

Dorchester News

Free to every home in the parish

December 2020/January 2021





In this issue

Dorchester Abbey

Advent—not the Posada	3
Christmas Services	3
Talking Point	3
Thank you	3
Do you shop at Amazon?	4
Ride and Stride—Thank You	4
Abbey Tea Room Cookery Book	8
Dorchester Abbey Museum News	10
Dorchester Abbey Christmas Cards	14
Dorchester Abbey Tea Room	20

Clubs, Societies and Sports

Hempcroft Allotments	5
DoT Historical Society	5
DADS weekly play reading	7
Dorchester Tennis Club	7
Dorchester British Legion	11

Village news/articles

I was a stranger and you welcomed me	12
A history of building materials	15
Opened Spaces	16
The Doctor's House—your memories	19
Is it behind you? Oh no it isn't	21

Art Music and Entertainment

Artweeks May Festival	22
Crossword	22

Community and Charities

Street Tag	9
------------	---

Tributes

Mark Robert Lindsey	22
---------------------	----

Local and national government

Wanted by the Parish Council	7
From your Parish Council Chairman	23
Parish Council Notices	23
From your District Councillor	25
From your County Councillor	27

Schools and Education

Pre-school	9
St Birinus School	9
Help the PTA raise money	10

Wallingford

Corn Exchange	29
Wallingford Country Market	29
Wallingford Museum News	29

Advertising

Advertising in Dorchester News	26
Index of advertisers	31

Cover picture: Dorchester Abbey at Christmas time by Vicky Fryer

Deadline for February Dorchester News



email:

dorchesternews@dorchesteronthames.co.uk

DoT view

At the moment we are in a second lockdown, and we don't know what will happen when it is due to finish in early December. Hopefully there will be the semblance of an ordinary Christmas, although it is likely to be nowhere near what we are used to. The best we are hoping for are some socially-distanced Carol Services and concerts, as announced in this issue. But at the moment we can't be certain that they will happen, so please check before you go.

One thing that many of us can do is to go out for walks and the good news there is celebrated in this issue with an article about the opening up of the walks and land around the Dyke Hills and Day's Lock, thanks to a concerted effort by FODLWOS, the Parish Council and, of course, landowner Keith Ives. One of the good things for the village to have come out of 2020.

Newcomers to the village must have found it difficult this year, with few opportunities to join in and meet people. Melinda Powell has been talking to a few and introduces the rest of us to them in an article on page 12. If you are new to Dorchester and would like to be included in the next article, Melinda's contact details are given on page 14.

Malcolm Ains' trilogy of videos about the buildings of Dorchester has concluded with his history of building materials. His son, Thom, gives an appreciation of the videos and of their making on page 15.

That just leaves me to wish everyone a Merry and safe Christmas, and Happy and better New Year for us all.

Ian Brace

Editorial Team

Ian Brace, Megan Parry

Distribution Co-ordinator

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It's always true that when we write for the Dorchester News we don't know what will be happening at the time of publication but that is even more true this year – and I'm just realising that this has been for most of the year! At first, I think, we saw Lockdown and Covid-19 as a finite thing – gradually it became clear that Lockdown would continue and that Covid-19 was not just a bad version of the flu. However difficult this has been it has also proved our resilience – whether that has been expressed in baking or volunteering, writing or painting or simply keeping in touch and renewing old friendships. Now, at the end of the year there is much speculation about what the 'new normal' Christmas will look like and, yet again, we won't really know until we get there. **BUT CHRISTMAS ISN'T CANCELLED.** I say this with two meanings. First, I know that in Church and in your homes we will prove

as adaptable and resilient as we have throughout 2020 – I don't mean it will necessarily be easy and there may well be hard choices to make – but it will be possible! Outline details of our provisional plans for Christmas are included later in the News. If I've learned anything this year it is how to plan provisionally A,B,C and then emerge at plan X. In some ways it's been good to be kept on our toes, but it is disconcerting! We can look forward to Christmas and I hope that you will join in with a Community Advent Display in your window – or even your garden – see note below!

The second way that **CHRISTMAS ISN'T CANCELLED** is that, whilst many of the ways that have become traditional around celebrating the Birth of the Christ Child may well need to be done differently that's nothing new. Imagine,

there were no Christmas Trees 200 years ago, 100 years ago gifts came in a small stocking: a piece of unusual fruit, a small coin, a handmade gift and, would you believe that when I was little, there was no such thing as a chocolate Advent Calendar! The truth around which these celebrations have grown remain eternal. This year we may need to hear the great Christmas Gospel 'The Word was made flesh and dwelled among us...' in different circumstances but neither the power nor the eternal truth of that wonderful phrase is changed by our current circumstances.

Part of the eternal truth of Christmas is held within a word that runs through our traditions - Emmanuel, meaning God with Us – this message is one that I have hung on to for much of 2020.

May God be with you whatever Christmas celebrations emerge!

Advent—not the Posada

Most years the Holy Family – Mary and Joseph travel around the village from house to house staying with families for a night at a time as they journey to Bethlehem. Obviously we can't do that this year but I am inviting you to decorate a window, door or even the garden in your home like an Advent Calendar. Maybe you'd like to 'dress' the teddies that are still in some windows! I do hope lots of you will join in and be as imaginative as you like. For a simple display there are plenty of suitable images to colour and cut out online!

Week 1 (from 30 November) Shepherds

Week 2 (from 7 December) Angels

Week 3 (from 14 December) A stable with animals stars and an empty manger!

Week 5 (from 21 December) Mary and Joseph...and the Baby of course

And after Christmas you might like to add the Wise Men!

Thank You

To the Royal British Legion, the Parish Council and Nick Forman for an unusual but significant Remembrance Day.

To Phil and Sally Greenaway for keeping the memorial in beautiful condition.

To all the good neighbours and friendly faces in our village.

To the volunteers collecting the prescriptions each week and to all those offering small acts of kindness that make such a difference.

Christmas Services

We hope to hold the following Christmas Services

Carol Services on Sunday **20 December** at 3.00pm and 6.00pm (an additional service on **Friday 18** if necessary). If it is possible to hold these services they will be ticketed – details will be on the Abbey website or please call the Office after **2 December**.

Nativity Services on Christmas Eve in the Cloister Garden, weather permitting, and/or on **22 and 23 December** if demand is high or the forecast bad! These will also be ticketed – we anticipate that your ticket will be for a 'bubble' in the cloister garden!!

Christmas Day

8.00am and 10.30am Assuming regulations are similar to those before Lockdown we will need to ask people to register in advance for these services to ensure that they can be socially distanced. If you would like information and do not normally receive our weekly online update please check the Abbey website or contact the Office.

It is not possible at this stage to gauge whether it will be appropriate to hold a Midnight Service. Updates will appear on the Website after any Guidance issued about Christmas restrictions.



Wallingford Food Bank November 2020

A huge thank you to everyone who has donated goods to the food bank over the past few months.

Last month the number of people needing to use the food bank was double that of the previous month. (almost 200) The organiser has told me how very grateful the recipients are and I would like to pass on their heartfelt thanks to you. Your generosity means a great deal to people who are facing real hardship and uncertainty.

Many families find it difficult to feed their children during the school holidays and the Christmas holiday is no exception. Children who would normally receive meals at school once again become dependent on their family for all their food. It would be a great help if we could include some nourishing snack bars for them as well as other food in our next delivery.

If it is more convenient for you to donate in Wallingford please use the collection point in Waitrose.

Judy Parker



Thank You

Many Congratulations to Susan Jupp and James Pratt who between them raised a fantastic £1,201.70 for this year's Ride and Stride. This is a wonderful amount to have raised and is shared equally between Dorchester Abbey and the Oxford Historic Churches Trust.

Many thanks also to everyone who sponsored them or who put a donation into the jar on the day. The donations jar itself raised £38.30! Thank you too to Rosemary Byrde for her incomparable organisation and to Denise Line and David Parker and to anyone else who took part or helped out on the day and to everyone who came to say hello.

Do you shop at Amazon?

Do you realise that Amazon will give money to Dorchester Abbey every time you shop? You just need to shop through the Amazon Smile page, nominating the Abbey as your charity. It's that simple!

Follow the link on the front page of the Abbey website or take a look here:

www.smile.amazon.co.uk

Do contact me if you have any questions.

