

Dorney Parish News

September 2020



Summer at the Jubilee River

(with thanks to Gail Lowe from Dorney Reach for the photograph)



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EDITORIAL

So, Dorney is going to get its roundabout at the junction of Lake End Road and Court Lane...or is it? At the time of writing 547 signatories, presumably many from Dorney and some from outside, have signed a petition in support of that solution. The new Beeches Community Board might just have broken through the logjam which has persisted since the public presentation of the M4 Smart Motorway project in the Village Hall in mid-2018 coincided with the Parish Council's decision to lobby for a roundabout.

The case for a roundabout is now based on two premises. As the petition says 'a mini roundabout placed at the junction will reduce traffic speeds of vehicles entering and exiting Dorney Village, and, if designed correctly would alleviate the waiting and dangers to those exiting onto the main road from Court Lane.' Also, the plan is seen as a return to the arrangements which worked well in 2012.

Thanks are due to Dev Dhillon for recognising that 100 supportive signatures might get the proposal back on the Unitary Authority's agenda, Andy Purdie for setting up the petition and Alice Foxley for kick starting a campaign to support it.

Some politely dissenting voices have raised valid points on Nextdoor. The current layout is disliked although the good intentions of prioritising the route into Dorney Reach is recognised, but a return to the former layout when the Marsh Lane bridge is re-opened tends to be preferred to a roundabout. But some residents feel they were not consulted over the roundabout advocacy and petitions don't give the chance to register 'no thanks'.

Lobbying via our county councillor proceeded through 2018-19 with, it seems, little response from Bucks County. Highways England and Balfour Beatty offered to lobby for the Dorney case at regular Traffic Management key stakeholders' meetings but there seemed to be confusion about who could attend and whether important county traffic people ever intended to turn up at them. At the very last minute, in terms of the Marsh Lane bridge closure, a meeting on site last November approved the new road layout but rejected a roundabout because there was 'no lighting'.

This is rather a sorry tale in terms of local government decision taking in these parts. If there had been a single parish councillor with sole responsibility for M4 and related issues would the proposal have had greater traction? Would detailed written proposals from Dorney, perhaps engaging the involvement of those in the area with traffic expertise (who were making detailed comments at PC meetings) have been a catalyst? Should there have been active consultation with residents on all these proposals – minutes with low key circulation are not enough. None of the parties have come up with an explanation for residents as to why a roundabout was rejected in late 2019. There was little clarity as we went into the Marsh Lane closure and now, as re-opening looms, there is again the same lack about whether the present junction continues, or there is reversion to the pre-2019 layout or whether we have a roundabout conversion. Has the lack of a coherent proposal allowed a distant and disinterested Bucks Council to ignore Dorney's needs, which has over two years or so led to a mismanaged project?

Nextdoor Neighbours?

In 2016 the Local Government Association issued guidelines over how councils could achieve the most effective online communication. Four years ago, the LGA kicked off their report with the words 'almost all UK councils have at least one Twitter or Facebook account now. *The argument over whether to use social media across local government has long since passed*'.



Over the summer, it became clear that, far from being 'passed', this argument in Dorney was raging. Unless you were present at the rather stormy July online meeting of the Parish Council or witnessed the subsequent exchanges on Nextdoor, this may have passed you

by. That the use of one among many such platforms could provoke such a row must be incomprehensible to two groups – on the one hand, those untouched by social media in general or those who know of Nextdoor but refer to it infrequently and on the other the growing number of Dorney residents to whom it is merely a part of everyday life. After all, around a hundred individual local residents posted on it about the Rowing Lake crisis while last week information about Thames Water outages was exchanged quickly and usefully.

A resident suggested to the Parish Council that, as locals were finding Nextdoor very useful, they might consider integrating it more fully into their communication, with the aim of building community spirit, which many felt had been lacking during the height of the lockdown. That same resident also expressed the gratitude that is due to Councillor Alice Foxley, who has gone from time to time to great lengths to keep us informed of recent developments via Nextdoor and via this magazine. The response from the Council was not enthusiastic. One councillor posted later on Twitter that Nextdoor was 'not a nice social platform'. Another said words to the effect that he didn't have time to follow every complaint on Nextdoor. When another councillor was informed that many councils not only used, but enthusiastically endorsed Nextdoor and other social media, he confidently asserted 'they're wrong'.

This controversy was triggered by Nextdoor, but the real issue is a wider one of communication in general. This is not a new issue. The 2005 Dorney Parish Plan drew on findings from a Village Appraisal carried out a couple of years earlier to declare that only 11% of Dorney residents thought that Parish Council decisions and activities were well reported. With so many tools at our disposal nowadays, there is no need for this problem to linger. It can be argued that the quality of life in Dorney is suffering by a general failure to communicate community and local government matters and that this deficit is particularly marked when compared to neighbouring parishes and to other villages in general.



This article will be concluded by a very quick view of the use of Nextdoor by other parishes and then a run through the local communications that have come my way in recent days.

An online search will throw up so many Nextdoor examples, often alongside parish council and community websites way in advance of Dorney's own sorry effort.



The Chairman of Normandy PC (that's the one in Surrey, not France) says 'may I recommend a fantastic social community website called Nextdoor which is a great source of communication within Normandy and the best way to stay informed about what's going on in your neighbourhood...' The 'Council Update' on the superb website of Broxton PC says 'the council is now regularly posting on Nextdoor along with on the council's Facebook page'. I've had considerable correspondence with Duxford PC who have set out to encourage local Nextdoor membership which has grown from 27

three years ago to 640. A Duxford councillor emailed me *'when there is a piece of council activity or news one or more of us want to communicate, one of the councillors uses the platform for a personal post under his or her personal membership (we are all voluntarily members). That way we get our messages across as individuals and Nextdoor preserves its integrity as what it is – the place where ordinary villagers of every background can congregate on equal terms.'*

If Nextdoor is not preferred, there are other platforms. In the last week or so, Burnham Parish Council have used Facebook to post information on, for instance, the Burnham Village pages about the Burnham Care and Share scheme, local venues participating in the current 'Eat Out' programme, the new Beeches Community Board and a consultation about conservation in Burnham Beeches. Local councillor, Samantha Rayner, has just updated the Eton Wick Community Facebook pages about discussions with the new owner of Crown Farm.



In spite of GDPR regulations, email must be a comparatively accessible tool. The Clerk of Taplow PC sends out a monthly newsletter on the lines of our 'Parish Pump' column. Another clerk, that of East Hagbourne in Oxfordshire, told me how their email newsletter is expanding beyond its original 30 recipients, and it sits on their website alongside items like their Village Plan and Emergency Plan. Weekly a newsletter arrives in my inbox from the Eton Community Association.

The editor of 'Dorney Parish News' is bound to support the case for print as a platform. A previous chair of Dorney Parish Council, the late Ken Richmond, wrote a monthly review of local government in these parts in this magazine. The Town Clerk of Eton writes columns in Eton Wick's 'Our Village' and 'Eton Matters' as does the ubiquitous Councillor Rayner.

It's unclear why this tradition of non-communication has developed in Dorney. To see how other parish councils and wider communities project themselves via modern interactive websites, social media, email and traditional print media is saddening. The chance of fostering such communication seems to me an important factor in the case for a 'community group'. Let's leave the last word to that parish council chairman in Normandy – *'There are so many ways our neighbours can help us; we just need an easier way to connect with them'*.

A very welcome and positive response to the Dorney Community initiative

In the July issue we ran an article about the Dorney Community and asking for responses. It was most encouraging to have so many positive comments on social media, emails, phone calls and chats in the road with residents.

A Nextdoor group has been formed as has an embryonic Facebook page. Both of these are designed to encourage conversations amongst residents on community related subjects.

It has been suggested that the creation of a formal Dorney Community Association (such as those in Eton and Eton Wick) should be left for a few months to see how the Dorney Community develops.

To assist the communication of community initiatives and volunteering opportunities Dorney Parish News is supporting a Dorney Community website that attempts to bring together the facts and figures about the various opportunities and challenges that affect the community. The website is www.dorneycommunity.org.uk.

It is hoped that the information provided will be useful and that volunteers will be able to contact the right people via the Contact Us page.

Should any resident have any suggestions regarding the content on the website, please advise via the Contact Us page.

Dorney Volunteers

Dorney is fortunate in having many volunteers who give their time and expertise to the smooth running of the village.

But more are always needed – to replace those that wish to stand down, to add more resources or to start new projects.

Dorney Community is here to help bring together volunteers and those looking for volunteers. Below is a list of organisations and projects that welcome new volunteers.

If you are interested in getting more information about any of these – or one that isn't listed – please use the Contact Us form link on the website and you will be put in touch with the right person.

Organisation/Project	Volunteer role
Jubilee River Clear Up	Volunteers need to litter-pick along the banks of the Jubilee River between Marsh Lane weir and Dorney Wetlands/Manor Farm weir. Litter grabbers, heavy duty bags and Hi-Viz provided. In your own time. No rota.
Dorney Parish Council	Parish Councillors. Volunteers either to be co-opted when a vacancy arises or to be elected at the next Parish Council election on 6 th May 2021.
Dorney Village Hall	Assist in the running of the Hall – bookings, maintenance etc.

