



Dorchester Town Council

Council Offices, 19 North Square, Dorchester, Dorset. DT1 1JF
Telephone: (01305) 266861

For information about this agenda contact Steve Newman
s.newman@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

6 January 2021

Agenda for the meeting of the **Management Committee** which will be held in via the **ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING PLATFORM** on **MONDAY 11 JANUARY 2021** commencing at **7.00pm**.

You will be able to join the meeting by using the link - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86867973476>

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

Public Speaking at the Meeting

The Chairman has discretion to allow members of the public to speak at the meeting. If you wish to speak please **contact the Clerk by 9.00am on the morning of the meeting**. We ask speakers to confine their comments to the matter in hand and to be as brief as possible.

Member Code of Conduct: Declaration of Interests

Members are reminded that it is their responsibility to disclose pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests where appropriate.

A Member who declares a pecuniary interest must leave the room unless a suitable dispensation has been granted.

A Member who declares a non-pecuniary interest may take part in the meeting and vote.

Membership of the Committee

Councillors S. Biles, A. Canning, L. Fry, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger (Chairman), D. Leaper, A. Lyall, R. Major, R. Potter, M. Rennie, R. Ricardo, D. Taylor and The Mayor ex-officio.

Agenda

1. Apologies

2. Minutes

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 9 November 2020 (adopted by Council on 23 November 2020). A copy of the Minutes can be found at www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/Committees/Management/Minutes.

3. Management Arrangements – Outdoor Services

- (a) To receive the Outdoor Services update report (enclosed).
- (b) To note that following the introduction of a third national lockdown and in accordance with the accompanying Government Guidance the following outdoor facilities have been closed:-

- Skatepark
- Multi Use Games Areas
- Outdoor Gyms
- Tennis Courts
- Table Tennis Court

The remainder of the Council's services remain open including the play areas, Borough Gardens (including toilets and kiosk), open spaces, allotments and cemeteries.

4. Borough Gardens – Rose Garden Update

To consider a report by the Outdoor Services Manager (enclosed).

5. 2021-2022 Estimates, Special Items and Fees and Charges

To consider the Committee's Estimates, Special Items and Fees and Charges for 2021-2022 (enclosed).

If any Member has any detailed queries or questions regarding the proposed budget please contact the office prior to the meeting.

6. Cemetery Matters

- (a) Exclusive Right of Burial and Interments and Burial of Ashes

To note the grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial issued and the number of interments, burials of ashes and uses of the South Chapel at Dorchester Cemetery since the last meeting of the Committee (enclosed).

- (b) Headstones and Inscriptions

To confirm the action taken by the Town Clerk in approving applications for the design of headstones and inscriptions received since the last meeting of the Committee. The Register of Memorials will be available to view at the meeting.

7. Municipal Buildings Monitoring Report

To consider the Municipal Buildings monitoring and update reports (enclosed).

8. Municipal Buildings New Lift Update

To consider a report by the Deputy Town Clerk (enclosed).

9. Dorchester Ballet Club

The Committee will be informed that the Council, as freeholder of the land, has received formal notification (under the 2015 Town and Country Planning Order) from Dorchester Ballet and Dance informing the Council that it has submitted a planning application for a new single story dance school proposed to be located within Sandringham Sports Centre car park.

The Committee has previously supported this initiative.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 11th January 2021 OUTDOOR SERVICES UPDATE REPORT – Winter 2020/21

This report has been prepared whilst the country is working under the government regulations on the types of work and socialising that can be undertaken during the Covid 19 outbreak. These regulations had and continue to have a significant effect on the work undertaken by the team, services having been reduced and or amended in such a way so as to: -

- **Safeguard the NHS**
- **Safeguard the public**
- **Safeguard staff health both in and away from work**
- **Maintain essential services**
- **Maintain a light maintenance regime on other areas whilst keeping Parks and Open Spaces open which is a governmental expectation and to keep play areas open for general use.**

1. The Autumn/ early winter period saw ongoing maintenance work and one-off jobs being completed within the outdoor services team and this continued into December. A prolonged wet and mild period restricted grass cutting and some other operations, grass cutting is now halted for the winter unless ongoing particularly mild conditions promote growth in high profile areas. Staff are now taking the time to do the basic maintenance and preparation works that ease pressure in the summer and ensure good standards of maintenance for the coming spring and are undertaking repair works to ensure quality is maintained.

2. The Borough Gardens staff have been doing many tasks within the site. Annual beds have been planted with stock to flower in the spring next year. Previously, problems with fungal infections and rotting have affected the quality of the display in the spring. This is due in part to poor soil structure and texture inhibiting drainage and preventing air entering the root zone. To this end the main palm bed adjacent to the clock in the gardens has again been left fallow, manure will again be spread over it and it will be properly dug in in the spring to improve the soil and bring that amelioration work to completion. A programme of soil improvement will take place over the next 3 winters on annual beds to try to overcome this problem. In coming years, the soils will be improved by the use of a compost comprising locally sourced manure and compost from our own operations. This will be repeated annually until soils improve. This year another focus for improvement, should time allow, will be the annual beds and grass around the large yew tree in the lower area adjacent to west walks. The grass and soil levels have deteriorated there so works will be carried out to improve the display and remove trip hazards.

3. The team have also further improved the appearance of the nursery area following the committee decision to retain the nursery. Works have included removal of overhanging tree branches, further reduction in height of adjacent hedges, electrical and general building repairs. Works have also been carried out to tidy and level the standing out areas around the houses. By improving the greenhouses, it has again been possible to increase the amount of bedding stock plants held over winter for use next year which in turn has reduced waste. This year's stock to be held over is again experimental being temperature sensitive plants for the carpet bedding design

and very cold weather may see this fail but there is a very low risk attached to this item of work as replacements can be ordered in time for the summer as normal.

4. A significant amount of work has been concentrated in the area of the rose garden. This is detailed in a progress report included in the agenda for this meeting.

5. Works on the Camassia lawn were completed last year and the public response was excellent. As a result, the planting has been extended into the grass on the adjacent west walks. Assistance to plant the bulbs was provided by some hardy volunteers for Rotary who braved very inclement weather to lend a hand which was much appreciated by the gardens team. It is anticipated the increased display will again contribute to improving the visual impact in the Bowling alley walks /west walks area.

These works combined with routine work and the need to create the rose garden saw a very busy end to 2020 for the gardens staff who responded well and carried out some excellent work.

5. Away from the gardens, the outdoor services team have been very busy trying complete grass cutting rounds very much restricted by the wet weather prior to Christmas, lower temperatures in the new year have eased that problem by stopping grass growth. Additional winter works have been carried out around the town, again to ensure facilities are of a good standard. Staff have carried out routine repairs and maintenance in several play areas and have commenced power washing safety surfacing in play areas before topping up with sand dressing.

Two trial seats were reconditioned and repositioned outside "Reloved" in the mid-autumn. These feature two varieties of wood not used by the council before, Oak and Sapele, this is an attempt to prevent the problems with seat slats warping as is evident on many seats in the town centre area. The two benches show different colours of wood, one light, one dark and these will be inspected periodically to see how they perform in terms of warpage, colour and durability. The reconditioning of existing seats is considerably cheaper than the procurement of new so a programme of replacement will be embarked upon in the autumn of next year.

Maumbury rings pavilion has had all external doors replaced as they were decaying, this work is complete. Internal decoration will take place over the winter to leave the pavilion in good condition for the much-anticipated return to use during events in the coming summer.

Further routine work has continued keeping all play equipment inspected and in a safe and well-maintained condition, collecting litter from open spaces and bins has been ongoing.

The pre-Christmas period saw staff heavily involved in making sure the Towns Lights looked their best, this involved evening / night working to ensure the safety of staff and road users whilst the lights were put up and then removed.

The Christmas tree was again located by the town pump and remained on site until the 5th of January, this was then chipped and the arisings will be used to mulch around the base of tree whips planted at King's Road. All Xmas lights were successfully removed on the evening / night of Tuesday 5th January.

7. Cemeteries - The provision of this critical service shaped all other direct service delivery during the previous lockdown period and continues to do so currently. Staff carryout tasks broadly within team bubbles based around potential grave digging to come. The Council should be comfortable that currently, staff resources and management practices have maintained capacity for burials, allowing them to continue without the need to re-schedule timings or request help with excavation from others and it is intended this will continue to be the case.

New Covid restrictions see no change from our current guidelines on the number of mourners to attend a funeral.

Poundbury cemetery has seen a lot of activity with several burials being carried out at frequent intervals. The combination of the use of ground protection boards and staff taking a lot of care has resulted in the grass in this area maintaining a reasonable appearance despite all the heavy digging works carried out. Staff have been given new guidance as to how to deliver this service and they have responded well.