Nick Forman

treasurer@dorchester-abbey.org.uk

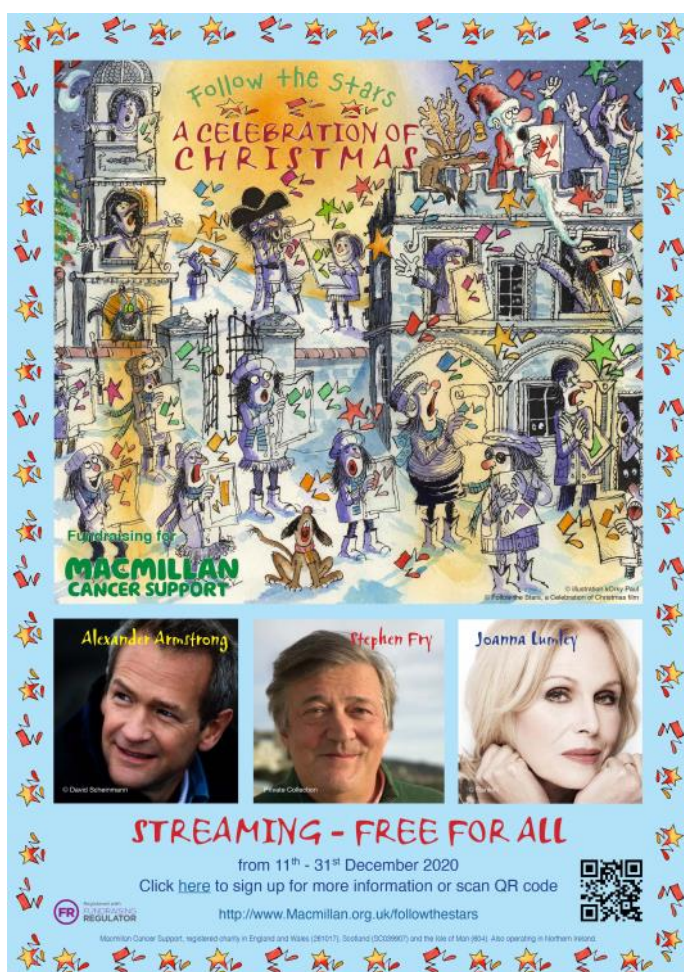


Christ Church Cathedral Oxford Carol Concert goes online

The hugely popular Christ Church Cathedral Oxford Carol Concert which is organised by a team of local volunteers is this year going to be streamed, free to all, see adjacent poster – so if anyone is looking for something Christmassy they can enjoy doing from home, they need look no further!

A stellar cast of celebrities and renowned musicians are joining forces in a major online Christmas celebration of carols and festive readings to help generate urgently needed funds for Macmillan Cancer Support. The concert, aptly named *Follow the Stars*, streams as live from **Friday 11 to 31 December**. From the beautiful Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford, will be performances by world-leading baritones Roderick Williams and Christopher Purves and celebrities will deliver seasonal readings directly from their own homes. So, to join Joanna Lumley, Stephen Fry, Jeremy Irons, Alexander Armstrong, Toby Jones, Benjamin Zephaniah and a host of other well-known faces including a very special surprise guest star, go to the following link or use the QR code for more details

<http://www.justgiving.com/FollowtheStars2020>





Hempcroft Allotments December

The growing year is coming to an end and winter is approaching and so it is time to gather the last of the summer's crops and prepare for next season and reflect on this year's efforts on your allotment. Remember that there are no failures; it is always down to the weather; too dry or too wet, or pigeons, slugs, or various Acts of God, or in this particular year a plague that spread out of China.

In the first lockdown period in March and April it was difficult to get hold of seeds or seedlings and quite a bit of communal bartering took place on the allotments. Through the collective effort and goodwill of everyone we kept the allotments open and accessible throughout the spring and it was a huge benefit, providing exercise and recreation in the open air, and responsibly distanced socialising.

The advantages of owning an allotment were such that there was a considerable demand for plots and through the year we have welcomed 12 new plot holders to the Hempcroft Association.

In September the Association of Public Service Excellence (APSE) published its State of the Market Survey 2020 on the allotments in Local Authorities. These are operated in a different way from the Hempcroft Allotments, which are owned by the Parish Council, but nevertheless there were some interesting findings and comparisons. On the Local Authority sites over 35% of tenants pay over £70 for a plot and over 70% of tenants over £50 (in comparison we pay £25). Of course, the Local Authorities provide a wider range of support for their allotments, but we should be aware that our Parish Council takes care of fencing, water supply and skip hire.

65% of Local Authority allotments have a range of 100 to 400 people on a waiting list and the average waiting time is 18 months. They also have strict rules on the length of time that a plot is allowed to be uncultivated. 40% allow only one month and 50% allow 3 months, with 30 days being the average notice period for improvement. At present virtually all the good plots have been allocated and we are now letting areas where the archaeological dig took place. There is also our 'biodiversity area' in the south west corner of the allotments which may have to be brought into cultivation.

Edward Metcalfe
edmetcalfe@yahoo.co.uk
01865 340160

Dorchester on Thames Historical Society

In these unprecedented times we are sadly unable to plan any meetings for the foreseeable future.

We had hoped to carry over 2020 meetings into 2021 but cannot yet offer speakers possible dates or guarantee suitable arrangements in any local venue. We have also ruled out trying to provide Zoom talks, as these would not reach all our membership, or other members of the public, and not all speakers can offer this technology.

However, we hope everyone who has explored the links on YouTube has enjoyed and learnt new facts about our village from Malcolm Airs' three live walks around the village – perhaps you have now walked round yourselves to look at the features he has shown us. Thank you so much to our Honorary President for providing us with these stimulating, informative and fascinating guides to our heritage.

We also hope our members have enjoyed receiving news from the Oxfordshire Local History Association, which offers a wide range of talks and information online and draws attention to events and new publications.

If anyone is interested in pursuing their own local research – on their family or house, for example - or have questions on Dorchester history they would like answered, we'd be happy to help.

We shall postpone our customary January AGM until February or later. Meanwhile, your committee will continue to monitor the situation, and hope to give you better news in the New Year.

Margot Metcalfe
Chairman



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Wishing all my clients a peaceful
Christmas and a Happy New Year.



The salon will close on Monday, 14th December 2020,
re-opening on Monday, 11th January 2021, but you can
book now for January treatments. Start the New Year relaxed!

Gift Vouchers are available as the perfect Christmas present.

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Dorchester Tennis **Match-ready for 2021**

subject to current LTA Covid-19 regulations

Sadly we had to close the courts to all players at the beginning of November, following government and LTA guidelines, but we hope that as you read this we are back in action. With our newly refurbished courts and increased membership we are ready for what we hope will be a turbo-charged year ahead for Dorchester tennis.

Join our club now for 2021 priority access to the courts, club sessions and entry to the 2021 draw for Wimbledon tickets. We offer social tennis, coaching sessions and competitive tournaments. Whatever is your thing, we have something for you – all at very competitive rates and a super friendly club atmosphere.

All abilities very welcome

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
chrisccsmith@btinternet.com
Tel. 01865 341947

DADS Weekly play readings

Dorchester Amateur Dramatics Society

DADS continue to host weekly online play readings which are open to all.

During the next few weeks, they will have a seasonal flavour. Here's a sneak preview:

30 November - *Tales The Countess Told* by Stephen Wyatt

An imaginative stage treatment of the amazing life and enchanting fairy tales of the Countess d'Aulnoy. Exiled by Louis XIV to the country, the Countess entertains a neighbouring newly married young woman with revelations about her life and dramatisations of her most famous fairy stories about beautiful princesses, evil dwarfs and enchanted serpents.

But her visitor starts drawing unexpected conclusions for her own life from what the Countess tells her.



Image: <https://www.smithscripts.co.uk/>

7 December - *Grandma's Secret* by Jane Hilliard & Paul A J Rudelhoff

Unbeknown to her family, pensioner Mavis Davis has been writing best-selling books in the style of *Fifty shades of Grey* under an assumed name. With the deadline approaching Mavis needs to be in her home finishing the final chapter of the final book but her family have arranged for her to go into a nursing home for the Christmas period while they are on holiday in America. Determined not to go into the home, Mavis hatches a plan. What could possibly go wrong?

