earned his dues. (8)
- 18 Little owls could be stars. (8)
- 19 In Tae- Kwan -Do position moving up to "The Louse" (6)
- 21 One gives praise to get clean out of November. (6)
- 22 A thousand crosses for the Roman rites. (6)
- 24 Get down to a second exercise. (4)

## Name that flower

If you are still scratching your head over July's flower naming competition, you can give your scalp a rest now, because here are the answers? How did you do?

- |                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Not a dance all night     | 11. Lonely in an onion patch    |
| <b>Wallflower</b>            | <b>Petunia</b>                  |
| 2. Falling from the sky      | 12. You will remember           |
| <b>Snowdrop</b>              | <b>Forget-me-not</b>            |
| 3. Last call in a pub        | 13. Used to thicken a sauce     |
| <b>Thyme</b>                 | <b>Cornflower</b>               |
| 4. Part of the eye           | 14. Marry that millionaire      |
| <b>Iris</b>                  | <b>Marigold</b>                 |
| 5. Accident in the dairy     | 15. St George's card game?      |
| <b>Cowslip</b>               | <b>Snapdragon</b>               |
| 6. On a bicycle made for two | 16. Baby in Popeye              |
| <b>Daisy</b>                 | <b>Sweet Pea</b>                |
| 7. Sweethearts in a fog      | 17. Max Bygrave's Dutch flowers |
| <b>Love-in-a-mist</b>        | <b>Tulip</b>                    |
| 8. Religious headgear        | 18. Novel by Baroness Orczy     |
| <b>Monkshood</b>             | <b>Scarlet Pimpernel</b>        |
| 9. Bouquet not bucket        | 19. A cathedral's campanile     |
| <b>Hyacinth</b>              | <b>Canterbury Bell</b>          |
| 10. A hardworking girl       | 20. Full fat vessel             |
| <b>Busy Lizzie</b>           | <b>Buttercup</b>                |

Submitted by Yvonne Lawden, courtesy of Oxon KFA

*'Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass, it's about learning to dance in the rain'*

**Vivian Green, 2006**

## Across

- 7 Assembled a piece of clothing - knockout stuff ! (8)
- 9 Red Sea taken out. (6)
- 10 The Emperor was nothing but excessive to begin with. (4)
- 11 Make an admission - Alan is true but poor. (10)
- 12 Chant when a fan of Geordieland. (6)
- 14 Electric current a blessing and can be available indoors. (8)
- 15 Watch around the river going Westwards at a great rate.(6)
- 17 Thanks very much for the hundred before the lady's drug containment. (6)
- 20 Less cane keeps order and purifies. (8)
- 22 A joint maybe but no drink included when the musicians are performing. (6)
- 23 Signs for the charts and the leading motor. (10)
- 24 It's a drink my friend! (4)
- 25 Some of the stones (sieved) could be monstrous. (6)

## Advertising in Dorchester News

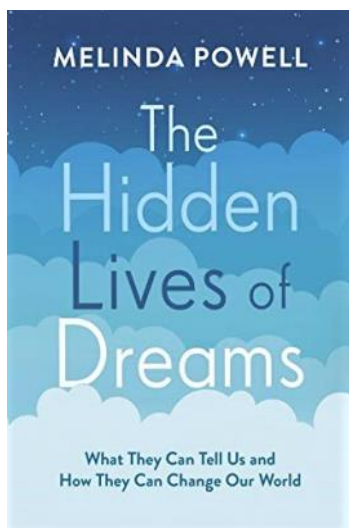
Costs per issue are for an eighth of a page £11.75 mono, £12.75 colour; quarter page £23.50 mono, £25.50 colour; half page £35.25 mono, £38.50 colour and full page £47.00 mono, £51.00 colour. There are ten issues per year.

Please send artwork to  
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One-time adverts, please send a cheque, payable to 'Dorchester Abbey PCC', to  
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## Dreamers of Dorchester



*The Hidden Lives of Dreams*  
by Melinda Powell,  
DRImelinda@ccpe.org.uk

On account of my work as co-founder of the Dream Research Institute London, I was invited in 2019 to write a book on dreams and well-being by Bonnier Books UK, and it was published in March 2020. I wasn't able to host a local 'book launch' for friends and family in Dorchester because of the pandemic, so I have decided to write a short piece about the book for the *Dorchester News*.

