



# DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, 19 North Square, Dorchester, Dorset DT1 1JF

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Steve Newman, Town Clerk

17<sup>TH</sup> July 2023

You are invited to a meeting of the **DORCHESTER HERITAGE JOINT COMMITTEE** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS, HIGH EAST STREET, DORCHESTER DT1 1HF** on **TUESDAY 25 JULY 2023** commencing at **7.00pm**.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Newman'.

Town Clerk and Secretary to the Committee

## 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

Dorset Council: R. Biggs, A. Canning, L. Fry, S. Jones and R. Tarr

Dorchester Town Council: S. Biles, A. Chisholm, F. Hogwood, G. Jones and D. Taylor

The following Members may attend and speak but not vote:

Mr B Murphy (Duchy of Cornwall), I. Gosling (Dorchester Civic Society), Vacancy (Dorchester Chamber for Business), M. Woodgate (Dorchester Heritage Magazine), E. Metcalfe (The Keep Military Museum), L. Poulsen (Dorchester Local Nature Reserve), E Selby (Dorset Museum), J Wallis (Blue Badge Tourist Guides) M Rice (Dorchester Association), Maria Gayton or S. Johnson (Dorset History Centre), R. Raine (National Trust (for Max Gate and Hardy's Cottage)), T. Little (Shire Hall), A. Worth (Keep 106 Community Radio), M. Chutter (Thomas Hardy Society).

## AGENDA

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive any apologies for absence.

### 2. MINUTES

To read, confirm and sign the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 18 April 2023 (copy enclosed).

3. **HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY - UPDATE**

To receive the following:

- (a) Update on the work of the Tourism Partnership.
- (b) Funding proposal from Tourism Partnership

4. **HERITAGE OPEN DAY – 10 SEPTEMBER 2023**

To receive a report from the Tourism Development Officer (DTC).

5. **ONGOING PROJECTS:**

To received update reports on the following matters:

- a) Information board at Poundbury
- b) Millstream Paths information boards
- c) Roman mosaic project – The Walks

6. **THOMAS HARDY VICTORIAN FAIR 2023 – EVALUATION REPORT**

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

7. **FUTURE PROJECTS**

To discuss the following potential projects:

- a) Roman baths
- b) Water meadows
- c) Pop-up 'museum' for Dorchester
- d) Henry Moule statue at Salisbury Fields

8. **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2022-23**

9. **QUESTIONS**

To receive questions submitted by Members in writing to the Dorchester Town Clerk and in respect of which the appropriate notice has been given.

12. **URGENT ITEMS**

To consider any other items that the Chairman decides are urgent.

**ITEM 2:**

**DORCHESTER TOWN COUNCIL**

**DORCHESTER JOINT HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**18 APRIL 2023**

At a Meeting of the Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee held on 18 April 2023:

**PRESENT:**

Dorchester Town Council

Councillors: S. Biles  
A. Chisholm  
F. Hogwood  
G. Jones (Chairman)  
D. Taylor

Officers: S. Newman  
M. Manley

Dorset Council

Councillors: A. Canning  
S. Jones

Dorchester Association  
Dorchester Civic Society  
Dorchester Heritage Magazine  
Local Nature Reserve  
Dorset Museum  
Blue Badge Tourist Guide  
Shire Hall Historic Courthouse Museum  
Thomas Hardy Society

M. Rice  
I. Gosling  
M. Woodgate  
L. Poulsen  
E. Selby  
J. Wallis  
N. Corey  
M. Chutter

The Chairman welcomed Nina Corey, the new Director of the Shire Hall Historic Courthouse Museum, to her first meeting of the Committee.

**33. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. Biggs and L. Fry (Dorset Council), R. White (National Trust) and M. Gayton (Dorset History Centre).

**34. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 January 2023, a copy of which had been circulated, were confirmed and signed.

**35. ROMAN BATHS**

Dorset Council's Senior Archaeologist Steve Wallis gave a presentation to the Committee in respect of whether it was possible to uncover the Roman Baths located at the Wollaston Road car park area.