8. Biodiversity

Tree Planting has commenced at King's Road Playing Field, works were carried out over a week in the run up to Christmas and progressed as expected. Planting was suspended in the first week of January due to severe frosts but it is anticipated it will recommence w/c 11/1/21.

The Town Council has received formal confirmation of the designation of Fordington Cemetery as a Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) by The Dorset Wildlife Trust. Along with this were received the results of the first survey carried out in 2019. Both these documents and a leaflet explaining what the designation means for landowners can be found at the end of this report.

The grassland management regime was changed last year to reflect the anticipated recommendations contained as part of the survey report and these have roughly matched, this is encouraging and the management regime will now continue to promote biodiversity within the cemetery.

Members will receive a report on the potential to apply for Weymouth Avenue Cemetery to also be designated as an SNCI as part of the next committee cycle.

9. Tree works were finally completed at Salisbury Field after the previously notified delay. Works went well with the minimum of disturbance or damage to the grass surface. Branches and limbs were chipped wherever possible, these chippings will be used as weed suppressant mulch to whip plantings at Kings road.

Rather than remove the stump by chipping the arborists were asked to create, if possible, a seat to be a feature in the field which would also allow people to sit and enjoy excellent views to the north over Dorchester. The decay meant there was a risk this wouldn't be possible, however sufficient unaffected timber was found to facilitate a carving, (see photo Below)

There has been a positive response so far to this new addition.

A replacement lime has been purchased and has been delivered, it will be planted in the field near to the original tree in the coming weeks.



Tree works were also completed in Borough Gardens before Christmas, the works went well Town Council staff proving support by moving ground boards around to prevent damage to grass areas by high access equipment. Some logs have been left on site where possible to provide wildlife habitat in the deep shrubberies and other material was again chipped to be used as mulch at king's road.

10. Staffing: - As part of our ongoing staff development and training members are reminded that training was organised and delivered for staff in Play equipment inspection. This was again intended to widen the skills base of the outdoor services staff and allow for increased flexibility in working practices. Updating training is now also booked for some staff to upskill in safe grave digging and marking, this is currently scheduled to be carried out in late January 2021.

Carl Dallison
Outdoor Services Manager



By email to: a.stuart@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

FAO: Mr A Stuart
Dorchester Town Council
19 North Square
Dorchester
Dorset
DT1 1LF

Dorset Wildlife Trust
Brooklands Farm
Forston, Dorchester
Dorset DT2 7AA

Tel: 01305 264620
info@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk
www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk

16th December 2020

Re: SY69/045 St George's Churchyard, Fordington Site of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI).

Dear Mr Stuart,

Thank you for allowing Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT) to visit and perform a monitoring survey of a site within Dorchester Town Council's landownership: St George's Churchyard, Fordington (grid reference SY697905).

DWT, in partnership with other conservation organisations, have been running a project to identify important wildlife sites, called Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs), across Dorset for many years. The project assesses habitats against a set of natural history criteria in order to identify sites which are of, at least, county importance for wildlife. Nearly 1300 such sites have been recognised since the 1990s across the county. I have enclosed a leaflet giving further details. You will see there are three main reasons for recognising sites as SNCIs.

Firstly, it provides us with a comprehensive audit of the state of Dorset's countryside, from which we can measure any trends of gains and losses of wildlife habitat over the years. Secondly, and most importantly, we try if we can, to help landowners to manage these sites in a way which is sensitive to the wildlife interest. We are able to offer advice about the best management solutions for wildlife, and where possible can suggest sources of grant aid towards such conservation-friendly management. The chances of success in agri-environment grants can be higher if sites have been recognised as SNCIs.

Thirdly, the project enables land-use decisions to be made from a factual scientific basis. To this end, summary information about SNCIs is passed to the Local Authorities for guidance in the drawing up of Local Plans. They are subject to policies designed to ensure that the wildlife interest is taken into account when considering planning applications, although these policies are separate and more flexible than those for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs).

We always stress the point that SNCI recognition is fundamentally different from SSSI notification, quite apart from any distinction drawn in Local Plans. SSSI designations are overseen by Natural England and carries an obligation on the owner to consult when considering any specified 'damaging practices'. SNCIs are not overseen by Natural England and carry no such obligation. The recognition aims to focus and enhance voluntary efforts, with landowners and tenants free to continue to manage the sites as they see fit, subject of course to any conditions of agri-environment grant schemes and *The Environmental Impact Assessment (Agriculture) (England) (No. 2) (Amendment) Regulations 2017*. The latter protects semi-natural habitats from changes in agricultural activities (i.e. ploughing, draining, increasing stock density etc.) that will result in changes to the vegetation. More information can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/eia-agriculture-regulations-apply-to-make-changes-to-rural-land>.



Part of a
nationwide network
of Wildlife Trusts

Protecting **Wildlife** for the Future

Registered in England as Dorset Wildlife Trust
Registered Office: Brooklands Farm, Forston
Registered Charity No. 200222
Registered Company No. 680439
VAT Registration No. 785 7124 96
Printed on environmentally friendly paper

You might recall a surveyor from Natural England visited the site on 15th August 2019. The assessment concluded that the site meets the designation criteria and thus should be designated as a SNCI.

The SNCI was considered at a formal SNCI Panel, which is responsible for all additions, deletions and boundary changes to the fully designated list. The Panel consists of representatives from various organisations who are involved in land management or environmental assessment, including DWT, Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Dorset Council, Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC), Dorset Flora Group and Natural England. The site was recommended for designation as a SNCI at the Panel held in September 2019.

Please find attached the results of the monitoring survey for your records and interest, which includes a map, description of the wildlife interest on-site and a list of the plant species recorded, including Dorset Notable Species. These are either rare or declining nationally or locally; or are important as indicators of good quality wildlife habitat. You will also shortly receive the latest copy of our annual newsletter for SNCI owners, The Green Linnet.

If you would like any advice on managing the site for the benefit of the wildlife, or if you have any queries about the information we have provided then please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours Sincerely,



Leanne Butt
Conservation Officer – Planning and SNCI
Nature-based Solutions Team

DORSET SNCI SURVEY

Site Number: SY69/045
Site Name: St George's Churchyard, Fordington

Survey Type: First survey Site Grid: SY697905

Date of Survey: 2019 Area surveyed: Whole site

See attached report: Botanical Survey of Fordington St George's Church Graveyard, Dorchester
By Sean Cooch (15/08/2019)

SNCI Panel Date: 16/09/19
Assessment: Whole site selected



Report Date: 15/08/2019
Ref: Fordington Graveyard
Author: Sean Cooch

BOTANICAL SURVEY OF FORDINGTON ST GEORGE'S CHURCH GRAVEYARD, DORCHESTER.

INTRODUCTION

A botanical and vegetation survey was undertaken of the grounds of St George's Church, Fordington in Dorchester, Dorset, during mid-July 2019. All of the grassland area was looked at to assess the plant communities in the graveyard. Casual records were made of other wildlife. Early season surveys were not undertaken but notes and records taken over several years since around 2015 have been collated by the author of this report.

Church grounds can support very important areas for wildlife and they may often be one of the few places within a parish where certain habitats and species still persist. Typically, grassland habitats can be botanically species-rich supporting many plants much reduced in the wider environment. The St George's graveyard supports a good example of a calcareous grassland with a significant number of flowering plants including a selection of Dorset notable species. Overall the graveyard is an important area of remnant, unimproved grassland that is important for its flowering plants as well as an important habitat for other wildlife such as bees and hoverflies.

SITE DESCRIPTION

St Georges Church in one form or other has existed since at least around 857AD, with the church we see today having existed from around the 15th century with modifications in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The Church graveyard, known in the rest of the report as the graveyard, is situated on the eastern side of Dorchester and sits above the River Frome with the site around 60m a.s.l. The underlying geology is soft chalk with some elements of flinty and loamy deposits revealed when fresh graves are dug. It is probably the case that the graveyard is remnant chalk grassland and was even managed as hay meadows having once been part of Parsonage Farm as shown on the tithe map of 1841. The grounds today are a little over 1 hectare with additional car park (not included in survey). The largest area or block of contiguous grassland, where also most of the graves are found is on the eastern side of the site (see map 1). The graveyard includes aspects with steep and gently sloping ground with east and south east facing slopes as well as a very steep north facing bank. To

the front of the church the land slopes gently to the south west. The remaining, significant area of grassland lawn is flat occurring north of the church hall.

The graveyard grounds are part of the Dorchester Town Councils property assets and are managed by them.

SURVEY METHOD/S

Plant species and grassland vegetation communities

The survey aimed at recording as many species as possible at a time of peak flowering. A walkover survey was carried out on 13 July 2019, with regular stops to get an idea of abundance of each plant species. Particular effort was placed on recording in the main graveyard as significant areas had not been cut since May allowing much easier recording and species identification. This was the first time the graveyard had been left to flower and a number of species were recorded that had not been spotted before such treatment. Other ad-hoc records mainly from spring have been added to the report to give a fuller list of species for the site.

