

Pavilion in the Park opens for Coffee

PiP café and community hub opened on The Great Field in April, following a successful fundraising campaign by its new owner/operator, the Alcohol Education Trust, a national charity based in Dorset.



The Town Council funded the toilets attached to the building, one with baby changing and the other with full disabled facilities, and will contribute for their cleaning so that they can be used by all the park's visitors.

Busy from day one, the café is an added reason for clubs and residents to enjoy the Great Field. It is open 9 - 5, Tuesday - Sunday with homemade and local food and drinks. The family and dog friendly space is also a book exchange and exhibits art by the under 25's.

There is also a community hub which seats 16 people. AET wish to welcome groups and clubs to the space and wish to support activities for young and old. Contact lucy@pipspoundbury.com or 01305 259142 for information or to book lunch at the cafe.

Kings Road Trees

As part of the Council's Climate Emergency commitment, over the winter our Outdoor Services Team planted 400 native species trees and 1,300 native whips in the green space at Kings Road, adjacent to the River Frome.

Many of the trees were funded by Dorset County Hospital as tree replacement commitments associated with their project to build a Multi-storey car park at their Williams Avenue site. Dorset Council have also provided funds to replace trees removed as part of their now completed project to improve the Roman Town House at their County Hall site.

Planting will continue in late 2021 and a formal naming of the space to commemorate the response to the Covid epidemic will take place in the new year.

News from the Borough Gardens

A new space has been created at the southern end of the Borough Gardens, adjacent to the tennis courts.

A Rose Garden has been planted by the Parks Team, with fragrant English roses named after authors and literary characters, funded by two local donors.

Benches and paving have been added and surrounding hedges have been reduced to provide a welcome space.

Elsewhere in the Gardens two shield beds will be planted this summer; one to commemorate 100 years of the Royal British Legion, the other as a Thank You to all those involved in the Covid response.

Dorchester West Railway Station Ramp

One of the longest projects on the Town Council's list is finally underway.



Originally conceived over a decade ago, an access ramp is being installed from the northbound platform to ground level at Williams Avenue, to enable disabled and pushchair users to board and alight trains more easily.

The project, managed by Network Rail, received funding from

Dorset Council plus contributions from the Town Council and the Friends of the Station.

War Memorial

The town's War Memorial on South Walks has been the focus of centenary commemorations in recent years and has itself now reached 100 years of age.

It was first unveiled on 24 May 1921, built by local monument mason, Algernon Grassby, with bronze plaques bearing 239 names of the fallen manufactured by George Membury at the Model Brass Foundry in Colliton Street; all installed at a cost of £400.

The Council has recently undertaken renovation works to close some of the joints in the stonework, clean the stone and tidy up the base of the monument.

Dorchester News

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Summer 2021

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Gareth Jones elected as Mayor

At a ceremony in the Borough Gardens in May, Gareth Jones was elected Town Mayor for the next civic year.

First elected in 2011 as a South Ward councillor, he served as Chair of Policy Committee from 2015 to 2019.

Gareth will focus on supporting the town's recovery from the Covid pandemic, particularly how the town's heritage can be used to encourage tourism.

As his charities Gareth has chosen two local groups setting up new services in the town:

- The GAP project, who will use land in Lubbecke Way to provide practical support to improve mental health through growing food and gardening.
- The new Mencap Community Café and Charity Shop, based in Trinity Street, which will provide work place opportunities for people with learning difficulties to develop their independence.

Gareth's wife Anne will accompany him during the year as Mayoress.

Working closely with Dorchester BID we have been developing a new phone app to provide timely, information to our residents and visitors.

The 'Discover Dorchester' App was launched on 24 May during English Tourism Week to promote the town, its heritage, attractions and the town's businesses.

It will help visitors plan their day, as well as providing answers to some of the practical questions they have.

For locals, the app will provide up to date information on events in the town. It will also list all the shops and hospitality providers



across the town, with their latest offers; and will also provide walks and ideas for new places to visit in the town.

The idea for the app grew from discussions between the BID, the Town Council and Poundbury based web specialist, Key Digital, who were developing a product for holiday park customers elsewhere in the country, which they believed could be tailored to Dorchester's needs.

Later this year the partners will also deliver a new website.

The app is available for download from your usual appstore.



Visit our website at www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk

Richard's Thank You to the Community

After 2 years as Mayor, Richard Biggs' final week coincided with test events for the reopening of the Dorset County Museum.

The Museum kindly helped Richard to say thank you to a number of guests who had helped during his time in office, including those involved in different parts of the Covid response, Remembrance Day and Food Banks.

The 36 guests were among the first to see the new galleries created as part of the £16 Million refurbishment, which opened to the public at the end of May, receiving a tour of the building by its volunteers.