Members felt that opening up the Roman Baths would be a good thing for the town and a real plus for tourism but noted the difficulties and costs associated with such a project. Other options to mark the Baths in some way were discussed. At the very least an information board should be provided in the area. It was noted that a board had been designed but at the time agreement had not been forthcoming from the District Council in respect of installation.

The Committee thanked Steve for an interesting and thought provoking presentation.

#### **RESOLVED**

That further consideration be given to installing the information board that was produced about the Roman Baths at the site.

#### **36. HARNHAM WATER MEADOWS**

The Chairman of the Civic Society reported on a recent trip to Harnham Water Meadows at Salisbury. The site was managed by the Harnham Water Meadows Trust which was established in 1990 with the following aims:

- preserve and reinstate the original irrigation system where possible, -replant hedgerows in what is believed to be their original lines,
- -protect and encourage the growth of wild flora, fauna and birds,
- -carry out controlled "drownings" of approximately 10 acres (4ha) through the channel system, at present three times a year in winter, and
- -organise educational visits, guided walks and demonstrations throughout the year in part by using its headquarters in Rose Cottage, which it has owned since 2006

The representative also reported on what might be able to happen with Dorchester water meadows. The Committee thanked the representative for his presentation and work in respect of Dorchester's water meadows.

#### **37. INFORMATION BOARD AT POUNDBURY**

The Committee had before it a copy of the proposed 'Poundbury's Roman Era Farm' information board which had been amended to take into account the comments made by the Committee at its last meeting. It was noted that discussion was ongoing with the Duchy of Cornwall regarding a suitable location for the board.

#### **RESOLVED**

That the revised information board be agreed.

#### **38. HERITAGE TOURISM STRATEGY**

- (a) Tourism Partnership - Update

The Committee received a progress report from the Tourism Development Officer on the work of the Tourism Partnership with a specific update on the new Tourist Information Point at Shire Hall, Hillforts and Henges Festival 2023 and the Joint Museums Easter event.

**RESOLVED**

That the update be noted.

(b) Dorchester Tourism Partnership – Notes of Meeting

The Committee received the notes of the Tourism Partnership meeting held on 5 April 2023.

**RESOLVED**

That the notes of the Tourism Partnership meeting held on 5 April 2023 be received.

39. MILL STREAM PATH – SECTION FROM LONDON ROAD TO MILL STREET

The Committee considered four draft information boards which had been drafted by Mark Chutter and Miranda Woodgate and which would be installed along the Mill Stream path from London Road to Mill Street.

Members agreed to let Mark or Miranda have any comments on the boards within two weeks.

**RESOLVED**

That, subject to any further comments, the boards be agreed.

40. ROMAN MOSAIC PROJECT – THE WALKS

The Committee heard an update from the Tourism Development Officer. Members were informed of a mosaic still in situ in the Trinity Street / Alexandra Terrace area.

**RESOLVED**

That the update be noted.

41. THOMAS HARDY VICTORIAN FAIR

The Committee was updated on progress with the arrangements for the 2023 Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair. It was noted that a road closure for the event had been submitted and would be approved. Members were pleased with the progress reported.

**RESOLVED**

That the update be noted.

42. **HERITAGE OPEN DAY 10 SEPTEMBER 2023**

Members gave consideration to the format of an event for 2023. The Committee felt that as 2023 was a Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair year the Heritage Open Day event should involve less activity in the street itself. It was noted that a road closure application had been submitted. Members put forward a number of comments and suggestions which included:-

- Include Fordington again
- Hidden heritage
- Open doors – to places that are not usually accessible
- Themed trails and walks
- Wollaston House / Judge Jefferies
- Heritage building trails

**RESOLVED**

That support be given for a scaled down Heritage Open Day on 10 September 2023.

43. **QUESTIONS**

A question had been received from the Dorchester Association as follows:

“Should not the Joint Heritage Committee take a lead in dealing with the increasing problem of Graffiti around the town?”

