



Dorchester Town Council

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8th July 2026

Agenda for the meeting of the **Management Committee** which will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER** at **THE MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, HIGH EAST STREET, DORCHESTER** on **MONDAY 13th JULY 2026** commencing at **7.00pm**.

Steve Newman
Town Clerk

Public Speaking and Attendance at the Meeting

The Chair 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 interests where appropriate. A Member who declares any interest must leave the room. A Member who declares a registerable interest as a Council nominee to a partner organisation may first address the meeting as a member of the public.

Membership of the Committee

Councillors A. Canning, P. Farmer, W. Gibbons, J. Hewitt, S. Jones, F. Kent-Ledger (Vice-Chair), D. Leaper (Chair), R. Major, R. Potter, M. Rennie, D. Taylor and The Mayor ex-officio.

Agenda

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Declaration of Interests**
- 3. Minutes**

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 5th May 2026 (adopted by Council on 19th May 2026). A copy of the Minutes can be found on the [council's website](#).

- 4. Outdoor Services – Update Report – Summer**

To receive the enclosed report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services).

5. Review of Council Grant Scheme

To receive the enclosed report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate).

6. Response to Dorset Council's Consultation on Dog-related Public Space Protection Order

To receive the enclosed report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate).

7. Use of Body-worn Cameras for Park Keepers.

To receive the enclosed report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services).

8. Removal and replacement of play equipment at The Great Field.

To receive the enclosed report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services).

9. Graffiti Issues in Dorchester

To receive the enclosed report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)

10. Mobile phone connectivity in Borough Gardens

To receive the enclosed report from the Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate).

11. Grant Applications

To consider the following applications for financial assistance:

- (a) A request from the Winterborne Valley First School PTA for a grant of £500 towards the cost of play equipment.
- (b) A request from Women of Dorset for a grant of £500 towards the cost of developing and performing *Unearthed*.
- (c) A request from ASCape for a grant of £450 towards the cost of 3 gymnastic sessions for children with special educational needs.
- (d) A request from the Thomas Hardy Society for a grant of £500 towards the cost of the annual conference.

12. Minutes of Property Site Visit

To receive the minutes of the Member Property Site Visit on 2nd June 2026.

13. 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 and burials of ashes 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.

ITEM 4.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 OUTDOOR SERVICES UPDATE REPORT – SUMMER 2026

1. The spring/early summer period saw ongoing maintenance work. This was mainly influenced by increasingly dry conditions which allowed for continued grass cutting operations.
2. **Borough Gardens**
 - 2.1 Main works commenced with removal of winter flowering annual plants. In keeping with the new methodology, a high number of bulbs were planted in the autumn to provide a display and this has been very successful with a bright display of bulbs for over 6 weeks in the gardens which were not affected by the wet winter.
 - 2.2 Work to prepare the beds and plant summer bedding plants is almost complete. This has been delayed by the very dry conditions which have placed a lot of pressure on the team as water supplies lost pressure and some plants succumbed to drought shortly after planting. These plants were replaced by stock kept for such eventualities. The recent heat wave was a significant challenge with many plants being heavily scorched and growth restricted.
 - 2.3 The project to plant young Japanese maple trees in the shrub bed adjacent to the fountain was completed and they are now on an irrigation Rota to ensure they can actively grow in their first year. Low key fencing will be placed around the perimeter of the bed to try to protect the newly planted stock in the coming weeks.
 - 2.4 Some staff, especially park keepers, have been subject to ongoing verbal abuse over the last few weeks. This included anti-social behavior and damage to newly planted displays caused by the individuals concerned. The police are aware, crime reports have been completed, and the situation is under monitoring. See separate report regarding use of body cameras on the management committee agenda for 13/7/2026.
 - 2.5 Cyclical checking of fire detection and electrical wiring has been completed to all relevant facilities within the gardens.
 - 2.6 The gent's kiosk toilet ceiling has had unsightly mold removed and been repainted.
3. **Outdoor Services team**
 - 3.1 The Outdoor Services team have been carrying out maintenance works to ensure facilities are of a good standard. Staff have carried out routine maintenance and repairs in several play areas. The repainting of equipment in Edward Road play area has been completed following the agreement to allocate funding from the play area reserve.
 - 3.2 Works are underway to repair the sections of rusted perimeter fencing around the play area. This is almost complete. Works included removal from site, removal of old paint and rust, repair by welding where necessary, priming and repainting followed by refitting. By doing this the railings have been able to be re-used rather than being scrapped and replaced with new when this wasn't necessary, so reducing waste produced by the council.

- 3.3 Current hot weather conditions are not ideal for grass growth and the team have been very busy undertaking grass cutting operations at all of the councils' sites whilst helping the gardens team plant out and water. The weather has prompted grass to go to seed early but not produce much leaf which is rendering some areas visually untidy. It is anticipated that the team will have cut all areas again by the end of week commencing 13th July. Cutting operations may be reduced after this but the decision will be dependent on prevailing weather conditions.
- 3.4 Water leaks and pressure problems were repaired at Herringston Road allotments and Hawthorn Road allotments.
- 3.5 Problems with toilets and the circulation pump were resolved at Weymouth Avenue Cricket Pavilion.
- 3.6 Hanging baskets have been placed on businesses in partnership with Dorchester Bid, they are also located on the corn exchange and lamp posts in south street. The Depot team will keep these watered through to the end of the summer.

4. Cemeteries

- 4.1 Routine maintenance has continued within the cemeteries including small tree maintenance, litter collection, grass cutting and grave digging. Full burials have again been fewer in number with only 3 over this reporting period whilst ashes interments have remained roughly consistent.
- 4.2 Improvement works to the Poundbury Cemetery toilet building and mess room building are progressing well. Completed works include repairs to the water supply system, internal decoration and renewal of sanitary ware, where required, in the public toilet area. The floors in the workshop area have also been painted to ease cleaning and so reduce dust.
- 4.3 Works in progress currently include the rubbing down and painting of the main entrance gates and the repair of damaged rendered areas around the spoil bay gates.
- 4.4 Replacement of external doors, a window and timber gates to the spoil area are awaiting arrival of materials.

5. Biodiversity

- 5.1 Young tree maintenance in the form of watering has continued across all recently planted areas and will be carried out in the coming weeks unless natural rainfall occurs.
- 5.2 Final pruning and tying work to the first batch of council nursery tree stock has taken place. It is anticipated that the trees will be planted in various town council sites over the coming autumn and winter period. The next generation of stock will be transplanted in the nursery over the coming winter period.
- 5.3 Brushcutting work has been carried out in the riverside nature reserve to try to control Himalayan balsam which is increasingly prolific throughout the site despite the best efforts

of volunteers pulling the plants over the last few years. It is hoped that by preventing plants seeding this year a measure of reduction, next summer, will be achieved.