Based on the full species list and abundance (DAFOR value) of key plants the grassland was assigned to a plant vegetation type using the National Vegetation Classification (NVC) (Rodwell, 1992).

Plant Species

More than 70 species of vascular plant species have been recorded in the Fordington graveyard. Most of these are associated with the grassland but also included are trees and any species found growing on walls or other hard surfaces. There are thirteen plant species that are listed as Dorset Notables (Table 1) and are typically associated with unimproved, good quality grasslands. Mosses were recorded but not comprehensively. A survey of lichens occurring on gravestones and the church and walls would be worthwhile as many, including some uncommon species are found on graves, church buildings and walls.

Table 1: Species found in the St Georges Graveyard listed as Dorset Notables (DERC 2019) with DAFOR score

<i>Briza media</i>	Quaking grass (O)
<i>Carex caryophyllea</i>	Spring sedge (R)
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common knapweed (O to L/F)
<i>Cirsium acaule</i>	Dwarf thistle (R)
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's bedstraw (F)
<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Rough hawkbit (F)
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye daisy (F)
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot trefoil (F)
<i>Pilosella officinarum</i>	Mouse-ear Hawkweed (O)
<i>Plantago media</i>	Hoary plantain (F)
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	Salad burnet (R to L/O)
<i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	Burnet saxifrage (O)
<i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip (O)

Description of Grassland communities

MG1e *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland *Centaurea nigra* sub-community. False oat-grass Common knapweed sub community. This is the dominant grassland type within the main graveyard.

Typically, this is a coarse grassland characteristic of abandoned and undermanaged fields and road verges. Interestingly, it is specifically mentioned in Rodwell (1992), as occurring in graveyards but more usually it is a grassland type indicative of irregular grazing and often neglect. However, regular mowing or more traditional scything, with the removal of the cuttings can maintain the species component of this community. In addition, regular cutting, where grass cuttings are left can lead to a deterioration in the species-richness of swards and may shift the vegetation towards a ranker, more grass dominated vegetation. Cutting too often may also eliminate some flowering plants tipping the vegetation towards a dull, species-poor amenity type grassland.

MG1e grassland which is the most botanically-rich type of the MG1 grasslands occurs on more base-rich soils but there is also some suggestion that the graveyard vegetation has affinities with the more neutral **MG5** *Cynosurus cristatus-Centaurea nigra* grassland *Galium verum* sub-community. In addition, whilst lacking many of the typical associates found in species-rich chalk downland, there is a nod in places to remnant calcareous grassland. It is possible that appropriate management could help improve the species richness of the site. In 2019, dwarf thistle *Cirsium acaule* was found flowering, a species typically associated with high quality calcareous grasslands.

The grassland directly in front of the church is interesting in that it is closest to a calcareous grassland with enough constant species for it to be considered a **CG2** *Festuca ovina – Avenula pratensis* community but with much more frequent *Festuca rubra* red fescue with *Galium verum*. Overall, it lacks some of the more typical grass species as well as other indicator herbs but is still of interest adding to the overall diversity and importance of the graveyard. The grassland behind the St George's Hall is not as species-rich but with good indicators such as Hoary plantain *Plantago media* and Burnet saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga* being frequent and occasional. This grassland area is therefore closer to a semi-improved calcareous type **MG6** *Lolium – Cynosurus cristatus* grassland.

Within the main St George's graveyard the most typical grasses are *Arrhenatherum elatius*, with *Dactylis glomerata*, *Festuca rubra*, *Holcus lanatus*, and *Trisetum flavescens*. Other grasses which tend to be less frequent or localised include *Briza media*, *Luzula campestris* and the sedge *Carex flacca*. *Festuca ovina* also occurs but is much less frequent than *F. rubra*. Other, usually quite common grasses in this sward are no more than occasional and even rare. Regular cutting and leaving of arisings may have reduced them or certainly made them harder to find so species such as *Avenula pubescens* were recorded in 2019 but were still uncommon. *Cynosurus cristatus* was all but absent although this can be the case on some calcareous soils. On the northern bank in the main graveyard Spring sedge *Carex caryophyllea* can be found in a few places.

Herbs are well represented throughout with in places particularly high densities of some species. Notably, *Lotus corniculatus*, *Leontodon hispidus*, *Pilosella officinarum* and *Plantago media* can be locally abundant and even constants over much of the graveyard. In addition, *Galium verum*, *Leucanthemum vulgare*, *Crepis capillaris*, *Trifolium pratense* and *T. repens* and *Achillea millefolium* are all relatively frequent. Finally, with

the easing of cutting in 2019 patches of *Centaurea nigra* and *Pimpinella saxifraga* have been allowed to flower along with spectacular displays of *Galium mollugo*. These species were present before but were much more abundant than was thought before the cutting regime was relaxed in 2019. In Spring, both primroses *Primula vulgaris* and cowslip *Primula veris* are locally frequent in the graveyard.

Trees

There are a significant number of trees both in and around the church grounds. In the car park horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*, Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* are found. One reasonably large ash succumbed to the now widespread fungal disease ash-dieback and was removed in 2018. There is a mixture of planted trees: Whitebeam *Sorbus* spp, Lime *Tilia* spp and Field maple *Acer campestre*. A hedge on the northern boundary of the graveyard has hawthorn, hazel and sycamore

The most significant and somewhat characteristic trees found in the graveyard are the Yew *Taxus bacata*. There is one veteran Yew on the Kings Road side (see map). This fine tree, growing in relatively poor soil is over 4.2m in girth. The Yew may predate this part of graveyard but was probably planted when the land was taken as part of the burial ground. It is difficult to age but a tree of this size on relatively poor soils is likely to be over 250 years old and possibly much older. The tree is obvious in an aerial photograph from 1947 casting a long shadow across the graveyard. It has been variously cut with side branches removed but also appears to be a natural maiden tree with lots of branches above the main trunk.



Picture 1. Veteran Yew overlooking Kings Road. There has been some hollowing and decay on the graveyard side but the tree is very healthy.



Picture 2. Another view of the Yew looking south down Kings Road. The shape appears to show the tree is many stemmed

Other Wildlife

Various records have been gathered from casual observations mostly in the last few years although no systematic recording has been undertaken. It would be worthwhile carrying out surveys of groups such as bees, butterflies and other insects. In 2019, bumblebees have been far more noticeable with nectar sources from plants such as knapweed and bird's-foot trefoil being allowed to flower. Grasshoppers have also thrived with the longer vegetation.

It is worth noting that slow-worms *Anguis fragilis* appear to be present in the graveyard. A number have been observed, however, most sightings are of dead specimens as a result of being accidentally strimmed when the grass is cut. Ideally, having some uncut and overgrown refuges would help this reptile.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS AND MANAGEMENT.

Nature Conservation status

The graveyard, or more accurately the grassland supports many plant species typically found in good quality unimproved grasslands. The main, and biggest part of the graveyard supports the **MG1e** *Arrhenatherum elatius* grassland *Centaurea nigra* sub-community. This MG1 grassland is recognised as a type that would qualify under the criteria of a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Furthermore, the frequency of burnet saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga* is superficially similar to an MG1e variant recorded on the limestones of the Mendips and Pennines. However, due to its small size it would fall short in terms of area but in a town setting it is nonetheless a very important site and should be recognised as a **County Wildlife Site** (Dorset - Site of Nature Conservation Importance - SNCI). The area of grassland at the front of the church is also important and is somewhere between a **CG2/MG5** type. Many of the Dorset Notables found in the main graveyard occur at the front of the church and one species, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor* is more common here than anywhere else.

Caring for God's acre

It is often the case that churchyards are kept very 'tidy' with vegetation cut short with little consideration for wildlife. This view has been changing in recent years and the charity 'Caring for God's Acre <https://www.caringforgodsacre.org.uk/> has done a lot of good work promoting more sympathetic and traditional management of graveyards. Dorset Wildlife Trust also previously ran a Churchyard Project: Living Churchyards and Cemeteries (The Dorset project started in 1996 with over 100 parishes becoming involved).

The change in management in 2019 implemented by Dorchester Town Council has been much more flexible with sympathetic cutting regimes and allowing flowering of over half the graveyard. The benefits of this have meant better habitats for insects which have been particularly abundant with plenty of pollen and nectar sources available. It is also helpful in allowing species to set seed which can aid further recruitment in the grassland.

It is important however that the grassland is cut regularly to maintain the species richness of the site. Also of importance is the removal of the grass/vegetation cuttings. Currently this is more of a challenge because strimming leaves the arisings on site. In the early season this is not too problematic as there is little bulk and most disappears

readily. In the height of summer, the sward is bulky and the cuttings smother the vegetation, particularly lower growing flowering plants as well as leaving a lot of litter. This can lead to enrichment of the grassland and therefore a significant reduction of species richness. Long-term this can lead to a much duller, grass dominated sward.