The current wave of graffiti started around two years ago, when an individual started leaving his mark on street furniture around the town. As this was not removed, it led to others leaving their marks and other daubings. It is still increasing with new participants in evidence. A co-ordinated clear up should be funded in order to improve the heritage environment of the town. The work of the committee to improve our heritage for the benefit of residents and tourists is being undermined by the signs of a creeping inner city malaise as indicated by graffiti.

In response the Chairman confirmed that it was not possible for the Committee to undertake graffiti removal but that any incidents of graffiti should be reported to the appropriate authority or to the Town Council who would either remove or report to the correct body.”

44. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

Chairman.....

## **ITEM 3 (a)**

### **Joint Heritage Committee Update from Dorchester Tourism Partnership**

The last Tourism Partnership Meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2023. It was well attended, and partners indicated that they were pleased with progress and projects. Notes and slide from this meeting can be found at: <https://discoverdorchester.co.uk/business-resources/>

Partners were impressed with Dorchester's First Walking Festival and would like to hold it again next year subject to tender process and a brief being created. The evaluation report for the 2022 Walking Festival can also be found online at: <https://discoverdorchester.co.uk/business-resources/>

The Tourism Partnership received a presentation on the results of the Feeling Towns Project with Southampton University.

There were some interesting comments received from community members about Dorchester's heritage as part of this project. Some recommendations around heritage were made too. Please see the summary of Southampton University's report below and the presentation on this (included in the tourism partnership meeting slides online).

#### **Feeling Towns: Pride and Dorchester**

**University of Southampton – Institute of Arts & Humanities**

#### **Executive Summary**

The Feeling Towns project, in collaboration with officers at Dorchester Town Council, explored the meaning and value of pride, culture, heritage and the environment in Dorchester. Research was undertaken between February and June 2023, when local government and stakeholders sought to understand different strategic visions for the town and its resident communities.

We undertook fieldwork, speaking with approximately 300 people using a variety of research methods, including interviews, fieldwork and facilitated creative workshops. We also undertook desk-based research, placing Dorchester's cultural, heritage and digital strategy within a wider comparative context.

We found that there was much to celebrate and feel proud of in Dorchester: its green spaces, its heritage and heritage assets, its community and workers, and its role as a county town. These were all sources of obvious pride. We found that this was also an active community, with a rich culture and history of volunteering, community engagement and care from the local authority and beyond.

We also noted that it is not immune to the issues facing many small, rural towns: the depletion of the High Street, the retention of young people in skilled work, the lack of housing, and the character of new housing developments. These were all sites of shared, and recurring, concern.

In our fieldwork we noted that change was viewed differently by Dorchester's various communities. We propose that understanding—and communicating across—different views could present change

in very productive ways for the town. We also think that the high levels of community engagement in the town offer rich possibilities for facilitating and creating community-owned narratives and identities.

Most of our specific recommendations support these two overall insights.

We found, for example, that Dorchester saw itself both as a community connected to the wider region and as a small, close-knit town that resisted change. We found that there was a significant concern about a lack of affordable or rented accommodation and a concern about the location and identity of new housing developments. We found that residents want to actively relate to, and feel ownership in, the ways in which Dorchester presents itself—its heritage, its history, its present and future. In our deskwork, by placing Dorchester's strategies into the context of comparable places, we noted that although Dorchester has rich heritage assets, it could do more to develop a community-led digital shopfront, services specifically aimed at young people, techniques of community engagement, and conditions for a vibrant evening economy.

Our central recommendations are to:

- develop a programme of hyper-local, hidden histories in Dorchester to celebrate the different identities and areas of the town so that residents can share new stories for taken-for granted places and that new developments are given a wider context;
- support spaces and opportunities for young people to co-create activities with older generations, particularly focusing on the possibilities of shared skills and interests that the emphasis on sustainable food and fashion suggest;
- enhance community ownership of green spaces, by establishing a series of allotment projects that are accessible to a wide range of groups and celebrate these spaces;
- celebrate the stories and communities of minority groups, with more place-based research undertaken to understand the attachments of minority groups in Dorchester and their contributions to the town;
- design an inclusive communication strategy for a new physical and digital shopfront that celebrates Dorchester's engagement and commitment to place;
- develop a community ownership strategy that builds project development and bidding capacity, placing Dorchester more visibly in national conversations about small towns to understand shared issues and develop specific solutions (e.g. around the future of high streets, young people and skills).



