

## Remembrance Sunday



Normally at this time of year we would be preparing for the annual Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial, which has grown to involve over 500 participants in the parade and at the service, including many young people, and an estimated 2,000 residents sharing the 11.00am silence.

With Covid 19 still circulating we simply can't host such a gathering this year. We would really appreciate it if this year you stay at home, but still mark the silence.

We are planning for a short service involving the Mayor, with representatives of serving military and veterans only, starting just before 11.00am with The Exhortation and Last Post, and finishing with Wreath Laying. We will endeavour to share the service using livestream via our [Dorchester Town Council page on Facebook](#).

Representatives of other groups who traditionally lay the 40+ wreaths at the War Memorial each year have been requested to lay their wreaths from Noon onwards on Remembrance Sunday.

Later in the day the Mayor, with a representative of the Dorchester-Lubbecke Society, will lay a wreath at the German War Memorial.

## Shire Hall reopens and welcomes visitors

With 'Good To Go' safety standard for Covid-19 in place, staff and volunteers returned to welcome visitors to the Museum, Shop and Café in August.

The reopening coincided with news that Shire Hall had won a Bronze Award for Small Visitor Attraction of the Year in the national Visit England Tourism Excellence Awards.

With a brand new family trail, families made up for time spent in lockdown and have been enjoying following



### Free Coffee Voucher

Hand this voucher to the café staff to receive your free cup of coffee\*!

\*Can be substituted for any hot drink. Single use only.

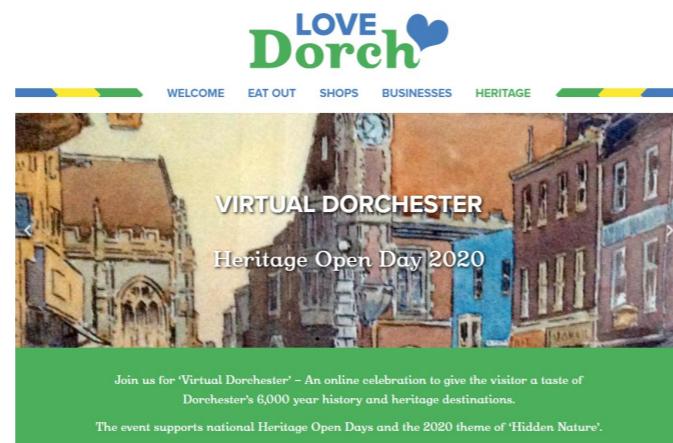


Visit our website at [www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk](http://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk)

## See Dorchester's Heritage online

In common with many events the town's Heritage Open Day was largely a virtual affair this year, although a few fortunate residents were able to book onto a town centre walking tour.

The team responsible for organising the day quickly brought together existing, and commissioned new, videos that provide some very informative insights into the town's history.



This wonderful repository is still available online, proving that every now and then there is a positive outcome from this year's lockdown.

Enjoy the videos at [www.lovedorch.com/hod](http://www.lovedorch.com/hod)

cartoon cat, Bert, around the historic courthouse where the Tolpuddle Martyrs were tried.

In December, the museum will host its first ever Christmas market on 12 - 13 December. The popular Christmas afternoon teas also make a comeback from 30 November.

To welcome you back, or tempt you to visit for the first time, please exchange the attached voucher for a free hot drink in Shire Hall Café (no purchase required).



Autumn 2020

# Dorchester News

Dorchester Town Council

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## How many Mayors...

...does it take to change a light bulb?

As part of its Climate Emergency Plan the Council is helping the town's community partners to reduce their carbon footprint; so we were very pleased when Dorchester Municipal Charities, who provide 26 almshouses along West Walks, asked us to help switch their communal areas and homes to LED lights.

The Council offered a small grant along with the services of Mayor Richard Biggs, seen here with the Charity's Chair and ex-Mayor, Molly Rennie.



The Energy Saving Trust see LED light bulbs as one of the easiest first step towards reducing your home's carbon footprint; a typical switch costs £100 and saves £40 a year.

Inside this newsletter we have two surveys that we could really use your help on.

As we return to some form of normality after the Covid 19 lockdown, we have dusted off our draft Corporate Plan that the Council elected in May 2019 was developing. The Plan identifies our priorities and where we should spend your money and our councillor and staff time.

We would like to know whether you think we are heading in the right direction?

## Transition Town targets 2,000 trees

Transition Town Dorchester has received a grant from The Tree Council via their 'Branching Out' programme, matched by the Town Council.

The two grants, plus trees donated by the Woodland Trust will mean the group can plant over 1,200 young trees this month which, coupled with planting events that took place in the Spring, will bring the total number of trees planted in 2020 to over 2000.

This time they will be joined by other community groups, colleges and schools, who will help plant the trees during National Tree Week from 28 November - 6 December.

The planting events will follow guidance on Covid issued by The Tree Council.



There are still some planting slots available if your group would like to get involved - as they say, many hands make light work!

If you would like to get involved in the Dorchester Trees Initiative get in touch on the [Transition Town Dorchester Facebook](#) page or at [www.transitiontowntordorchester.org.uk](http://www.transitiontowntordorchester.org.uk).