It is recommended that a detailed management plan is drawn up to help maintain and enhance the grassland vegetation in the Fordington graveyard. The following outline recommendations which would maintain and enhance the sward should be considered:

- Cutting/mowing should remove the arisings and composted on site in agreed areas. Compost areas will also provide an extra habitat for many species of insects and other mini-beasts and may be used by grass snakes and hedgehogs.
- Main pathways should be maintained with regular cutting either side of around 0.5-1m in width. This will give the impression of a well maintained cemetery and actually provide a shorter sward which will benefit some flowering plants.
- A network of other smaller pathways should be cut through the grassland in the main graveyard so that visitors have access to grave sides easily.
- Core areas of grassland where the number of graves is low were identified in 2019. An early cut/s is recommended over most of these areas (except where displays of primroses and cowslips are obvious, where these can be cut in early June) with the last cut being late-May before leaving to grow on. In these areas it will be important to cut again some areas in early to mid-July and others in mid to late August. Overall half the grassland should be managed like this but rotating each year areas for a July cut and August one. Arisings should be removed and composted.
- Where cutting is more regular it would be beneficial to switch to a cut and collect mower and lifting the blade so that the sward is around 3-4cm rather than shaved off. This will allow low growing plants like bird's-foot trefoil to continue flowering throughout the summer. In addition, it would be useful to have a no cut period over the whole graveyard (except for paths) from mid-July until mid to late August to allow all species to flower and provide late pollen and nectar sources.
- It is worth having a few areas retained as longer grass particularly on the northern slope and area below this. These will provide important refuges for insects and reptiles such as slow worms. They should be cut at the start of the year (March) and then in September. It is worth dividing up and rotating the cutting area so that each year around a third is left uncut into early winter.

Appendix 1: Photographs of the Graveyard



Photo 1: In Spring, primroses can be locally abundant appearing from early March. This area occurs near the entrance into the main graveyard at the car park end.



Photo 2: Also in Spring cowslips are scattered throughout but generally only occasional over most of the graveyard. They are often cut off early and do not generally set seed which may limit spread and abundance.



Photo 3: At the end of May and early June Ox-eye daisies are at their peak flowering although they will flower well into July. They are locally abundant and frequent throughout the graveyard.



Photo 4: In 2019 with the relaxation of cutting ladies bedstraw was able to flower profusely. It was found throughout the graveyard and a constant species in most stands.



Photo 5: A panoramic at the end of June 2019 looking up the slope from the eastern side of the graveyard showing the abundance of hedge bedstraw. Other species present include bird's-foot trefoil and rough hawkbit both found often in some abundance across the site. The tall grass is the false oat grass which defines the grassland community type.



Photo 6: From around mid-June through to the end of July peak flowering occurs. Here abundant bird's-foot trefoil and rough hawkbit along with red clover, ox-eye daisy, and lesser amounts of ribwort plantain, yarrow and mouse-ear hawkweed.

Photo 7: Hoary plantain is a constant species throughout the graveyard. It does equally well from regular cutting or left to grow on and seed. Cutting stimulates flowering but too often reduces its benefit to pollinating insects. This picture illustrates the benefit of having shorter swards as well as allowing other areas to grow longer.



Photo 8: Again the benefits of having mixed cutting regimes are illustrated here with variable lengths of medium to longer swards. Such cutting extends the flowering season so therefore particularly beneficial for insects both for feeding and cover.



Photo 9: Common knapweed is locally frequent to occasional in the graveyard. It is very important nectar source sought out by many insects but particularly bumblebees.



Photo 10: Looking like a traditional hay meadow at the end of June ox-eye daisies are fading and both ribwort and hoary plantain have gone to seed in this uncut area. Common knapweed and rough hawkbit are still flowering well.



Photo 11: Rough hawkbit is frequent and locally abundant, in the foreground here making up a significant amount of the flowering display. It is a very important pollen and nectar source visited by many species of insects.



Photo 12: At the front of the church when cutting is eased many species will flower. The sward here is as rich as the main graveyard full of herbs including the white flowered burnet saxifrage flowering in the middle of the picture.



Photo 14: The base of the church and between gravestones and slabs the flora is again rich with abundant ladies bedstraw, rough hawkbit, bird's-foot trefoil, red clover and plantain species as well as occasional salad burnet.



Photo 15: In Spring on the steeply sloping north facing bank in the main graveyard sedges are more obvious with glaucous and Spring sedge flowering here.



Photo 16: Ivy is an important wildlife plant providing invaluable late nectar for many insects particularly late flying bees and hoverflies. Dense growth like this in the graveyard also providing nesting cover for a pair of robins in 2019.



Photo 17: Walls and other hard surfaces are important habitats for specialists that can survive this harsh environment. Wall rue a small fern is common in the graveyard and many species of lichens are found on the stone surfaces.

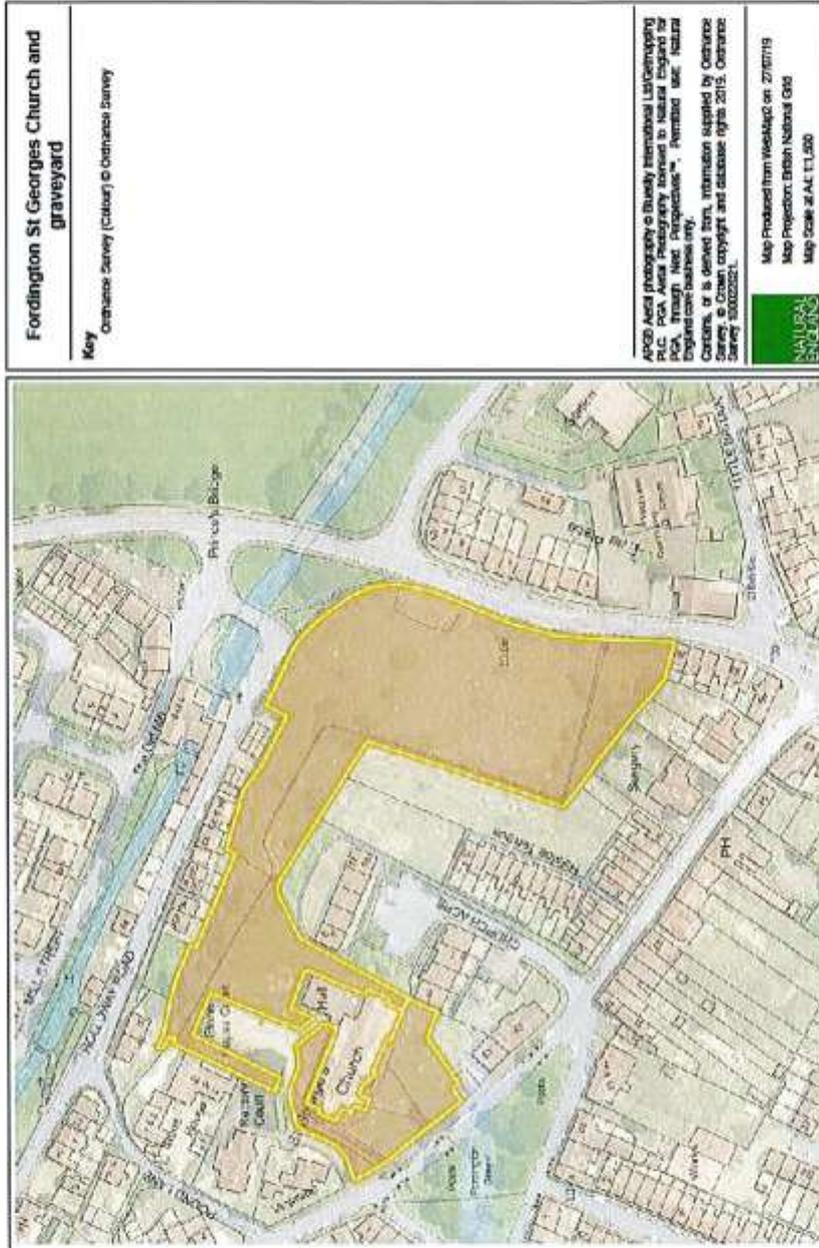


Photo 18: Walls are important for mosses such as this Silky wall feather moss *Homalothecium sericeum*.



Photo 2: Red valerian is a non-native plant that thrives amongst the graves. Until 2019 it had been largely cut. It is highly sought after by moths and some butterflies and is worth allowing this species to flower.

Appendix 2. Map of the grounds.