### **ITEM 3 (b): Funding proposal from Tourism Partnership**

The Tourism Partnership would like to propose an allocation from the Heritage Tourism budget for the Heritage Committee's consideration:

- **Overview** – A new annual grant for new cultural (arts, heritage, food and drink) events and experiences in Dorchester.
- **Budget** – Proposal to allocate £5,000 from the Heritage Tourism Funding pot for the first year (would look to review at end of first year and amend for future years.) Fee of £1500 (Five days of our General Manager and Four days of Chief Executive) to Arts Development Company to set up and run the grant.
- **Partners** – Arts Development Company would be commissioned to develop, promote and administer the grant on behalf of the Tourism Partnership. They have experience in developing and delivering grants and feel this grant would be great for the local cultural economy. Representatives from the Tourism Partnership to review the terms and conditions of the grant before launched. Representatives from the Tourism Partnership and Youth Council to sit on grant review panel.
- **Details** - Grants available would be for up to £1,000 each for events and experiences in Dorchester that would attract tourists and be of interest to local residents. The size of grant would depend on the number of people the event or experience would attract. This would be a different type of grant than normal. It would welcome applications for profit making organisations as we would like the events and experiences to be financially sustainable after the initial grant. The grant would be an investment into ongoing activity rather than a grant that subsidises activity. So, central to an application process will be evidence of how these funds will be used to increase the long-term viability of the activity.

**Matilda Manley**  
**Tourism Development Officer**  
**Dorchester Town Council**  
**July 2023**

## ITEM 4:

### Proposal to Heritage Committee for Heritage Open Day 2023

An initial meeting with interested partners was held on 27<sup>th</sup> June 2023 to discuss partnership plans to celebrate this year's Heritage Open Day in Dorchester. The meeting was attended by representatives from:

- Dorchester Town Council
- Keep Military Museum
- Shire Hall Museum
- Dorchester Civic Society
- Dorchester Arts
- Dorset Council Archaeology and Portable Antiquities Team/ Dorset History Centre
- St Peters Church

The following were also invited but were unable to attend:

- Thomas Hardy Society
- Dorset Museum
- Love Poundbury

At this meeting the group discussed dates, scope of activities, roles and responsibilities and marketing.

The following plan was discussed:

- Activities in the town centre would take place on **Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023**. If other partners would like to arrange activities in Poundbury and/or Fordington on other dates then they would be welcome to do so.
- Dorchester Town Council agreed to provide marketing support for any activities run by partners.
- Any events would also be promoted nationally through the Dorset Architectural Heritage Week / National Heritage Open Day websites - Dorchester Town Council would lead on this.
- There would be no need for a road closure on High West Street as this could detract from the activities going on away from the street and limits disabled access to activities the buildings (e.g. museums and St Peter's). Partners would prefer that any money that might be spent establishing the road closure to be spend on marketing instead.
- The Civic Society is happy to provide tours without a road closure.
- There is a need to include in the programme any activities at Dorchester Prison (e.g. tours).

**The key partners proposed to offer the following:**

#### **St Peter's Church**

- Refreshments
- Tours
- William Barnes Society poems

### **Shire Hall Museum**

- Behind scenes tours
- Hidden histories
- Only the Courthouse would be open for free – otherwise entrance charges as normal.

### **The Keep Military Museum**

- The museum will be open for free
- Tours of the roof – timed bookings
- Request that any town-wide trails should include The Keep
- Public access to the library area and store

### **History Centre**

- Offer socials/weekday tours (not open on Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> September)
- Different times/evening tours
- Social media blogs and videos for access
- Supporting people with information
- Portable Antiquities team at Roman Town House with re-enactors on 10<sup>th</sup> September.

