

Dorchester News

Dorchester Town Council
19 North Square Dorchester Dorset DT1 1JF

☎ 01305 266861 📠 01305 266085 ✉ admin@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

Winter 2010-11



Council Tax pegged

Dorchester Town Council has pegged its Council Tax this year, even though, unlike every other body which raises money from the Council Tax, it will not get any Government compensation for doing so.

The Council has carried out an even more thorough review than usual of its spending this year and has identified a number of ways in which money can be saved. They are all small in themselves, and none will affect the levels of service provided but taken together they have enabled the freeze.

One area which is pertinent to the main story is that Dorchester Joint Burial Committee, which has existed since 1927, will cease to operate this year and the Council will assume direct responsibility for the management of Dorchester's three cemeteries.

There will be no noticeable change to the way the cemeteries are run, but doing away with the Joint Committee will mean that our Accounts will be easier and cheaper to produce so we shan't have to spend so much on having them audited.

Cemetery Chapel improves

Dorchester Stitchers came together as a result of the creation of the Dorchester Tapestry which now hangs in the foyer of the Corn Exchange as part of the commemoration of Dorchester's 700th Anniversary as County Town in 2005.

They decided that they had enjoyed the work on the Tapestry so much that they would carry on meeting and producing needlework items for use in public spaces and they have done a number of projects for the Council since, including a new Mayoral cushion and cushions for the Mayor's and Town Clerk's chairs in the Corn Exchange.

Their most recent completed project is a new altar cloth for the South Chapel at Dorchester Cemetery on Weymouth Avenue.

The presentation of the piece marks the final stage in a series of improvements to the Chapel which has seen missing dado panelling restored and the cleaning and polishing of all the oak joinery in the chapel's chancel.

One little-known feature of the Chapel is a particularly fine stained glass window which was created by Christopher Whall, a leading member of the Arts and Crafts Movement. It was installed in 1890 as a memorial to local solicitor Henry Lock who was first Clerk to the former Dorchester Joint Burial Board. More information about the window is available on the 'Downloads' section of our website.

As our pictures show, the altar frontal takes its inspiration for colour from the window. It does not contain any obvious religious imagery, instead using motifs borrowed from nature, because

not all the funerals that take place in the Chapel involve religious elements.

Dorchester Stitchers are at present producing a pair of wall hangings picking up on Dorset's prehistoric remains which are planned to go on the main staircase in the Corn Exchange.



If you would like to be involved in this project, or to find out what else the Stitchers are working on, contact Rosemary Gameson on 01305 265575.



Royal Wedding Celebration

We have a long record of arranging high quality and memorable events to commemorate national and international occasions and we have decided that it is right to celebrate the wedding of HRH Prince William and Kate Middleton on Friday 29 April - not least since Prince William will probably be the next Duke of Cornwall.

Street parties are a traditional way to commemorate royal occasions, and some of you might remember the street party along the length of South Street to mark the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002.

This year we are having a street party with a difference. The event will take place in Maumbury Rings from 10am to 4pm. We shall show the television coverage of the wedding on a big screen for the first part and follow it up with a 'Last Night Of The Proms' style performance by the Dorset County Orchestra complete with union jack waving and communal singing starting at around 2pm.

What better reason to bring your picnic and street party to us?



Heart Town Dorchester

The Town Council has accepted an approach from the British Heart Foundation for Dorchester to be named as one of the first Heart Towns.

The initiative aims to increase awareness of the dangers of heart disease and to encourage people to make sure that they have a healthy lifestyle, exercising and eating wisely.

The initiative will see a range of activities taking place including information and promotional material aimed at schools and employers as well as at the general public.

The Council has committed itself to helping the BHF to achieve its aims where possible and will, for example, help them to identify a Heart Town Walking/Running Route in and around the town centre and allow them to organise an appropriate event in the Borough Gardens during the summer to further the aims of the initiative, including fundraising for Mending Broken Hearts and 'Artie's Olympics' to encourage exercise. (Artie is the BHF's mascot!)

None of this means, of course, that we shall reduce the support which we already give to other local charities. We are pretty good at saying 'yes' when people ask us for help or permission to do something, and the Heart Town initiative is no different.