Appendix 3: Plant list and relative abundance from Fordington St George's Church and graveyard.	
Latin name	English name
<i>Arrhenatherum elatius</i>	False oat-grass (A)
<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>	Cocksfoot (F)
<i>Festuca rubra</i>	Red fescue (F)
<i>Holcus lanatus</i>	Yorkshire fog (F)
<i>Trisetum flavescens</i> ,,	Yellow oat grass (F)
<i>Briza media</i>	Quaking grass (O)
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	Field wood rush (O)
<i>Festuca ovina</i>	Sheep's fescue (O)
<i>Avenula pubescens</i>	Downy oat grass (R)
<i>Carex flacca</i>	Glaucous sedge (F)
<i>Carex caryophylla</i>	Spring sedge (R)
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial rye grass (O)
<i>Centaurea nigra</i>	Common knapweed (O to L/F)
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's bedstraw (F)
<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Rough hawkbit (F)
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot trefoil (A)
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye daisy (F)
<i>Plantago media</i>	Hoary plantain (F)
<i>Pilosella officinarum</i>	Mouse-ear Hawkweed (O to L/F)
<i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	Burnet saxifrage (O)
<i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip (O)
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	Salad burnet (R to L/O)
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort plantain (F)
<i>Taraxacum officinale agg</i>	Dandelion (O)
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander speedwell (O)
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Primrose (O)
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth hawksbeard (O)
<i>Galium mollugo</i>	Hedge bedstraw (O to L/F)
<i>Alchillea vulgaris</i>	Yarrow (F)
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red clover (F)
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White clover (O)
<i>Bellis perennis</i>	Daisy (O)
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Selfheal (O)
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common sorrel (O)
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser trefoil (R)
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping cinquefoil (O)
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Ragwort (O)
<i>Convolvulus arvensis</i>	Field bindweed (O)
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Common sowthistle (O)
<i>Leontodon autumnalis</i>	Autumn hawkbit (R)
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb-Robert (R)
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Wild majoram (R)
<i>Centrathus ruber</i>	Red Valerian (O)
<i>Cirsium acaule</i>	Dwarf thistle (R)
<i>Epilobium montanum</i>	Broad-leaved willowherb (R)
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping buttercup (R)

<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>	Hogweed (R)
<i>Cirsium arvense</i>	Creeping thistle (R)
<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>	Spear thistle (R)
<i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>	Figwort
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i>	Bramble (O)
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Stinging nettle (R)
<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i>	Common bluebell (R)
<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>	Spanish bluebell (R)
<i>Geum urbanum</i>	Wood avens (R)
<i>Arum maculatum</i>	Cuckoo pint (R)
Mosses (grassland species)	
<i>Homalothecium lutescens</i>	Yellow feather-moss (F)
<i>Kinbergia praelonga</i>	Common feather-moss
<i>Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus</i>	Springy turf-moss
<i>Brachythecium rutabulum</i>	Rough stalked feather-moss
Walls, gravestones/graves (with gravel) and hard paths	
<i>Sedum reflexum</i>	Reflexed stonecrop
<i>Asplenium ruta-muraria</i>	Wall rue
<i>Parietaria judacia</i>	Pellitory-of-the wall
<i>Cymbalaria murallis</i>	Ivy-leaved toadflax
<i>Erigeron karvisnkianus</i>	Mexican fleabane
Trees and scrubs including climbers	
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Common yew
<i>Sorbus aria (agg)</i>	Whitebeam
<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>	Sycamore
<i>Acer campestre</i>	Field maple
<i>Hedera ilex</i>	Ivy
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan
<i>Prunus spp</i>	Cherry species (not identified)
<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>	Common ash
<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>	Horse chestnut
<i>Corylus avellana</i>	Hazel
<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>	Holly
<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>	Hawthorn
<i>Buxus sempervirens</i>	Box

Acknowledgements

The main survey was carried out jointly with Lyn Cooch.

A big thankyou to Carl Dallison of Dorchester Town Council who has been an enthusiastic supporter of managing the graveyard for the benefit of wildlife and has coordinated the cutting regime throughout 2019.

References

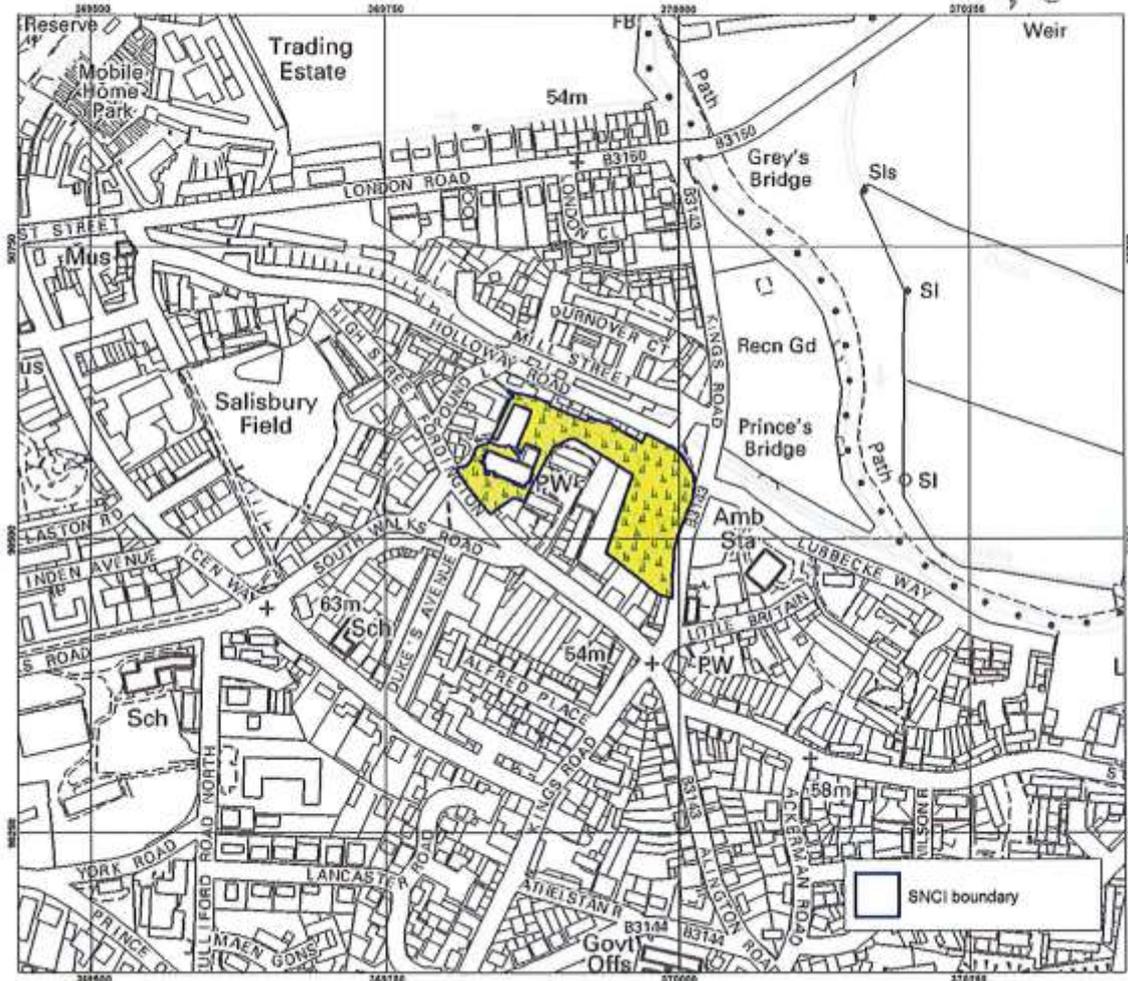
Rodwell, J.S (1992). V.3 British Plant Communities: Grasslands and montane communities. JNCC. Cambridge.



Shorter vegetation on old graves supports some interesting vegetation more typical of chalk downland. One raised grave has a good population of dwarf thistle typically found in species rich calcareous grassland.