Organisation/Project	Volunteer role
St Mary Magdalene Church, Boveney	Back-up people to open and close the church each day. Assist with keeping the church looking welcoming.
Dorney Parish News	Volunteers welcome to: Write articles. Become an Associate Editor. Assist in print production. Be Back-up Distributors of the publication to residents.
Dorney Speedwatch	Community Speedwatch (CSW) is a national initiative where active members of local communities join with the support of the Police to monitor speeds of vehicles using speed detection devices. Planned for Dorney once Smart Motorway works are completed.
Dorney Community Project: New Heathrow Flight Paths	Join the Action Team monitoring and evaluating Civil Aviation Authority proposals for these and the potential impact on Dorney and Taplow.
Dorney Community Project: Dorney in Bucks or RBWM?	Join the Action Team, alongside our Taplow neighbours, in assessing the pros and cons of this, together with monitoring and evaluating the Local Plans of Slough Borough, RBWM and Bucks Council regarding future housing needs.
Dorney Community Project: Full Fibre Broadband	Join the Action Team to research how residents and businesses can access the hundreds of metres of fibre optic cable laid in ducts throughout the village.
Dorney Community Project: Planning Research	Join the Action Team to help in researching all possible or actual planning events that impact Dorney.
Dorney Community Project: M4 Lake End Bridge	Join the team of Lake End & Burnham residents and businesses who can work with Balfour Beatty/HE to “manage” the impact of the Lake End Bridge works on the community.
Dorney Community Project: Trumper’s Field – Community Right to Bid	Join the Action Team that is considering providing some protection to Trumper’s Field in Dorney Reach, in the event of Bucks Council attempting to sell it to a developer.

Services in the Local Churches



St James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick
St. John the Evangelist, Eton

**Vicar: Revd. La Stacey, The Vicarage,
69a Eton Wick Road, Eton Wick, Windsor,
SL4 6NE**

**Tel: 01753 852268 email:
revlastacey@gmail.com**

For information about our churches, activities and church history please see our parishes' web site:
www.stjohnstjamesed.org.uk

Methodist Church, Eton Wick Alma Road, Eton Wick, SL4 6JZ

Minister: Rev Margaret Dudley, 01753 867117

Sunday 6.30pm Evening Service

Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, Burnham

Parish Priest: Fr. Joseph Udoh, M.S.P. 01628 605764

Saturday 6pm Vigil Mass

Sunday 9.30am Mass

Rev La Stacey writes I wonder how parents are finding it sending their children back to school after all this time? Presumably, some children won't have been at school since before lock-down. I imagine that some will be able to let their children go with confidence, sure of the capability of the child to adapt. For others though, particularly those who have been shielding, crossing the border into the outside world will feel like going into alien territory, with all the fear and feeling of uncertainty that goes with such a crossing. I read a story about a lady who made a border crossing long ago with the Windrush Generation. She came from Guyana to London and, looking for something familiar, went to the local church on Sundays. After a few weeks, the vicar came up to her at the end of the service and shook her hand and said, 'Thanks for coming, but don't come back, please.' She had been invited to the country to work, but then found rejection from many quarters, including the one place where she should have been able to find refuge. Instead of a welcome, it felt like a slap in the face.

Jesus appears to have reacted equally badly to a foreigner on one occasion. It was he who had crossed the border this time, into Tyre and Sidon, to seek a bit of respite. A woman approached him, knelt in front of him, and asked for his help to heal her daughter. He seems to have rebuffed her with what reads to us like a racist comment. She did not go away in deep dudgeon however but stood her ground with resilience. And Jesus granted her request. Jesus frequently seems to have pushed back when people asked him for something. It seems to me that he wanted them to be conscious about the faith they were expressing in coming to him for the thing they needed.

The woman in this bible story stood up to the rebuff she was given and was insistent on a relationship of faith with Jesus. And this story stands in the bible as a perpetual reminder that there is no barrier between 'Jew and Greek' (as they were called at the time). All are one in Christ.

And so the woman from Guyana is, by chance, one day taken to visit that church again by her daughter, who had some business there. The woman recognised the church instantly and reminded her daughter of the story of her previous visit. As they approached the current vicar came up to them and welcomed them with friendly hugs. The daughter mentioned that this was somewhere her mother had attended at one time and the vicar enquired, 'and how was your experience? A good one I hope?' The lady bowed her head and said nothing. The vicar picked up on what had happened, and it was she who dropped to her knees and with heartfelt repentance, poured out an apology. The lady simply smiled her forgiveness back and said, 'It's all right. That's life.' The daughter is the leader of the choir that sang 'this little light of mine' at the wedding of the Duke and Duchess of Sussex. Crossing into unknown lands is hard and requires courage. I pray that all those who are finding themselves in unfamiliar or forgotten territory may be resilient and know it is worth persevering.

With blessings.

Church services have resumed at 9.30 am in Dorney and 11 am in Eton Wick. There is a midweek Communion in Eton on 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of the month.

Or follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/Church-Community-of-Eton-with-Eton-Wick-Dorney-and-Boveney-647610252009554>

Details are on our website: <http://www.stjohnstjamesed.org.uk/>



St Mary Magdalene, Boveney

This beautiful church is now open again.

The 2020 Services currently are:

Christmas Advent Service by Candlelight - 1500hrs on Sunday, 13th December 2020

Baptisms, Weddings & Funerals are, regrettably, not permitted at the Church; however, the Renewal of Vows and Blessings following a Civil Ceremony are very much encouraged. We also make the church available as a venue for concerts, readings etc. Seating for 100.

For further information please contact bill@daxfamily.com

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Planning Applications (Validated and Decided) during August 2020

Burnham Parish (adjoining Dorney Parish)

From South Bucks District Council Planning website:
pa.chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk/online-applications/

Validated:

Orchard Herbs Lake End Road Dorney Buckinghamshire SL4 6QS

Outline permission for re-development of existing partial brownfield site into renewable energy park with high capacity battery storage, 416 bedroom hotel (Use Class C1), two office units (Use Class A2), biogas waste digester energy unit, advanced educational facility, two-storey car park and associated landscaping

PL/20/2020/OA



This outline planning permission was validated on 17th August 2020. The Neighbour Consultation period ends on **Friday 11th September 2020**. Anybody can comment on this proposal on or before this date by registering and completing the online form. To do this, just go to the South Bucks Area Planning Applications website (Google it) , go to Simple Search, leave Status as All, put SL4 6QS in the Keyword, Reference, Post Code search box and press Search.

You will see the application as printed above. Click on it to go to the Summary Page. You can access the relevant Documents and make your comments by going to the Comments section. You will have to register on the site if you haven't already done so.

This site has a rich planning history, as can be seen from the documents available with the application.

Prior to this outline planning permission, a resident had submitted a Planning Complaint which was summarised as follows:

The Current Issue:

- *Since a date after 23 June 2018, according to Google Earth, the owners or tenants have been parking commercial/non-agricultural vehicles and containers over the majority of the complete 9 acres of land.*
- *This has created a highly visible, unauthorised “dump” of unsightly commercial vehicles and containers on Green Belt land.*
- *In 2008 the High Court quashed a South Bucks Enforcement Notice that appears to have made it lawful to park non-agricultural vehicles in a designated area of the land, nearest to Lake End Road, totalling 1.75 acres.*
 - *Part of this land is now subject to a Highways England Compulsory Purchase Order relating to the new Lake End Road bridge.*
- ***There appears to be no recorded Planning Permission to park commercial vehicles on the 7.25 acres of land outside of the 1.75 acres.***
- ***If that is the case, it appears that the owners are in breach of Policies GB1, GB3 [Green Belt] and LS3 of the adopted Buckinghamshire County Structure Plan 1991-2011, and of policies GB1, GB4 [Green Belt] and L2 of the South Bucks District Local Plan (adopted March 1999).***
- *Aggregate, possibly containing asbestos, has been placed over the 7.5 acres of Green Belt land.*
- *Residents are seeking to remove the unsightly commercial vehicles and containers from the unauthorised storage area.*

A response came back from what is now Bucks Planning Enforcement allocating a reference number and, most importantly, designating Kirstie Elliot, Principal Planning Enforcement Officer, Planning, Growth and Sustainability Directorate, as the officer responsible.

Further to recent correspondence between residents and county councillors regarding Roundmoor Ditch possibly being blocked by the owners/tenants of the Orchard Herbs site, Kirstie Elliot confirmed the following regarding the planning enforcement:

"I am dealing with this site and we will be issuing an enforcement notice as soon as we can in respect of the unauthorised use of the land for the storage of vehicles. There is quite a long history in respect of this site and the unauthorised uses have fluctuated between county and district planning matters (not that that is an issue now that we are a unitary authority).

I will start drafting the necessary report and enforcement notice and will need to get another site inspection as soon as we can as it sounds...that the situation on site may have changed. However, this could be connected with the M4 widening (Smart Motorway) as part of the site was due to be compulsory purchased by Highways England as part of this project, and part temporarily 'purchased' for 5 years. We will need to confirm this."

The new outline planning permission submitted implies that the hotel/office proposal is a significant improvement on the current situation and that it would be a suitable solution.

Dev Dhillon, the County Councillor responsible for this area, recently stated his position on this matter to Dorney Parish News as follows:

In my view most of the Orchard Herbs site is Green Belt.....

Surely the applicant will say that it will be improvement to that site, because it serves their aim and goal. In the first instance the whole idea was to make it an eyesore and then try to win the case by justifying their action.

I am in no doubt that this application should be thrown out and the landowner made and ordered to restore [it] to the Green Belt. I will listen to my residents and parish councillors very carefully.

From an examination of the various reports commissioned by the Appellant, it appears that a considerable amount of time and money has been invested to get the project to this stage. Should residents and others wish to express their views it is important that as many of them do it as possible. Leaving it up to Dorney Parish Council (who have no direct responsibility for this land, as it is in Burnham Parish), or others to make the case is not sufficient. The Bucks Planning Department (and our County Councillor) will take serious note of the number of comments made via letter or the online form. A number of people have already done so.