Visit our website at [www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk](http://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk)

## Municipal Buildings closed for a refresh

The lockdown period has presented an opportunity to work on bringing much needed work forwards at the Municipal Buildings in High East Street.

Roof repairs, costing £800,000 will start this winter and will see new roofs for the Council Chamber, Corn Exchange and apse, and on the rear of the building.

As part of its Climate Emergency commitment the Council has applied for planning permission to install a biomass boiler, using locally sourced dried woodchip, to heat the building. It is also considering solar panels and other green energy measures in a package of works costing £500,000.

Above the boiler house the Council will create a new office space to house its staff and colleagues from Dorchester Arts. It will also reorganise the kitchen and storage space below to provide multi-functional spaces. These works would cost up to £500,000.

Funding for the project will come from the Council's Reserves, Government environmental grants, the sale of 19 North Square and efficiencies generated by moving into one building. The project will eventually reduce the Council's overall costs, but as some of the savings will take time to arise the Council intends to take out a low interest loan to cover its cashflow.

The Council is also in discussions with Dorchester Arts about how the two organisations might manage the building more effectively and provide a stronger community arts offer from the building when it reopens. The Council has £250,000 reserved for this work, to match funds raised by Dorchester Arts.

The Corn Exchange is scheduled to reopen in April 2021, provided all works go to plan.

## Councillor Contacts

Phone and e-mail contact details for Ward councillors for the Town Council and the Dorset Council are available on our website, [www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk](http://www.dorchester-tc.gov.uk)



Keep up to date with what's on in the town: listen to your volunteer run, not for profit, community radio station from Dorchester, covering central-southern Dorset. Online at KeeP106.com



## Our Draft Corporate Plan Ambitions

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- Work with key partners to unlock and develop sites across the town for affordable housing

### COMMUNITY, CULTURE, HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- Work with agencies and community partners to understand the general needs of our community and the specific needs of vulnerable groups, in particular as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic
- Maintain and adapt ours and partners Community, Sports, Cultural and Health & Wellbeing services to meet the requirements of the town's residents and visitors
- Use the Municipal Buildings to make a relevant and environmentally efficient contribution to the town's community

### THE ENVIRONMENT

- In response to the Climate Emergency, proactively support practical steps to reduce the Council and the town's impact on its environment
- Focusing in particular on the Town Centre, introduce sustainable practices to assist the town's community and key partners to improve the town's appearance

### LOCAL ECONOMY, TRANSPORT AND PARKING

- Working with other agencies and the business sector, identify how the town's economy can be strengthened and reshaped, with a particular focus on supporting recovery of the town centre following the Covid 19 pandemic
- Working initially with the town's Heritage and Tourism sectors, develop a holistic strategy to maximise the benefits of tourism to the town
- Work with Dorset Council to agree and implement a Transport and Parking strategy that resolves the competing demands of residents, workers and visitors to the town

### FUTURE GROWTH OF DORCHESTER

- Develop the Town's existing response to the pressure for development of new housing emerging through the Dorset Council Local Plan process

### GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

- Ensure that the Council's working arrangements remain relevant to the needs of the town and are delivered efficiently and effectively
- Ensure that the Town Council has a robust Medium Term Financial Strategy, which particularly recognises the direct and indirect impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic

## QUESTIONNAIRES

### Corporate Plan

We have been reviewing our Corporate Plan, the document that sets out our ambitions and then identifies specific actions we will take to deliver those ambitions. We would like your views of our high level ambitions that are set out on the previous page.

**In broad terms, do you agree with the ambitions we are setting? (please circle)**

Yes

No

**Is there anything you would add to our priorities?**

1.

2.

3.

**Which, if any, of the priorities, would you remove?**

1.

2.

3.

**Our plan is that our part of the Council Tax will only rise by inflation each year, with any savings we make on one service being used to develop our other services. Do you agree with this? (please circle)**

Yes

No

**If not, what alternative would you like us to consider?**

### How to return this survey

Please take a photo of the survey with your mobile phone and send it to

**[enquiries@dorchester-tc.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@dorchester-tc.gov.uk)**

Or post to DTC, 19 North Sq, DORCHESTER DT1 1JF  
The survey is also available on our website.

Results from the survey will be considered as the Council sets its final Corporate Plan and Budget in January 2021.

Thank you for your views.

### Life after Lockdown

We are trying to establish how the Covid 19 lockdown and events afterwards have changed your view of how Dorchester should change in the long term. We would be grateful if you could respond to the following questions.

**What have been the biggest challenges for you/your family?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**What, if anything, has improved for you/your family?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Longer term, which of the following do you think the Town Council should particularly focus on to help improve & future proof our town? (suggest you tick 3)**

- Parks, Play Areas & Open Spaces, Allotments
- Health and wellbeing of the wider community
- Additional Support for Children & Young People
- Additional Support for Older people
- Responding to the Climate Emergency
- The Town Centre, Tourism Promotion & Business
- Support for the Arts, Heritage & Events
- Community Organisations and Volunteering
- Transport, Walking & Cycling
- Communication and Sharing Information

**What do you think is missing from Dorchester at the moment?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.