### **Civic Society**

- Walking tours –road closure not required.
- Work with The Keep to identify buildings.
- Coordinate public access to private homes and buildings of heritage significance – the following may be approached to take part:
  - Nappers Mite
  - Brewery Square
  - Collition Club
  - South Lodge (on South Walks)
  - Sunninghill School

### **Dorchester Arts**

- Actors assisting with tours around the Municipal Buildings
- Thomas Hardy (performance)
- Performance of the music of Sydney Smith
  - Hidden histories – music
- Present proposals for changes to the ground floor.

### **Next Steps:**

- All partners to confirm details of what they will be offering on 10/9/23.
- Ensure all partners are able to cover public liability.
- Collate a programme of activities to be marketed.
- Register on the national websites.

**Matilda Manley**

**Tourism Development Officer**

**Dorchester Town Council**

**July 2023**

## **ITEM 6:**

### **Report for Joint Heritage Committee – 25<sup>th</sup> July 2023 Feedback from Thomas Hardy Victorian Fair 2023**

Following the successful Fair on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2023, this report has been drafted by Dorchester Town Council with input from Miranda Woodgate (THVF2023 Event Co-ordinator) who was involved in many aspects of planning, organisation and sponsorship for the event.

The report below is structured to reflect the key aspects of the event and is aimed to help with the planning if the Fair is held again in 2025. **Appendix A** of this report sets out the results of surveys that were undertaken by the Event Co-ordinator amongst participants and local businesses.

#### **Performers:**

- The range and quality of the performers throughout the day was of a very high quality and made a significant contribution to the authenticity of the event.
- The traditional craft demonstrations by local craftspeople were excellent in providing authenticity and interest – and showcasing local skills.
- The Victorian Hall in Dorset Museum was an ideal for demonstrating traditional crafts.

#### **Procession:**

- The historical and theatrical nature of the town council procession fitted well into the overall theme of the event and also celebrated the Twinning visit from Lubbecke.

#### **Market stalls:**

- The market stalls were a key element of the event although. Although not strictly linked to the Victorian theme, commercial stalls were needed in order to generate income and provide additional interest to visitors. Stallholders were offered pitches for half-price to dress up in Victorian costume which worked well as 21 out of 31 took advantage of the discount.
- The organization and support from Caroline Richards was invaluable – her recommendations for future events are as follows:
  - Reduce duplication amongst stalls – perhaps too many baked good and sweets and a wholesaler – there are enough Dorset-based bakery stalls to meet our needs.
  - Not have any clothes stall – unless we try vintage or even Steampunk to add something new to the Victorian theme and add a new dimension to the event.
  - An ‘early doors’ booking offer for stallholders at the next event in order to get the best of local producers to buy-in to the event and help with forward planning.
  - Feedback from the traders indicated that they were pleased with the level of sales.

#### **Setting up of event:**

- There needed to be more time to set up the event. An earlier road closure at 8.30am would be ideal and allow at least two hours for set up. There was also a discrepancy between the time of the road closure on the official order (9.30am) and the earlier time of 9.00am on the road signs provided. This issue was highlighted by the Event Co-ordinator.
- The site plan of the market stalls (with coloured zones) needs to clearly show key shops/businesses so that stalls can be placed in the right location by the volunteers – temporary marking on the road surface would be helpful.

#### **Road closure - extent and management:**

- The more limited road closure (only extending eastwards as far as the Church Street traffic lights) worked well and minimised disruption to drivers.
- The need for two-way traffic on Colliton Street to allow cars to access the North Square/Frome Terrace area also seemed to work well but did require marshalling during the set-up of the event in order to guide stallholders to the County Hall car park.
- The County Hall staff car park provided convenient parking for stallholders.
- The northern section of Trinity Street from the road closure to the traffic lights could be better used for the event with stalls or activities.