<i>Leontodon hispidus</i>	Rough Hawkbit	DN
<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>	Oxeye Daisy	DN
<i>Lolium perenne</i>	Perennial Rye-grass	
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil	DN
<i>Luzula campestris</i>	Field Wood-rush	
<i>Origanum vulgare</i>	Wild Marjoram	DN
<i>Parietaria judaica</i>	Pellitory-of-the-wall	
<i>Pilosella officinarum</i>	Mouse-ear-hawkweed	DN
<i>Pimpinella saxifraga</i>	Burnet-saxifrage	DN
<i>Plantago lanceolata</i>	Ribwort Plantain	
<i>Plantago media</i>	Hoary Plantain	DN
<i>Potentilla reptans</i>	Creeping Cinquefoil	
<i>Primula veris</i>	Cowslip	DN
<i>Primula vulgaris</i>	Primrose	
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Selfheal	
<i>Ranunculus repens</i>	Creeping Buttercup	
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble	
<i>Rumex acetosa</i>	Common Sorrel	
<i>Sambucus nigra</i>	Elder	
<i>Sanguisorba minor</i>	Salad Burnet	
<i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>	Water Figwort	
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common Ragwort	
<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>	Smooth Sow-thistle	
<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>	Rowan	
<i>Taraxacum officinale</i> agg.	Dandelion	
<i>Taxus baccata</i>	Yew	
<i>Trifolium dubium</i>	Lesser Trefoil	
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover	
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover	
<i>Trisetum flavescens</i>	Yellow Oat-grass	DN
<i>Urtica dioica</i>	Common Nettle	
<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>	Germander Speedwell	

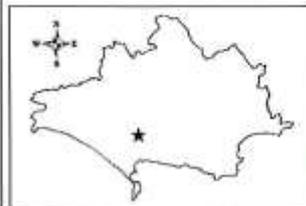
Dorset Environmental Records Centre



Key:					
	Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural		Calcareous grassland - unimproved		Lowland heathland
	Broadleaved woodland - plantation & other		Calcareous grassland - semi-improved		European dry heath
	Mixed woodland		Calcareous grassland - semi-improved - species rich		Wet heath
	Mixed woodland - plantation & other		Calcareous grassland - semi-improved - species poor		Purple moorgrass and rush pasture
	Wet woodland		Lowland meadows & other unimproved neutral grassland		Fens & mires
	Coniferous woodland		Neutral grassland - semi-improved		Open water, running & standing
	Dense scrub		Neutral grassland - semi-improved - species rich		Swamp, reedbeds & marginal vegetation
	Dry acid grassland - unimproved		Neutral grassland - semi-improved - species poor		Other habitats & features
	Dry acid grassland - semi-improved		Improved grassland		Hedges
	Dry acid grassland - semi-improved - species rich		Arable and horticulture		Line of trees
	Dry acid grassland - semi-improved - species poor		Bracken		

Sites of Nature Conservation Interest

Scale 1:5000



Site_number: SY69/045
 Site_name: St George's Churchyard, Fordington
 Grid: SY697905
 Area_ha: 1.13
 Panel_date: 16/09/2019



The SNCI project is administered by the Dorset Wildlife Trust
 Compiled by JC on 12 November 2019
 F:\Map Templates - DO NOT DELETE\sncis_IHS_Habitats wor

© Crown Copyright and database rights 2018
 Ordnance Survey 0100000003. You are permitted to use this data solely to enable you to respond to or interact with the organisation that provided you with the data. You are not permitted to copy, sub-license, distribute or sell any of the data to third parties in any form.



What are the consequences for me?

- If you own an SNCI, this **does not** mean that people will be allowed on to your land without permission. Rights of way will remain unaffected and **no** new rights of access are created as a result of land being an SNCI.
- You will receive a map showing the site boundary, together with a description of why it is important and a list of the species found during the survey.
- You will be entitled to a **free** visit to offer advice on management to help wildlife.
- DWT can also provide assistance with gaining grants for conservation management.
- You will **not** be required to manage the site in any way you do not wish to. This scheme is entirely based on voluntary co-operation and interest.
- You will receive an annual newsletter with articles about wildlife habitat and species, management techniques and lists of useful contacts.



Dorset Wildlife Trust is a charity dedicated to the conservation of wildlife. It manages 43 nature reserves and provides advice to statutory bodies, landowners and private individuals on matters relating to wildlife conservation.

The SNCI project has the support of all local authorities, Natural England and other conservation organisations. It is linked to the Dorset Biodiversity Partnership.

JOIN us today!

Over 25,000 people are members of Dorset Wildlife Trust, and are helping our valuable conservation work. We need you to help us too.

Members benefit from:

- Free entry to our nature reserves.
- A colourful newsletter three times a year.
- A copy of the Natural World magazine three times a year.
- The opportunity to attend DWT events and work parties.
- Children can join the junior club WATCH, and take part in fun activities throughout the year.

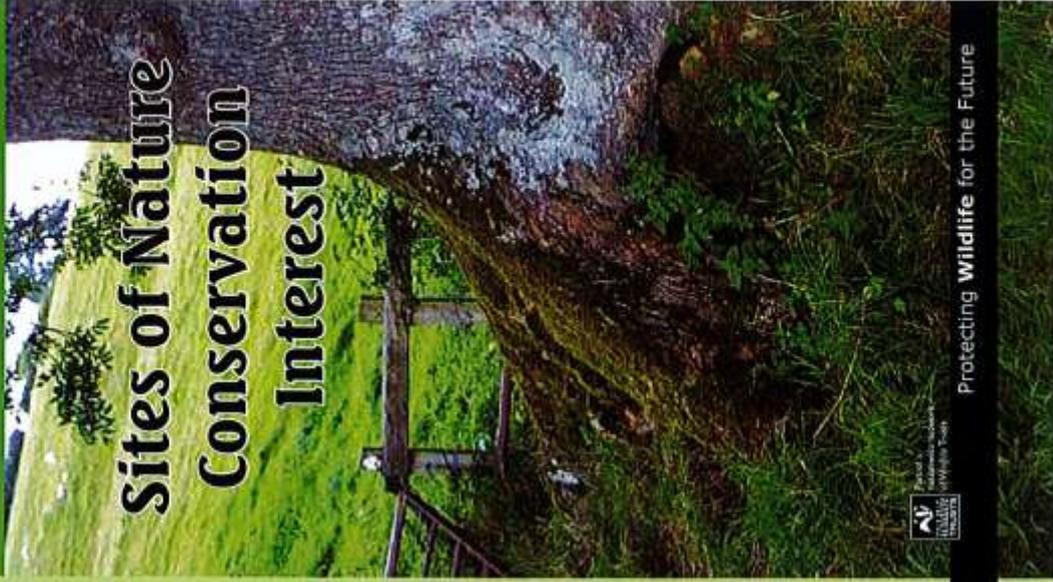
Your Dorset Wildlife Trust contact is:

The SNCI Manager
Dorset Wildlife Trust
Brooklands Farm, Forston,
Dorchester. DT2 7AA
Tel: 01305 264620 Fax: 01305 251120
Email: enquiries@dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk
www.dorsetwildlifetrust.org.uk

6/11 Photos by Tony Bates



Sites of Nature Conservation Interest



Protecting Wildlife for the Future

Registered Charity No. 200222

Sites of Nature

What are Sites of Nature Conservation Interest?

These are places that are considered valuable and important because of their wildlife. In Dorset they are known as Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCIs) - some counties refer to them as **Wildlife Sites**. They have no statutory designation but nevertheless contribute to Dorset's diverse countryside.

The SNCI Project was set up to :

- Collect information on sites in Dorset which are rich in wildlife.
- Help landowners and managers to look after the wildlife of these sites.
- Inform those involved in land-use decision-making of the importance of these sites.

How are sites selected?

Sites are selected by assessing their wildlife importance in a county context using scientific guidelines.

- Each site is considered on the basis of existing data or by a new field survey. Permission is **always** sought to enable surveys to be carried out.
- The selection panel includes representatives of Dorset Wildlife Trust, Dorset Environmental Records Centre, Dorset County Council, Natural England and the Environment Agency.
- Members examine the data against an agreed set of guidelines related to wildlife habitats and species in the county.
- Many of the sites are privately owned and the survey results are sent to owners.

Conservation Interest (SNCIs)

Dorset is a place renowned for its diverse and outstanding wildlife heritage

Land use and decision making

SNCIs do not have the same statutory protection as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), but their wildlife value is recognised by Local Authorities and will be taken into account when applications or proposals would have an effect on them.

Where is the information kept?

Site details are held by Dorset Wildlife Trust (DWT), Dorset Environmental Records Centre (DERC) and a brief summary and map are sent to the Local Authorities for inclusion in Local Plans. DERC is the county's data bank for biological and geological information, and provides information on the distribution of habitats and species throughout the county.

Helping landowners and managers

DWT recognises that farmers and landowners hold the key to ensuring that the remaining pockets of wildlife-rich land continue to be well managed. It is thanks to the past management by farmers that such sites still exist, and continued sympathetic management will mean that their wealth of wildlife will be available for future generations.

DWT is able to help SNCI owners with free advice on both site management and grant aiding opportunities. Assistance with applying for grants can also be provided.

DWT works closely with other organisations concerned with countryside and wildlife.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 11th January 2021

Borough Gardens Rose Garden - Updating report

Background

A suggestion to plant some roses named after Hardy characters somewhere within Borough Gardens was made by Councilor Rory Major. His idea was to use varieties named after Thomas Hardy characters and bred by David Austin roses who are specialist rose breeders. This would link the heritage of both the gardens and more widely Dorchester, with the author. Having only three varieties was a little restricting, confining use to a small rose border/garden type setting, limiting both the potential of the design and increasing the risk of disease, poor vigor etc. if planted in larger numbers.