FOOTPATHS (The Clue Is In The Name)

Twelve months ago, I was told I was pre-diabetic and needed to lose weight. I was told walking regularly would be beneficial and consequently made an effort. Traversing the local footpaths made me more aware of the difficulties and conditions of this type of exercise.

Dorney Reach Village

As a whole these are not in a good condition and present several obstacles. At the lower end of Harcourt Road on the south side the path is badly crazed and uneven. This is mainly due to tree roots. I certainly would not advocate the removal of the trees, but I would suggest that a regular planned maintenance would keep the situation under control. I have been a resident since the 1970s and cannot recall that section being repaired. Oak Stubbs Lane has bad cracking with grass and weeds growing through.

Over many years the hedges have been allowed to encroach over the path and in some cases narrowed the paths by up to 12 inches (300 mm). This can easily be seen where properties have walls or fences which lay backward of the path edgings. Another example of the lack of maintenance is the encroachment of grass and weeds on the path surface. This is created by dust building up on the path verges forming a bed for the weeds. This is ongoing and the width of the tarmac reduces accordingly. The roots of these weeds then penetrate the tarmac causing surface deterioration.

Another major problem is parking. People appear to view footpaths as parking areas. How many times do you see cars parked partially, or in some cases totally, on the path? In many cases these cars are parked outside properties that have space on their drives to park. Mondays provide another problem as residents are expected to put their bins, at least two, plus boxes, at their boundaries. I'm not sure that these should be on the paths, but rather inside the boundary line. However, after the dustcarts have left these bins are left haphazardly on the paths for the rest of the day. In some fairly exceptional circumstances pedestrians, especially families with young children, have to walk into the road to circumvent these obstacles.

Marsh Lane to Lake End Road

These paths tend to be in better condition but suffer from similar problems. The grass incursion is probably greater on these paths. I have cleared a section of path outside my property which shows the extent of the problem. Our newest path, the Richmond Path, is beginning to suffer from this condition. The other problem is hedgerows. Most of these include bushes with thorns. As they are not regularly cut back the branches overhang the paths and force pedestrians towards the road.

Sections of these paths have domestic parking problems as before. The other major problems are cyclists and horses. To my knowledge there is no law allowing the riding of cycles and horses on these paths. I can understand very young children riding on these paths, but their accompanying adults should ride on the road next to them. Horses should be kept on the road as they are not compatible with walkers. It also reduces the pollution pedestrians have to avoid and the muddy covering deposited during wet weather.

River Paths

Most of these are in reasonable condition, but some are starting to wear. The exception is the Thames Path between Trumper's Field and the Bray footbridge. The two garden sections are kept in a reasonable condition, but the sections in between are a minefield. Deep potholes with exposed roots dominate. In wet weather this is made worse as the extent of the damage is hidden. For less agile people and families, it is an accident waiting to happen.

On most of these paths cycling is permitted. This also provides a problem as cycles do not appear to have bells, or the riders do not use them. When being approached from behind one is only aware of their presence when they are within a yard or so of you. As some of the lycra-clad warriors travel in excess of 10mph this can be dangerous. It would appear that the cyclists' complaints of a lack of care by motorists to their well being on roads are not reciprocated by the care shown to the pedestrians by them on these paths.

Horses are also allowed to be ridden on some of these paths. Most lengths of these paths have grass verges on one or both sides. It puzzles me why the horses are ridden on the hard surface and not the grass which must be more preferential for the horse. The result is that pedestrians have to take avoiding action to miss piles of horse manure which could then create danger from approaching cyclists. How is it that it is an offence for dog owners to not remove their deposits, but that horse riders are immune for a much larger problem?

Car Parks

The two obvious examples are Lake End Road and Eton College Rowing Lake. When these two were closed because of the virus people parked on the road and paths adjacent to them. Why didn't the authorities enforce the laws to prevent this and therefore allow their actions to become far more relevant? These actions would allow local residents to lead a much more peaceful life – after all we pay taxes the same as everyone else.

Derek Breslin

Dorney Parish Council Website

The Dorney Parish Council website address is:

www.dorney.org.uk

and the Twitter account is @DorneyPC

Find minutes, planning, tweets, links to SBDC articles etc.

The Footballist

Lucky old Dorney!!

To coin a phrase, you couldn't make it up!

Mr. Covid keeps us covered up and apprehensive, the not so smart motorway keeps us awake at night and lightly dusted during the day, closes our well used roads, and saves us from loneliness with a constant barrage of noise; plus of course the uncertain future of Crown Farm which appears to have suffered an air raid.

So, here's something completely different! I hope you enjoy it.

In its wisdom, the Metropolitan Police in 1981 were clever enough to buy some Rover SD1's and gave me a few (I kept crashing them) to chase bad people around. They appeared fabulous in Police livery; having the look of 'Oh ****, the police have arrived!', but their best quality was that, when driven at slow speed, they were almost silent; really useful when creeping round industrial estates and Airport hotel car parks at night, lights out, and I caught lots of cars thieves and a few burglars red handed in the Rover SD1.

Imagine if you will, John and I creeping between lines of expensive wheels at one in the morning, lights out, windows down, walking pace, so quiet we were whispering. Sometimes, an XR3i would suddenly start up, wheels spinning in blue smoke, starting another car chase!

But not tonight. All was as quiet as a sleeping cat.

"Hold up," whispered John. "Back up a bit."

I reversed to a "Stop here Mike."

We were looking at a dark green Maserati.

"Look at the number plate," he murmured, and sure enough, this glorious car displayed a cheap stick-on number plate available in any auto factors at that time. A car check revealed a green Maserati from Chelsea. We got out and peeled back the number to the true hidden number underneath. A check on this revealed the car to be stolen two days before from a dealer some miles away. Bingo!! Well spotted John.

Any excuse to chat to the pretty girls at the reception was always welcome and we approached the deserted desk. In those days, one left the registration number of one's car with the hotel and we asked her to look up the Maserati. After leafing through a circular file, she smiled beautifully and said,

"Wing Commander Bristow, room 416."

"May we speak to the wing commander please?"

"Well, it's a little unusual this time of night, I'll have to get the manager."

Asking our assistant not to phone the room, we waited a few minutes.

"Good morning Officers," he smiled his expensive hotel smile. "How may I help you."

We explained the circumstances thus far.

"Is the Wing Commander likely to be the Wing Commander?" he asked quizzically.

"I'd not put money on it," I grinned.

“We might not get paid.” He looked genuinely worried. “Of course, you may speak with him. May I come too?”

He knocked respectfully on the door emblazoned 416. Silence.

“Wing Commander?” he muttered. “May I have a word please?” Silence.

“I have a key,” he proffered a house key and quietly opened the door. The room was empty, neat and tidy with expensive new clothes on a rail, wash kit in the bathroom.

We decided to wait for his return.

“Can we wait in his room Sir?” we asked.

“Of course, officers. May I offer you coffee and cakes?”

I arranged for the police car to be removed back to the station and we settled into the comfortable room, supplied with coffee and later toast and later still, a handsome breakfast. It was lovely, and by now we were on overtime!

A now familiar rattle on the door announced the arrival of more goodies, and as I turned from my comfy seat, I saw a beautifully dressed young man complete with collar, tie and blue blazer look aghast at us, shouting something about a duck, and he ran. By now John and I were fully awake and aware and tore down the corridor after him. As we reached maximum speed, he suddenly stopped and turned, hands raised.

“OK, I g.....!” Unable to stop our headlong rush, we piled into him, crashing to the carpeted floor. We all picked ourselves up but with a firm grip on the Wing Commander.

“You OK?” I asked with genuine concern.

“I shouldn’t have run. I’m fine,” he replied, adding surprisingly, “you OK?”

“What about the Maserati?” I asked.

“It’s stolen.”

“Who stole it?”

“Me,” he smiled.

Dear reader, yes I know it sounds implausible, but some villains really did this – not often I grant you, but it did, and I suspect, sometimes does happen. Don’t believe me? Then stay with me a while longer.

We radioed for a van and all three of us returned to the nick, where after processing we had breakfast, John and I in the canteen and ... we’ll call him Ned, had his in a cell. By now some lucky officer had driven the Maserati to the nick and we settled down for Ned’s interview.

In those days, recorded interviews did not exist, so everything had to be written down laboriously.

After caution, the immaculate Ned sighed.

“I’ve had a good run. It couldn’t last and I ran into you. Up till last week, I was in an open prison, in the football team. I’m a good striker, and we were playing away in some Sunday league when I suddenly realised I had the ball, running down the centre of the field with no screws or anyone else near me, so I kept on running; off the end of the pitch, through hedges, across fields and gates. I am fit, and nobody was near me. I was in my kit and eventually came out into an estate. There was a motorbike there with no one around. I

broke into the top box and found some clothes and a little money. I changed and made my way to a railway station where I phoned my sister and told her I had been released early and would she put me up for a few days? She picked me up in Birmingham and took me back to her house where I met her new boyfriend, Wing Commander Bristow. After a nice meal and a few drinks we all went to bed, but I woke at four in the morning, nicked the wing commander's jacket, wallet and ID and made my way to London on him. I booked into the Churchill as him and found a copy of Motor Sport in the lounge, inside which was an advertisement for Maserati. I rang the dealer, told them who I was and staying in the Churchill and interested in the green one.

'Would the Wing Commander like us to bring the car to the hotel?' they asked.

'Yes,' I said, 'the Wing Commander would like that very much.'

I bought some decent clothes, and sure enough the next day, it arrived with a salesman who took me out in the car, extolling its virtues. He pulled up on the side of the A4.