14 December - *Hansel and Gretel* by Chris Lane

Join Hansel and Gretel, their grandfather Herr Inmeizoo, handsome French servant Phil de'Pottie and lots of madcap characters in this irreverent panto set in Bavaria.

If you would like to read or listen, you will need to register. You can do this via Facebook

@DorchesterAmDramSocietyDADS
or the DADS website www.dads.org.uk.

We will take a short break for Christmas and the New Year and return on **Monday 11 January 2021**.



WANTED

WANTED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

A volunteer to become a parish councillor.
This is a co-opted position, no election required.
To serve until May 2023.
For details of what is entailed contact
Geoff Russell, Parish Clerk on
07745 311439 (office hours) or
e-mail: parishclerk@dorchesteronthames.co.uk



Chairman of the Parish Council,
Mark Williams, writes about its
work on Page 23 of this issue.



Help the PTA raise money for iPads by creating photo books

A photo book can be a great way of saving and sharing memories. It can also support your school too.

As you start to think about gifts for the festive season, you may like to consider **easyPhotobook**. They want to help PTAs raise as much money as possible this year.

It's really simple to do. You just need to follow the instructions on their website -

<https://easyphotobook.uk/primaryschools/> -

and add our school code - **b3rsze** - at the checkout. For every photo book you make, the PTA will receive **£5.10**.

We hope you can support us! Thank you.



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St Birinus School News

As we approach the festive season and the country goes into a second lockdown we strive to continue to make our school a safe place for the children of our community. Although these are anxious times, there is a general feeling of hope and optimism among our children which is a testament to the fabulous work being done by teachers and support staff across school to look after, reassure and nurture the children in our care. Our remote learning offer is working well when needed and it is fantastic to see the learning that is going on both in and out of school.

The whole school took part in a two minute silence at 11 o'clock on 11 November to remember the service and sacrifice of people in the past. We also took some time in assembly to consider service and sacrifice which is going on in our community right now. I felt very proud as we joined some residents by standing outside our school and observing the silence. The children beautifully demonstrated the value of respect.

Parents of children born between 1/9/16 and 31/8/17 can start applying for their school place now. We are an aspirational school with high expectations. We nurture individuals to be the best that they can be. I am more than happy to talk to anyone and answer any questions while we cannot show people around. Please feel free to give our office a call (**01865 340081**) to arrange a time to talk if you would like some more information. Look out for a slide show coming soon! The deadline for applications is **15 January 2021**.

As we move towards Christmas this is always a busy and exciting time for primary schools. We know that there are some things which will need to be a little different in school this year. We plan to film a Nativity to share with parents and there won't be as much singing as usual. However, we will still make it a joyful time for our children – with a tree, parties, Christmas lunch and possibly even a socially distanced visit from Father Christmas! Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from all of us here at Dorchester St Birinus Primary School.

Jo Staples
Headteacher



Pre-School

We held our AGM in October and have elected the committee for the forthcoming year, with thanks to Lauren, Hazel and Emma who have all moved on now their children have left Pre-School.

We're on the lookout for someone to help us with some admin tasks, if you have some free time available and you're able to help support us or would like to find out more then please get in touch at chair@dorchesterpreschool.co.uk or **01865 341805**.

The children have been enjoying lots of autumn activities recently, with fun focus on Halloween and Bonfire night, collecting sticks and leaves to make pictures. We also made poppies for Remembrance Day and have been learning about Remembrance and Diwali.

Our pre-Christmas activities will have to be a bit different this year, but that won't stop us having fun!

Ed Shrimpton
Chair

Street Tag

Street Tag is a new family-friendly game that rewards primary schools, families, individuals and communities for physical activities such as walking, running, and cycling.

Street Tag is turning streets and parks in Oxfordshire into a giant virtual playground. You can play to win rewards for your child's primary school, or as an individual or team of up to six people in Oxfordshire's community league.

Watch your total distance accumulate and see how far you climb up the local leaderboard. Get ready to push yourself and start your journey to a healthy lifestyle with Street Tag.

For more info on how to play, head to

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/streettag



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Dorchester Abbey Museum News

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EVENT

2.30 to 5.00pm Sat 5 Dec and 10.30am to 12 noon Tues 8 December

Come to the Museum Gift Shop and buy your Christmas cards and presents.

We have Abbey Christmas cards and others, and lots of lovely Christmas gifts: books, jewellery (including special Christmas earrings), as well as a wide range of stocking fillers for children.

Also our popular greetings cards for birthdays and other occasions.

Edith Stedman's Cook Book

The perfect Christmas present!

To mark the 60th 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

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.

Please pay by card if possible.



Christmas Tea Room Takeaway

2.30-5pm, Sat Dec 5th

& 10.30-12noon, Tues Dec 8th

Dorchester Abbey Tea Room

Come and buy Tea Room treats as gifts or to enjoy over Christmas:

- mince pies & stollen
- christmas cakes
- biscuits & brownies
- chutney and much more!





Dorchester and District Royal British Legion

While this year's Remembrance Service was very different it did, at least happen, in an online way as a broadcast from the Abbey on Facebook and Zoom on Sunday 8 November.

Those who joined the service online have all made very positive comments. Of course, everyone would have preferred the traditional service in the Abbey followed by the procession to the War Memorial and the Act of Remembrance usually held, but the Covid-19 Rules had to be respected.

On behalf of the local Royal British Legion Branch I would like to say a big thank you to Sue Booy's and her team for making the service this year possible at all and for her guidance and experience in bringing the event together in a dignified and sensitive way. Special thanks to Nick Forman for his technical skills in the broadcast and editing of pre-recorded sequences of the service both inside the Abbey and at the War Memorial.

Let us all hope that next year things will be different and a little more like what we have been used to in the past.

Finally, the Dorchester Royal British Legion branch is still looking for new members. Even if you have never been a member of the armed services we welcome everyone with an interest in improving the lives of service personnel.

Chris Hill
Chairman of Dorchester and District Branch

Photographs: The display in the porch of the Abbey of flowers and poppies, which was created by Sandie Griffith, Kathy Glass and Denise Line.



In this time of Covid-19, it might feel that we have all become strangers in a strange land, the unfamiliar terrain of life during a pandemic, learning to live with the restrictions upon us, the masks we must wear and the distance between us.

For those of us who have had the good fortune to live in Dorchester on Thames before the pandemic, we hold shared memories of the many happy occasions that brought us together, thoughts of which cheer our hearts and help to impart faith in life's goodness.

Such happenings would include year-round Abbey services, concerts and choirs, along with special Abbey events like Narnia and Adrian Brooks' 'Light' and 'Henge' series, fundraisers such as the bi-annual Dorchester Festival with its whimsical rubber duck race on the Thame, and November bonfire nights on the 'rec' to support Footsteps, plus get-to-know-you socials like the legendary Safari Suppers, with each course served in a different home.

Then, too, we may have shared memories of Newcomers eves and Harvest competitions as well as Parish Council and Village Meetings held at the Village Hall. We can recall the acting of Dorchester's Amateur Drama Society (DADS), the talents of Dorchester's artists on view during Oxfordshire Artweeks, and the beauty of local gardens open to visitors. We can remember the conviviality of Dorchester Abbey's tearoom, Lily's Cafe and our local pubs, along with lively drinks and Christmas celebrations.

With the cessation of village activities, many of us have been blessed by the volunteer networks that formed in Dorchester to bring medicine, food, and good cheer to those of us shielding – so many kindly acts, including, for my husband Andrew and me, someone who left sweet pea flowers on our doorstep!

Here we might pause to ask ourselves

'I was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me'

Some relative newcomers are introduced to the village.

just how strange it must feel to be a newcomer to Dorchester during the pandemic, when because of Covid-19 concerns, the time-honoured ways to enter into the heart of village life cannot take place and the doors to neighbourly visits – and even the beautiful sanctuary of the Abbey – may be closed to all.

I was made keenly aware of this when, during the recent 'Lockdown Exhibition' held at the Abbey held in September, I had the pleasure of meeting Paula Firstbrook who moved to Dorchester with her husband, Peter, last November. Paula mentioned how happy they were to have moved to Dorchester but also that it was a strange time to settle into a new place with village life at a standstill.