6. The Great Field

- 6.1 Town Council staff have carried out routine maintenance to the flat turf areas, play equipment and trees on site. Additionally routine litter collection and bin emptying operations have continued. Littering and the filling of some of the bins with domestic waste is being observed and monitored.
- 6.2 Brown tail moth infestations were removed in two separate operations during late March and April, but some still persisted. As a precautionary measure some trees immediately adjacent to the school entrance area were fenced off when further infestations were discovered.
- 6.3 The team were scheduled to re-locate the football goal posts on the main sports area in January/early February. The work was delayed until spring due to the very wet soil conditions. Work will be carried out to re-instate the grass surface in old goal mouths when temperatures and rainfall allow the seed to germinate.

7. Arboriculture

- 7.1 An inspection of the trees located at Maumbury Rings was previously completed and the report received. No immediate concerns were identified. Some work to ensure continued health and good formative growth were suggested along with removal of overextended branches. A conservation area application for the work has been made. Works will be carried out, following Dorset Council agreement. All further Dorchester Town Council sites will be inspected as part of a rolling programme through 2026.

8. Allotments

- 8.1 Works to identify and resolve further water leaks have been carried out at Hawthorn Road and Herringston Road Allotments.

9. Fire at Riverside Nature Reserve

- 9.1 Following dry weather in mid-May there was a fire at the picnic table area within the reserve. The cause is unclear, but damage was significant.



- 9.2 The fire was controlled and extinguished by the fire brigade and town council staff closed the site to public access the following workday.
- 9.3 The council's insurance will cover the cost of replacement and materials were ordered and have been delivered.
- 9.4 It is anticipated that works to replace the decking will commence in mid to late July and will be carried out by the council's own staff. The picnic bench will be rubbed down and repainted. Work will be carried out to some shrubs and undergrowth over the winter to afford a view of the picnic table from the riverside path to enable some casual supervision and viewing which may deter anti-social behavior.
- 9.5 Positive conversations have been held with Wessex Water to allow the works to commence before their works are completed on the riverside sewer improvement project, this has enabled an earlier planned start to the boardwalk repairs.

10. Christmas Lights

- 10.1 Dorchester BID approached officers with an idea and joint funding, to replace some of the Christmas Lighting in the Town Centre. This was very opportune given the failure of some elements last winter. The existing lights are approaching end of confident use life.
- 10.2 Work was carried out jointly with Dorchester BID to replace the cross-street Christmas lighting for South Street, High East Street and High West Street.

- 10.3 Funding was on a like for like basis with the BID, utilising the xmas lights reserve. Due to timings for orders being placed needing to be met, the use of reserves was approved by chairs and vice chairs of both management and policy committees outside of the normal meeting structure.
- 10.4 Quotations were sought to meet procurement requirements and lighting ordered. The BID then agreed to commit to further additional funding for special bespoke panels in High East Street and High West Street which they will order separately.

11. Fordington Cemetery wall

- 11.1 Tenders are currently out with shortlisted contractors., with a return date of 10/7/2026. Due to one contractor withdrawing and another requesting an extension of one week, the date has been changed to 17/7/26 to allow for the maximum number of returns.
- 11.2 If there are any complications or decisions to be made on acceptance of a tender that isn't the lowest, for example, due to the ability to commence the project more quickly so saving scaffold hire costs, then it is hoped that a confidential item can be prepared for Policy Committee to be held on 20th July. With inclusion to Chair and Vice Chair of Management Committee.

Carl Dallison
Assistant Town Clerk, Outdoor Services
Dorchester Town Council

ITEM 5.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 REVIEW OF COUNCIL GRANT SCHEME

1. The Council has operated its community grant scheme for several decades and currently has an annual budget of £10,000. The Council's grants are typically quite small (with a maximum award of £500) and are easy to access, with a simple application form and decisions made every two months. The criteria for the Town Council's community grant scheme are set out in **Appendix A**.
2. This grant scheme fits well within the hierarchy of other local / Dorsetwide grants available for community projects. For example, Dorset Council currently operates a range of groups schemes including the following:
 - Community & Culture Project Fund – offering grants from £1,000 to £5,000 once annually.
 - Capital Leverage Fund – offering grants from £1,000 to £25,000 once annually for capital projects that provide improved cultural or community facilities.
 - Youth Fund – offering grant of £1,000 to £10,000 to support positive activities for young people.
3. The future of the Community & Culture Project Fund and Capital Leverage Fund is under consideration as part of Dorset Council's review of its future funding for the voluntary sector from 2027.
4. In addition to its own community grant scheme, the Town Council now administers the Dorchester Car Boot Grant scheme following the transfer of the markets' operation in April. This scheme offers grants up to a maximum of £1,000 and grants are awarded annually. However, the Car Boot grants are available to support projects taking place within a 6.67 mile radius of Fairfield Market.
5. It is proposed that members undertake a review of the scheme's scope, criteria, administration and promotion in order to ensure that it still best serves the needs of the local community and fits with the Council's corporate priorities.
6. To undertake the review, it is proposed that a member working group is established, comprising up to four members of Management Committee with the aim of reporting back to the Committee in the Autumn.
7. The scope for the review could include a review of the following:
 - criteria – is the current criteria fit for purpose and sufficient clear;
 - application process – is it suitable for small grants;
 - methodology for assessing applications;
 - administration of the scheme;

- promotion of the scheme and encouraging applications.

Recommendations

8. It is recommended that the Committee:
 - a) establishes a working group of up to four members to review the community grant scheme and make recommendations back to a future meeting of Management Committee;
 - b) agrees the scope of the review as proposed in paragraph 7 of this report.

Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)
Dorchester Town Council

APPENDIX A – COMMUNITY GRANT CONDITIONS

1. When making your application:
 - a) Remember the Council will usually only consider requests for specific projects, not on-going or revenue costs. The Council does not grant more than the amount requested and cannot make a determination if an amount is not indicated.
 - b) Grant applications for events/activities that have already taken place will not normally be considered.
 - c) Grant applications for events aimed at raising money for distribution to a wide range of other charities and organisations will not normally be considered.
 - d) £500 is normally the maximum award.
2. A copy of the full accounts of the organisation (if applicable showing all general and special balances) must be sent with the application form.
3. All applications for grant aid must declare any other grants that have been received in connection with the same application.
4. Requests for grant aid will only normally be considered from the following categories:
 - a) A Dorchester-based charity.
 - b) An organisation serving the needs of the residents of Dorchester. This includes but is not limited to groups that support vulnerable people, art/ culture, young people, reducing climate change, sport, heritage, outdoor spaces, health and wellbeing.
 - c) Residents of Dorchester requesting grant aid with a project or event, which will be for the benefit of a wider group.
 - d) A Dorchester-based club, association or organisation serving a specific section of the community, or the community as a whole.
 - e) The Town Council as a body does not affiliate to any political party or religion therefore will not provide grant aid to support any religious group or activity in the town. By law the Town Council cannot offer financial assistance to any political party. An award of a grant must give direct benefit to all or some of the inhabitants, and the size of the grant should be commensurate with the benefit delivered.
5. Applications for grant aid that do not meet the criteria set out in 4 above may be considered in certain circumstances.