*The Hidden Lives of Dreams* brings together the art and science of dreaming, including lucid dreaming, for therapeutic benefit and psycho-spiritual development, both *within* dreams and in waking life. The book explores the role of light, colour, space, healing presence and lucidity in dreams, dispels common misconceptions about dreams and addresses the fear of nightmares. Using case examples and sample dreams, I show how to tap into our dreams as a source of guidance and inspiration, to enhance our wellbeing and to discover a healthier, balanced approach to life.

Due to the global pandemic, I have also been invited to talk and write about 'pandemic dreams'. Rather than seeing such dreams as merely symptoms of distress, I view them as offering us a way forward for addressing what ails us, individually and collectively. Acknowledging the feelings aroused by pandemic dreams, and working with them therapeutically, has the power to harness the emotional energy that can help bring healing to the human heart.

*The Hidden Lives of Dreams* is available at [amazon.co.uk](https://www.amazon.co.uk) in print, Kindle, and audio.

Melinda Powell



## Dorchester and District Royal British Legion

I am pleased to report that the Dorchester Branch of the Royal British Legion was restored to its full status during May of this year. It had looked like the branch may have closed completely this September.

Fortunately this was avoided by the formation of a new committee earlier in the year so that we can continue all our functions unchanged, including the Remembrance service, as in past years.

Unfortunately, as with many other events Covid interrupted plans for a VE Day celebration at the Village Hall in May but all members were invited to a VJ Day service at the Abbey on Sunday 16 August when we were able to parade the standard.

The next event will be a face to face meeting in the White Hart on **Wednesday 23 September** (Covid permitting). Members will be reminded by email nearer the time.

Similarly, the date of the Branch AGM and further details of the Remembrance service will also appear in the next edition of Dorchester News and on email over the coming months.

I do hope all our members will come along to these events so that we can gain feedback on how they feel the branch can function better for the benefit of members and the wider Legion family.

Chris Hill

Chairman of Dorchester and District RBL.

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# Join the Great British September Clean

Be part of the pick



## The Dorchester Flyer

The Dorchester Flyer, the Parish's Friday bus service to Wallingford, had to be suspended at the start of the Covid-19 lockdown. At present the County Comet service, which provides the mini-bus, cannot operate as normal, and we do not know when or whether we will be able to reinstate the service.

Anyone with a ticket with unused sections can apply to the Parish Clerk for a refund:

Clerk to the Council: Mr Geoffrey Russell  
The Pigeons, 5-7 High Street, Dorchester-on-Thames,  
Oxfordshire OX10 7HH

Telephone: **07745 311439**  
e-mail [parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk)



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## Parish Council Notices

### Parish Council Vacancy

The Council regrets to announce the resignation of Viviane Quirke due to the recent increase in her teaching commitments at Oxford Brookes University. The Parish Council Chairman, Mark Williams, and all the Councillors wish to thank Viviane for everything that she has contributed during her time in office.

Notice of a Casual Vacancy on the Parish Council has been displayed on Village Notice boards. Further information is available from the Clerk.

### Keep Britain Tidy

#### Great British September Clean

The Parish Council has applied to South Oxfordshire District Council to take part in The Great British September Clean on the weekend of **Saturday 12 – Sunday 13 September**. Litter picking equipment and hi-visibility jackets will be provided and the District Council has created systems to keep everybody involved in the litter picking process as safe as possible.

Volunteers will be limited to a total of 30 adults and children combined. If you will be available on either **12 or 13 September** please contact the Clerk via email to [parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk)

Further information will be posted on Village notice boards nearer the time.

### Dog Fouling

The Parish Council is still receiving an unusually large number of complaints about dog mess being allowed to remain in public areas. This includes surfaces on the Recreation Ground, in the Cemetery (where all dogs should be on leads), and on pavements and footpaths in the countryside around the village.

To remind people of their responsibilities, which are a **legal** requirement, several new notices have been displayed. Dog waste bags and bins are provided throughout the Parish so there really is no excuse for this being a problem. Some more consideration, please.