Her words inspired this first of a series of articles written to give us the opportunity to meet some of the people who settled in Dorchester on Thames shortly before, during or since the lockdowns. Hopefully, everyone who would like to be included will be so in time!

Meanwhile, I'm pleased to introduce some of our newer 'Dorchesterians': the aforementioned Paula and Peter Firstbrook, who live in The Limes off Abingdon Road, Rosalind and Aldwyn

Cooper, on Martins Lane, Jill Battson, on Queen Street, and, lastly, living on Wittenham Lane in sight of the Dyke Hills and the 'clumps', Maggie and Matthew Grayson.

If you walk by Paula and Peter's home, you might see Paula engaged in her newfound passion for gardening as she prepares the garden for their youngest son's outdoor wedding. Paula and Peter moved to Dorchester from the Isle of Wight to be nearer to their four children and five grandchildren. Their son David, who will be starting a new Job at Culham Science Centre in January, and his partner Karen, who works in Financial Services, have recently moved into a house on the High Street, and are just settling in.

Paula, who hails from Boston, has also lived in New York, and moved to London in 1980. She is a counselling psychologist and worked for twenty-five years at the University of Westminster, where she specialised in Developmental and Counselling Psychology and where she is currently Emeritus Professor of Psychology.



Peter could tell you stories about his twenty-five years as a BBC Television documentary filmmaker before he went freelance in 2002. He could also regale you with historical anecdotes from one of the many books he's published on topics ranging from the search for George Mallory's body on Everest to Barack Obama's African family history.

Both are already active in village life: Paula volunteers at the Abbey Tearoom. Peter has recently written articles on the source of the Thames and of the Thame rivers for the *Dorchester News*, with more articles to come!



Aldwyn and Rosalind Cooper

In normal times, you may have had the pleasure of raising a glass of fine wine with Rosalind and Aldwyn Cooper. The Coopers, who moved to Dorchester in June, could tell you about their years in San Francisco, where Aldwyn, a cognitive psychologist, was a visiting Harkness Fellow at Stanford University and where Rosalind first developed her specialist knowledge of wines through her study of the region's renowned vineyards. Rosalind has written many books on the subjects of wine, food and travel, including a wine almanac. One day, who knows, she may organise a village wine-tasting event of wines for each season!

She and Aldwyn might also tell you about their three children and grandchild. The latest news is that their daughter Zoë, recently opened The Henley Larder at 62 Bell Street, showcasing local food and drink producers.

Seeking a 'tranquil haven', the Coopers moved to Dorchester. Aldwyn has recently retired from his ten years as Vice Chancellor of Regent's University. In spite of a late onset of progressive disability, Aldwyn's determination and dedication to his work inspired colleagues and students alike. With disarming openness about his condition on YouTube, he is an inspiration to all.

Both Aldwyn and Rosalind have a flair for acting, and perhaps may be persuaded to take part in a DADS production.

When you next walk past Dorchester's allotments, you may come across another newcomer, Jill Battson, working on her plot while her dog, Fellig, a Weimaraner supervises! Jill, who moved to Dorchester-on-Thames in March, put her name on the waiting list for an allotment before moving to the village, and shortly into the first lockdown, she got one. As she puts it, 'It proved an excellent way to meet people at a distance, and I've formed some really solid friendships because of that.' Fittingly, Jill, an internationally published and prize-winning poet, has written a poem called '36 Reasons that I Want to Grow a Garden'.

As a 'multi-disciplinary poet', Jill works in collaboration with composers, musicians, visual artists and performers to create artistic productions featuring poetry. Such events, like the 5-day 'The Festival of the Spoken Word' and 'Word Up', a series of mixed media or 'interstitial poetry spots', have resulted in poetry books and CDs.

Prior to settling in Dorchester, Jill spent forty years in Canada and the United States working in arts and culture. She

now puts her experience to work as a fundraiser for the Garsington Opera. She looks forward to taking part in play readings in person and to having people over for dinner!

Like so many of us in Dorchester, Matthew and Maggie Grayson, who now live at the end of Wittenham Lane, have lived abroad. Matthew, originally from Malvern, has spent his working life in finance based either in London or Japan, where he lived for fourteen years, and they returned to the UK two years ago. Maggie grew up in Shanghai and, for 10 years, ran her own import/export company in Guangzhou.

When they lived in London, they would stay in Dorchester for weekends, but with the lockdown, decided to move to the village permanently. Although new to gardening, they have successfully nurtured aubergines, runner beans, sweetcorn and potatoes on their patch at the end of the lane!

They enjoy long countryside walks and began combining that with picking up litter along the paths, roads, and riverside. As Matthew relates, 'Somewhat unexpectedly, this has become a regular activity for us. For

Continued on Page 14...



Jill Battson

...‘I was a Stranger and You Welcomed Me’ continued.



Matthew and Maggie Grayson

Dorchester’s newcomers, like Paula and Peter, Rosalind and Aldwyn, Jill, Maggie and Matthew. They have all expressed appreciation not only for the beauty of Dorchester and its environs but also for the neighbourly greetings they have received. If you see them passing by or in the shop, pub, garden or allotments, do take the chance to say hello and let them know something about yourself and our village too!

Melinda Powell

national litter month, we cleared up along the path from the end of Oxford Road up to the roundabout and, just recently, teamed up with Gerry Wells to do the roadside between the roundabout and the Burcot sign. Along the way we have met many nice people.’

In some ways, while Covid-19 safety measures have caused us to become more remote, making strangers of us all, we have also been reminded of the importance of simple pleasures, small kindnesses, warm gestures and our shared humanity, not least for

This is the first in a series of articles about newcomers to Dorchester on Thames, including people who moved to the village in 2020. If you would like to be introduced in future articles, please contact Melinda Powell at melindapowelldreams@gmail.com

Dorchester Abbey Christmas Cards

Sold in aid of Dorchester Abbey

Please do buy Abbey cards this year to support us while our income is affected by corona virus measures. They are available from the museum or from Steph Forman steph@forman.org.uk 01865 340434. All cards are sold with envelopes in packs of 10 for £4.50 and are colour printed on glossy quality card with 'Happy Christmas' inside and 'Sold in aid of Dorchester Abbey' on the back.

(all images are © Nick Forman unless otherwise stated)

