

Dorney in 1967: A Year of Transition and Community Building

The *Dorney Parish News* issues from January to February 1967 offer a snapshot of village life, characterised by a blend of traditional religious practices, active social organisations, and the emergence of local issues that would shape the community's future.

Key Themes:

- **A Strong Church Presence:** The Parish Church of St. James is a vital hub of activity in Dorney. The *Parish News* meticulously outlines upcoming services, special events (like the Epiphany service and the Family Eucharist), and calls for financial contributions. The publication also highlights baptisms and confirmations, underscoring the church's role in marking important life events.
- **Engaged Community Organisations:** Several organisations contribute to Dorney's social fabric. The Women's Institute (WI) holds meetings featuring diverse speakers and organises outings, reflecting a commitment to both learning and leisure. The Horticultural Society fosters a shared passion for gardening, organising shows and providing information about upcoming events.
- **The *Parish News* as a Platform for Discussion:** The publication features "Letters to the Editor," providing a space for residents to voice their opinions and concerns. Notably, discussions arise regarding stray dogs, the need for increased road safety measures, and the preservation of Dorney's rural character in the face of development.
- **Early Stages of Key Issues:** The seeds of issues that would dominate later years are evident in 1967:
 - The need for a **new village hall** is acknowledged, with the existing hall described as "four years old instead of forty."
 - **Traffic safety** concerns are raised, particularly regarding the junction of Marsh Lane and the A4.

Notable Events and Developments:

- **Parish Council Elections:** The *Parish News* provides a platform for candidates to share their biographies and messages to electors, highlighting the importance of local governance and civic engagement.
- **Christian Stewardship Development Campaign:** The church launches a campaign to increase financial contributions and encourage active participation in church life. The *Parish News* emphasises the spiritual dimension of this effort, urging residents to consider their relationship with God and the church.
- **Dorney Common Management:** The *Parish News* reports on the management of the common land, including the grazing season, fertiliser applications, and plans for registration under the Commons Registration Act. The publication also highlights a proposed gas pipeline project that would cross the common, foreshadowing future debates about development and land use.

A Glimpse into Daily Life:

- The *Parish News* features advertisements for local businesses, providing a window into the commercial landscape of Dorney. These advertisements range from butchers and builders to riding schools and dairy producers, reflecting the diversity of services available to residents.

- The publication includes reports on the "Weather of the Month," offering a glimpse into the day-to-day experiences of Dorney residents and their connection to the natural environment.

Dorney in 1967 is a community undergoing a period of transition. While rooted in traditional religious and social structures, the village grapples with emerging challenges related to development, road safety, and the need for updated community facilities. The *Dorney Parish News* emerges as a crucial platform for facilitating these discussions, informing residents, and fostering a sense of collective identity in the face of change.