'Would the Wing Commander care to try the car?' and with that he got out of the driving seat, and as I got out of the passenger seat, I locked the door and slammed it shut, got into the driving seat and drove off! It was easy. I saw him leaping about on the roadside in the mirror. I saw a similar car, remembered the number, got a couple of stick-on index plates and booked into where you found me."

"Where did you spend last night?" John asked.

He blushed a little. "I've been in prison some time if you err...understand," he grinned.

He was charged and returned to prison. He must have pleaded guilty because I never saw him again.

About three years later, I was reading my local paper.

"Cheeky chappie steals Maserati!" was the headline on an inner page, and there was exactly the same MO (method).

I rang the Thames Valley officer in the case.

"That will be Ned. He was in prison when I caught him, but he'll be out by now. He lived in Sandon at the time. Good luck with it. Let me know how you get on."

A week later, I received a call from the officer.

"Ned sends his love," he grinned down the phone. "What a character!"

"Where did you nick him?" I asked.

"Near Dorney," he replied.

All the names, dates and places and even the make of the car have been changed. While it's all true any likeness to anyone living or dead is coincidental.

Hope it took your mind off smart motorways, at least for a while.

Stay safe

Mike Quincey

Dorney Horticultural Society

Dear members and friends, this would have been the time of our popular annual show. As you may be aware, in line with government advice, our village hall is restricted to 25 persons in the hall at a time, so unfortunately our social events are on hold for the foreseeable future.



John's vegetables



John's onions

However, the current situation didn't put off our intrepid gardener, John Akerman, who carried on regardless growing his award-winning vegetables. Behold a small selection of his onions, potatoes, leeks, tomatoes and parsnips. John's gigantic onions weigh in at $3\frac{1}{4}$ lbs nearly 1.5kg each - can anyone better that? John is a very enthusiastic supporter of the Society, so we thank him for allowing us to have a bit of a virtual show at least.

For those of you on social media please have a look at our Face book page 'Dorney & District Horticultural Society' and feel free to upload your photos and stories.

Finally, with sadness we say goodbye to one of our committee members, Wendy Shephard, who is moving out of the area. We wish Wendy and Mark all the best for the future in their new home. This means we are appealing for new committee members again, ready for when we can re-commence our programme of events. We are hoping to organise some sort of outdoor events next year which we will keep you posted on in due course.

Ron Alsworth - Chairman

DORNEY IN 1798

Those who keep a close eye on the Dorney History Group website may have spotted that it now contains an item called the Posse Comitatus dating from February 1798. This strange title hides some remarkable content. It is a list of all the men living in the parish of Dorney aged between 15 and 60, who could be called on to fight in the event of an invasion by France.

It's hard to imagine, perhaps, but the country was gripped by a very real fear of such invasion. Just as we did before the two world wars, the authorities made preparations. This included working out how many men could be available to join the armed forces and how many draught horses, wagons and carts could be supplied. The information was collected at parish level and then collated by hundred and finally by county. Buckinghamshire is the only county for which complete returns have survived. It is our luck that this gives us a snapshot of Dorney over 40 years before the first detailed census records.

So, what does this tell us? In total, there were 53 eligible men aged between 15 and 60. This did not include clergymen or gentlemen. This number is consistent with the first census taken three years later, which counted 190 inhabitants of the parish, comprising 41 families in 37 dwellings. We know that a lot of children were being born in Dorney at the end of the 19th century.

The detailed breakdown confirms the image of Dorney as a farming village. Five farmers were listed, but a further four were included in the list of those owning horses, waggons and carts. Of these, one was a woman, one was Sir Charles Palmer, and one was listed as a labourer. There were 31 labourers, most of whom probably worked on the land. Two carpenters, a chairmaker, a tailor and nine servants completed the occupations. Most of the servants would have been working outdoors. Two of them, living at one of the farms, refused to give their surnames – William the milkman and George the carter. Four men had no occupation given. It was noted if anyone had some infirmity which might prevent them from fighting, and out of the 53 potential recruits, four had some disability – two were lame, one infirm and one had a crooked knee.

Let's drill down and have a look at some of the individuals comprising Dorney society. The largest farmer living in the parish was Richard Sedding, aged 57. He had more horses and vehicles than any other farmer – 21 horses, 3 waggons and 4 carts which would have regularly travelled the lanes we know so well. Thomas Sedding seems to have been Richard's younger brother, and unlike Richard he was married. His was the farm where the milkman and carter were recorded. When he died, he was recorded as "a reputable farmer". His widow Elizabeth left £200 to maintain her grave and to make annual payments to poor widows in Dorney when she died in 1815. The third Sedding farmer in 1798 was widow Sedding. This was Mrs Parker Sedding, who later took on Bayliss Farm in Stoke Poges and established a charity for the poor of Dorney. The Sedding family was long established in Dorney and no doubt they employed many of the labourers. Between them, they owned 35 of the 56 working horses in the village. Another farmer, William Neighbour from Taplow, had married Richard's sister Elizabeth Sedding. Now aged 44, he had settled in the parish of Dorney (actually in Dorney Wood) where they had a son.

Another well-known Dorney farming family was the Perrymans. In 1798, the list of farmers included David Perryman aged 46 and his eldest son Charles who was 22. David was married to Mary the daughter of Richard Brothers, and so was connected to the Sedding family, as the mother of Richard and Thomas Sedding had been another Mary Brothers. A map produced in 1812 marks the name Perryman as the tenant on several fields – the

northern part of Thames Field adjacent to Barge Path, part of North Field and two smaller fields at Dent's Corner.

At the other end of the scale was Avery Kimberley. In his mid-30s, he kept 4 horses and had one wagon and one cart. He doesn't seem to have been a permanent resident of Dorney; he was living in Bray when his son was born in 1788, and in New Windsor when he died in 1814. Thomas Weston was another small farmer who appears to have been transient – a daughter born in Dorney, then another in Burnham. He was recorded as a labourer, so perhaps he just rented a small amount of land where he made use of his cart and two horses.

The chairmaker was Jeremiah Dell, whom we have met before in this column as an old man. In 1798 he was in the prime of life, 37 years old, married to Sarah and with a young family. The Dells were another long established Dorney family. Jeremiah's grandfather John Webb, another Dorney chairmaker, had died only four years earlier. The farmer Richard Sedding called Jeremiah Dell his friend.

The men classified as labourers accounted for well over half of the total and included several families. Robert Cox was there with his 19-year-old son, also called Robert. Robert and his wife Elizabeth had married in Burnham and their eldest child had been born in Farnham Royal, but they had then settled in Dorney where six more children had been born and one died. John Cox, aged 45, and his wife Sarah already had eight children and there was another one on the way. Their eldest son William, aged 17, was also listed; he was one of those recorded as lame.

Robert Tarrant had married Sarah Mead in Dorney in 1789, but they had only just started their family in 1798, with a son under 2 and another on the way. It looks as though Robert's father had lived in Dorney for a time before moving to Eton where Robert was born 30 years before. His younger brother Thomas Tarrant was also listed as a labourer.

John Martin was Dorney born and bred, and he and his wife Elizabeth had 4 children. John's father, who had died 5 years earlier, had also been a labourer.

Thomas Newell's wife Susanna had just given birth to their first child, a baby daughter. They had been living in Eton when they married the previous year and had moved to Burnham by the time Susanna died a few years later. James and Sarah Ellwood started their family in Burnham and had only moved to Dorney a year or so earlier.

Many of the men had not been born in Dorney, and there was clearly a lot of mobility around local villages – Burnham, Taplow, Bray, Eton, Windsor. Some came from further afield – Cholsey, Rickmansworth.

So, these were some of the people who lived in Dorney 220 years ago. Some families were resident here for several generations; others made the village their home for only a brief time. All would have known the old buildings we still know today – Dorney Court, the parish church, many of the houses and cottages in the village or lining the common. They walked or rode along the same roads as we do, were familiar with our stretch of the Thames, and saw the distant view of Windsor Castle rising above mist over the common. They are gone but – thanks to the survival of an old administrative list – they are not forgotten. And the names of Richard Sedding and David Perryman are recorded in Dorney church for posterity, as churchwardens, on a board painted with the words of the Lord's Prayer.

Virginia Silvester

Burnham/Farnham's/Taplow & Dorney

Neighbourhood Priorities

Priority One – Burglary

This quarter we have seen a decrease in residential burglaries from 25 to 24, seventeen of these related to shed/garage breaks.

Make sure you lock the door with a key once inside the house, remove all keys from the lock as well as double locking doors to stop burglars 'fishing' for keys.

Make sure that UPVC doors are double locked whilst in the property and windows are not left open.

At this time of year the nights are starting to draw in so please make sure your home looks occupied, use timer switches on lights and televisions to give this impression.

Keep cash and other valuables out of sight

Trim back any hedges or plants that a burglar could hide behind and make sure side gates and back windows are secure.

Property mark your high value items with your postcode and house number.

Finally report any suspicious behaviour on the 101 non-emergency number, or if a burglary is in progress, then call 999.

Priority Two – Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

Dorney Lake, Dorney

Since Dorney Lake had authority to close its gates whilst essential work was being done to protect the area and the community it has brought a peaceful environment to all. The team would like to thank the community personally for their ongoing support and patience whilst we worked, and continue to work, towards a solution. Ultimately Thames Valley Police did not want to take anything away from the community, although we felt it was essential for us to support the Lake's decision to close to prevent any harm coming to anyone.

A decision has not been made as yet as to how the Lake will reopen, and a request has been made for involvement in this decision so as to continue to help the community. We truly hope we are not faced with similar scenes to those in the Summer of 2020 or in previous years, and we will do all we can to support the Lake and the Community so we don't face that challenge again. We really recognise the efforts made by the Lake, and hopefully we will see the improvements in the coming months, years and so on.