Nativity scene from the East End window
17.6 x 12.5cm



© Frank Blackwell

Nativity scene in the Shrine Chapel
12 x 12cm



Victorian wall painting of the Annunciation
9 x 20cm

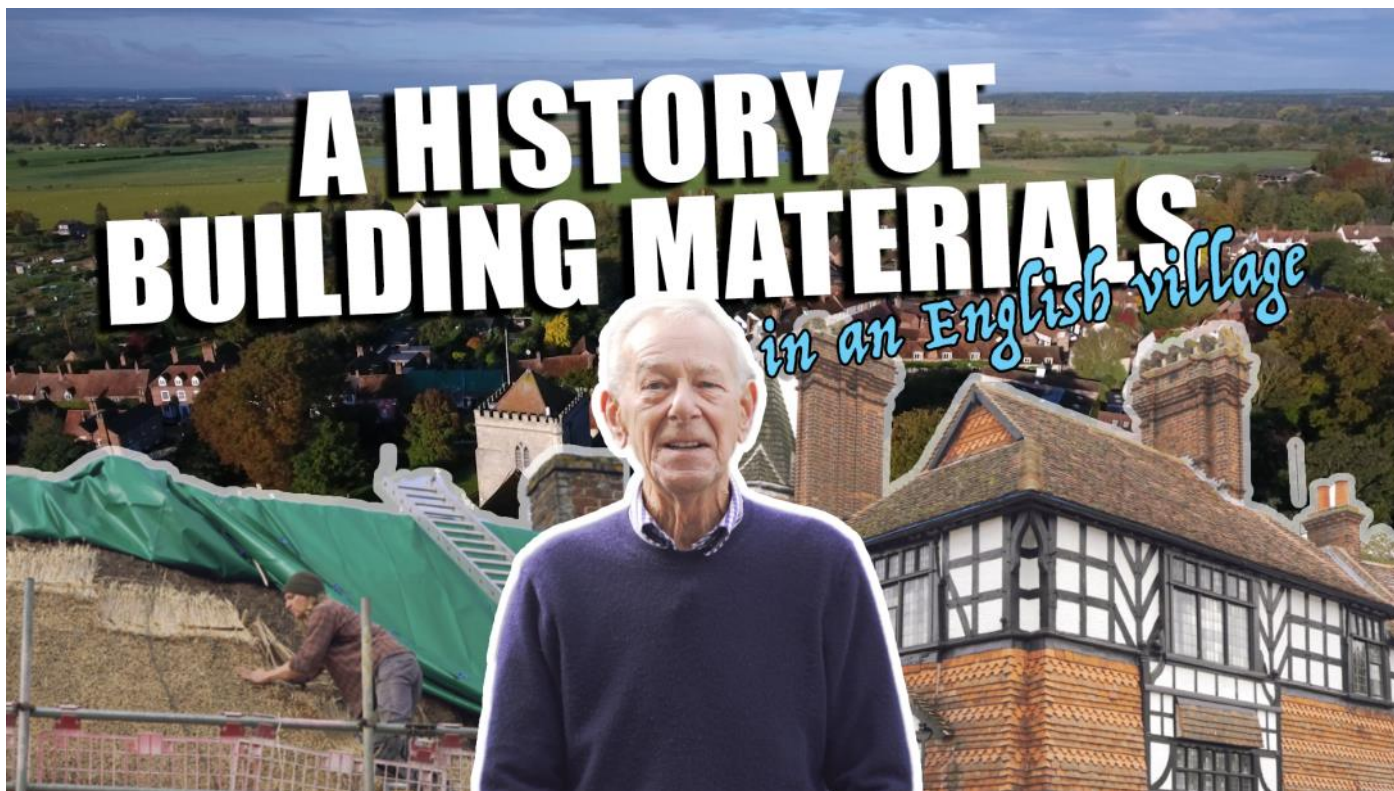


Christ Child from the Shrine Chapel
13 x 13cm



Angels from the Shrine Chapel
21 x 9.7cm





The third and final video on the history of Dorchester's buildings by architectural historian Malcolm Airs has recently been published on YouTube.

In this free-to-watch 25-minute episode, the High Street resident explores the various materials used to construct the village's buildings – from cob to timber, brick to stone, thatch to slate.

Malcolm's son Thom, who filmed and edited the videos, explains how the series came about...

At the beginning of this year I knew a couple of things about this project. I knew my dad's knowledge of Dorchester's buildings deserved to be recorded and preserved, and I knew – based on the popularity of his walking tours of the village – that it would at least gain an appreciative audience locally.

What I didn't know was quite how we would package the information, nor how popular the trio of videos would eventually become. Moreover, I didn't fully appreciate the depth of my dad's understanding of village history.

I was born in Dorchester and grew up playing football up the rec and fishing on the Thame while dad bought dusty books and droned on about 'timber framed this and cob-walled that' to men in thick-rimmed glasses and bad jumpers. His passion for architectural history had never grabbed me. Until we made these videos.

What struck me was the constant evolution of the village and, crucially, the fascinating social history that underpins and brings to life all the dry stuff about beams, bricks and beading.

Behind every altered façade, lavish extension and change of use is a human reason – be it safety, fashion or the availability of materials. And even though I went into filming knowing roughly what to expect, it the social history that I found made my dad's approach to the videos so accessible. It was him who suggested the thematic approach, splitting the tour of the

village into three different episodes based on a central topic, and his meticulous research made my job of pressing record and waiting for RAF Benson helicopters to pass so much easier.

Despite his many decades of giving lectures and leading walking tours I'm sure he gained a new-found respect for TV hosts as we ironed out a few hesitations, deviations and repetitions, but I've filmed with far more experienced presenters who would've crumbled trying to impart as much information in under half an hour. That genuine understanding and love for the subject cannot be bluffed, and I think that shines through. Had it not been for a couple of technical blunders on my part, all three of the episodes would have been shot in half a day, which is testament to his preparation and recall.

For me, the chance to look at Dorchester through a lens was like hand-washing your own car – that landscape you think you know so instinctively is actually home to more details, blemishes and curiosities than you ever realised!

As I type, the first video (on Dorchester's sometimes misleading date stones) has amassed more than 3,000 views, while the second (on the changing face of village windows) has scored over 1,500. Not vast numbers, but certainly more than I expected, and the stream of positive comments from strangers, neighbours and prominent historians has been genuinely touching.

All of us know that Dorchester is a special place to live, but having an expert explain its national importance and fascinating heritage through the stories of its buildings has, for me at least, only served to strengthen that feeling. These three little videos might not trouble the awards committee at the BAFTAs but I'm very proud that we went out and created something that will keep our village's history alive for years to come.

To view all three videos, visit www.youtube.com/thomairs

Thom Airs

Four years ago this month, wandering the dog up to the Dyke Hills for a run around on a typically grey November day, I was confronted with a stretch of fence posts down the middle of the track at the end of Wittenham Lane. A roll of barbed wire and cattle fencing lay ominously nearby. It marked the start of a new ownership for Bishop's Court Farm and the launch of a new regime to control public access. Within a matter of days, areas which had previously been open access, enjoyed by locals and visitors throughout the year, were now fenced off. Spacious paths now reduced to legal minimums by barbed wire. A landscape transformed; butchered and graffitied by agricultural machinery with metal spray cans.

It didn't take long for word to spread, and with it a growing local discontent. There were those who grumbled and moaned, but were placated with 'it is the right of the landowner', and there were others who questioned 'Can anything be done? What are the rights of generations of users of this land? Don't we have a duty to future generations to at least try?' And so FODLWOS was born, a mouthful of an acronym 'Friends of Dorchester and Little Wittenham Open Spaces' reflecting the coming together of two communities divided by a river and no man's land. And our leader? You may



View from the end of Wittenham Lane, November 2016



View from the end of Wittenham Lane November 2020

know her as Becky Waller – the effervescent, generous and positive resident of Ten Penny. Over the past four years, I have come to realise she is so much more: selfless and modest (she would happily remain anonymous in the background) but she is also relentless, insistent, determined and fighting for the rights of local people past, present and future – Dorchester's very own Boudica. And her secret weapon? A good understanding of the law and legal processes.

The newly formed group acted quickly in January 2017 (see the FODLWOS timeline), with the following aims:

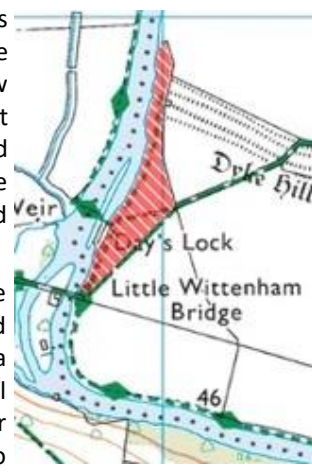
- Register Day's Lock Meadow and the Dyke Hills with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) as having village green status (open-air meeting places used for recreation, celebration and activities) thus preserving access and use for generations to come.
- Register the true width and route of paths used locally with OCC, who hold the Definitive Map. Prior to the new landowner, the Definitive Map did not include all the actual walked paths and their widths. If approved, it would ensure the paths and their widths are protected forever.

Once our submissions were with OCC, the outward facing work of FODLWOS ceased and Becky, supported by John Taylor and a few others, got to work on the legal processes, relevant stakeholder engagement and tireless form filling. No small feat given the landowner at the time and without the headlines, it was difficult to maintain momentum... but as I said, Becky is relentless and so is John!

In late March of this year, news of a new owner for Bishops Court Farm was greeted with gentle optimism by our reduced FODLWOS group. As many of you know (Dorchester News May 2020), Keith has a lot of projects on the go and plans for the farm. His generosity was clear from the outset, opening up a new path during the first Covid-19 lockdown and removing the fencing from part of Day's Lock Meadow. After some joint walks around the farm it became clear that with some support, his vision for the farm could align with the FODLWOS aims:

'I've lived in the village for 25 years. We used to steal onto the land with our children and it's just great to have the opportunity to open it up to the community'

I have been asked a number of times since Keith showed his support for local public access, why is FODLWOS continuing? If access has returned what is the point? FODLWOS's



The two Village Green sites and the Dyke Hills

Top of the page: Families are once again a



Day's Lock Meadow
Dyke Hills (red shading)

overarching goal is to protect the access rights of future generations forever through the combination of the Village Green and Footpath applications irrespective of the farm's ownership. Now with the vision and generosity of Keith we have been able to reach amicable agreements whereas we were otherwise developing our legal position to pursue the applications with the previous landowner in situ. This would have been an expensive exercise. The two Village Greens are now with OCC, just awaiting the final rubber stamp. Those of you who have ventured between the village and the Thames, Thames and Day's Lock in recent weeks will have seen an incredible transformation of the landscape.