#### **Use of volunteers:**

- Recruitment of volunteers needs to take place at least one month before the event and for the roles to be clearly defined.
- Volunteers were most needed during the setting up of the event to help with the marshaling of stallholders' vehicles, marshaling road closures, setting up gazebos and moving chairs/tables. After that, a more limited number of volunteers were needed to help distribute programmes to the public and cover rest breaks by the security staff.
- It should be possible to draw up now a timetable with roles and duties for volunteers for any future event.
- The support from the Rotary Club, Dorchester Civic Society and Dorchester Chamber members was particularly welcome.

#### **Facilities for organisers, volunteers & performers:**

- The Magistrates Room in the Municipal Buildings was well-located as a 'HQ' or operations centre for the event organisers but did become crowded when also used as a changing and rest room for performers. In future, it would be preferable to use another space for the performers (e.g. the Corn Exchange) and keep the Magistrates Room for event staff/volunteers.
- If the Municipal Buildings are used again for the next event, then it would be best to have volunteer marshals restrict access to the building to avoid the public entering – or just have some 'no public access' signs on the doors.

#### **Event management**

- The security staff brought in for the event were invaluable in ensuring that the main road closures were effective and provided general reassurance. Similarly, the first aid staff hired for the event were essential.
- Although a WhatsApp group was established with the organisers and volunteers as members, it would have been better to have a radio system to enable better communication between key people.

#### **Funding:**

- The event was funded through a combination of sponsorship, income from the trade stands, and funding from the Dorchester BID and Dorchester Town Council.

#### **Benefits for attractions and businesses:**

- There is some concern that the heritage attractions in the town did not benefit from the event given the amount of free outdoor entertainment and opportunities to spend. However, considerable effort was made to mitigate this by positioning costumed characters at each of the heritage attractions to attraction footfall.

- The support of Shire Hall and the Dorset Museum (with its steam engines and free use of the Victorian Hall) was invaluable to the event.

### **Roles and responsibilities:**

In future, it may be better if there is a clear allocation of roles and responsibilities, although much of the event organization can be undertaken by key partners and town council officers, with volunteer support. However, the procurement of marketing and sponsorship expertise would be invaluable. The key roles would be:

- Co-ordinating marshals and security / first aid – and drafting event management plan and road closure application.
- Creative planning – programming the event activities and liaison with key attractions (e.g. museums).
- Event manager on the day of the event.
- Co-ordination of market stalls – booking/selection and supervision on the day.
- Co-ordination (and booking) of performers.
- Marketing and fundraising.

In terms of volunteers, it's likely that about 12 would be need for the first 3-4 hours (8.00am until 12.00) undertaking the following tasks:

- 2 - Carrying chairs, tables and gazebos to required locations and assist marshaling the performers.
- 3 – Colliton Street and County Hall car park traffic marshalling.
- 2 – helping to ensure all road closure signs are in place – and support security staff.
- 4 – to assist market stalls co-ordinator with the position of stalls.
- 1 – lost children supervisor to assist First Aid staff.

After midday, only 4 volunteers will be required to help during the event and to assist marshal the stallholders during packing up whilst the security staff maintain control of the road closures at either end of High West Street.

### **Conclusion:**

The 2023 Fair was a very successful event for the town with visibly large numbers of visitors throughout the day and many local businesses that were open benefited from the extra footfall. Future planning for the event needs to focus on clear organization and forward planning, the careful 'curation' of the market stalls in order to showcase the best of Dorset, and finding the best way to help the heritage attractions benefit from the extra footfall in the town. Consideration ought to be given to evolving the event further with new aspects such as a vintage market or Steampunk area.

**Assistant Town Clerk  
Dorchester Town Council**

## ITEM 6: APPENDIX A – THVF 2023 Feedback & comments

Feedback forms were sent out by the Event Co-ordinator to performers, traders, volunteers and local businesses. The responses are as follows:

**Performers** - 15 responses were received.

### Summary:

- 93% found communications and instructions to be clear
- 80% said THVF was above average, rating 8.87 out of 10
- 100% said the event was well organised
- 67% now felt more positive about Dorchester
- 82% visited a local café, shop or restaurant

### Comments:

"I suppose the only drawback for me was that as a single operator, I did not have time to go and explore outside, but lots of visitors came to the hall and they gave good feedback about the day."