ITEM 6.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 RESPONSE TO DORSET COUNCIL'S CONSULTATION ON DOG-RELATED PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER

1. Dorset Council has launched a consultation on the Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) in relation to the control of dogs in public spaces across the county. The current dog-related PSPO expires at the end of 2026 and so a new Order will need to be in place by January 2027.
2. The intention of the PSPO is to address any irresponsible dog ownership so that everyone can enjoy public open spaces and it does so by placing specific restrictions and duties upon dog owners.
3. The purpose of this report is to help formulate the council's response to the consultation with regard to its own open spaces. However, members are free to submit their own, individual responses to the consultation.
4. Here is a link to the consultation, which closes on 7th August 2026: <https://consultation.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/c-e/dog-related-pspo/>
5. The current dog-related PSPO was considered by the Committee at its meeting in March 2023 (<https://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/docs/management/agenda/230717-Agenda-.pdf>) and members supported the proposed provisions and these are reflected in the current PSPO.
6. In general, the provisions that most affect Town Council property are as follows:
 - dogs to be on leads in cemeteries, public gardens and allotments and within 5m of marked sports pitches;
 - dogs should be excluded entirely from certain public areas include enclosed play areas, skate parks and enclosed sports facilities;
 - dogs only excluded from marked sports pitches on a seasonal basis when the pitches area in use.
7. It should be noted that enforcement of the above restrictions can currently only be undertaken by trained officers of Dorset Council.
8. Initial consultation with members has prompted the following proposal for the committee to consider:
 - a) Cllr Gibbons initially suggested that the area of The Great Field to the south/west of the Pavilion / play area could be designated as 'dogs on lead' at all times. Although this may result in a reduction in dog fouling and prevent uncontrolled dogs from causing a nuisance to children and the vulnerable, it would be near impossible to

enforce and the current 'dogs permitted off lead' regime is long-established. Cllr Gibbons is not, therefore, suggesting any such changes to the PSPO.

- b) A local resident in Poundbury submitted comments to Cllr Gibbons proposing that in some of the small green areas in Poundbury (Duke of Edinburgh Gardens, Coade Square Green and Hayward Green) dogs should not be allowed at all. To achieve this, the Duke of Edinburgh Gardens would need to be fenced in the same way as the other two suggested sites. This suggestion has been shared with the Duchy of Cornwall, that owns and manages all these sites, but is not supported by the Duchy.
9. To date, no other proposals for amendments to the current PSPO provisions have been suggested by members apart from a desire to see the existing restrictions properly enforced.
10. **Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Committee responds to Dorset Council's consultation on the Dog-related Public Space Protection Order for 2027 onwards by expressing its support for retaining the current restrictions on open spaces and outdoor facilities in Dorchester.

Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)
Dorchester Town Council

ITEM 7

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 USE OF BODY-WORN CAMERAS AT BOROUGH GARDENS

For Decision.

1. Background

- 1.1 From time to time an individual or group of individuals have caused anti-social behaviour, criminal damage, nuisance or made threats/abused park keeping staff in Borough Gardens.
- 1.2 These occurrences are infrequent but have had an impact on both the enjoyment of the gardens by others and the staff involved.
- 1.3 Problems tend to occur during non-peak hours in the gardens, usually weekday evenings and weekends. This means that this disproportionately impacts on the staff undertaking park keeping duties.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 Problems with a group of teenage individuals have been experienced in the gardens since the start of June 2026.
- 2.2 Incidents have included verbal abuse to the park keeper, vandalism, criminal damage to one the councils' vehicles and ripping out of flowers newly planted that day.
- 2.3 The park keeper has been called many rude names, had their hat knocked off their head and being called a paedophile which is clearly distressing to the individual concerned.
- 2.4 The incidents have been formally reported to the police and the PCSO officer for the area is aware and trying to provide support.
- 2.5 A report was completed W/E 03/07/2026 to enable the police to visit the teenagers involved and formally talk to them about their behaviours and actions.
- 2.6 Video has been taken by members of staff and the public which enables identification of some of the individuals involved.
- 2.7 Lone working risk assessments and safe working procedures were reviewed and re-issued to all staff at the gardens.
- 2.8 Staff are instructed that once a reasonable approach has been met with excessive behaviour they are to disengage and seek refuge in the park keeper's office or Borough Gardens House. They have both shop radio connection and a mobile phone and their instructions are to call the police when behaviours become such that the park keeper feels threatened.

- 2.9 This is the second incidence where police involvement has been required in the last 10 years. Most problems self-resolve relatively quickly.
- 2.10 Staff currently use the video facility on the work mobile phone supplied to record any inappropriate activity.
- 2.11 Staff have phone numbers to request assistance from colleagues. This has occurred in the recent incident.

3. Options

3.1 The council requests officers to develop a Body Cam procedure/policy with a view to implementation.

- 3.1.1 Before body worn video cameras (BWVC) can be used in the gardens there is a need to develop a policy on how and when they could be used. This is a basic level requirement to comply with various pieces of legislation relevant to their use.
- 3.1.2 Officers would seek advice from other local authorities who may already use these systems.
- 3.1.3 Officers would then report back to councillors on the policy, seeking approval and funding to invest in the necessary equipment, technology and staff training.

Positive aspects:

- The council would comply with its responsibilities under the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act.
- Staff would potentially be further re-assured.
- Film may help police with identification and potential conviction of offenders.
- The potential to reduce occurrences.
- There is the potential to raise the quality of the visitor experience in the gardens and reduce potential complaints.

Negative aspects:

- The use of BWVC, is regulated by various pieces of legislation and requirements are placed upon the authority to both manage information and operate the equipment. Mainly based around managing and securing personal data under the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA) and The Human Rights Act 1998. (HRA)
- The HRA requirement is for the use of this equipment to be in such a manner so as to be proportionate, legitimate, necessary and justifiable, and two incidents in 10 years may not be sufficiently frequent to meet that.
- Members of the public may be put off by the signage informing that (BWVC) equipment is in use in the gardens, potentially increasing the fear of crime unnecessarily.
- There would be a financial cost to implementing the system and managing the data stored.

- There is a risk that the use of cameras may encourage staff not to seek refuge and to try to remonstrate with the individuals.

3.2 The council accepts the steps already taken along with additional conflict management training are sufficient.

- 3.2.1 The council currently has a lone worker risk assessment framework including various mitigations such as shop radio network, staff mobile phones, provision of a safe refuge.
- 3.2.2 The council has a safe working practice and procedure for lone workers in the Gardens reviewed in 2026.
- 3.2.3 The mobile phone supplied has a video/audio function which staff have used.
- 3.2.4 Additional training for staff in conflict management would be provided which would be across the entire Gardens team.

Positive aspects:

- The council would comply with its responsibilities under the 1974 Health and Safety at Work Act.
- The staff are familiar with the procedures and protocols in place.
- There is no need for additional staff training in the use of BMVC
- There would be no public signage which could cause fear of crime in some people.
- This could help staff feel they are supported.
- Reduced financial impact, the only cost being that of conflict management training.
- Staff would gain confidence from conflict training which would be across the entire gardens team.