With tangible change occurring support is rallying. The Parish Council have just offered a contribution of £10,000 from its budget towards the current works. Chair Mark Williams said: *'I remember being in the village hall four years ago, along with some 200 other parishioners, angry at the way we were being treated by a new landowner. FODLWOS has spent the time since then steadily working to protect village interests with regards to legal access to the land, submitting village green applications to protect areas for future generations and more recently building rapport with Keith Ives, the new owner of Bishop's Court Farm. The Parish Council tried, and failed, to make headway with the previous owner but now has a good dialogue with Keith. Together, Keith, the Council and FODLWOS have finally achieved real progress. The Parish Council is happy to donate to fence work that Keith has already started and we hope to support future improvements. This is a good example of the benefit of community action.'*

Additionally, a few generous local residents have offered to cover the remaining costs Keith has incurred. Keith is discussing with FODLWOS possible options for the 'Covid-19' path linking the Dyke Hills with Day's Lock Meadow which will need to include input from Historic England as the path runs through the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Any plans here will require significant fund raising and a broad-based appeal to the community

I encourage you to get out and enjoy your recently opened spaces; be respectful and follow the country code. Perhaps take a moment, on the Dyke Hills or beside the Thames in Day's Lock Meadow, to acknowledge with gratitude the generosity of Keith and the Parish Council, combined with the commitment and tenacity of Becky, John and others over the last four years. What a gift for the village at the end of an incredibly difficult year.

Louise Aukland
On behalf of FODLWOS

able to walk along the top of the Dyke Hills.

FODLWOS timeline

October 2016:	Bishops Court Farm has a new owner and fences are quickly erected.
Early January 2017:	FODLWOS meet for the first time at the White Hart.
Early January 2017:	A village meeting to discuss the Village Greens, with more than 200 people from Dorchester, Little Wittenham and other local villages. Supported by Kate Ashbrook from the Open Spaces Society.
12 January 2017:	The first Village Green questionnaires sent to OCC (additional applications sent later, totalling in excess of 200 for each site). It is the largest Village Green Application OCC have ever seen.
March 2017:	A second village meeting to discuss footpaths and record the true width of paths walked (applications for each path, with photographs and supporting questionnaires).
27 March 2017:	Applications made for a definitive map modification order (DMMO).
Summer 2017 – early 2020:	FODLWOS continued to work towards its aims in liaison with various stakeholders (Landowner, OCC, Historic England, Open Space Society, Parish Councils, SODC, Natural England)
March 2020:	Keith Ives takes over as owner of Bishop's Court Farm. The FODLWOS applications remain with the land and there is a responsibility for responding to the DMMO and Village Green applications.
April 2020	Keith demonstrates his generosity towards the local community by removing fences on Day's Lock Meadow and opening up a new 'Covid-19' pathway to allow a one-way system between Day's Lock and the Dyke Hills.
Summer 2020:	Discussions held between Keith and FODLWOS about next steps.
October 2020:	Keith generously agrees to the Village Green status for Day's Lock Meadow and the Dyke Hills and to footpath width changes and a new route for the path at the confluence of the Thames and Thames. More than 1000m of barbed wire fencing is removed.
November 2020:	Fences along the path running from Wittenham Lane to the bridleway by the Dyke Hills are widened to provide the true width walked. The paths and widths are in the process of being recorded with OCC. FODLWOS ensure that fencing work is underwritten and completed without Bishop's Court Farm incurring costs. Dorchester Parish Council kindly agree to provide £10,000 towards the cost of current works. The Village Green applications await final approval from OCC.



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The Doctors House—your memories



The family of the late Roger and Jane Mitchell are looking to collect memories of those who knew the surgery at The Doctor's House (now Watling House). The house is being sold after the deaths of Roger in 2018 and Jane in 2019.

Jane was the daughter of Dr David and Mrs Sheila Harris, and she grew up in the house with her siblings, Jill and John. Jane and her husband Roger moved to Dorchester in 1994 after the deaths of David and Sheila, who had been in the village since the 1930s.

The doctors' practice was originally in the house, then in a building in the garden, and it then moved into the thatched barn in 1957 and was there until Dr David Harris retired.

Were you a patient of the doctors at the practice and have memories to share? If so, we would love to hear from you.

The Mitchell Family

thedoctorshousedorchester@gmail.com

Watling House

71 High Street

Dorchester-on-Thames

OX10 7HN

01865 340005



Mrs Sheila Harris & Dr David Harris



Roger & Jane outside the Abbey at their Wedding, and, below, on their 50th Wedding Anniversary



Opening of the new practice in the thatched barn, 1 June 1957. From left to right:

Mrs Daphne Pritchard

Dr David Harris

Mrs Anne Miller

Dr Carlo Pratelli

Dr Andrew Miller

Dr Peter Pritchard



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For as many years as **Is it behind you? Oh no it isn't.** is on its way. We would most of us can remember the two events that heralded the coming of Christmas were the DADS show in the Village Hall and the Carol Service in Dorchester Abbey.

The Service of Lessons and Carols in Dorchester Abbey always meant that Christmas had arrived. This year ere will be Carol Services, regulations permitting, but with the current restrictions they may not be quite the same. But they will herald the arrival of Christmas. The front cover of this month's issue hints at Carol Services past.

But late November or early December meant the DADS Christmas production, and the first suggestion that Christmas be coming away from the Village Hall full of good cheer. Not always from a pantomime, though. With only two productions a year the members of DADS prefer not to have half of their productions pantos; but no matter what it was, the audiences always came away happy knowing that the Christmas season was on its way.

There is sadly no DADS production this year. So is this all behind us? Not by a long way. We hear that there may be a DADS panto again next year. So to cheer us until then and to mark the beginning of this Christmas season, here are some reminders of some recent November shows. Can you put a year to each of them?



Dorchester News Crossword No.14 Solution

Compiled by Slider

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Mark Robert Lindsey

It is with much sadness that Stephanie and David Jackson announce the sad loss of a dearly loved brother/brother in law, Mark Lindsey. We know that many villagers will be saddened by this news but Mark had been battling with advanced dementia over the last 18 months and at least now he is at peace and no longer has to struggle. Mark passed away quietly on 9 October in the care home that had been looking after him so well, with his big sister Stephanie at his side. We would like to thank everyone for their expressions of sympathy and condolences, and we take great comfort knowing that Mark was loved as much in this village as in his home village of South Chard.



Artweeks May Festival 2021

To register for ARTWEEKS 2021 visit www.artweeks.org

OXFORDSHIRE ARTWEEKS is open to ALL - amateur and professional artists/craft makers alike, galleries, community and charity groups that live or work in Oxfordshire.

Deadline for registering exhibition entries: 31st January 2021

(this is an extended deadline for 2021 only)

- May exhibitions will be required to be COVID-SECURE.
- If circumstances cause last minute wholesale changes as they did this year, venues will then be able to choose to mark themselves as Open/Open by Appointment only (as well as postponed/closed).
- Alongside the physical festival, Oxfordshire Artweeks will host a virtual festival over the same period.
- As it is unlikely the festival guide can be distributed in print in the normal way in 2021, it will be produced in digital versions only.

DATES for the 2021 festival are 1st–23rd May

North Oxfordshire May 1st -9th [3rd Bank Holiday Monday]

Oxford City May 8th - 16th

South Oxfordshire May 15th – 23rd



Parish Council Notices

Parish Council Vacancy

The Parish Council has received permission to fill by the process of co-option the Casual Vacancy that arose when Cllr Viviane Quirke resigned due to pressure of other work. All those interested in being considered for this vacancy should contact the Clerk. The term of office will be until the Council elections in 2023.

Monthly Meetings

The December Meeting will take place on **Wednesday 9 December 2020** commencing at 7.30pm. and the January Meeting on **Wednesday 13 January 2021** also commencing at 7.30pm. The Agenda will be posted on Village Noticeboards and on the Parish Council section of the Village website – www.dorchesteronthames.co.uk - three clear days in advance of each meeting.