"An excellent event."

"The event was excellent, very widely advertised before and well sign posted on the day. We were in the Victorian Hall at the Museum and it was very busy for most of the day. I think it helped that people came in to cool off as it was a hot day!"

"Great selection of stalls and activities. Something for everyone."

"Excellent atmosphere which was especially enhanced by those who came dressed in Victorian-style costumes."

"A few more stalls wouldn't go amiss and maybe some fairground rides for children."

"A lovely event, completely unique to Dorchester. Good, appreciative crowds for the Punch and Judy show. The event was well organised and the shows were well programmed."

"Less stalls inside the museum and more along the highstreet. It got a bit cramped inside the museum."

"A thoroughly enjoyable day for all concerned. The pop-up ceilidh was a great way to finish the afternoon. The Magistrate's Room in the Corn Exchange was very useful as a place to keep cases and bags."

**Traders** – 16 responses were received

### Summary:

- 100% found communications and the booking process to be clear
- 70% found set up and parking instructions to be clear
- 63% had an above average trading day, 31% average and 6% below average
- 100% said the event was well organised
- 75% now felt more positive about Dorchester
- 92% visited a local café, shop or restaurant
- Overall rating was 9.1 out of 10

### Comments:

“We enjoyed the displays, entertainment and the many characters present.”

“Arriving at the event and being told where to go was a little confusing but I understand there had been challenges with road closures that may have confused things.”

“It was excellently organised and the volunteers were fantastic!”

“Apart from a delayed start at set up time, which was a little unfortunate, Members of Dorchester Country Market enjoyed a most enjoyable day and were very pleased to be part of the event.”

“The bustling atmosphere and variety of attractions and stalls available to the Public. The way stall holders had, in the main, embraced the Victorian theme of the event. Some lovely costumes and music enjoyed throughout the day.”

“Having complied with the staggered set up timings it was a little frustrating to have been turned away twice and asked to park elsewhere initially but we fully understand the difficulties posed when organising such large events. Our concern was the short period of time left to get unloaded and be properly ready for an 11o'clock start for visitors arriving. Perhaps an earlier start to set up time could be considered at future events.”

“We had a great pitch near the entertainment and the traction engines which suited our merchandise which does not mix well with food!”

“More local producers. Maybe the civic party should show their appreciation of the event but actually visiting the stands not just processing up and down.”

“The whole atmosphere was amazing”

“A very enjoyable event to be part of and well organised. I liked the facilities (having the magistrate building open for toilets etc was very convenient). I liked the parades and maybe next time the mayor's party could be led by the soldiers and possibly the band?”

“Maybe more advertising a lot of local people didn't know it was on or have ever heard of it.”

“It was great to see so many people there, with lots in period dress, which created a lovely atmosphere. The range of stalls, displays and the activities meant that there was plenty for everyone to enjoy.”

“The atmosphere where everybody was clearly having a good day - we got a lot of positive feedback from the public. The setting with all the Georgian buildings was a perfect backdrop to the event. We had a great day!”

“Overall everything was a positive - nothing to dislike!”

“Very well organised, a little more setting up time would be ideal but knew this couldn't be helped due to people arriving late for their pitch. Absolutely loved seeing all the re-enactors and how passionate everyone was about the day.”

“The Victorian vagrants and street sellers were fantastic.”

### **Marshalls/Volunteers** – 6 responses were received

#### **Summary:**

- 50% found communications and instructions to be clear
- 50% found communications and instructions confusing
- 3 thought THVF was above average, 1 average, 2 below average
- 4 considered the event well organised, 1 disagreed, 1 didn't know
- 50% now felt more positive about Dorchester
- 66% visited a local café, shop or restaurant
- Overall rating was 6.83 out of 10
- 5 said they would support THVF again, 1 say maybe, 0 said No



## Comments:

“Enjoyed the day. Managed to speak to good range of attendees.”

