

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

DORCHESTER JOINT HERITAGE COMMITTEE HELD VIA THE ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING PLATFORM

18 JANUARY 2022

At a virtual Meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee held on 18 January 2022:

PRESENT:

Dorchester Town Council	Councillors:	S. Biles A. Chisholm F. Hogwood G. Jones (Chairman)
	Officers:	S. Newman M. Manley N. Hayes
Dorset Council	Councillors:	S. Jones R. Tarr A. Canning
Dorchester Civic Society		I. Gosling
Dorchester Association		M. Rice
Dorchester Heritage Magazine		M. Woodgate
Dorchester Local Nature Reserve		L. Poulsen
Shire Hall		T. Little
The National Trust (Max Gate)		R. Raine
Thomas Hardy Society		M. Chutter

25. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R. Major (Dorchester Town Council), Councillor L. Fry (Dorset Council), M. Gayton (Dorset History Centre), A. Worth (Keep 106) and E. Selby (Dorset Museum).

26. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2021, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

27. **HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY**

(a) **Heritage Tourism Strategy - Progress**

The Committee received a progress report from the Tourism Development Officer which included:

- Discover Dorchester website had been launched with the home page and What's On pages the most viewed. The app had over 3,000 downloads.
- The first Tourism Information Point (TIP) to open at Dorchester Post Office.
- Brewing celebration event to take place at end of February.
- 'Like a Local' project moving forward, all portraits now taken and exhibition going to be erected at Marks and Spencer shop front.
- Tourism signage going up at 'Better Hearing' shop window front on Trinity Street.
- Information leaflet ready for print – one final proof to be reviewed.
- Information video to be filmed during last week of January.
- The University of Southampton had not been successful in its funding application for a Dorchester based project.

The Committees views were sought on four new potential projects:

- Durnovaria student project, £1,000 required. The students would be asked to create a project that would celebrate Dorchester's Roman heritage and present it in a new and engaging way to visitors and local residents.
- A sunflower project – including a sculpture and sunflower theme across the town.
- A pedestrian crossing mural to celebrate heritage in a line painting form. Connecting the north and south sides of High West Street at the existing crossing at St Peter's Church.
- A new A35 tourism sign on Kingston Maurward College land. KMC had agreed permission for a sign on the land on the approach from the A35. Planning permission would be required. Members suggested asking other local land owners for signs at other entrances to Dorchester.

Members considered that the sunflower project was a nice idea but agreed that it did not have a connection with heritage and the Committee therefore felt that it would not wish to fund this proposal. It was noted that the Town Council might wish to take this project forward.

The Committee supported the other proposals. It was reported that the town was known by three names, Dorchester, Casterbridge and Durnovaria and it was suggested that these names should be included on the new A35 sign.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the Tourism Development Officer be authorised to further explore all projects with the exception of the sunflower project as it was not considered to be heritage related.
- (2) That, due to the urgency on the A35 sign, the funding be agreed by the Chairman and Deputy Town Clerk.

(b) Dorchester Tourism Partnership -Notes of meeting

The Committee received the notes of the meeting of the Tourism Partnership held on 11 January 2022.

RESOLVED

That the notes of the meeting of the Dorchester Tourism Partnership held on 11 January 2022 be received.

28. **MILL STREAM PATH – SECTION FROM LONDON ROAD TO MILL STREET**

The Committee received an update from the Deputy Town Clerk. Locations for four information boards been identified. Some funding towards the project was available but the deadline for expenditure was the end of March 2022. Volunteers were sought to put together some text and photographs for the boards. Tim Loasby was put forward as somebody that might be able to help. M. Chutter and M. Woodgate also volunteered to undertake this work.

RESOLVED

That the update be noted.

29. **COMMITTEE FUNDING**

The Chairman reported that the Town Council had agreed to contribute £3,000 annually to the general work of the Committee plus £8,500 annually towards the cost of the bi-annual THVF and the annual HOD event.

RESOLVED

That the regular financial contribution to the work of the Committee, by the Town Council, be welcomed.

30. **REPLACEMENT BENCH – FRONT OF DORSET MUSEUM**

A. Chisholm updated the Committee on progress with the replacement bench at the front of Dorset Museum. Funding had been identified, materials purchased and Dorchester Men's Shed had started construction on a bench in memory of Chris and Jo Draper. The bench was expected to be in place before the end of March 2022.

Whilst discussing this matter it was reported that there was a lack of secure cycling storage at or near the front of the Museum.

31. **THOMAS HARDY VICTORIAN FAIR - 2022**

The Deputy Town Clerk advised the Committee that the THVF 2022 would be taking place on the same weekend as the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations. The Committee therefore felt that it would not be appropriate to hold the THVF this year.

The Thomas Hardy Society representative confirmed that he would update the Committee at its next meeting on the plans for the Thomas Hardy Society during that weekend.

RESOLVED

That the Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair should not take place in 2022.

32. **ROMAN MOSAIC PROJECT – THE WALKS**

Members received an update report from the Working Group established to progress this project. A meeting had very recently taken place which had consisted of a site visit around the Walks. A further meeting would take place on the 2 February 2022 together with the student group so as to tie their Roman project in with this one. The Deputy Town Clerk advised a discussion with Historic England prior to any development on the Scheduled Monument.

33. **QUESTIONS**

No questions had been received.

34. **URGENT ITEMS**

It was noted that Councillor S. Jones would be the Town Council representative on the Thomas Hardy Society.

The representative from Shire Hall Historic Courthouse Museum passed on the Museum's thanks to M. Manley, the Tourism Development Officer for all her help and enthusiasm in including Museum in the town's tourism projects and plans.

The Committee wished to express its concerns to the Dorchester Markets Joint Panel regarding the very poor state of the Linneys at Fairfield car park. It was felt that the market was an important part of the town's heritage and that the Linneys should be maintained appropriately.

It was noted that the next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday 19 April 2022.

Chairman.....