For more information about the British Heart Foundation and the work it does visit www.bhf.org.uk.



2011 Census

In March all residential households in the UK will be taking part in a census. Since 1801 a day has been chosen every ten years for a census to be held. The census provides information about the population which enables central and local government, health authorities and many other organisations to plan public services for years to come.

This planning needs to be as good as it can possibly be, so it is crucial that the census is as accurate as it can be. Make sure you don't lose the questionnaire envelope when it arrives - even if you decide to complete the questionnaire

on-line you will still need the individual code which will be on the front of it. There is more information, including a wide range of information in alternative formats and the numbers of telephone helplines on the 2011 Census website at www.census.gov.uk.



Shetland Bus

For the last couple of years, home-made wreaths have appeared on the War Memorial during the run-up to Remembrance Day, and this year was no exception.

The photograph shows a wreath made by a resident commemorating a local connection with the Shetland Bus, a tale of heroism from the Second World War when the people of the Shetland Isles worked tirelessly, and at no little risk to themselves, to help and support the people of Norway.

You can find out more about the Shetland Bus at www.shetlandbus.com.



Grit Bins

We provided our first grit bins several years ago now, and most people had forgotten about them until the last couple of years when, as we all know, the winters have been worse than we had become used to. This has sparked off a number of requests for new grit bins which we are unable to satisfy at present but it has caused us to undertake a proper review of the practice with Dorset County Council who have the prime responsibility for gritting highways, including pavements.

Before we provide any more we need to be sure that they can be properly maintained during periods of severe weather. They get emptied very quickly when the first snow falls, and we need to be sure that there are enough resources - and enough grit - to refill them promptly when necessary.

We are involving West Dorset District Council in the discussions as well because the snow just before Christmas highlighted opportunities for us to work together more effectively. We shall report the outcome of these discussions in a future edition of *Dorchester News*.

Council sets its Budget

Dorchester Town Council has set its budget for the next financial year which will see its share of the Council Tax pegged at £158.51 at Band D, and has already said that it aims to the same again in twelve months' time - we know many people are finding times hard now, and there can be no certainty how much better things will be next year.

And that is at Band D, which is the standard way of calculating these things. Most properties in Dorchester fall into a lower band which means that those people pay less, as do people who live on their own, students and those on income support.

The West Dorset District Council collects the Council Tax on our behalf, as they do for themselves, the County Council, the Police and the Fire Service. Of these five bodies the Town Council is the only one which does not get any of its money direct from central government. We have to raise all of the money we need from private residents in Dorchester - we do not even get a share of business rates, although some of the money we spend goes to help businesses. And this year all the rest of the precepting bodies have received money to compensate them for holding the Council Tax unchanged but we have not.

The budget set by the Council means that we can continue to maintain things to a high standard and continue to improve things that could be better. If you would like to know more about how we spend your money and the services we provide get in touch with any member of the Council - their contact details are on the back page, visit our website at www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk, e-mail us on admin@dorchester-tc.gov.uk, write to or visit the Council Offices at 19 North Square, Dorchester DT1 1JF or telephone the Office on 01305 266861.

If you are having difficulty paying your Council Tax, or think you might be entitled to some benefit or reduction which you are not receiving, contact West Dorset District Council on 01305 251010 or by e-mail to revenues@westdorset-dc.gov.uk

Durnovaria Silver Band

This year marks the 75th Anniversary of the Durnovaria Silver Band, and one of the early commemorations will be a concert in the Corn Exchange at 7.30pm on Saturday 2 April. Tickets cost £5 each and will be available from Harmony Music and the Tourist Information Centre in Antelope Walk.

The Band rehearse on Friday evenings at Fordington Methodist Church and are always on the look-out for new members. If you are interested you can find out more on their website, www.durnovaria-silver-band.org.uk.



Gardenshare

Lots of people in Dorchester want an allotment and can't get one, so this seems a good time to remind everyone about the Gardenshare project run by Transition Town Dorchester and its partner organisations.

Gardenshare simply links garden owners who have an unused corner of their garden with local committed gardeners who want a plot of ground to treat as if it were their own garden.