### Council Meetings

The September Parish Council Meeting will take place on **Wednesday 9 September** and will commence at 7.30 p.m. The Agenda will be posted on Village Noticeboards and on the Parish Council section of the Village website – [www.dorchesteronthames.co.uk](http://www.dorchesteronthames.co.uk) – three working days in advance.

It is expected that this meeting will be held 'remotely' but **all** Parish Council meetings are open to the public and any resident who wishes to raise any matter of concern is welcome to do so at the start of the meeting. Please contact the Clerk no later than 3.00 p.m. on the afternoon before the meeting so that the necessary access arrangements can be made.



As we have coped with lockdown many of us have taken the opportunity to walk and explore the village and its surrounds. Like me you might have seen the inevitable accumulation of litter at some spots. So, September sees a wonderful initiative sponsored by Keep Britain Tidy and The Great British Spring Clean which the Parish Council is keen that we all support. We are all being encouraged to contribute a little to tidying the footpaths and amenity areas around our communities.

So how can we all help? It is simple really. Grab a bag, a bin bag or even a carrier bag. Grab some gloves if that works for you. And then when you are on your regular walk pick up any litter you see on your way. And bin it. Done.

If we all do a little bit on our various routes then we can really make a difference to our environment. Your parish councillors are all keen to help so will be joining in but this is one of those areas where the more of us do it the more we can achieve. So please do take part, it's got to be a good thing and helping ourselves in this way, at this time of all times, will build on the public spirit that Dorchester has shown so strongly over the last few months. I'm looking forward to the photos of bags of rubbish on the village website and in Dorchester News next month!

**Mark Williams**  
Chairman DoT Parish Council  
[chairman@dorchesteronthames.co.uk](mailto:chairman@dorchesteronthames.co.uk)

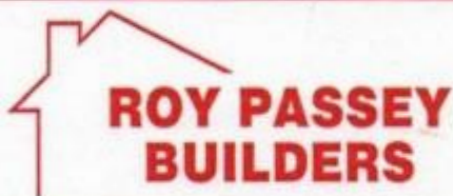
### Contacting the Parish Council

The Parish Clerk is Geoffrey Russell of The Pigeons (next to The Fleur de Lys), 5-7 High Street, Dorchester-on-Thames OX10 7HH

Telephone (during normal office hours, please, unless an emergency) **07745 311439**. Texts are always welcome.  
e –mail: [parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk)

Cllr Mark Williams, the Chairman, can be contacted via [chairman@dorchesteronthames.co.uk](mailto:chairman@dorchesteronthames.co.uk)

For information about the Parish Council go to <https://www.dorchester-on-thames.co.uk/parish-council/>  
This includes the minutes of all Parish Council Meetings and financial information such as monthly bank balances and payments as well as a record of all planning matters upon which the Parish Council has been consulted and reports from our County and District Councillors.



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## From your District Councillor... ...Robin Bennett



### South Oxfordshire Local Plan

The public hearing stage of the examination into the local plan recently finished. As you probably know, controversial Secretary of State Robert Jenrick has forced the council to progress the plan. It was the first local plan examination in the country to take place online, with well over 200 contributions from organisations, public bodies and individuals, and more than 14,000 views on YouTube.

In his initial conclusions on Friday, the inspector Jonathan Bore MRTPI indicated that he was satisfied with the strategy, housing numbers and sites in the plan. This is disappointing for local green belt campaigners, given that six of the seven large 'strategic sites' are in the green belt. We now await final written confirmation of any modifications that may be required to the plan in Mr Bore's report. Some changes, including some I proposed during the sessions, have already been accepted, such as on prioritising cycling and encouraging community-led housing, but it is clear that the inspector is not likely to make the fundamental changes that we hoped for.

In any event, the government's proposals for a new planning regime look likely to demolish any remaining local ability to influence major housing development plans.

### Enjoyment of the countryside

Increased use of the countryside across the district for recreation during lockdown, which is very welcome, has inevitably led to an increase in litter. SODC officers have been working to deal with the increase, including increasing the number of bins and the frequency of emptying. Meanwhile, our new district Thames Champion, Cllr Jo Robb, has written letters to neighbouring councils, river users and other groups, encouraging sustainable use of our river system and improved public access while protecting and enhancing the river's biodiversity and cleanliness.