Generally, Dorney is a very quiet and peaceful location, We would urge anyone who has concerns about suspicious behaviour, anti-social behaviour and obstructive parking to keep us informed via 101, or 999 in an emergency or when a crime is in progress.

St Peters Park, Burnham

We have had reports of Anti-Social Behaviour and criminal damage in St Peters Park and the Stomping Ground. If you experience or see any kind of Anti-Social incidents occurring, then please call Police on 101 or 999 if criminal damage is occurring at the time. We will be conducting patrols around these areas.

River Road/Mill Lane, Taplow

The NH team have been working closely with residents and Council to try to resolve issues of ASB around River Road and Mill Lane, Taplow. Due to COVID19, and the recent heatwave, there has been an increase of visitors to these locations.

Statement from Chris Green, Community Safety Manager, Buckinghamshire Council -

'Buckinghamshire Council and the Police are working together to problem solve this issue which we know is affecting the quality of life of local residents and those that wish to enjoy this area.

This is a complex issue in relation to the ownership of land alongside the River Thames because this land is owned and managed by private residents, Bucks Council and Network Rail, each with differing land management obligations and associated issues like maintenance and litter waste management. There are also Rights of Way across this land which we have to take into consideration. Bucks Council Estates department is investigating further these land issues.

Action taken to date by the Council:

1. Ensuring regular bin waste collections and litter picking takes place.
2. Ensuring the 2 damaged 'Life belt' stations have been re-sited and buried deeper in the ground, to prevent removal and general maintenance repairs completed.
3. Liaising with Network rail to have the 'Graffiti' removed from the Bridge, repair pathway areas and deal with individuals who trespass on the railway bridge.
4. Considering improving warning signage in relation to anti-social behaviour and swimming in the river.
5. Exploring other Community Safety measures, for example CCTV and Parking restrictions.
6. Working in partnership with the Police to deal proactively with Anti-Social behaviour issues.

We would like to assure residents we are doing all we can to improve this situation and we are in regular contact with Councillor Sandy.

Priority Three – Speeding

The NH Teams have been out and about across the area carrying out speeding operations. In addition, we now have two very active Community Speed Watch teams.

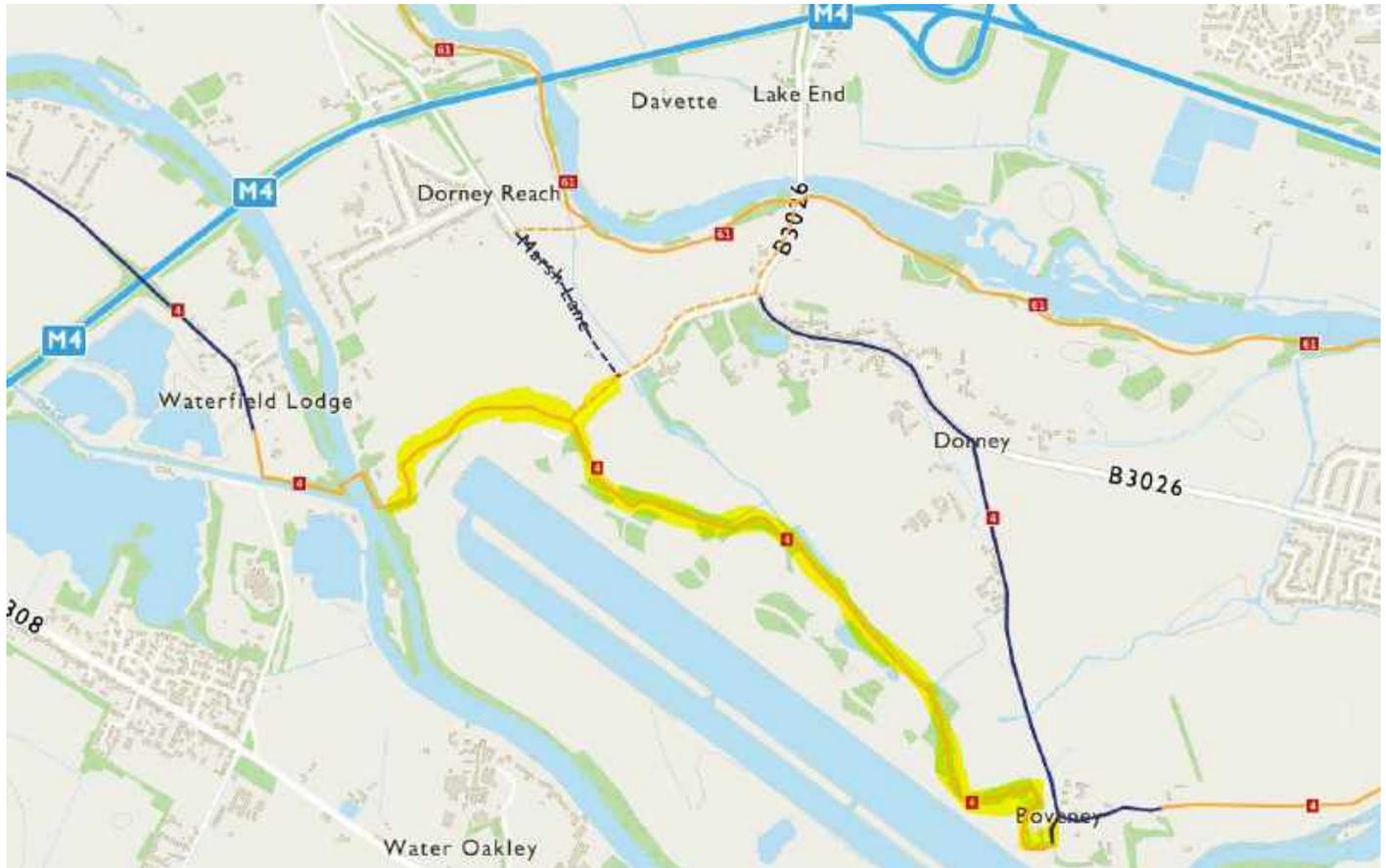
This is a great opportunity for residents who wish to volunteer their time to monitor speeding in areas highlighted for concern by fellow residents. If you are interested in helping out, then please contact the team or your local Parish Council.

Other News

PCSO Paul Austin has now moved to Gerrard's Cross/Denham and has been replaced by PCSO Kam Benawra who has joined us from Iver as the new PCSO for Burnham.

The Saga of the Cycle Path!

I've always been fascinated by maps. I like walking locally and when I realised that I was possibly going to have to share my walks along the very narrow Thames Path by Dorney Reach with cyclists, I thought it was time to do something about it!



From my research I discovered certain things -

The National Cycle Paths in our area are Routes 4 and 61. There were 3 problems arising from the closure of the Route 4 around the perimeter of Dorney Lake.

- 1) Route 4 had been interrupted in both directions from Bray to Boveney Lock. The route which it had previously taken around the outside of Dorney Lake's land, crossing the main driveway just NE of the carpark was no longer open.
- 2) The join between Route 4 and Route 61 going from Bray in the West to the Jubilee River in the East was originally over the Summerleaze Bridge again around the end of Dorney Lake on the outer path and then up the main drive to the front gates. Here they would either turn left up Marsh Lane to turn right across the field path to the Jubilee River or continue up Court Lane turning left up Lake End Road to join the Jubilee River there.
- 3) And in the opposite direction from the Jubilee River to cross the Thames at the Summerleaze Bridge to join up with Monkey Island Lane and onwards towards Bray and Maidenhead, the cyclists arriving at the main gate to the Lake and with no entry, needed redirection.

To begin with I was aware that there were more cycles along the Thames Path between the Summerleaze Bridge and Trumpers Field, in both directions, and even as far as where Amerden Lane comes to the River just south of Bray Lock. Then I saw the new security guards at Dorney Lake Main Gates directing cyclists up Marsh Lane towards Harcourt

Road, Oak Stubbs Lane and the Village Hall. And then I heard tales of people meeting pairs and groups of cyclists trying to get to the Thames Path via the snicket at the end of Harcourt Road.

Looking carefully at the notices at the Main gate of Dorney Lake I read a notice telling me that 'Sustrans' were the people to contact about the cycle paths. So, I contacted Sustrans to ask what was being done about rerouting cyclists. I was quite surprised by their response, they told me that they had only just found out about the closures themselves, so I went out walking and photographing paths and signs and spent time looking at their maps and sending them messages about alternatives.

Sustrans also had local members who made suggestions as did Eton College but when submitted to Bucks Council they came up against a problem – "Bucks Council weren't willing to approve the diversion along the Thames Path as they are not the landowners and were mindful of previous issues there." Looking carefully at the map I realised that it would be impossible to get permission for any route which involved the footpath from the Summerleaze Bridge in the direction of Dorney Reach – it actually seems to include land owned by about 14 different landowners and this part of the Thames Path is also marked as No Cycling anyway.

The alternative route along the Thames Path to the South East of the crossing at the Summerleaze Bridge was private land and luckily owned by Eton College and another two landowners only. The opening of this alternative Route was comparatively easy – and the path itself although not ideal for cycling is mostly a reasonable width for both walkers and cycles to use. (1) Sorted!

The join between Route 4 and Route 61 going from Bray in the West to the Jubilee River in the East (2) was a little more complicated – they could follow the route for (1) but divert from the Thames path at or just before Boveney Lock and return to the main road across Dorney Common then via Village Road and Lake End Road to join up with Route 61 along the Jubilee River just before the Pineapple.