It is expected that these meetings 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 3pm. on the afternoon before the meeting so that the necessary access arrangements can be made.

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

Cllr Mark Williams, the Chairman, can be contacted via 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.



Last month I talked about the success of the litter picking campaign in the village. So I am even more pleased to hear from a number of residents, young and old, that they are going to continue their efforts and march out with litter pickers and bags to keep our lanes and paths tidy. Thank you once again. The more the merrier of course.

Shortly, Covid-19 permitting, we will be undertaking a traffic speed survey throughout the village. A number of residents have raised concerns and so it makes sense to get some clear facts. There will be around half a dozen measuring points around the village, both in the centre and on the access roads. These are rubber strips across the road that you may have seen elsewhere and which do not identify or record individual vehicles.

Armed with the results we will then be better able to engage the County Council on any actions that might be appropriate within their guidelines. More to follow on this in due course.

At the time of writing, some of you will have noticed that Keith Ives has started to remove some fencing and widen footpaths down to the Thames, with further works to follow. The Parish Council is in discussions with Keith and FODLWOS on our contribution to this process.

Alongside these sort of initiatives on behalf of the village, the Parish Council is responsible for both the assets we own such as the playing fields, play area and the pavilion and also investing in projects that support our overall sense of community such as the village hall. As we make these decisions it is good to have the widest possible range of opinions in our deliberations. And we do have a vacancy on the council and I'm keen to find a willing volunteer to join our number and offer a different perspective. If you are interested then please do contact me and have a chat. There is no election to go through, the council can simply appoint someone to boost our number.

Mark Williams
Chairman DoT Parish Council

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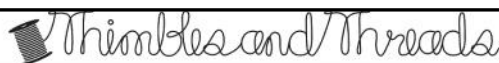
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From your District Councillor... ...Robin Bennett



A merry Christmas double-issue to you all...

The Green-Lib Dem partnership administration has had a busy few months. We took the decision to build the council's new offices in Didcot (on land the council owns opposite Didcot station) instead of on the former site in Crowmarsh. This will place a key local institution in the centre of Didcot, close to public transport, and will be home to both SODC and Vale of the White Horse district councils. This has become a viable location because of the major changes in work patterns brought about by the pandemic.

We've also supported the creation of a new diversity and inclusion strategy, in the wake of Black Lives Matter protest, and campaigned on improving regulation of water quality in our rivers. These are some of the many changes proposed as part of our new 'corporate plan', which sets out how the council will operate over the next four years. This can be viewed on the council's much-improved new website:

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk>

Objections to Government's proposed reforms to the planning system

The council has written to Robert Jenrick objecting to many of the Government's proposed reforms to the current planning system, on a range of issues, including - the loss of democratic input to the planning system, climate change policy, affordable housing, and the role of Neighbourhood Plans. The Government's proposed changes were outlined in the Planning for the Future white paper.

Local Plan modifications

During December, we will receive the final report from inspector Jonathan Bore on the controversial South Oxfordshire Local Plan, to be considered at our December meetings. I submitted many proposed changes during both the examination and in the consultation on modifications; the report will indicate which of these have been accepted. The whole process has been conducted under a strict legal direction from Secretary of State Robert Jenrick. While we have managed to improve many climate change and transport policies, it looks likely that all the major sites will remain in the plan.

Funds for affordable housing and community facilities

I've been working on proposals to change the way CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy) is spent to allow more to be spent on community facilities and 'green infrastructure' for areas impacted by development, potentially releasing millions in unspent funds. Last month, we passed a decision making over £4 million in Section 106 developer funds available for

affordable and community-led housing in the district. Also, officers are starting to develop the initial business plan for a new council-owned company which could deliver both sustainable housing and other community projects, looking at successful examples across the UK.

Covid-19 support for individuals and families

Aside from gyms, community centres, and our offices, which are closed, most council services are continuing to run as normally as can be expected.

Council staff will once again have a role to play in supporting residents and businesses while restrictions are in place. From the start of the pandemic, we have had a team working to support the most vulnerable in our communities.

The Community Hub continues to carry out this work and is the main point of contact for individuals and families in need as we continue to deal with the impact of the pandemic across our districts. The Community Hub team is available from:

- 8.30am-5pm Monday to Thursday
- 8.30am-4.30pm on Fridays

Call our Community Hub on **01235 422600** or email communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk.

Robin.Bennett@southoxon.gov.uk

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Please send artwork to
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From your County Councillor... ...Lorraine Lindsay-Gale



Parking enforcement proposals aim to keep the traffic moving

Oxfordshire County Council has agreed to apply to the Government to take over responsibility for civil parking enforcement across the whole of the county. If the plans are approved by district councillors at the Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire and Cherwell, then the new measures could come into force across the county by November 2021.

The proposal, which was agreed by the county council's Cabinet on Tuesday, October 13, would also lead to the creation of up to 168 new on-street pay-and-display car parking spaces in the Vale, South, and Cherwell districts.

The county council already enforces parking in Oxford City and West Oxfordshire, and could now take over responsibility from Thames Valley Police in South Oxfordshire, the Vale, and Cherwell, ensuring continuity across the whole county.

Members of the public would be able to report areas and incidents of illegal parking through a dedicated email address and telephone line. Officers would investigate and take enforcement action as required.

Parking offences, which include overstaying in pay-and-display bays, double-parking, dropped kerb obstruction and yellow line infringements, would be enforced by the county council's contractor Conduent. Penalty charges range from £50-£70, but would be reduced by 50% if paid within 14 days.

£60K+ investment in Garsington's Roads

On 28 and 29 October a 240m section of the highway at the junction of Wheatley Road, Oxford Road and The Hill around the Village Hall was resurfaced.

The surfacing started just after the junction of Denton Ln on The Hill side and finished just before the twin gullies opposite Library Farm. While the closure was in place, additional patching was carried out adjacent to the junction of Denton Lane.

Included within these works were the replacement of damaged existing Full Batter kerbs on the bend and straight Bull Nose kerbs on The Hill side. New dropped kerbs were also installed at the end of the existing footpath along Pettiwell due to no kerbs present. Also included within the works were the replacement of four old gully grates on the Oxford Rd side.

It was also identified that there was a small section of carriageway that required surfacing on Pettiwell within the extent of the properties. A 6.5 linear metre length of full width surfacing was carried out here while the road closure was in place.

The total estimated cost to carry out these works was approximately £40,000

The Friends of Dorchester Abbey and the Beauforest Society

Help to support your Abbey.

The Friends of Dorchester Abbey and the Beauforest Society are charities that support the Parochial Church Council but have a separate legal identity. They raise funds to be used exclusively for the restoration, maintenance, and improvements to the structure of the Church and the Abbey Guest-house. Recently these have included new sound and lighting systems, and major repairs to the stonework of the Abbey. Further major projects are under discussion.

The Friends and Beauforest Society have promoted and supported social events such as concerts, flower and craft festivals, lectures and visits to other cathedrals and abbeys. All members receive a regular newsletter and the Beauforest society



members are invited to an annual event in the Abbey, usually in the autumn.

The annual subscription for the Friends is a minimum of £25 or Life Membership of £350. For the Beauforest Society the annual subscription is £100.

Details of the work of the Friends together with application forms can be found on the Dorchester Abbey website www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk and the Friends' notice board in the Abbey.

For further information contact the membership secretary, Mrs Honor Juniper. **01865 343228** or email friends@dorchester-abbey.org.uk



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Wallingford Museum News

Wallingford Museum's dedicated team of researchers are working with architectural model maker, Ben Taggart, to create a 1:300 scale model (1.5m x1.6m) of Wallingford's royal castle as it may have been in the mid-14th century. This amazing collaboration draws on 15 years of research, unravelling the castle's history, using archaeology, geophysical surveys, LiDAR, maps, and the transcription, translation and analysis of many documentary records. Some of these records, from the 12th-19th centuries, also contain surveys with measurements, which greatly help the study.

Virtual meetings with Ben, use all the available evidence to try to accurately position the walls, drawbridges, moats and buildings, such as the great hall, kitchens and stables, as they would once have looked.

The culmination of all this research will be this magnificent model of the castle at the height of its power, to share with everyone, once the museum reopens in 2021.

