

## Summary of Key Events and Issues in Dorney Parish in 2013

The year 2013 in Dorney Parish was shaped by the **aftermath of the 2012 Olympics**, ongoing efforts to **improve community facilities**, and persistent concerns about **traffic, parking, and infrastructure**. The *Dorney Parish News* provides a rich chronicle of village life, capturing the triumphs, challenges, and everyday experiences of Dorney residents. Here is a summary of key events and issues from 2013, as documented in the provided source:

### Dorney Lake: Post-Olympic Reality and Uncertainties

- **Delayed Reopening:** After hosting the rowing events during the 2012 Olympics, Dorney Lake remained closed to the public for much of 2013, causing frustration among residents who had hoped for a more accessible legacy. Eton College, which owns the lake, cited the need to restore the site and control access.
- **Parking and Traffic Concerns:** The popularity of Dorney Lake, even with limited public access, led to increased traffic and parking issues, particularly on event days. Residents complained about congested roads, inconsiderate parking, and safety hazards.
- **Limited Olympic Legacy:** Residents expressed disappointment that the Olympics had not delivered a more tangible legacy for Dorney, beyond the rowing venue itself. There was a sense that the village had borne the brunt of the Games' impact without reaping significant benefits.

### Village Hall Refurbishment: A Long-Awaited Project Gains Momentum

- **Fundraising Efforts:** The Dorney Village Hall Management Committee (DVHMC) continued its fundraising efforts to support the much-needed refurbishment of the Village Hall. They secured a donation from the Dorney Lake Trustees and applied for grants from organisations like Veolia.
- **Planning and Preparation:** Throughout the year, the DVHMC worked diligently to finalise plans, obtain quotes from builders, and secure funding for the project. The refurbishment aimed to modernise the hall and create a more functional and welcoming space for community activities.
- **Loan Negotiations and Financial Challenges:** The Parish Council engaged in discussions with the DVHMC about the financing of the refurbishment project. The possibility of a loan from the Public Works Loan Board was explored, raising concerns about the impact on the parish precept (local tax).

### Broadband: Slow Speeds Remain a Major Issue

- **Frustration with Limited Connectivity:** Residents expressed frustration with the slow broadband speeds in Dorney, particularly in areas like the Common end of Dorney Village. The lack of reliable high-speed internet access hampered residents' ability to work from home, access online services, and keep pace with the digital world.
- **Hopes for Superfast Broadband:** There was hope that Dorney would benefit from the rollout of superfast broadband as an Olympic legacy, but progress was slow, leading to disappointment.

### Traffic and Parking: Persistent Problems and Community Debate

- **Congestion and Inconsiderate Parking:** Residents frequently complained about traffic congestion and inconsiderate parking throughout the parish. The narrow roads and

limited parking spaces struggled to accommodate the growing number of vehicles, particularly during events at Dorney Lake.

- **School Run Parking Issues:** Parking problems were particularly acute around Dorney Reach School, where parents dropping off and picking up children often parked inconsiderately, blocking roads and creating safety hazards. The school and the Neighbourhood Policing Team worked together to address the situation.
- **Parish Council Explores Solutions:** The Parish Council acknowledged the traffic and parking concerns and sought solutions, including the possibility of installing bollards and requesting donations to repair damaged verges.

### **Community Life: A Tapestry of Events, Activities, and Local Pride**

- **Dorney Horticultural Society Celebrates 60 Years:** The Dorney & District Horticultural Society (DDHS) marked its 60th anniversary with a successful Horticultural Show, showcasing the village's vibrant gardening tradition. The society hosted a variety of other events throughout the year, fostering community spirit and celebrating local talent.
- **Best Kept Village Competition:** Dorney participated in the Buckinghamshire Best Kept Village competition, receiving a Certificate of Merit for its efforts. Resident Nick Teale, who coordinated Dorney's entry, encouraged residents to take pride in their village and contribute to its upkeep.
- **Church and Community Events:** The Parish Church of St. James the Less continued to be a focal point for community life, hosting services, concerts, and social gatherings. The church tower restoration project was ongoing. Lent lunches, organised by residents, brought people together for a good cause.
- **Community Clean-up Efforts:** Residents participated in a community clean-up of the riverbank, demonstrating their commitment to keeping Dorney beautiful. Concerns about litter and vandalism persisted, however.
- **Dorney Court Kitchen Garden: A Local Gem:** The Dorney Court Kitchen Garden (DCKG) offered a range of events and activities, attracting visitors and contributing to the village's charm.

### **Other Notable Events and Issues**

- **New Waste and Recycling Service:** A new waste and recycling service was introduced in South Bucks, prompting discussions about the proliferation of wheelie bins and the complexities of sorting waste.
- **Community Bus Service Trials:** A community bus service was trialled for events like the Food Festival, but low utilisation raised questions about its viability.
- **Concerns about Gas Main Work Disruption:** Residents expressed annoyance about the disruption caused by gas main work along the Bath Road, particularly the practice of filling in trenches on Fridays and digging them out again on Mondays to accommodate Sunday car boot sales.
- **Dorney Parish News: A Window into Village Life:** The *Dorney Parish News* served as a vital platform for residents to share news, events, opinions, and concerns. The magazine featured a mix of local history, community announcements, and thought-provoking articles and letters to the editor.

**2013 was a year of transition and adjustment for Dorney Parish.** The legacy of the Olympics was debated, while the community focused on improving local facilities and

addressing ongoing infrastructure challenges. The *Dorney Parish News* captured the spirit of the village, showcasing the resilience, community spirit, and deep-rooted pride of Dorney residents.