“Ensure the stallholder site map is better and more clearly marked with the shops, buildings and house numbers that stalls will be trading outside. It will be easier and more precise for volunteers to interpret so we can allow for a smoother more efficient set up for stallholders.”

“The Victorian Fair proved to be a very appropriate context in which to celebrate and honour the town's most important resident.”

“Close the whole of the High Street to traffic.”

“The organisation of the volunteers seemed chaotic. There was no clear direction given in advance and on the day I was rostered to undertake a much longer shift than I had anticipated. Ultimately it was decided that volunteers were not needed at certain points for so long.

Refreshments were promised but did not arrive on time and were being delivered as we left for our duties. Overall, not very impressed with the organisation of the volunteers. The briefing however was clear and concise although again, with the number of questions that were being asked it seemed that matters were being decided on the hoof.”

“There was no clear line of communication in the event of an issue. When i posted a message on the whatsapp group nobody came to assist. It felt nobody was monitoring the channel. As it was there was not a major issue (just people needing more info about how they could take a vehicle into the closed zone after the shut down time) but had there been an issue I felt there was no back up for the volunteers. I offered to help for a few hours so was horrified to see on the plan I was allocated the whole of the day. This was not what i offered and felt blackmailed into staying longer”

“I felt the stalls and Victorian characters were great and really added to the spirit of the event. I just felt the organization was lacking. I would think twice about volunteering again as did not feel there was the backup”

## **Businesses** – 14 responses were received

### Summary:

- 14 were aware of the event
- 9 via poster/leaflets, 6 from organiser, 5 social media, 3 website, local press, email and word of mouth
- 6 businesses reported a higher turnover, 4 said no, 1 didn't know, 3 didn't open
- 10 wanted more town events, 3 said maybe, 1 didn't know

### Comments:

“It is nice to see the town centre busy and have something different to look at.”

“Community feel...would like to see things for locals too please”

“Don't work with local businesses enough to promote events.”

“Fair should be held on a Saturday when all the shops are open. Always arrange events Monday to Saturday. Give shops free signage for their shop windows advertising events”

“Huge effort put in by all stall holders and some general public- delightful! Shops in lower south street felt a little uninvolved but I did think there were many people passing through the lower end of south street. Crowds thinned out alot after 1400 but also more making their first visit to

the fair after this time. Several families noted to have gone and come back after lunch. Punch and Judy well attended, however very loud for Shire Hall- possibly better placed at closed top end of Trinity street( as a suggestion)."

"Could the schools be a bit more involved somehow? Free parking on the day: reduce daily cost of museums (this also on a general day to day basis as I have had a few complaints about the price of the museums."

## ITEM 8: STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

### Dorchester Joint Heritage Committee

Year ended 31st March 2023

	£	£
<b><u>Income and Expenditure</u></b>		
Contributions in year		
01/04/2022 DTC Contribution to activities	3,000.00	
22/08/2022 Lets Explore	2.50	
14/11/2022 DTC Contribution to events	8,500.00	
25/11/2022 Dorset Council grant for Heritage Open Day	2,000.00	
12/12/2022 Contribution to Mill Stream Boards	1573.99	
	<hr/>	15,076.49
Expenditure in year		
06/06/2022 The Resourcery - Event Management	3000.00	
15/08/2022 Hengefest	200.00	
08/11/2022 Ward Signs GRP Plaque	515.00	
14/11/2022 Heritage Open Day 2022	500.00	
	<hr/>	4,215.00
<b>Deficit in year</b>		<hr/> <b>10,861.49</b> <hr/>
<b><u>Balance Sheet</u></b>		
Balance brought forward as at 1st April 2022		638.12
Add: Deficit in year		10,861.49
<b>Balance carried forward as at 31st March 2023</b>		<hr/> <b>11,499.61</b> <hr/>
<b><u>Outstanding Commitments</u></b>		
	<hr/>	0.00
Blue Plaque / Pub Scheme / Information Boards	1,420.00	
Events	4,800.00	
Mill Stream Boards	1,573.99	
		7,793.99
Available balance		<hr/> <b>3,705.62</b> <hr/>