As a result, a scheme was further developed and expanded to create a new rose garden in the area to the west of the tennis courts formerly laid out to grass (having previously been part of the old bowling green). It was felt the project had great potential to transform the appearance of the entrance to that part of the gardens from the current somewhat utilitarian setting comprising the new tennis courts and nursery areas.

Councillors approved the proposal to create the garden at the Management committee meeting of 9th November 2020.

Design

The design comprises two rectangular borders surrounded by grass and complimented by two donated benches to allow for peaceful reflection, enjoyment of the roses and watching tennis being played.

Initially it was proposed to increase the height and interest in the borders, in each bed by positioning a single central pyramidal frame which will provide support for climbing roses. Once the beds were created however it became clear that a single central obelisk in each would be located in such a way as to obstruct the view from the benches out towards the tennis courts. It was also clear that each bed was sufficiently large to require two obelisks in each rather than the one.

Progress

Works progressed well in late November and December of 2020, with bare root roses arriving promptly after ordering.

The key to successful roses in the main lies in ensuring the soil is sufficiently rich for good root development and growth which in turn leads to drought and pest resistance and a good display of flowers. After initial marking out significant effort was put into cultivating the soil to a good depth and incorporating large quantities of manure. The planting element and hedge line management is now completed.

Work programmed for January will see the creation of seat bays and installation of the seats.

Carl Dallison
Outdoor Services Manager

Initial marking out

The main aim to ensure clean lines to borders and reduce damage to existing grass as much as possible.



Turf stripped and removed



Cultivation

The beds were large enough to justify the use of machinery to dig soil and to incorporate manure. It can be seen that the different coloured sub soil was kept separate and improved before being returned to the lower soil profile.



Additional manure was then added on top and the hedge line taken back and grass seeded.



The beds were then consolidated and raked to a tilth. Adjacent hedge lines were reduced and reprofiled to allow for a formal clipped regime to be implemented to compliment the rose garden.



Roses were spaced and planted incorporating the top-dressed manure and the new obelisks positioned.



DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2021

REVENUE BUDGET 2021/22

1. A draft budget for services provided by this Committee is attached (Appendix 1). Total service costs are £1,009k, £9k higher than the current year.
2. The Municipal Buildings and Culture budgets take account of the transfer of management to Dorchester Arts, which results in a reduction of £47,000 on Municipal Buildings income, £63,000 on Municipal Buildings expenditure, and an annual grant of £16,000 to Dorchester Arts in the Cultural budget; the net impact of these changes is neutral.
3. The contribution to the Municipal Buildings Reserve has been maintained at £178,000. If approved, this will allow the Council to reduce the debt required to fund current refurbishment works, lowering the long term revenue budget.
4. **Special Items** have been included in the Cultural and Twinning budget at £19,000. It is proposed that this is allocated as follows in 2021/22

	£
• War Memorial - refurbishment of South face	7,000
• Playgrounds – replacement of closure mechanisms	3,000
• Pedestrian wayfinding signs refurbishment	3,000
• Office staff relocation to Municipal Buildings	6,000

5. **Earmarked Reserves** expenditure planned for the Committee's services is: -

	£000
Poundbury Cemetery wall repainting and fencing	30
Municipal Buildings refurbishment	245
Great Field – new mowing equipment	20
New Christmas Lights	10
Total	305

In addition to the use of Earmarked Reserves the budget also assumes the Council will take on new debt of up to £890k by March 2022 associated with the Municipal Buildings works.

6. If Appendix 1 is accepted as drafted it will form part of the **Council's overall budget**, which is currently being developed within the following context: -
 - A 0.8% increase in Council Tax will be proposed, to cover inflationary pressures in the overall budget. Coupled with Nil growth in Council Tax Base (0.0%, the first time for many years in Dorchester), this would produce a precept of £1,516k, up £13k (0.8%) from 2020/21
 - Budgets overseen by the Policy Committee will rise from £503k to £507k. This takes account of the introduction of a Tourism Development budget (£30k) and

reduced reliance from income from Dorchester Markets (£10k). offset by adjustments to Reserves contributions (see below)

- Policy Committee will be invited to place £90,000 in a Development Reserve and consider the appointment of a fixed three year post to assist the development and implementation of the Corporate Plan, in particular focusing on Community, Tourism and Environmental partnering opportunities and our external communications
- All of the above results in a balanced budget for 2021/22. The Council will hold £580,000 in its Corporate Projects Reserve and will still be in a position to help manage local service cuts still to be made by Dorset Council, to develop new services or reduce the future level of Council Tax, in line with the Corporate Plan that the Council will adopt in 2021/22
- Council will consider the overall budget strategy on 25 January 2021

7. Taking account of all of the information above it is **RECOMMENDED** that the budget as laid out at Appendix 1 is submitted to the Policy Committee for inclusion within the Council's overall budget for 2021/22

8. Fees and Charges have been revised and are included at Appendix 2. Items to note include: -

- Over the last few years the Council has followed a policy of raising a greater share of the cost of operating Cemeteries from direct users, bringing its fees broadly in line with those charged in Weymouth. Fee increases of between 2 - 5% are proposed
- In line with the strategy set last year, the tennis fee is increased by £5 to £35, but residents will now receive an increased £10 discount, the charge remaining at £25 for Dorchester residents. This is part of a strategy to widen the gap between the resident/non-resident fee over the next few years
- Borough Gardens House charges (as set out in Appendix 2) remain unchanged
- Municipal Buildings charges are not considered at this time and will be set by Dorchester Arts at a future date in line with a policy to be discussed with the Dorchester Arts Task and Finish Group and reported back to the Committee.

Adrian Stuart
Town Clerk

APPENDIX 1

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual £	Budget £	Budget £
PARKS & OPEN SPACES			
Electricity	10,179	5,800 ▼	5,900 ▼
Water	3,524	7,500 ▼	6,500 ▼
Rent	3,588	4,000	4,300
Rates	19,544	20,200 ▼	20,500
Premises Repairs & Maintenance	14,999	18,000	18,000
Other Repairs & Maintenance	59,895	59,000	59,000 ▼
Legal Fees	0	0	0
Highway Trees Partnership	5,000	5,100	5,000
Walks Cleaning Contract	4,542	5,900	6,000
Office Team	54,696	56,455	56,519
Outdoor Services Team	372,682 ▲	382,053	386,051
To Reserves: Play Equipment	10,200	0	0
To Reserves: Parks Premises	37,700	5,100	5,200
Total Expenditure	596,550	569,108	572,970
Tennis	-2,900	-3,200 -	3,200
Football	-816	-1,200 -	1,200
Bowling Alley Walk Wayleave	-632	-600 -	630
Borough Gardens Flat Rental	-6,360	-6,400 -	6,500
Borough Gardens House Hire	-4,527	-4,500 -	4,500
Borough Gardens Kiosk Rental	-1,437	-1,000 -	1,000
Louds Mill Depot Feed in Tariff	-1,105	-1,100 -	1,300
Dorchester Bowls Club Land & Water	-3,285	-5,500 -	5,500
Hanging Baskets, Recharges & Sundry	-3,083	-3,000 -	3,000
Total Income	-24,145	-26,500	-26,830
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	572,405	542,608	546,140
ALLOTMENTS			
Water	2,659	2,100	2,500
Rent	1,119	1,200	1,200
Repairs, Maintenance & Pests	110	400	200
Subscriptions	55	60	60
Office Team	3,574	3,658	3,694
Outdoor Services Team	5,815 ▲	5,976	6,024
Total Expenditure	13,333	13,394	13,678
Rents & Water	-10,304	-10,000	-10,500
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	3,029	3,394	3,178

APPENDIX 1 (cont)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£
MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS			
Salaries	48,015	48,747	49,367
Overtime	6,001	7,000	0
National Insurance	2,868	3,272	2,381
Pensions	12,866	12,264	11,337
Training Courses	0	500	500
Repairs & Maintenance	17,564	19,500	15,900
Materials & Equipment	305	1,200	0
Water	597	700	0
Electricity	10,509	11,500	0
Gas (Bio Gas)	9,125	8,400	0
Rates	24,305	24,800	0
Telephone	963	1,000	0
Performing Rights & Other Licences	2,056	1,000	0
Promotion & Stationery	127	500	0
Office Team	40,002	41,162	41,336
Outdoor Services Team	9,682	10,053	10,029
To Reserves: Municipal Buildings	175,100	176,600	78,000
Total Expenditure	360,085	368,198	208,850
Room Hire	-31,917	- 41,000	0
Bar Franchise & Sundry	-4,074	- 6,000	0
Total Income	-35,991	-47,000	0
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	324,094	321,198	208,850
CEMETERIES			
Electricity	2,740	2,300	2,400
Water, Service Charges & Cesspit	628	600	600
Rates	7,298	7,400	8,500
General Maintenance	5,082	3,500	3,500
Cemetery Grass Cutting	13,625	18,800	18,800
Office Team	25,362	26,061	26,207
Outdoor Services Team	41,748	42,167	42,736
To Reserves: Cemeteries	5,000	15,500	15,800
Total Expenditure	101,483	116,328	118,543
Burial Fees & Chapel	-26,060	- 25,500	-26,000
ERBs, Memorials & Inscriptions	-24,324	- 25,500	-26,000
Total Income	-50,384	-51,000	-52,000
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	51,099	65,328	66,543