Negative aspects:

- There would be no additional deterrence which could occur due to the use of signage and use of BWVC.

Carl Dallison
Assistant Town Clerk, Outdoor Services
Dorchester Town Council

ITEM 8

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 THE GREAT FIELD PLAY AREA WATER FEATURE - FUTURE OPTIONS

For Decision.

1. Background

- 1.1 As part of the development and provision of the play area at The Great Field by the Duchy of Cornwall, a water feature was installed in the play area.
- 1.2 During its first summer of operation, problems were experienced with the small gravel (pebbles) used as safety surfacing under many other items of play equipment and loose material from the gravel paths, being put into the feature by children playing on it.
- 1.3 This resulted in a large muddy pool full of gravel appearing at the lower end of the water rill where the drain was located, due to the drain being blocked by this material. Several complaints were made about this to the council. The council's team did attend on several occasions to remove the blockage, simply for it to return shortly afterward.
- 1.4 The following winter the Duchy of Cornwall installed a larger sediment trap to enable debris to be trapped and removed before it blocked the main water drain. Initially this helped slightly. The water supply was then turned off due to a fault with the online drinking fountain.
- 1.5 The water remained turned off until earlier this year (2026) when the supply was turned on again.

2. Current Position

- 2.1 During the winter months the system is drained down and the feature is not in use.
- 2.2 When the supply was reinstated the heras safety fencing was removed and the feature awaited commissioning for the summer as it would normally.
- 2.3 During this time a young child received facial injuries as a result of tripping on the stones that are set into the concrete structure.
- 2.4 With this in mind, the design was reviewed by the ATCOS with a view to establishing if the design played a part in the accident and could it be changed to improve the situation and reduce risk of re-occurrence, as the council, as owners, are required to do.
- 2.4 The design comprises an elevated concrete water rill running from a pump down to a collection area and drain. Set into the surrounding concrete at close spacing are pieces of rock sitting very proud of the main concrete surface.
- 2.5 Given the design it can be said that a similar trip or fall will occur again in the future.

- 2.6 The feature is in the zone of the play area intended, informally, for younger children to play.
- 2.7 The fact that it is a water feature will make it more likely that children wearing lighter summer clothes or swimming type clothing will use it to take advantage of the water that it offers. This in turn is likely to increase the degree of any slip, trip or fall injury, due to more bare skin being exposed.
- 2.8 The problem with collection of dirty water in the feature is likely to continue into the future. It can be said that the pebble safety surfacing and bound golden gravel in the path network will mean this problem will not abate.
- 2.9 Removal of the stone protrusions down to flush with the concrete, to remove the trip hazard, will be difficult to achieve and will result in a smooth surface that once wet will become slippery.

3. Options

3.1 **Option 1: The council cleans and primes the feature for use again and undertakes no modifications to it.**

- This could potentially lead the council to receive injury claims in the future and have to defend not acting on a previous accident in a way so as to try to prevent or mitigate a further injury that was foreseeable.
- There is little cost to this option other than staff time to carry out priming and cleaning works.

3.2 **Option 2: The council reduces the height of the stones embedded in the concrete and then returns the feature to use.**

- This would resolve the immediate problem of trip hazards and the concrete structure but could lead to slips and falls due to a smoother surface.
- There is a risk that after the works are completed the council's external play inspector may identify the slip risk as significant and requiring attention, the only likely option then to be removal.
- There is an estimated limited (less than £2,500) cost to this option.

3.3 **Option 3: The council removes the feature and replaces it with other play equipment.**

- The risk to the council in both financial and reputational terms is removed.
- This offers the opportunity to locate new equipment in that part of the play area and to rationalise provision to increase play value. This would be further enhanced if it were to feature items of inclusive play equipment to compliment the signing board located nearby and would meet a shortfall in such inclusive equipment elsewhere on the site.
- The Duchy of Cornwall whilst expressing disappointment, raise no objection to the removal of the equipment.

- There would be a higher cost to this option, members to decide a project spend limit.

4. Recommendation

It is recommended that the Council pursues **Option 3** by removing the existing and instructing officers to draw up new plans for replacement with new inclusive play equipment for approval by Management Committee. This element to be funded using the Play Equipment Reserve. This would remove the risk associated with the current water feature and also meet a social need that has previously been identified.

Carl Dallison
Assistant Town Clerk, Outdoor Services
Dorchester Town Council

ITEM 9.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 GRAFFITI ISSUES IN DORCHESTER

1. Members have expressed concern about the number of instances of graffiti in Dorchester and are keen for the Town Council to play its part in helping to address the problem. This report explores ways in which the Council can help combat this issue.
2. It would appear to officers that instances of unauthorized graffiti in Dorchester have increased over the last year although there is no definitive evidence to support this perception. Recently there have been instances of graffiti (spray painted offensive images) on Town Council property, including some trees, and these are removed as soon as the council is aware.
3. Reporting instances of graffiti:
 - **Dorset Police** – if graffiti is offensive it could be a crime and can be reported via: <https://www.dorset.police.uk/contact/af/contact-us-beta/contact-us/report-crime-incident-suspicion/report-vandalism-graffiti/>
 - **Dorset Council** – depending on location but mainly on street furniture, bus stops and road signs – report to the Street Cleaning team via: <https://dorset-self.achieveservice.com/service/report-vandalism--graffiti-or-fly-posting> . However, Dorset Council is only able to remove graffiti if it is deemed offensive or malicious in nature, which is defined as:
 - Racially offensive and/or hostile to a religious group
 - Sexually offensive
 - Homophobic
 - Depicting a sexual or violent act
 - Defamatory
 - **Dorchester Town Council** – where it occurs on council property (e.g. skate park, play areas, parks).
 - **Network Rail** – on railway bridges: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/our-work/living-by-the-railway/graffiti-removal/> - however, Network Rail won't take action if the graffiti is judged to be non-offensive and if its removal creates a 'blank canvas' thereby encouraging further vandalism.
 - **South Western Railway** – on Dorchester South Station: customerrelations@swrailway.com
 - **Great Western Railway** – on Dorchester West Station: gwr.feedback@gwr.com
 - **Telecoms** cabinets (mostly green) – report to Open Reach via <https://www.openreach.com/help-and-support/damage-health-and-safety>

4. **Recommendation.** In order to help combat unwanted (particularly offensive or malicious) graffiti, the Town Council can set out the above information on reporting methods on the council website and via social media and encourage both its staff and the public to report cases of graffiti.

Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)
Dorchester Town Council

ITEM 10

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 MOBILE PHONE CONNECTIVITY IN BOROUGH GARDENS

1. In 2017, the Council agreed to contribute towards Dorchester BID's initiative to provide free WiFi in the town centre and Borough Gardens. To enable the WiFi in the Gardens, it was necessary to install the main router equipment in the basement of Borough Gardens House together with a small 'throwing' device attached to the wall of the building which would connect with a similar device on a pole fixed to the corner of the tennis courts which, in turn, would connect with another device to be installed on a four metre black column to be installed into the shrubs near to the borehole, which would then finally connect to a device located on the top of the kiosk.
2. However, in recent years the WiFi in the Gardens has often not been available due to problems with the BT line service the router in the House. Given the growing number of community and NHS bookings of the downstairs community room in Borough Gardens House, the Council now provides a more reliable via a mobile SIM router provided by Dorset Council and which connects to EE. This solution has proved reliable and so officers are planning on taking the same approach with the Gardens' team office – thereby giving our staff reliable access to the council's network.
3. As a result, the council no longer needs a phone line into the House and no longer relies on the free WiFi for connectivity. It is proposed, therefore, to discontinue council support for free WiFi in the Gardens – a service that has been very unreliable. The BID can remove the WiFi equipment and redeploy it elsewhere in the town centre.
4. However, officers are in discussion with Dorset Council about how to improve mobile connectivity across the whole town centre (4G but hopefully 5G) and 'small cell' technology might be an answer but will probably require significant investment. This option is being explored by Dorset Council and a report will be presented to members in due course if a way forward seems viable.
5. In general, it is likely that the public would rather have fast and reliable mobile connectivity (4G or 5G) in the Gardens and wider town, rather than relying on WiFi.
6. **Recommendation.** It is recommended that the provision of free public WiFi is no longer pursued in Borough Gardens and that the Town Council works with Dorset Council to bring forward options for reliable mobile connectivity.

Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)
Dorchester Town Council

ITEM 11.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 GRANT APPLICATIONS

1. In the current financial year, the Council's small grants budget is £10,500. This budget comprises the agreed annual allocation of £10,000 and the grant of £500 awarded last year to the Dorchester Disabled Club and which has now been relinquished by the Club.
2. The grant scheme is used to support discrete projects which directly benefit the Dorchester community. Grants are typically between £50 and £500.
3. The Committee has already allocated the following grants from the **2026-27** budget:

Organisation	Project	Requested	Awarded
South West Dorset Multi-Cultural Network	One World Festival	£500	£500
Dorchester Daytime Band	Music books and A-board	£305	£305
Kushti Bok	Traditional van hire	£500	£500
Dorchester Youth & Community Centre	Summer family fun day	£450	£350
Total awarded			£1,655
2026-27 budget remaining			£8,345

4. A list of all the grants awarded by Management Committee in previous years can be viewed here: <https://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/Supporting-Our-Community/Town-Council-Grants#gsc.tab=0>
5. The grant application form sets out all the essential criteria that applicants must meet (<https://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk/docs//Grants/Grant-application-form-2025.doc>), however it is worth noting the following key requirements:
 - The Council will usually only consider requests for specific projects, not on-going or revenue costs.
 - Grant applications for events/activities that have already taken place will not normally be considered.
 - Grant applications for events aimed at raising money for distribution to a wide range of other charities and organisations will not normally be considered.
 - The Town Council as a body does not affiliate to any political party or religion therefore will not provide grant aid to support any religious group or activity in the town. By law the Town Council cannot offer financial assistance to any political party.
 - The size of the grant should be commensurate with the benefit delivered.

6. The Committee is requested, therefore, to consider the applications below which have been received since its last meeting.

Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)
Dorchester Town Council

ITEM 11 (a) – Application from Winterbourne Valley First School PTA

1.	Name of organisation. <i>(If your application is successful the grant cheque will be made payable to the name used here.)</i>	Winterbourne Valley First School PTA
2.	Name and address of responsible officer who should be contacted regarding this application.	Name: Sally House Address: Winterbourne Valley First School Winterbourne Abbas Dorchester Dorset Tel: 01305 889 297 (school number) Mobile: 07793682920 Email: volunteers@winterbournevalley.dorset.sch.uk
3.	Address where activities are based.	Winterbourne Valley First School Winterbourne Abbas Dorchester Dorset
4.	What area (community) is served?	The school serves children from Winterbourne Abbas, Winterbourne Steepleton, Martinstown, Little Bready, Dorchester (they take several children who there are not places for in the Dorchester schools) and Compton Vallance
5.	Are there any other similar facilities or services provided in the area/district?	The school has a number of play structures in the playground, but sadly the 'trim-trail' on the field and the play structure on the front playground have both recently been declared unfit and are therefore going to have to be removed. There are no parks or play areas in villages of Winterbourne Abbas or Winterbourne Steepleton (or most of the surrounding villages). There is a park in Martinstown.
6.	How does your organisation / activity benefit the residents of Dorchester	There are a number of pupils in the school who come from Dorchester. Often, when families move to Dorchester and need to find places for their children, they have found in the past that the Dorchester schools are full and unable to accommodate – therefore the pupils end up seeking places at village schools. It will therefore benefit some of the children from Dorchester.

7.	Present charges/ subscription/fees. Please attach schedule if available.	This money will contribute to the £10,285 needed for the new playground equipment (Timber Trail 2 in the quote).
8.	Are there any proposals to change or introduce charges, subscriptions or fees? If so please advise effective dates.	N/A
9.	Details of the project facilities or service to be provided and how they will benefit the community. <i>(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)</i>	The benefitting community is the close-knit group of children and families connected to Winterbourne Valley First School, a small rural school in Winterbourne Abbas just outside Dorchester, Dorset. With only 65 pupils drawn from the surrounding villages and Dorchester, the school serves a mixed rural catchment with limited access to local play facilities. The recent loss of the school's long-standing playground equipment has significantly affected pupils' opportunities for physical activity, outdoor play, and social development. As a small school with limited funding, the community relies heavily on parent volunteers and local supporters, who are actively fundraising to ensure the installation of new equipment that will benefit not only current pupils but also hundreds of children who will attend the school in the years to come. The new playground equipment will significantly enhance the physical, social, and emotional wellbeing of children at Winterbourne Valley First School by providing daily opportunities to build strength, coordination, balance, and gross-motor skills through active play. It will encourage imaginative and cooperative play, helping pupils develop confidence, resilience, and positive peer relationships, while also offering a safe and stimulating outdoor space that supports mental wellbeing and readiness to learn—particularly important for a small rural school with limited indoor space. The equipment will benefit not only the current cohort but also hundreds of children who will attend the school in future years, ensuring long-term value for the community.
10.	How, if the project is	This is not an on-going project. If there is damage to the equipment – the school will fund the fixing of this as they would

	ongoing, will you plan for it to become financially sustainable into the future – donations, charging, grants, other etc.	any equipment in the school.
11.	a) Proposed starting date of project or acquisition date of equipment. b) Estimated completion date.	We aim to raise £10,285 by January 2027 to purchase and install the new equipment.
12.	Please give details of the cost of the project.	Playground equipment - £10,285 To help reduce costs, we will be organising a working party of volunteers to remove the old equipment. Due to safety requirements, the installation of the new equipment will be carried out by a professional company which will be paid for by the school.
13.	Please give details of other grants awarded or applied for.	School Events - Film Night, Disco, Bake Sales, Raffle, Easter Bingo Wider Community Events - Wreath Making, Gingerbread House Decorating, 100 Club, Easter Bingo £2350 (since September) Planned Future Events – Bake Sales, Raffles, Sports Day Sponsored Event (further events to be planned for Autumn 2026) We are anticipating these events will raise £2500 Grants applied and received – The Rotary Club £400 Crowdfunderplatform - we are in communication about match funding for this We are anticipating this will raise £5000 Winterbourne Valley First School play equipment - a Schools crowdfunding project in Dorchester by Winterbourne Valley PTA Grants We are in the processing of reaching out for other funds and hope to raise £2000 from grant. We have reached out to Tesco. parish councils, The Lions Club, The Odd Fellows
14.	Amount of grant requested from Dorchester Town Council.	£500 (but we would be grateful for any amount).
15.	Any other relevant information. <i>(Continue on a</i>	