Mayor and Mayoress Richard and Carolyn Biggs with guests, enjoying a Covid secure tour of the County Museum.

Mayor's Grants

Once it became obvious that civic activities in 2020 would be curtailed the Mayor allocated his remaining allowance to local community groups whose fundraising would suffer while they continue to incur running costs.

Groups that received a donation included

- Dorchester Youth and Community Centre, for their outreach service supporting young people
- Weldmar, for their "At Home" Appeal, more details of which can be found on their website
- Dorchester Opportunities Group, who provide support to pre-school children with additional needs
- Dorchester Disabled Club, to help keep their minibus running
- Transition Town Dorchester, towards core costs associated with their environmental work in the town
- Dorchester Foodshare, to help with their food parcels service
- The Alcohol Education Trust, to support plans for a summer young people's programme at the Great Field
- Dorchester Arts, to help with their Parkinson's Dance programme

All of these groups would welcome contact from other donors, as well as those who might benefit from the services they offer.

Keep up to date with what's on in the town: listen to your volunteer run, not for profit, community radio station from Dorchester, covering central-southern Dorset. Online at KeepP106.com



Vaccine Volunteers

If 2020 was the year when the community volunteered to help during lockdown, then 2021 has created a different opportunity to serve the community.

Since January 450 hi-viz jacketed volunteers have steered over 20,000 residents from across mid Dorset through The Atrium Centre for their vaccines.

By the end of May 80% of the eligible population had received their first vaccination - with 56% of the population being fully protected!

This amazing community effort has seen staff from all the local GP practices pulling together to provide vaccinators and other clinical support.

So thanks to the volunteers for every one of the 5,885 hours of time donated so far!



Councillor Contacts

Phone and e-mail contact details for Ward councillors for the Town Council and the Dorset Council are available on our website, www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk



Municipal Buildings & Dorchester Arts

Works continue on the £2.5 Million refurbishment of the Corn Exchange and other rooms in the building.

The first full reroofing of the Council Chamber and Corn Exchange since they were built in the mid 1800's is now nearing completion.

Focus has now shifted to the conversion and extension of the rear of the building to provide multifunctional, accessible meeting, dressing room and food preparation space, as well as replacement offices for the Town Council and Dorchester Arts. These works will also enable the installation of a new biomass boiler system, the key part of the Council's Climate Emergency programme, part funded by a grant from Low Carbon Dorset and Government Renewable Heating Incentive payments.

By the end of the summer the Corn Exchange will have been refitted with new lighting, sound and projection, as well as retractable seating to enable the room to provide a 150 seat theatre venue.

After an outdoor season based at Maumbury Rings Dorchester Arts will reopen in late September with a packed autumn programme.

Further works will be carried out to the front of the building in 2023 to open up the space for use by theatre goers and to allow better use for community purposes.

Council Summer Events Programme

Planning for our summer events programme, including for the August Bank Holiday weekend and our Cinema event, is undertaken each year in January.

This year we took the decision that we should not put on large scale free events, both because of the uncertainty associated with Pandemic lockdowns and because of the risk that our free events might result in the spread of any residual virus.

Most of the smaller partner led events in the Borough Gardens are similarly affected. We will, however, be putting on a number of smaller concerts involving local bands from the Borough Gardens Bandstand - see the notice board in the Gardens for more details.

Supporting Citizens Advice

The Citizens Advice in Dorchester has continued to provide free, independent and impartial advice throughout the pandemic and lockdown period.

From the start of the pandemic it became clear that there was a significant increase in demand for Employment Advice and an expert team was put together to meet this need.

When funding for the new team ran out in May the Town Council stepped in to provide a £13,600 grant to enable the service to continue until March 2022. The Council is in discussions regarding longer term support for the service.

Citizens Advice will continue to support residents in the recovery phase as shops and businesses reopen and people return to work; building financial resilience in the months ahead to help maintain housing and budgets.



Central Dorset

See www.westdorsetca.org.uk or call 01305 751514 or 0344 411 1444 for help.

Dorchester Arts At Maumbury Rings

July

Saturday 10 "Macbeth" - The HandleBards 7.00pm

Thursday 29 "The Importance of Being Earnest" Slapstick Picnic 7.00pm

August

Sunday 1 "King Arthur" - The Last Baguette - 2.30pm

Tuesday 10 "She Stoops to Conquer" Rain or Shine - 7.00pm

Saturday 14 "Mr Stink" Heartbreak Productions - 6.00pm

Sunday 15 "Alice in Wonderland" Boxtree Productions - 5.00pm

All events are ticketed, visit www.dorchesterarts.org.uk