### Future plans for the district council

In spite of uncertainty about local government reorganisation, we are pressing ahead with plans for the future. We have now had a record 930 responses to the survey on our draft 'corporate plan' through our public and staff engagement. The plan sets out the themes and projects our administration hopes to achieve over the next few years. Themes in the plan include tackling the climate emergency, homes and infrastructure that meet local needs, and improved economic and community wellbeing. There's also a focus on how we can help to protect and restore the natural world, and how the council can operate in an open and transparent way.

We have also received a great response to the 'lockdown lifestyle' survey which launched recently.

This will provide us with a much better understanding of the impact of Covid-19 on our residents and a really good basis to work on new initiatives to keep residents active, healthy and happy. On that note, it's great to see that the gym at Abbey Sports Centre has reopened, with social distancing measures in place, although the pool and other facilities are still closed at the time of writing.

### Community hub support and contact tracing

As you know, the national shielding programme is being paused. Most of our shielded residents have welcomed the relaxation in restrictions and are coping well, which is positive, but it's early days, and our community hub remains open and available during normal office hours - call **01235 422600** or email [communitysupport@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:communitysupport@southoxon.gov.uk).

Our environmental health officers are likely to be part of any localised test-and-trace system, and on standby should that be required in the event of a local outbreak. This would be led by the county council's Director of Public Health. Of course, we hope the system will not be required.

**Robin.Bennett@southoxon.gov.uk**

tel. 01865 858680

m. 07979 646815

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# From your County Councillor... ...Lorraine Lindsay-Gale



## Active Travel

Part of our work to enable Oxfordshire's recovery from coronavirus has been to support a shift to walking and cycling so people are able to get around safely and sustainably as lockdown restrictions are eased. This is being partly funded by the Department for Transport through the Emergency Active Travel Fund.

### Tranche one

Good progress continues to be made with the first phase of activity. Our **Active Travel web pages** provide up-to-date information, including:

- detailed phase one changes (June and July) by wide geographical area
- the work schedule for cycleway changes

We are continuing to feature active travel news stories, which include:

**Didcot racks up more active travel opportunities**

**Science Vale cycle network progress boosts active travel**

### Tranche two

Work progresses on compiling our bid for the second tranche of Active Travel funding, due to be submitted on 7 August.

The **joint fast feedback survey** with Oxford City Council to help inform proposals to **install temporary bus gates** in Oxford city centre is now closed. We are proposing to trial two new bus gates in Oxford city centre, using an Experimental Traffic Regulation Order (ETRO) - this is an approach encouraged by the Government to assist in the delivery of active travel modes and other coronavirus recovery schemes. As anticipated, there was high level of public interest in this exercise.

### Registration offices open:

- County Hall (registrations/ceremonies)
- Tidmarsh Lane, Oxford (ceremonies)
- Bodicote House, Banbury (appointments and ceremonies)
- Didcot Library Registration Office
- Henley

### Opening 2<sup>nd</sup> September:

- Abingdon, Bicester, Witney

## Oxfordshire Music On Line

To brighten your day – it certainly did mine – I thought I would share this fantastic performance from the **Oxfordshire Youth Music Theatre** singing *Superstar* (from *Jesus Christ Superstar*) which you will find on youtube. After rehearsing for months, their performance was sadly cancelled by the coronavirus. But they rose to the challenge and delivered a wonderful virtual performance. Oxfordshire County Music Service really have been keeping the music alive during this pandemic, with virtual music lessons, the joint OCC/CDC choir, and much more.

## Cultural Services – August 2020

Government guidance has now confirmed that libraries are to be treated in the same manner as shops and therefore **face coverings are now required for customers and staff in libraries**. As per the guidance and information in the public domain for shops, customers will not be refused entry if they do not have a face covering or refuse to complete a track and trace information slip but do run the risk of receiving a fine if they do not do so.

Once we are in a position to open the Oxfordshire Museum and History centre, the same rules will apply regarding face coverings.

### Library Openings

Berinsfield and Wallingford libraries opened w/c 3 August.

### Community Libraries

We have had initial discussions with friends groups who help us run our 22 Community Libraries to plan for opening in the same phased way.