	<i>separate sheet if necessary.)</i>	
16.	Declaration I/We declare that the information given on this application is true and complete in every respect. I/We understand that the information provided on this application form will be used by the Council to judge whether or not to award a grant and that the information will be available in the public domain. If you have provided any information which you do not wish to be made publicly available please make this known when submitting the application. Signature of Applicant(s) <i>S. House</i> (Sally House) Position Held: Treasurer For and on behalf of Winterbourne Valley First School PTA Date 27.5.26	

ITEM 11 (b) – Application from Women of Dorset

1.	Name of organisation.	Women of Dorset – produced by Stephanie Dale and Dorchester Arts, with Lighthouse Poole
2.	Name and address of responsible officer who should be contacted regarding this application.	Name: Stephanie Dale Address: Dorchester Arts High East Street Dorchester DT11HF Tel: Mark Tattersall 01305266926 Stephanie Dale Email: finance@dorchesterarts.org.uk
3.	Address where activities are based.	Dorchester Arts, Lighthouse Poole and various spaces across the county
4.	What area (community) is served?	Dorset
5.	Are there any other similar facilities or services provided in the area/district?	Yes
6.	How does your organisation / activity benefit the residents of Dorchester	For the past year, we have been working with women over 200 women aged 7-82, researching, workshopping and making UNEARTHED , a stage play about 12 historical women from across the county, performed by 45 women from across Dorset. The play is written by a professional playwright and produced by a professional all women team. The project is enabling women from across the county to take part in the arts, grow in confidence and have access to the county's largest stages – Poole Lighthouse and Dorchester Arts. It is building a community that is intergenerational and together we grow to make something bigger than self. The women are growing in confidence, and the experience will uplift and elevate their confidence and performance skills. We also aim to celebrate the stories of lost women, who made substantial contributions to Dorset.
7.	Present charges/ subscription/fees.	None.
8.	Are there any proposals to change or introduce charges, subscriptions or fees? If so please advise effective dates.	N/A

9.	Details of the project facilities or service to be provided and how they will benefit the community. (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)	This is a grassroots project and we are so proud of what we have achieved so far. We will be performing on the main stages at Lighthouse Poole and Dorchester Arts. Most of the cast were part of the workshop process – please see www.womenofDorset for more information. Jayne Jackson is also documenting the process as part of her PhD on women and empowerment.
10.	How, if the project is ongoing, will you plan for it to become financially sustainable into the future – donations, charging, grants, other etc.	This is a project with performance dates at the end of July. We are currently trying to raise funds for the production.
11.	a) Proposed starting date of project or acquisition date of equipment. b) Estimated completion date.	We have just started rehearsals and the last performance in on Sat 1 August.
12.	Please give details of the cost of the project.	The cost of this project in total has been 20K
13.	Please give details of other grants awarded or applied for.	We have received funds from Maria Bjornson Foundation, Shaftesbury Arts and substantial in kind support from Lighthouse Poole and Dorchester Arts.
14.	Amount of grant requested from Dorchester Town Council.	£500
15.	Any other relevant information.	
16.	Declaration I/We declare that the information given on this application is true and complete in every respect. I/We understand that the information provided on this application form will be used by the Council to judge whether or not to award a grant and that the information will be available in the public domain. If you have provided any information which you do not wish to be made publicly available please make this known when submitting the application. Signature of Applicant(s).....Stephanie Dale..... Position Held.....Producer – with Dorchester Arts..... For and on behalf of.....Women of Dorset..... Date.....26/05/26.....	

ITEM 11 (c) – Application from ASCape

1.	Name of organisation.	ASCape
2.	Name and address of responsible officer who should be contacted regarding this application.	Name: Clare Cameron Address: provided.
3.	Address where activities are based.	Dorchester YMCA, Sawmills Ln, Weymouth Ave, Dorchester DT1 2RZ
4.	What area (community) is served?	Dorchester DT1 and DT2
5.	Are there any other similar facilities or services provided in the area/district?	There are some activities available locally for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN); however, there is currently no equivalent provision that combines movement-based sensory exploration with direct occupational therapy guidance for parents/carers of Autistic children. Occupational Therapist Jennie Boyt currently runs a weekly SEN gymnastics session at Dorchester YMCA on Wednesday evenings. This provision is extremely popular and has a long waiting list, demonstrating clear local demand for sensory-informed movement opportunities. Other organisations, including Diverse Abilities and Artz+Sportz, provide valuable recreational activities for children and adults with SEN at Dorchester YMCA. However, these activities are not specifically designed to identify sensory preferences or equip parents/carers of Autistic children with practical strategies to better support their child's sensory and emotional regulation at home. This pilot project would therefore complement, rather than duplicate, existing provision by addressing a recognised gap in accessible, early sensory support for families of Autistic children.
6.	How does your organisation / activity benefit the residents of Dorchester	ASCape is a charity supporting Autistic and socially anxious children and young people, alongside their families, across West Dorset, including many families living in Dorchester (DT1 and surrounding areas). While ASCape is based in Bridport, our community and beneficiaries extend significantly into Dorchester, where there is no equivalent local organisation offering the same support.

		Many Autistic children experience sensory processing differences, meaning they may be over- or under-sensitive to movement, sound, touch, balance or environmental stimuli. When sensory needs are not understood or supported, children can experience dysregulation, heightened anxiety, emotional distress and behaviours that challenge family life, school attendance and community participation. Families often face significant barriers to accessing occupational therapy support. NHS waiting lists are long and specialist sensory integration support can be difficult to access, while private occupational therapy can be prohibitively expensive. This pilot project would provide Dorchester families with affordable, accessible and proactive support. Through supported movement-based play and professional observation, parents/carers would gain practical advice and strategies to help meet their child's sensory needs at home and in daily life. Earlier understanding and support can improve wellbeing, reduce distress and increase confidence for both children and families. Autism prevalence is increasing, and unmet need is significant, particularly for families awaiting assessment or diagnosis. This project would directly benefit Dorchester residents by providing accessible support in a local community venue.
7.	Present charges/ subscription/fees. Please attach schedule if available.	ASCape does not charge membership fees or subscriptions. We aim to provide support and activities that are either free or low-cost to ensure accessibility for families. Where charges apply to activities, hardship discount codes are available on request so that financial circumstances are not a barrier to participation. The proposed pilot sessions would be offered to participating families for a nominal charge if funding is secured.
8.	Are there any proposals to change or introduce charges, subscriptions or fees? If so please advise effective dates.	No. ASCape relies on grants, fundraising and donations to subsidise or fully fund activities for families. There are currently no proposals to introduce membership fees or subscriptions.