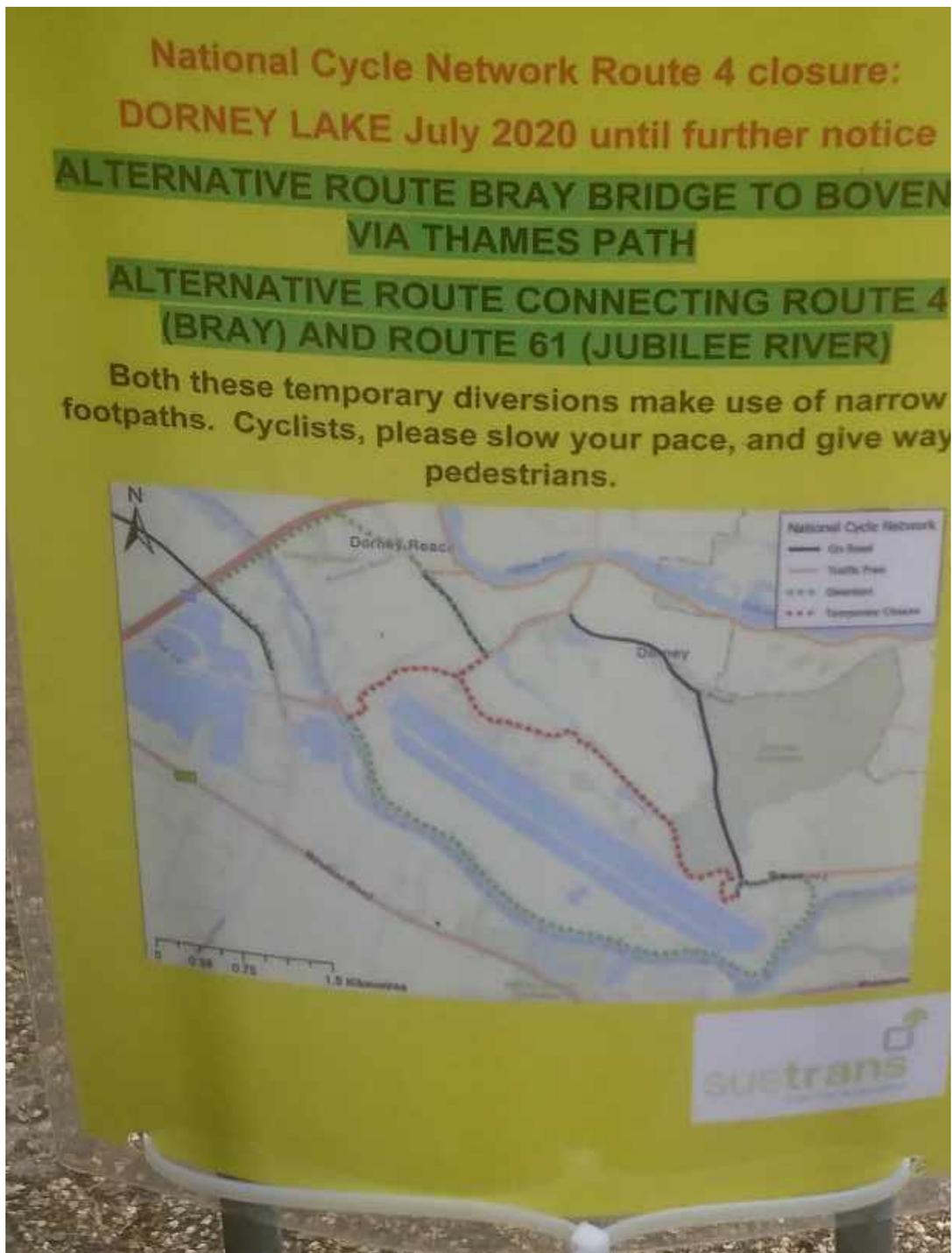
The alternative route was the reverse of what became the solution for (3) when cyclists trying to join Route 4 from Route 61 needed to get to Monkey Island Lane and onwards, these cyclists arrived at the main gate to the Lake and needed redirection.

This was where another problem arose! Due to an initial misunderstanding the Security Staff were sending cyclists up Marsh Lane to Harcourt Road where they rode down to the snicket in Dorney Reach Road because "a lady who lives in Harcourt Road said there was a snicket that would give the cyclists access to the Thames Path"! When I explained how narrow it was and that it then took the cyclists to a part of the path that didn't join up with any bridge and wasn't really suitable for cyclists anyway, they were happy to revise their advice.

So a new route was proposed, approved, and new maps were placed in strategic places to show these more 'serious' cyclists how they could traverse from the Jubilee River (Route 61) to Bray (Route 4).

There are now approximately 9 of these maps – sometimes in two's in useful places but sometimes not easy to see – at least Sustrans have tried!

For those of you that find this map not as clear – or who come across a cyclist asking for directions the route is as follows.



From the Dorney Lake Entrance continue on the road up March Lane (N), Take the 2nd left turn into Oak Stubbs Lane. Follow this to where it meets the Motorway and there follow signs for Monkey Island along the footpath that runs along the southern side of the motorway. This paved footpath although narrow, is reasonable straight with good sightlines and crosses the Thames to join Monkey Island Lane. A right turn at this point will take them towards Bray and Maidenhead along Route 4.

I was so pleased that this was all sorted that I wrote and thanked both my contacts at Sustrans and at Dorney Lake for a good conclusion to the problems of lost cyclists!

Too Soon! The entrance to the Village Hall and the start of the footpath along beside the Motorway have been diverted! – this is definitely an ongoing Saga – hopefully soon Dorney Lake will reopen the Cycle Routes and all will return to comparatively normal!

Thea Pine

Swan Support to the rescue!

We'd like to say a big 'thank you' to Wendy, Steve and Harry for the fantastic work they do in looking after the swans and water birds on The River Thames, Jubilee River and elsewhere.

Our family alone have made several calls for assistance over the past months - one for a Canada goose who was so bound in fishing wire and a hook big enough to catch a large salmon. It was stranded and would have died on the towpath. Also a poor young swan who seemed to have lost its way and crash landed in the barley stubble at Boveney and was unable to take off.



Every cry for help is attended, assistance given and any interested youngsters get the benefit of being close to and learning about these creatures.

I know it's been a busy summer for them all but help is always at hand.

If you see an injured swan or have any concerns about a swan, please call **07968 868172** or **01628 876336**, or email **info@swansupport.org.uk**

Jill Dax



Please feed our swans! Wendy from Swan Support (www.swansupport.org.uk) has been spreading the word that it's OK to feed bread to our swans.... and lots of other food too.

Our swan numbers are down as sadly some have flown elsewhere and permanently moved, searching for food.

Swans, ducks and geese need a variety of foods to keep them fit and healthy.



- Bread
- Wheat
- Leafy Greens
- Dried Grass
- Grains and Cereals
- Swan food or pellets

Swan Feeding Tips

- Feed small amounts at a time, making sure all food has been eaten before giving more.
- Always feed on water.
- Never feed them anything that has gone mouldy.
- Please remember to feed responsibly and follow any guidelines in your area

Paws for Thought on Dorney Common

As 2020 takes its stride through summer, the scorch of mid-August burnt brown our green common as temperatures soared. Relentlessly night and day there was no respite, as our bodies became lethargic with tempers flammable. I noticed in particular, that whilst writing my work reports or some such, my brain refused to engage with my fingertips on the keyboard. Brain freeze is one thing but this was cranial collapse; my head now finally contained pulp fiction.

Better news, as the months roll by, is that scientific knowledge on handling Covid is improving, understanding much better the method of spread along with developing medical proficiency. The cyberchondriacs can now relax slightly and spend less time on the web dissecting statistics and whacky prevention theories.

Here at the cottage, our garden projects were finally completed just before the heatwave hit, to transfer our energies to becoming soak slaves to drench our plants and quench the veggies, as both gasp in the harsh arid heat. So, whilst my husband Dave, as an essential worker, drives his laden van around Kent each day to service failing equipment in care homes, much time for me was spent at home working or wiling the time away in the garden with a hose.



My incumbent friend, my dear little brown cat Treacle, a rescue from Ashford RSPCA, is such a good companion during the long stretch of the day. Sadly, she has a critical heart condition, so must take three tablets a day to survive. Not an easy task as cats only eat what they want and can be very sniffy if it doesn't smell quite right. Although not a lap cat, she sits near at hand, usually inside an empty box or needling my best jumper with her paws. As I pause each day to reflect progress, we sit in the garden, amid the blooms in a shady spot, to appreciate life and the meaning it gives.

Outside my day job, and when not in the garden, since social life was somewhat curtailed, my time is spent mostly finishing off old creative projects that had been left abandoned in some corner to gather dust in my craft studio (my son's old bedroom). This is what textile artists call 'works in progress' but in truth they are items that have suffered stitcher's fade (writers block). Many have sat there for decades, idling in the hope that they may one day arrive to a significant conclusion. Well, this was the ideal opportunity to clear the clutter.

So, thimble on thumb and needle threaded, one by one they were inspected, reviewed, and finished. A good feeling of accomplishment as the cat looked on with purrs of encouragement, and gradually they were completed and became ready for mounting. Now this mount technique might appear slightly mysterious but is comprised of at least 3 hours of torturous pulling and stretching to achieve a smooth finish to the fabric, over a double piece of mountboard. The cat sleeps companionably in a comfy spot, observing the scene with one eye open, usually curled up in my old remnants' basket.

