

Key Events and Issues in Dorney Parish During 1989

The *Dorney Parish News* for 1989 reveals a year of both continuity and change in the village, with familiar community activities, new leadership, and the emergence of issues that would continue to shape Dorney's future.

New Leadership in the Parish

- **New Team Vicar:** The Reverend Colin Pontin took on the role of Team Vicar of Dorney in 1989. His arrival marked a new chapter for the St. James Church and brought a fresh perspective to parish life.
- **Focus on Community Engagement:** Reverend Pontin emphasised the importance of active Christian faith and community engagement in his writings for the *Parish News*.

Community Projects and Events

- **Village Hall:** The Village Hall remained a central hub for community activities, hosting a wide variety of events organised by different village organisations.
- **Dorney & District Horticultural Society (DDHS):** The DDHS hosted numerous events throughout the year, including a steak pie supper, a cheese and wine evening, garden competitions, a bring and buy sale, a barbecue and dance, an annual show, and a harvest supper.
- **Dorney Women's Institute (DWI):** The DWI held monthly meetings with a range of activities, including speakers, demonstrations, outings, and social gatherings.
- **Church Events:** St. James Church hosted various community events, including jumble sales, a Lenten lunch, and an "Annual Village Happening."

Controversies and Emerging Issues

- **Eton College's Rowing Trench:** Eton College's proposal to create a rowing trench near Dorney, involving extensive gravel extraction, began to surface as a potential concern, foreshadowing the major controversy it would become in subsequent years. This project was first mentioned in the *Parish Pump* notes from the Parish Council meeting on June 6th.
- **National Rivers Authority (NRA) Flood Relief Channel:** The NRA's proposed flood relief scheme, intended to reduce flooding risks along the River Thames, also began to generate discussion and mixed opinions within the community. The Parish Council initially supported the scheme with certain conditions.
- **Mud on Roads:** Mud on roads caused by farming activities continued to be a recurring problem, prompting discussions at Parish Council meetings and efforts to address the issue with farmers and the County Council.

Community Spirit and Local Identity

Despite emerging controversies and the challenges of balancing development with preservation, the *Dorney Parish News* from 1989 reflects a strong sense of community spirit, local pride, and a determination to protect the village's unique character.

- **Village Appraisal:** The Parish Council initiated a Village Appraisal to gather residents' opinions and insights on a wide range of issues, demonstrating a commitment to community engagement and a desire to shape Dorney's future in a way that reflected the needs and aspirations of its residents.
- **Historical Research:** The *Parish News* featured a series called "The Story of a School," delving into the history of the Dorney School and its connections to the local

community. This series highlighted the enduring bonds between past and present generations in Dorney.

A Year of Transition and Growing Awareness

1989 was a year of transition and growing awareness for Dorney Parish. The *Dorney Parish News* provides valuable insights into the everyday life of the village, its community spirit, and the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. The magazine's coverage of emerging issues like Eton College's development plans and the NRA flood relief scheme reveals a community beginning to grapple with complex questions about Dorney's future and the need to balance development with the preservation of its rural character.