9.	Details of the project facilities or service to be provided and how they will benefit the community. (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)	ASCape proposes to deliver a pilot scheme of three sensory-informed gymnastics sessions during the school holidays at Dorchester YMCA for up to six Autistic children per session and their parent/carer. The children would be from families residing in households with a Dorchester postcode (DT1 or DT2) The sessions will be facilitated by local Occupational Therapist Jennie Boyt, an experienced practitioner specialising in sensory integration and neurodivergent children and young people. (see attached letter) Each 90-minute session will enable children to freely explore gymnastics equipment in a safe and supportive environment, moving according to their individual sensory and physical preferences. Parents/carers will remain responsible for supervision while Jennie observes movement patterns, sensory seeking or avoidance behaviours, and areas of regulation or challenge. Based on these observations, Jennie will provide parents/carers with practical advice and strategies to recreate helpful sensory experiences at home and better support their child's day-to-day regulation and wellbeing. The project has several anticipated community benefits: • Increased understanding among parents/carers of their child's sensory needs • Practical, low-cost strategies families can use at home • Improved emotional regulation and reduced distress for children • Increased confidence and resilience for families • Greater access to specialist support without lengthy NHS waits or high private costs • Improved inclusion and wellbeing for Autistic children in the local community The sessions would take place during school holidays, when access to the YMCA gym is more feasible and when families often report increased pressure due to reduced routine and limited specialist activities. ASCape recognises the importance of collecting feedback to demonstrate the impact and effectiveness of our provision. Parents/carers will be invited to complete a short feedback questionnaire at the end of
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		each session to share their experience, any observed benefits and suggestions for future delivery. We also want to ensure children's voices are captured in an accessible way, so participants will be offered simple emoji postcards to indicate how the session made them feel and the impact it had on them. This feedback will help inform evaluation of the pilot scheme and future funding applications.
10.	How, if the project is ongoing, will you plan for it to become financially sustainable into the future – donations, charging, grants, other etc.	This project is intended as a pilot to test demand, outcomes and family feedback. If successful, ASCape would seek to sustain and expand the project through additional grant funding, charitable trusts, local fundraising and community donations. Potential future funding opportunities may include local grant programmes such as the Dorchester Local Alliance Group (LAG) and other charitable funders supporting children's wellbeing, SEND provision and community mental health. ASCape would also explore partnership working and sponsorship opportunities to maintain affordability and accessibility for local families.
11.	a) Proposed starting date of project or acquisition date of equipment. b) Estimated completion date.	August 2026 (date to be confirmed subject to venue availability and school holiday scheduling). January 2027 (to allow time for delivery, evaluation and reporting on outcomes of the pilot scheme).
12.	Please give details of the cost of the project.	The total cost of the pilot project is £450 for three 90-minute sessions. Breakdown of costs: Dorchester YMCA gym hire £30 per hour × 1.5 hours × 3 sessions = £135 Qualified Occupational Therapist (Jennie Boyt) £70 per hour × 1.5 hours × 3 sessions = £315 Total project cost / grant requested: £450
13.	Please give details of other grants awarded or applied for.	At the time of application, ASCape has not secured alternative funding for this specific pilot project. Dorchester Town Council is being approached as a potential funding partner due to the direct benefit the

		project would provide to Dorchester residents and the use of a local community venue.
14.	Amount of grant requested from Dorchester Town Council.	£450 This amount would fully fund the delivery of three 90-minute occupational therapy-informed sensory gymnastics sessions for Dorchester families during the school holidays.
15.	Any other relevant information. (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)	ASCape recognises a significant unmet need for practical, accessible sensory support for Autistic children and their families in the Dorchester area. This pilot has been intentionally designed as a small-scale, manageable intervention that can be evaluated effectively while reaching families who may otherwise be unable to access occupational therapy support due to cost or NHS waiting times. The project aligns strongly with priorities around community wellbeing, early intervention, inclusion and support for vulnerable children and families. By helping parents better understand and support their child's sensory needs, the project aims to improve outcomes not only for children but for whole families. The proposed delivery partner, Jennie Boyt, is a highly experienced Occupational Therapist with specialist expertise in sensory integration, learning disability, emotional regulation and neurodivergence. Her established SEN gymnastics provision at Dorchester YMCA demonstrates both local demand and her ability to engage this community successfully.
16.	Declaration I/We declare that the information given on this application is true and complete in every respect. I/We understand that the information provided on this application form will be used by the Council to judge whether or not to award a grant and that the information will be available in the public domain. If you have provided any information which you do not wish to be made publicly available please make this known when submitting the application. Signature of Applicant(s)..... Position Held.....Co-Director..... For and on behalf of.....ASCape..... Date.....14/6/2026.....	

ITEM 11 (c) – ASCape – supporting information



jennieboytot@gmail.com

07876167050

Tony Hurley
Dorchester Town Council
TonyHurley@dorchester-tc.gov.uk

25th June 2026

Dear Tony,

Re: Group Occupational Therapy Sessions for ASCape families.

I am an Occupational Therapist (OT) working independently and with Active Play Therapies. I use the YMCA gymnastics hall as my clinic and mostly support families from the DT1 and DT2 postcode areas. I offer therapy interventions to explore and address children's sensory processing needs around their movement, their 5 external senses, and their internal body feedback such as hunger, thirst, temperature. These issues are often linked to the ability to regulate emotions and cope with social demands. This work is often self-funded or funded through the Council's education and health care plan (EHCP). There is a high demand and a long waiting list for my therapy sessions, which means some Dorchester families are not getting timely Occupational Therapy advice and support about their children's sensory processing needs. This is important as it can help both families and schools to better understand the child and improve participation in school and social opportunities. The support I offer is not available on the NHS or from Dorset Council in Dorchester currently and the OT sessions are expensive, usually £135 per hour, due to the rental cost.

I am passionate about families in Dorchester having affordable access to these opportunities in a neuro-affirming, inclusive environment where there will be no judgment around the way a child acts. Therefore, I have worked with Dorchester YMCA to set up Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) gymnastics classes alongside gymnastics coaches, which we call 'Movement Therapy.' The sessions are increasingly popular and we also have a waiting list. I do not have the time to offer OT advice to parents at these sessions. However, through chatting with the parents after sessions, it has become apparent how much families benefit from hearing my thoughts about why their children seek certain activities or act in a certain way. Where I have been able to give advice, this has had a significantly positive impact on homelife and at school. For example, one Dorchester family have set up some swings at home, using a list of affordable equipment I gave them, and their child now has more resilience. This was not the original intention of the Movement Therapy sessions but has been an added bonus. I have a lot of Dorchester families wanting my OT support and expertise, but we are hampered by the barriers of the long waiting list, the high cost, and the fight for statutory funding for OT support.