### Heritage

Museum Resource Centre opened w/c 27 July. The Oxfordshire Museum and History Centre had a target date of w/c 10 August. This coincides with the University opening the Ashmolean.

## Award-winning Council

The **Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme** acknowledges employers who best demonstrate forces-friendly credentials as part of their recruitment, selection and support of those in the armed forces. Gold is the scheme's highest level of award, and we have received this honour in recognition of our **gold standard** employment and support of the armed forces community. More detailed information on how the council works with the military in Oxfordshire is in a dedicated section of our public website.

We have also been recognised in this year's **Fostering Excellence Awards** – the UK's most prestigious foster care awards, which celebrate outstanding achievement in fostering and recognise those who make exceptional contributions to foster care every day. The Fostering Network was so impressed with our work to promote the Fostering Friendly Employer scheme that they have awarded us the **Fostering Friendly Employer of the year award**.

## Opening of council buildings and offices

With more services restarting as lockdown eases, there will not be any immediate changes for the County Council as an organisation. We are continuing to ask everyone who can work from home to continue to do so and virtual committee meetings will continue.



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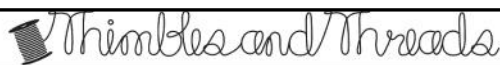
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# From your MP...

## ...John Howell

As August gives way to September, and Parliament and schools return, for many there is a hope of something nearer to the normal we used to know. There is also a hope that we will learn new ways of working and take some of the positive learning from recent experience forward. I appreciate too that many concerns still exist and we must be on our guard to remember that COVID 19 has not gone away. Instead we have learned more about how to live with it and we also have treatments that can alleviate symptoms and keep people out of hospital.

Summer without fetes has been strange. In the early summer I am usually out and about visiting at least one fete in the constituency every weekend. I have missed the informal conversations at these events and when out and about in the streets. Whilst technology has enabled some things to continue there is no substitute for face to face meetings. As human beings we rely on the non-verbal signals to understand more of what someone is saying and it is just not possible to read the signals in the same way on screen. I think this accounts for much of the mis-understanding that can come from emails too. During recent months I have continued to hold surgeries and these have had to be via zoom. Although I prefer to meet people face to face, with the geographical size of the constituency, I have come to realise that this may be a practical thing to continue going forward to reduce travel time especially where a meeting would be quite short. So in the Autumn I will continue to hold virtual surgeries and will arrange face to face meetings as restrictions permit.

As we begun to emerge from lockdown I know that there have been huge disappointments for some people. One area of disappointment has been for couples planning to marry. I know just how much planning goes into a wedding and some couples had adjusted their plans to be able to go ahead under the phased recovery plan which would have allowed small wedding receptions to go ahead in August. So when the COVID statistics showed the risk of a second wave which led the Prime Minister to put the brake on easing restrictions I appreciate that this was a huge blow to couples and their families. I do not underestimate the emotional strain on families and indeed on the wedding industry, but I do support the Prime Minister is

taking early action to apply the brake to keep us all safe.

A second area of disappointment has been around exam results. As it was impossible to hold public examinations the results had to be determined based on past performance and predicted grades. There has been much publicity over the fact that some students were disappointed with the outcome of this. I know the anticipation and anxiety around waiting for exam results and fully appreciate the disappointment when the outcome is not as hoped. Although there is an appeal process I was concerned that early decisions made by further education establishments based on the results did not allow for appeals. I made an urgent plea to the Minister for an immediate temporary halt to the UCAS Clearing system to allow for appeals before it was too late with places reallocated. I understand that universities are making allowance for this.

On the other side of things it has been a delight to see hospitality outlets reopen and pub and restaurant gardens attracting custom back in the lovely summer afternoons that we have had. Although limited, the chance to meet up with people again was welcome by many and in our area I have been pleased to see that, by and large, people have been following Government guidelines on social distancing and hand hygiene.

Let us hope that the work for a vaccine for Covid-19 continues to make good progress and that the availability of different drugs to treat symptoms continues to grow. Only with these will full confidence return and all business and social activities be able to recommence.

When Parliament returns there will be a busy programme of work. On many issues I make comment on my website so please do have a look. [www.johnhowell.org.uk](http://www.johnhowell.org.uk). If you have an issue that you would like to raise with me, if possible, please email me at [john.howell.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:john.howell.mp@parliament.uk). If you cannot email you can write to me at my constituency office - **PO Box 84, Watlington, OX49 5XD**.