APPENDIX 1 (cont)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
	Actual	Budget	Budget
	£	£	£
CULTURAL & TWINNING			
In House Events	1,765	5,200	5,200
Maumbury Rings Bank Holiday Events	16,390	11,900	11,900
Christmas Lighting	4,600	4,700	4,800
Partner Events & Sponsorship	8,335	8,700	8,900
Grants	4,877	3,800	3,900
Special Items	12,000	18,800	19,000
Support for Dorchester Arts	943	-	16,000
Twinning	0	1,000	1,000
Special Items	4,758	0	0
Offices Team	13,421	13,832	13,868
Met by Precept on Taxpayer	67,089	67,932	84,568
OUTDOOR SERVICES TEAM			
Salaries	285,310	275,020	278,401
Overtime	5,809	6,000	6,000
National Insurance	18,588	22,104	22,570
Pensions	44,557	61,824	62,568
Training & Subsistence	2,635	2,000	2,000
Subscriptions	220	400	300
Vehicle/Mower Costs and Repairs	3,733	10,200	10,200
Tools, Equip, H&S, Signs, Servicing	18,853	16,300	16,300
Protective Clothing	2,693	2,400	2,400
Fuel	7,309	7,000	7,000
Cleaning/Bin Liners/Dog Bags	6,465	7,000	7,000
Waste Services	13,409	9,200	9,200
Telephones	1,055	1,600	1,400
Advertising	0	-	0
To Reserves: Vehicles & Equipment	18,800	19,200	19,500
Total Expenditure recharged to Servi	429,436	440,248	444,840
Recharged to			
Parks and Open Spaces	372,682	382,052	386,051
Allotments	5,815	5,976	6,024
Cemeteries	41,256	42,167	42,736
Municipal Buildings	9,682	10,053	10,029
Recharged to Services	429,436	440,248	444,840

APPENDIX 2**CEMETERIES FEES****Interments**

	1 Apr 20	1 Apr 21
a) An infant under 2 years or stillborn	Nil	Nil
b) A person aged 2 years or older	£655	£665
c) A casket of ashes	£180	£185

Scattering of ashes

a) In a previously used plot or in the Poundbury Pavilion chamber	£62	£63
b) In the Garden of Remembrance	£30	£31

Exclusive rights of burial in earthen graves

For an exclusive right for 50 years, including Memorial Rights in an earthen grave:

a) Full Sized Plot	£945	£960
End of term Renewal for 25 years	£800	£815
b) Ashes plots and infant under 2 years	£630	£640
End of term Renewal for 25 years	£490	£500

Additional Interment, Scattering and Exclusive Rights fees will be charged for

- Non-residents – fee doubled. Residence is defined as living in Dorchester or Winterborne Herrington within previous 10 years or previously resident for at least 25 years.
- Non-standard grave sizes – additional fee to be agreed with the Funeral Director

Monuments, gravestones, tablets and monumental inscriptions

Right to erect or place a headstone, footstone, tablet, flat stone, plaque or monument in any other form at any site not subject to Exclusive Right of Burial	£215	£220
Additional inscription on a gravestone or other memorial (for each deceased)	£103	£105

BOROUGH GARDENS COMMUNITY ROOM HIRE FEES

Prices include VAT. Performing Rights Fee may also be payable.	Per Session £	Hourly Rate £	Hourly from 11.00pm £
Voluntary and Community Organisations	50	24	33
Other Non-Commercial or Private Events	63	26	36
Commercial	87	37	62

Session times for the Borough Gardens House are 8.00am – 1.00pm, 1.00pm – 5.00pm and 5.00pm – 11.00pm (on request only).

TENNIS FEES

Annual Membership	£35
Dorchester Resident Discount	- £10

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2021
EXCLUSIVE RIGHT OF BURIAL AND INTERMENTS AND BURIAL OF ASHES

1. To note that grants of Exclusive Right of Burial have been issued for the following grave spaces:

Name	Full Burial/Ashes	Grant No:	Grave Number
Dorchester Cemetery			
Poundbury Cemetery			
ROSEMARY HALLETT	ASHES	3111	C34B
CLARE MCCABE	BURIAL	3112	756
KATHLEEN FAY	BURIAL	3113	757
CAROLINE POPE* CANCELLED	BURIAL	3114	CANCELLED BURIAL
HOWARD PAYTON	ASHES	3115	C126
ANN BELT	BURIAL	3116	784
NICOLA AYLWARD	BURIAL	3117	783
Fordington Cemetery			

1. Since the last meeting of the Committee there has been the following interments, ashes etc. at Dorchester's Cemeteries:-

01.11.2020 - 31.12.2020	Dorchester	Fordington	Poundbury
Interments	-	-	9
Ashes	3	1	7
Garden of Remembrance	-	-	-
Dorchester South Chapel	-	-	-
Poundbury Chamber			-
Children's Plot			-

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2021

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS MONITORING REPORT

1. This report brings Members up to date with the activity in the Municipal Buildings since the last meeting of the Committee.
2. All four Town Hall Keepers are continuing to go to work whilst complying with social distancing and child care responsibilities. There has been a THK at the buildings every day Monday to Friday and occasional weekends.
3. The work being undertaken since the last Committee has focussed on preparing the buildings and in particular, the Corn Exchange, for the roof works. This has involved emptying everything underneath the floor at the apse end, removing the speakers, lights and lighting bars and emptying out the stage and seating store and moving everything upstairs.
4. The scaffolders arrived on site just before Christmas and started work scaffolding the exterior of the building. The interior of the building in the Corn Exchange will also need to be extensively scaffolded so as to form a safety platform from above.



5. The Government has announced a further national lockdown due to Covid-19 – as the Town Hall Keepers cannot work from home they will continue to work but as the work at the buildings has now reduced due to the roof works commencing, they will be starting work on refurbishing other buildings that require attention such as the Borough Gardens House, Maumbury Rings Pavilion, Depot, Weymouth Avenue Chapels.

Steve Newman
Deputy Town Clerk

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2021
MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS MAINTENANCE AND PROJECTS**

Regular Contracts	Contractor	Last Completed	Next Scheduled
Emergency Lighting annual test and service	Andy Whitty	January 2020	January 2021
Boiler Service	New contract: 2016 Benzoni Services Limited	July 2020	July 2021
PAT Testing	DAM Group	November 2019	November 2021/22
Lightning Protection	GNS Steeplejack Ltd	October 2020	October 2021
Emergency Evacuation Chairs service (6 monthly)	Evac + Chair International	July 2020	January 2021
Fire Alarms annual test and service	Andy Whitty	January 2020	January 2021
Stage Units – annual test and service	Cahill Ltd	November 2019	November 2020 - delay until reopen
Service Clock – annual test and service	Smiths of Derby	December 2020	December 2021
Ventilation Clean	Rentokill	February 2020	February 2021
Intruder Alarm	SES	October 2020	October 2021
Lighting Rig Test 3 Part (i) Rigging inspection (ii) Electrical inspection (iii) PAT testing	Stage Solutions	May 2020	May 2021
Lift	Stannah	N/A	Quarterly
Fire Extinguishers	Fire Express Ltd	July 2020	July 2021
Fixed Wire Testing (5 Year)	New contract: 2016 A. Whitty	March 2016	March 2021
Provision of toilet sanitary receptacles and emptying	PHS group Ltd	Weekly	Regular visits
Glass Collection Waste (Bar)	Dorset Waste Partnership	Fortnightly	Fortnightly
Car Park Gates – Annual test and service	Openings	February 2020	February 2021

Recent, current or planned maintenance projects over £1000 or special individual projects requested by Members		
Project	Cost	Progress
New lift	£25,000	Install Scheduled March 2021

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 11 JANUARY 2021

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS – NEW LIFT UPDATE

1. Members will recall that prior to the Covid pandemic it was agreed that the Municipal Buildings lift be replaced with a new lift manufactured by Stannah.
2. Work to install the new lift was delayed due to the pandemic and for the need to design a bespoke supporting bracket for the lift shaft – this work has now been completed.
3. Arrangements have now been made to remove the existing lift with works to commence on this part of the project on 15 January 2021.
4. Once removed the existing lift pit and electric supply will be modified in readiness for the installation of the new lift.
5. The new lift is presently being manufactured and it is anticipated that installation will be undertaken at the start of March 2021. Installation will take no longer than five working days.
6. Members are asked to note this update.

Steve Newman
Deputy Town Clerk