At the Maidenhead Drama Guild, and similarly the Dorney Horticultural Society, both lie mothballed until restrictions are lifted, which will sadly not be for the foreseeable future. With funds plummeting at the drama guild, we applied for a grant to The Prince Philip Trust Fund, chaired by the Duke of Wessex, who very kindly sent a very encouraging letter along with a grant allocation of £1000, which was most gratefully received. This should see us through until Panto 2021, which then hopefully replenishes our coffers. A desperate time for the Arts, and all associated entertainment and societies.

However, optimism still prevailing, with a friend who is an accomplished actress (and a very lovely lady), we have decided to put on a joint production of 'Abigail's Party' sometime in the New Year. Sometime over the rainbow! This will be a simplified version (virtually bare stage) so that we will be able to perform it open air or in our home rehearsal studio, although it will no doubt be confined to members only or limited numbers. Interestingly, this little play written by Mike Leigh, contains much language that slid away with that era, expressions no longer used, which presented a slight dilemma. In the end we decided to keep it intact - it is what it is, of the time, not particularly offensive, just phrases that are now obsolete as life and understanding moves on.

Another diversion which continues is my regular ride with the Light Cavalry, and a joy to be on the back of a horse, escaping in the solitude for a short while. I surprised myself how easy it was to adapt to each new horse, as support riders must tack up and be able to ride alone. One morning, as the temperatures touched 30 degrees, riding Lexi a lovely forward going black mare, we passed the York Club in Windsor Great Park, and desperately required shade in the midday sun. I remembered some old footpaths that I hadn't been down for many years. They were still there and still wonderful, meandering through a long leafy copse. Alone with one's thoughts with the comforting rhythmic thud of hooves, one man and his dog, but here, one older woman and her horse. The pleasure was all mine as the pause in the day brought clarity to thoughts.

Back home, returning with the glow of the day and the sweat of the saddle, my husband Dave has mopped up eleventy-eight garden chores while I had sauntered slowly through the Park. His sweaty brow meets my glowing one to ask if it is time for lunch. As they say, always keep your face forwards to the sun then the shadows will stay behind you, or as my husband says, ever optimistic, these are the best days of our lives. He is right, we have a chance to regroup, to be more considerate, to start again in the freshness that will hopefully follow.

The Garden of Tranquillity is finished, and within it lies an assortment of vegetables, pretty cottage flowers and an oak bench that now receives visitors, human and feline, to sit upon it and contemplate in the stillness. As the seasons change, we hope that pathways are found to combat this change of life, a worldwide menopause, where everything corrects itself to a new balance.

Kristina Perkins

BEECHES COMMUNITY BOARD



Cllr David Anthony - Chairman of Beeches Community Board

A new way to tackle the issues that matter most to our community

There is a new way to tackle the issues that matter most to our community – through Buckinghamshire Council's new Community Boards. The boards will connect local people, organisations and groups with the council to improve our local areas. Beeches Community Board covers the Burnham, Dorney, Farnham, Stoke Poges and Taplow areas and held an introductory meeting in July to start this conversation. Over the next few weeks organisers will be getting people, groups and organisations in the community involved and helping to identify our key priorities ahead of the official launch in September. Everyone is welcome - read on to find out more about what the board will do, how it will work and how you can get involved.

What is a Community Board?

Beeches Community Board will identify the themes and issues that most need to be addressed for this area and create an action plan to do this, with working groups to look at specific projects and issues. The board will:

- represent the voices of local people;
- capture thoughts, ideas and suggestions in new ways;
- enable local conversations about priorities;
- identify needs within local communities and work to produce creative solutions;
- explore areas of interest;
- influence how decisions are made and public services are delivered.

How does it work?

Partnerships created in response to Covid-19 are enabling the new Community Boards to quickly get up and running. All boards have a leader, as well as a coordinator who makes sure local people, groups and organisations feel connected with the boards and the council, ensuring information is shared and views are heard.

There will be a mixture of core meetings and working groups who will focus on a specific issue or local project. Core meetings will agree priorities, allocate funding and feed back on the plan of action. Anyone who wants to get involved won't need to attend every session. You'll be able to read the agendas and minutes online and can participate in the issues that you feel passionate about. You can join meetings, or take part in a specific priority or project working group. You can complete surveys, take part in polls or share your views.

Who's in the Beeches Community Board?

The chairman for Beeches is Councillor David Anthony, who like all of the boards' chairs is a member of Buckinghamshire Council. The vice chairman is Councillor Barbara Gibbs and its dedicated coordinator is Jack Pearce.

If you'd like to get involved, email localities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or visit www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-boards



Buckinghamshire Council

Beeches Community Board

Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of the Beeches Community Board held on Wednesday 8 July 2020 in Via Microsoft Teams, commencing at 2.00 pm and concluding at 3.42 pm

Members present

D Anthony, R Bagge, M Bezzant, J Carey (Burham Parish Council), D Dhillon, T Egleton, B Gibbs, J Hall (Farnham Royal Parish Council), K Harris (Dorney Parish Council), L Hazell, P Kelly, M Lewis, C Linton (Burnham Parish Council), S Lynch (Stoke Poges Parish Council), N Naylor, D Pepler, M Rolfe (Farnham Royal Parish Council), G Sandy and A Silver (Taplow Parish Council)

Others in attendance

Tiffany Birch (Consultant in Public Health), Tom Fowler (Democratic Services Officer), Simon Garwood (Localism Manager for the South) and Jack Pearce (Community Board Coordinator for Beeches)

Apologies

S Moffat (Dorney Parish Council)

Agenda Item

1 Apologies

Apologies had been received from S Moffat.

2 Welcomes and Introductions

The chairman welcomed the members and guests to the first Beeches Community Board meeting.

Members introduced themselves and Jack Pearce introduced himself as the Community Board Co-ordinator.

3 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4 Community Board Overview

The Community Board Co-ordinator gave an overview of the Community Board and its functions.

- The Board would aim to collaborate with local stakeholders and engage with the community.
- The core membership is composed of the Buckinghamshire Councillors for the Beeches

area, and standing invitations to meetings would be made to Parish Council representatives and other partner organisations; however, the Board is open to anyone who wishes to contribute.

- Beeches Community Board had been allocated £86,000 from the Community Area Priority fund and £27,500 from the Health and wellbeing fund. It had received £0 from the Local infrastructure fund. It was noted that only 50% of the allocated Community Area Priority Fund could be used for Highways matters
- An aim to build upon the connections formed in the Local Community during the Covid-19 crisis.

5 Reflections on Covid-19

The Consultant in Public Health gave an overview of the Public health situation within the Beeches Community area.

- Statistics about the Community Area were noted by the Members of the Board.
- Obesity, mental health issues and rates of degenerative diseases were higher than the average for the County.
- Loneliness for those aged 65 and above was an issue within the area.

Reflecting upon Covid-19, the Board observed the following.

- There was a notable loss of confidence and mobility during the lockdown which would not be easy to re-acquire.
- Some individuals/families were more isolated due to low profile and not naturally joining.
- A multi-faceted approach would be required to restore confidence and engagement.

6 Local Priority Setting

The Community Board considered what the priorities for the Community Board moving forward should be. The following issues were discussed and suggested as possible priorities.

- Highways & Infrastructure issues, including speeding, road disrepair, footpaths, vegetation overgrowth and noise.
- Health and social care, including obesity, mental health provision, social care for the elderly and youth provision.
- Environmental concerns linked to mental health
- Community re-engagement following COVID-19
- Establishment of sub-groups (suggested groups to include Infrastructure and Health & Social Care)

Action:

- **Jack to liaise with chairman and members to establish sub-groups and agree membership**
- **Jack to formulate action plan with priorities and circulate prior to September meeting**

VILLAGE HALL NEWS

As many of you will be aware, Dorney village hall had to close in late March due to Covid-19. During lockdown, the hall unfortunately suffered further vandalism resulting in more broken windows and a surfeit of fly tipping from people who seem to think the area around the hall is a good place to dump their rubbish. Please do keep your eyes open for any further incidents.

We were able to reopen, cautiously, at the beginning of August, and welcomed a children's summer sports activity for the holidays. It was good to see the hall being used again! We expect a gradual return of some of the regular activities in the autumn.

However, things are not what they used to be. Capacity of the hall at present is limited to 25 to allow for social distancing and anyone using the hall aged 12 or over must wear a face covering unless eating or drinking or taking exercise. We have had to take down the curtains and place the new fabric covered chairs out of bounds, as these are considered to be a virus transmission risk.

We have done our best to make the hall a safe environment, and any hirer must sign up to specific Covid-19 terms and conditions, as well as prepare their own risk assessment for their specific event. During the preparation for reopening and since, the rules we must follow have been copious and ever-changing. Realistically, we can expect further changes in the months ahead.

Not surprisingly, in this situation we have abandoned the idea of holding an AGM this year, so you will be spared my usual exhortations to attend!

Virginia Silvester
Secretary, Dorney Village Hall Management Committee
virginia@dorneyphoto.com

The Dorney Reach defibrillator – don't forget the keycode!



The Community Access Defibrillator is installed on the side of the Village Hall near the Playground Tuck Shop.

Should you need to use it, the defibrillator will lead you through the necessary steps.

The defibrillator case is locked. The keycode is **C123X**.

The information has been added to the Local Issues page on the Parish Council website so that it is always available.

Dorney Parish News will continue to provide Keycode details.

The Defibrillator in the old phone box on Village Road does not require a Keycode.