To address this imbalance, I would like to try a pilot for autistic children and their families in Dorchester, in conjunction with ASCape and Dorchester YMCA. I can offer affordable 1 hour group sessions during school holidays with preferably 4, but no more than 6, children and their families. The parents will take responsibility for the child's safety and well-being at the YMCA gymnastics hall whilst I will observe the children, support their play, and assess in the moment what might be driving the activities they seek, their actions, and their level of regulation (how comfortable and content they feel, or not). I can then chat with parents and offer advice and ideas for them to explore further after the session. During a subsequent session they can report back to me, we can refine our theories, and ultimately I can offer them some practical strategies and ideas to meet sensory and regulation needs in everyday life. I can also signpost them to suitable statutory and non-statutory services in the Dorchester area, and send a summary email with recommendations after the final session.

Whilst this is not a formal assessment and therapy, it will provide a child-led, fun experience and support Dorchester parents on the path to understanding the whole picture around their autistic children's needs. I would really like to trial this model of working and evaluate with ASCape whether it is a useful addition to address the shortfall of statutory services in Dorchester. This will offer more equitable access to evidence based therapeutic professional support, without the high costs of more detailed occupational therapy assessment and intervention.

I would appreciate any support you are able to offer us.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jennie Boyt', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Jennie Boyt

Occupational Therapist (HCPC: OT30111)

Advanced Sensory Integration Practitioner / Dialectical Behaviour Therapist

Copies to:

Clare Cameron, ASCape.

ITEM 11 (d) – Application from the Thomas Hardy Society

1.	Name of organisation.	The Thomas Hardy Society
2.	Name and address of responsible officer who should be contacted regarding this application.	Name: Miranda Woodgate, Secretary Address: Coastland College Kingston Maurward Campus Dorchester Dorset DT2 8PY Tel: Mobile: Email: secretary@hardysociety.org
3.	Address where activities are based.	Dorchester
4.	What area (community) is served?	Dorchester/Dorset/National/International
5.	Are there any other similar facilities or services provided in the area/district?	No
6.	How does your organisation / activity benefit the residents of Dorchester	Provide local knowledge of Thomas Hardy, local traditions, and the Wessex countryside through educational talks, walks and events – warm welcome given to locals/social inclusion
7.	Present charges/ subscription/fees. Please attach schedule if available.	Annual membership packages available £25 single / £32 joint / £15 student or additional if want printed/posted journals (to cover costs) <u>Join the Thomas Hardy Society</u> However, membership is not required to attend events
8.	Are there any proposals to change or introduce charges, subscriptions or fees?	No – prices went up in January 2026 set for 5 years
9.	Details of the project facilities or service to be provided and how they will benefit the community. (Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.)	“Thomas Hardy Week” is our biennial conference – a week long event with lectures, walks, coach tours to Wessex locations associated with Hardy and his works and evening performances. A great opportunity to learn about Dorchester’s most famous son and to explore the local countryside, bringing diverse visitors to the town that will support local eateries and retail outlets. The grant will be put towards the venue hire of the Dorford Centre and marketing collateral to promote the event.

10.	How, if the project is ongoing, will you plan for it to become financially sustainable into the future – donations, charging, grants, other etc.	We do sell tickets to cover costs – the aim is to make the event self-financing. However, we do offer a bursary to subsidise accommodation and travel costs for students/postgraduates to attend and deliver research papers.
11.	a) Proposed starting date of project or acquisition date of equipment. b) Estimated completion date.	The conference runs from Saturday, 25 th July to Saturday, 1 st August 2026
12.	Please give details of the cost of the project.	The conference will cost around £16,000 to deliver – THS is supported by volunteers so no payments are made for staffing the event
13.	Please give details of other grants awarded or applied for.	None
14.	Amount of grant requested from Dorchester Town Council.	£500
15.	Any other relevant information.	
16.	Declaration I/We declare that the information given on this application is true and complete in every respect. I/We understand that the information provided on this application form will be used by the Council to judge whether or not to award a grant and that the information will be available in the public domain. If you have provided any information which you do not wish to be made publicly available please make this known when submitting the application. Signature of Applicant(s).....<i>M Woodgate</i>..... Position Held.....Secretary..... For and on behalf of.....The Thomas Hardy Society.....Date.....17.6.26.....	

ITEM 12.

DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL NOTES OF PROPERTY SITE VISIT ON 2ND JUNE 2026 AT 9.30AM.

Sites visited: Poundbury Cemetery and Fairfield Market.

Attending: Councillors Richard Biggs, Sue Biles, Poppy Farmer, David Leaper, Robin Potter, Kate Reid and Molly Rennie,

Officers attending: Steve Newman (Town Clerk), Carl Dallison, Assistant Town Clerk (Outdoor Services), Tony Hurley, Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate), Daryl Chambers (Markets Officer) and Marc Sweeney (Markets & Communications Officer).

1. Poundbury cemetery

- Members were shown the on-going work to refurbish the toilet and mess room in the cemetery building. The toilet will be available to use when interment ceremonies are taking place.
- Improvements will be made to wooden gates and the soil storage area.
- The provisions in the site lease for the potential expansion of the cemetery southwards in order to meet future demand were discussed.

2. Fairfield Market

- Officers outlined future uses of the site as outlined in the vision document to be presented to the next Markets Panel meeting.
- Options for the refurbishment of the market hall were discussed and the need for investment in the building to make it more attractive, weather-proof and secure.
- The potential future use for the bull ring part of the building and its potential use as a venue for visitor and heritage information was discussed.
- The future use of the Linneys was also discussed – with the North Linneys being in a state of significant disrepair and at risk of imminent collapse, whereas the South Linneys have the potential for re-use as workshops etc.

Meeting closed 11.30pm.

ITEM 13.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE – 13th JULY 2026 EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL, INTERMENTS AND BURIAL OF ASHES

1. Exclusive Right of Burial:

Recommendation: To note that grants of Exclusive Right of Burial have been issued for the following grave spaces in May and June 2026:

Cemetery	Burial/Ashes	Grant No:	Grave Number
Dorchester Cemetery	Ashes	2386	TBA
Poundbury Cemetery	Burial	2387	409A
	Burial	2388	TBA
	Burial	2389	TBA
	Burial	2390	TBA
	Ashes	2391	TBA
Fordington Cemetery	-	-	-

2. Interments: During May and June 2026, the following interments and scattering/burial of ashes have taken place in Dorchester's cemeteries:

1/05/26 – 30/06/26	Dorchester	Fordington	Poundbury
Interments	1	-	2
Ashes	4	1	1
Garden of Remembrance	-	-	-
Poundbury Chamber			1
Children's Plot			-

3. Headstones and Inscriptions:

Recommendation: 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.

Assistant Town Clerk (Corporate)
Dorchester Town Council