In 2021 the museum will celebrate its 40th anniversary - created and entirely run by volunteers since 1981. We look forward to re-opening in 2021.

Sue Wright

Wallingford Country Market - Update

Wallingford Country Market, usually held in St. Mary-le-More Church in the Market Place each Friday morning, has been closed during the spring and summer months due to the Covid -19 pandemic. The church remains closed but we were very grateful at the end of September to have permission from the church to use their pathway outside to set up a few stalls selling home baked goods, preserves, honey, plants and eggs. The intention was to move to 'Centre 70' in Kinecroft off Goldsmiths Lane, (near Regal Centre car park), in November until the church re-opened. Now, with another lockdown, we have closed again for November. It is hoped that we will be able to trade from 'Centre 70' or church, if opened, from **Friday 4 December** for three weeks.

As a way of possibly keeping in touch with some of our customers, an ordering system has been set up for December for Christmas and other orders during this month. If you would like to take advantage of this scheme, please contact one of the Committee Members listed below who will pass your requirements on to the best producer/s for the items you require. These are: home-baked goods, preserves, local honey, home-grown winter bedding, flowering bulbs, hand-made Christmas wreaths and table decorations, home-crafted Christmas gifts and cards.

The producer will then get in touch with you to discuss your requirements and arrange collection. A small charge for travel will be made if an order has to be delivered to the customer by the producer. The names to contact are:

Alison Broadbridge: 01491 681596

Gwen Strong: 01491873338

Shirley Joy: 01491 281338

Sandra Halstead: 01491836527

Keep safe, keep well and a Happy Christmas to you all.

Wallingford Country Market Committee



Cinema: All regular performances normally start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise.

Tickets £8 for Adults and £5 for under 15s unless otherwise stated.

As you all know the Corn Exchange was closed again on Thursday 5 November 2020 due to new government guidelines and the current advice is that the lockdown will be lifted on Thursday 3 December 2020. This is of course uncertain but our view is that we should seek to rebuild our programme in December as best we can given the tight timescale and also the availability of suitable films. There are some cinema bookings available below and we will be adding more films in the next few weeks. Please look on www.cornexchange.org.uk for further programme updates.

December

Tues 8	Military Wives (12A)
Fri 11	A Gift from Bob (12A)
Sun 13	A Gift from Bob (12A) 2.30pm
Wed 23	A Christmas Carol (PG)

Live Screenings

Saturday, 19 December, 7:30pm

War Horse (12A), based on the novel by Michael Morpurgo, adapted by Nick Stafford, from the National Theatre. At its heart are astonishing life-size puppets by South Africa's Handspring Puppet Company, who bring breathing, galloping, charging horses to thrilling life on stage. At the outbreak of World War One, Albert's beloved horse, Joey, is sold to the Cavalry and shipped to France. He embarks on a treacherous mission to find him and bring him home.

Tickets £10 (adults) £8 (seniors) £5 (under 16s)

Live Theatre

Saturday, 12 December, 7:45pm

A Solo Christmas Carol featuring Guy Masterson, 'Scrooge's journey of redemption. The Perfect Christmas Treat.'

Tickets £15 (adults) and £10 (under 16s)

Coming Soon

Wednesday 20th to Saturday 23rd January, 7:45pm A

Daughter's a Daughter by Agatha Christie performed by the Sinodun Players.

Christie's 1956 play, written under the name Mary Westmacott, bubbles with suppressed emotion and has the extra frisson of perhaps being inspired by Christie's difficult relationship with her own daughter, Rosalind.

Tickets £12

Day by day

Sun 8.00am
6 Dec Holy Communion (1662)

Wed **Parish Council Meeting**
9 Dec 7.30pm
Online

Sun 8.00am
13 Dec Holy Communion (1662)

Wed **Chiropodist**
16 Dec Village Hall

OSJ Concert
Traditional Carols
Dorchester Abbey
6.00pm and 8.00pm

Sat **OSJ Concert**
19 Dec Handel's Messiah
Dorchester Abbey
6.00pm and 8.00pm

Sun **Carol Services**
20 Dec 3.00pm and 6.00pm

Thurs **Nativity Service**
24 Dec Cloister Garden

Fri **Christmas Day**
25 Dec 8.00am
Holy Communion (1662)
10.30am



Thurs 31 Dec **New Years Eve concert**
OSJ
Dorchester Abbey
6.00pm and 8.00pm

Weekly events at the Village Hall

Monday Yoga 9.30am

Tuesday Yoga 7.00pm

Wednesday Pilates 6.15pm

Thursday Yoga 6.00pm

All events are subject to the Covid-19 regulations in force at the time.

Weekly events

Monday DADS Play reading
7.30pm
Online

Tuesday Coffee Morning
10.30am
Online

Wednesday Mobile Post Office
1.00-3.00pm but may vary due to Covid 19
Outside Co-op

Regular events also appear in the Parish Council's website:

www.dorchesteronthames.co.uk

Parish Registers

Funeral

21 Oct Margaret Firth

See www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk/ for current information about services.

For St Birinus RC Church go to:

www.stbirinus.co.uk

Because of on-going uncertainty about Covid-19 regulations it is not possible to show a diary for January.

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Dial **111** to access urgent local NHS health care services. Where possible, they will book you an appointment or transfer you to the people you need to speak to or send an ambulance if they think you need one. For non-urgent health needs you should contact your GP in the usual way.

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HIRE OF DORCHESTER VILLAGE HALL

To hire our Village Hall, contact Emma Shrimpton bookings@dotvh.org.uk or **01865 689452**.

Please telephone at least 24 hours in advance to arrange collection of the key.

FAULTS AND COMPLAINTS

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Abandoned vehicles, dog fouling, flyposting or graffiti, flytipping or litter, street cleaning, such as broken glass in a cycle lane, unlit lampposts, potholes can be reported on fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk. In an emergency, call **0345 310 1111**.

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Ring Thames Water for blocked drains on **0800 316 9800**. Callers will be asked for the postcode of the address where the drains are blocked.

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If your rubbish is not collected on the due date contact the contractor direct. Call **03000 610610** and the website: www.more recycling.co.uk

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Fri 2.00-5.00pm
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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, 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

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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

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.

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Contact details for Church Wardens and other Abbey information are on the notice board in the Abbey.

ABBAY WEBSITE

www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk

VILLAGE WEBSITE

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Dorchester Abbey Museum E-mail
museum@dorchester-abbey.org.uk



REFUSE COLLECTIONS

Fri 4 Dec **Green**
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Fri 18 Dec **Green**
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Tues 5 Jan **Green***
Mon 11 Jan **Black**
Sat 16 Jan **Green**
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Fri 29 Jan **Green**

Weekdays from 7.00am
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Weekly: food waste (in bio-degradable starch-based bag or wrapped in newspaper, in green caddy).

Green* = No garden waste collection

The recycling centre at Oakley Wood (off the A4130) is open 8.00am - 5.00pm seven days a week. Check website <https://www.oxford.gov.uk/>

Index of advertisers

	Page
Acupuncture Barn	28
AKT Planning	23
Arbocare	24
Bell Motors	26
Brannfords Garden Makers	26
Bristow	20
Bryan's Locks	23
Culham Garden Services	5
Dorchester Fireplaces	6
Dorchester Window cleaning	28
Driving Miss Daisy	8
Four Winds	24
Full Circle	18
Graceful Gardens	28
Horted	6
Howard Chadwick Funerals	28
In House	6
JEM chimney sweep	26
Jenks	30
John L Fisher	28
Larkmead Vets	28
LB Plumbing	24
Martin Drew Logs	28
Massage Matters	5
Millstream Pilates	25
Q Self storage	18
Roy Passey Builders	28
St Mary's Dental	26
Steve Wilkinson	26
T W Hayden	28
The Landscape Group	8
Oxford	
The Sewing Lady	26
Thimbles and Threads	24
Wallingford Tiles and	
Bathrooms	20
White Hart	30
Will O'Leary	9



Dorchester Abbey Christmas 2020

Three socially-distanced concerts
at 6pm and 8pm.

Tickets must be pre-booked.

Wednesday December 16

Traditional Christmas Carols with OSJ
Ashmolean Voices

Saturday December 19 Handel's Messiah
Part I 'highlights' with the Orchestra of St
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Thursday December 31 (NYE) 'Overtures
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osj.org.uk