DORNEY SCHOOL



RESPECT * COLLABORATE * GROW

An emotional start of the school year at Dorney School

A range of emotions travel through my mind as I write this today. First and foremost, an excitement that school will re-open fully to our pupils on Thursday 3rd September at 8.30 am. We will all be re-united after nearly 6 long months for most children, and their teachers not to be at school. However, dispel the myth that we were ever shut. Dorney School, like most schools, was open throughout lockdown for our key worker children. We had a steady number of pupils in every day whilst their parents served the nation amidst an invisible killer disease. My gratitude goes out to each and every one of our NHS workers who has put themselves on the frontline. We also opened our doors for the last few weeks of the summer term to our Year 6 pupils and a limited number of Year 1. The experience gave us a valuable understanding of the logistics and organisation that will have to be in place to open the school in the next few days to nearly 200 pupils and more than 20 staff.

With the excitement comes the anxiety as more last-minute government guidance describes further steps schools will have to take. The organisation that will happen if someone at school shows the symptoms of Covid. We have planned for four scenarios (full opening, part opening, rota system and full lockdown) and each one comes with its own risks and benefits. As a school, we are confident we will do what is right by our children, their families, and the community. My hope is that we will not need to put three of those scenarios into action.

I also feel fear that some pupils may have faced true hardship because of COVID. Most would have stayed safe and secure with their immediate families, but some may have been affected by family members being extremely ill and parents facing employment losses. We are a caring school and throughout lockdown our staff made sure they telephoned families every week to 'check in' on pupils. For the pupils at home, teachers delivered daily lessons in the form of online learning. Staff had to learn very quickly how to adapt to this new way of teaching and learning. I felt pride – we rose to the challenge and everyone contributed in ensuring the Dorney school family was well supported.

I feel love. As a school, we have led with love and compassion and we will carry on leading with love and compassion. There will be many key changes to the school day and every decision has been made with the pupil and staff best interests at heart. We hope that our changes will not affect any residents as there will be slight staggered start and dismissal times at school. All our parents have been encouraged to park in the Trumper's Field car park, observe social distancing, be mindful of the local community and drive slowly, and with consideration, in the areas around school.

The changes also mean that pupils will be limited to staying in their classrooms and movements around school will be restricted. There will be no 'Walk to School' and no extra clubs or after school activities to reduce to reduce the risk of infection. All parents will have

DORNEY SCHOOL



RESPECT * COLLABORATE * GROW

to wear a mask when arriving at school and will not be allowed in the school building. In fact, the saddest part of the decision we had to take, is that we cannot have any visitors in school for the foreseeable future. This is so different from our normal daily routines. I am, however, confident that we can review and reverse some of these actions when the R rate has sufficiently reduced so that we all can return to some form of normality. Let us all hope for a vaccine to be available soon.

I wish every reader well and hope that life has been kind and will continue to be kind to you. Dorney School is proud to be a part of its local community and we hope that you will find the time to come and visit us one day, when it is safe enough to do so.

Mrs Sharifah Lee, Deputy Headteacher, Dorney School, 30th August 2020

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NATURE NOTES

Almost a quarter of the UK's forty-seven native mammals are now said to be at risk of imminent extinction, according to a new university study. In total, 11 mammals are on the country's first official Red List of the endangered species, compiled according to internationally agreed rules.

The wild cat and the greater mouse-eared bat are classified as critically endangered, whilst the beaver, red squirrel, water vole and grey eared bat are threatened along with the hedgehog, hazel dormouse, Orkney vole, serotine and barbastelle bats which are classified as vulnerable. Although each species is facing its own particular risks, the study team's report claims a common theme is that for wild animals to flourish it is imperative we create more connected areas of wild landscape for them to live in.



Beaver



Water Vole



Hedgehog



Hazel Dormouse

"Whilst we bemoan the demise of wildlife in other parts of the world, here in Britain we are managing to send even rodents towards extinction" claimed Professor Mathews of the University of Sussex, who led the studies. "Things have to change rapidly if we want our children and grandchildren to enjoy the wildlife that we take for granted".

We are fortunate indeed that the Dorney parish offers a rich and varied environment, including management of the key water resources, the River Thames, Eton Rowing Lake and the Jubilee River, together with agriculture, and common land. The climate, tranquillity and air quality are fundamental to the visual impact. The composition, size, and colour of vegetation has a direct bearing on the richness and diversity of, for example, the bird insect and animal life. Hopefully in the 21st century a harmonious blend of the natural and materialistic will be achieved and sustained for posterity.

Wayfarer



The Parish Pump

A summary of the July 2020 Dorney Parish Council Virtual Meeting

This meeting was held as an online event on July 14th.

Full Minutes of this meeting plus the full Minutes of past Parish Council meetings can be found on www.dorney.org.uk

Beeches Community Board – a roundabout plus speed limits

Our county councillor, Dev Dhillon, had attended the first meeting of the Beeches Community Board which is an innovation introduced by the new Unitary Authority. He had put forward proposals for a Speed Review of Lake End Road/Court Lane/Marsh Lane and for a roundabout at the junction of Court Lane with Village Road/Lake End Road. Cllr Dhillon suggested a petition in support of the roundabout which Cllr Purdie offered to set up. Cllr Harris had also attended the Board which lasted two hours and he thought unproductive. However, the Board was setting up a Traffic Sub-Group and he had offered to join it to campaign for the Speeding Survey and the proposed Dorney roundabout. Cllr Foxley asked for a sign for Dorney School to be added to this group's agenda. Cllr Harris explained that he will attend the Board as a spokesman for our Parish Council, but other parish councillors may only attend as observers. The Board was debating whether parish councils would have a vote. For traffic projects costing in the region of £26k plus, smaller councils like Dorney's would not be able to afford match funding if that were required.

Eton Rowing Lake

Cllrs Harris, Foxley and Dhillon had attended two meetings at Dorney Lake. Eton College have applied for official closures of the footpath and cycle path which would be lifted once the fence has been erected around the Lake, which will be closed until September. Cllr Dax expressed her unhappiness with the way that Eton College had handled the closures without lawful planning permission – the correct paper work was only submitted after the closures had taken place so the lawful closure of the paths would not take effect until July 17th. She said that Dorney residents had not been kept informed of these closures. Other councillors disagreed – Cllr Dhillon said that the footpaths had to be closed quickly because of the exceptional circumstances and Cllr Purdie agreed that the College had to take immediate action because the crowds of lake visitors created an uncontrollable situation which caused havoc to Dorney residents. Cllr Harris supported these views and thanked Eton College for the swift action it had taken. Cllr Foxley was sorting out the availability of parking in Court Lane for church visitors with the Police and Bucks Council. Two complaints had been received from residents over this closure of footpaths and cycle tracks.

Jubilee Car Park

The rubbish accumulating around the bins is very unsightly. Cllr Smith said that it was the Environment Agency who empty the bin. Cllr Dax would contact the EA and find out if more bins would be possible to alleviate the situation. Some discussion took place about increasing the size of the car park. It was agreed that this would only increase the amount of rubbish accumulating plus anti-social behaviour, so the car park was best left as it was.

M4 Smart Motorway

Matt Orchard of Balfour Beatty had sent a written report. The Marsh Lane bridge deck had been concreted and the parapet installed. The deck is planned to be waterproofed in the next week. The sheet piling to the south is complete and all the pre-cast L-shaped retaining wall sections have been placed to the north. There are still some in-situ concrete works to be done north of

the motorway. The approach embankments are being built up. Once they are completed the drainage, kerbing and surfacing to footways and carriageway will be placed. Thames Water are due on site by mid-August to divert the water supply from its temporary route onto the new bridge. This should be completed by early September. It is all on track for being opened to traffic by the end of September. The site team have been reminded to make sure that as much site traffic as is practicable arrives and leaves via the motorway but with the increase in the number of operations taking place and the increase in the number of light vehicles there will be some increase in light vehicle traffic on the local roads. Heavy vehicles should use the motorway access for as long as is practicable but as the embankments and new footways and carriageway take shape, the access to the motorway will eventually be blocked by the new works.

Ashford Lane flooding

Cllr Harris had met with a resident whose garden was badly flooded. Cllr Dhillon was pursuing the matter. He had asked the Environment Officer to investigate if the flooding is caused by any activity at Orchard Herbs Farm and he had informed the Head of Enforcement. Cllr Dax said that the ditch at Roundmoor Weir is very overgrown and could be affecting water levels. Cllr Dhillon would check this with the Environment Agency.

Village Road

In answer to a member of the public's points, Cllr Dhillon will be chasing up the resurfacing of Village Road.

Emergency Plan

Cllr Smith had circulated a draft emergency plan. He had based it on the idea that in the event of a disaster with no electricity/internet etc. there would be a need of a 'people network' of communication whereby the whole community is involved to work positively together. Cllr Dax suggested that the Plan developed by Plumtree PC in Nottinghamshire was seen as a good Emergency Plan template. Cllr Smith would review this to see if it is suitable for Dorney. (see <https://www.plumtreeparishcouncil.org.uk/emergency-plan.asp>)

Neighbourhood Plans, Parish Plans and Village Appraisals

Cllr Smith will ask a Planning Officer to give a presentation at the next PC meeting on what is involved in such plans. It was noted that before the production of the last Parish Plan in 2005, a Village Appraisal was carried out in 2002.

Other Issues – Telephone Box, Litter Pickers, Nextdoor, Grounds man

The red telephone box has been painted and looks very good. Cllr Harris has purchased litter pickers which have been welcomed by volunteers. More litter pickers were still needed. The grounds man was thanked for keeping Dorney neat, tidy and litter free in these difficult times.

In discussion of a resident's letter which stressed the usefulness of Nextdoor, Cllr Foxley said she had posted on behalf of Dorney Parish Council an explanation to residents that Nextdoor is not the correct platform for all councillors to be using and that she was DPC's representative for posting helpful communications on this platform.

Next Meeting

The next virtual zoom meeting is at 8pm on September 8th, 2020



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Dorney Parish News

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