If you would like to receive my periodic electronic newsletters, and briefings on specific issues, please visit my website [www.johnhowell.org.uk](http://www.johnhowell.org.uk) and subscribe at the link on the home page.

For details of online church services at  
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## Parish Registers

### Holy Matrimony

17 July Loic Courtois and Jennifer  
Booys

### Funeral

21 July Charles Hugh Johnson



## Weekly events at the Village Hall

All events suspended

## Weekly events

Monday	<b>DADS Play reading</b> 7.30 pm Online
Tuesday	Coffee Morning 10.30am Online
Wednesday	<b>Mobile Post Office</b> 1.00-3.00pm but may vary due to Covid 19 Outside Co-op

Regular events also appear in the Parish  
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unique building, create Covid19-safe procedures and ensure everyone is fully trained. We will also be using this enforced shut-down period to complete our annual maintenance tasks.

Because we are all volunteers, this will take us some time, so we will not be re-opening until at least the beginning of September 2020. Re-opening will also depend on the status of the virus and government guidelines at the time. We will update you on any further developments as and when we have them. We will also be eagerly awaiting advice from the Government on when we can resume live performances and theatre.

We are incredibly grateful for your support and passion for the Corn Exchange, and we look forward to welcoming you back to our wonderful and sorely missed venue.

Well, what a year it has been. Everyone at the Corn Exchange in Wallingford hopes that you are keeping safe and well and now that lockdown is easing, we want to update you on our plans.

You will have heard that the Government has authorised cinemas to open from 4 July 2020, but there is still no date for when theatres will be allowed to re-open for live performances. Because we provide both cinema and theatre, this means we will only show films when we first re-open.

We are totally committed to the health, safety and well-being of our fantastic volunteers and our loyal and supportive audience, and are working hard to ensure we make the Corn Exchange as safe as possible for all our visitors. We are taking professional Health & Safety advice on how best to modify our

### STOP PRESS

The Corn Exchange theatre in Wallingford is hoping to reopen the cinema on **Saturday 26 September**, subject to the government guidelines in place at the time. On this night we will be showing a free film as a welcome gesture to our loyal patrons. Please check our website [www.cornexchange.org.uk](http://www.cornexchange.org.uk) for further details, booking information and safety guidelines in place.

We cannot contemplate opening for theatre and other live shows at the moment as this is still not allowed but we will be working hard to ensure that this is done as soon as possible.

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Services X38, X39 X40 go every 20 minutes from the bypass at the end of Drayton Road to Oxford and Wallingford. Information about bus services, both local and national, is available from [www.traveline.info](http://www.traveline.info), and **0871 200 2233**. Reduced services currently being run.

### AGE UK

The UK's largest charity working with older people For help and advice etc. go to [www.ageuk.org.uk](http://www.ageuk.org.uk)

### WALLINGFORD VOLUNTEER CENTRE

WVC Volunteers provide help for the elderly, disabled or vulnerable, especially by giving lifts to medical appointments at hospitals in Oxford, Abingdon and Reading. You need to register as a client. Contact the Centre for more information. **01491 836345**

[www.wallingford.volunteercentre@gmail.com](mailto:www.wallingford.volunteercentre@gmail.com)

### CONTACTING THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Parish Clerk is Geoffrey Russell of The Pigeons (next to The Fleur de Lys), High Street, Dorchester on Thames OX10 7HH; **07745 311439** (during normal office hours, please, unless an emergency); [parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk](mailto:parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk).

### MOBILE POST OFFICE

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### ABBAY WEBSITE

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Fri 23 Sept **Green**

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The ultimate treat for home, picnic or tea in the Abbey gardens

# Dorchester Abbey Tea Room



Delicious home made cake sold by the slice, tea & coffee.  
Sats & Suns 2.30pm-5pm  
See this week's menu and pre-order for village delivery (for residents still isolating)



Eat in our lovely outside courtyard & Abbey gardens

Run & baked by volunteers!  
All profits to charity  
Children & dogs welcome



We are keeping our volunteers and customers safe by taking contactless payments only.