Garden owners benefit because their gardens do not become overgrown. They also get a share of the produce, the chance to link with other Gardenshare owners and the pleasure of seeing a vegetable plot developing.

Gardeners get a secure plot on which to grow whatever they choose, lots of vegetables to eat (or flowers to admire) and the chance to reconnect with the soil, link with other Gardenshare gardeners or learn new gardening skills.

Gardenshare costs just £10 per year for each gardener or garden owner. Gardeners will be able to grow what they like so long as the crop is not illegal or invasive and, of course, so long as the garden owner agrees.

All gardeners are expected to join the South West Allotment Association insurance scheme to cover accidental injury and protect garden owners from any threat of liability if a gardener injures themselves while they are working in someone else's garden. The premium is included in the £10 subscription.

For more information visit www.transitiontowndorchester.org/Projects/Gardenshare/gardenshare.html or e-mail gardenshare@transitiontowndorchester.org.



Members of Dorchester Town Council

East Ward

Mark Allwood 29 South Walks Road DT1 1ED	259991
Tim Harries 9 Brookhouse Street DT1 2GL	07970 653796
Stella Jones Syward Cottage, Syward Road DT1 2AJ	264335
Fiona Kent-Ledger 28 Olga Road DT1 2LX	250253
Tony Lyall 13 St George's Road DT1 1PA	266254

South Ward

Carolyn Biggs 20 Bridport Road DT1 1RS	260156
Susie Hosford 1 Meadow Cottages, Martinstown DT2 9JL	880102
Tess James 70 Monmouth Road DT1 2DG	262359
Robin Potter 22 d'Urberville Close DT1 2JT	264416
Molly Rennie 13 Alington Road DT1 1NS	268572

North Ward

Richard Biggs 20 Bridport Road DT1 1RS	260156
Vicki Black 4 Ashington Street DT1 3GJ	261574
Andy Canning 11 Alfred Road DT1 2DW	261592
Kate Hebditch 8 Friary Hill DT1 1JG	268603
Leslie Phillips 17 West Mills Road DT1 1SP	264030

West Ward

David Barrett 41 Holmead Walk DT1 3GE	259269
Anita Harries 9 Brookhouse Street DT1 2GL	261534
Leonard Heath 1 Maen Gardens, Culliford Road DT1 1PU	757313
Trevor Jones Syward Cottage, Syward Road DT1 2AJ	264335
Peter Mann 13 Beech Court DT1 1PZ	266796

Elections in May

This is the last time you will see the list of Town Councillors as printed in the top half of this page. This isn't because we are going to keep you in the dark about who your councillors are - we aren't! But there will be elections on Thursday 5 May for town and parish councils (including us) and for West Dorset District Council.

If you are interested in offering your services as a councillor but want to know more about what is involved you can contact any of the present councillors whose names appear here or the Town Council Offices.

Properly completed nomination forms will need to be with West Dorset District Council no later than Noon on Monday 4 April. If you are not on the electoral register, or if you want a postal vote for the election, you will need to apply by 5pm on Thursday 14 April.

Internet for the Corn Exchange

More and more users of the various rooms within the Corn Exchange building ask for internet access to make their experience of using it more convenient. By the time you read this we shall have installed a wireless hub which we shall set up as a 'hotspot' which might enable you to use your laptop in Cornhill, although we shan't know whether the signal will get that far until the hub is up and running.

Calling all artists

We have reported in previous editions of *Dorchester News* about the closure of the bowling green in the Borough Gardens following the winding-up of The Gardens Bowling Club and invited comments on what should be done with the space instead.

As regular readers might remember, we have decided to lay out a mini-golf course on it in due course and to convert the Pavilion to additional public toilets. However, we shan't be able to do this for a few years so we have decided that, in the meantime, we shall lay out a putting green on it. The design of the putting green will create spaces where suitable (robust and weather-resistant) works of art can be displayed, either permanently or as part of a changing exhibition. If you are interested in exhibiting your work there let us know - our contact details are on the front page and you can also get in touch through the 'Contact Us' area on our website.



Patrick Walsh's sculpture on the bowling green terrace