

Dorney Parish News

March 2025



Winter morning view from Dorney Court

(with thanks to Anna Palmer for the photograph)



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EDITORIAL

In the face of a dire situation in the world, last month we suggested that we could 'raise our hopes' by listening to the words of the young. With nothing to be more cheerful about this month, in this issue we are glad to hear from local resident Phoebe Ansell about youthful support for the Thames Valley Adventure Playground. Likewise, Laila Marples writes eloquently about gap year activities in Italy. Ah, nostalgia! This column's gap year (well gap few months) coincided with *Revolver* and the World Cup victory at Wembley with a visit to a German pen friend. Perhaps we should explain 'pen friends' to our younger readers and writers – it was like WhatsApp but a bit slower.

Phoebe writes about volunteering, and we can pass on the calls for volunteers we have heard of. Last month, this magazine carried an update from the Dorney Horticultural Society which included a call for new committee members. The 1st Lent Rise and Dorney Scout Group tell us that they will celebrate the 60th anniversary of their Scout Hut and are planning some refurb work to mark the occasion. They are also looking for people to volunteer with Trustee roles, such as secretary, treasurer and a uniform role of Group Lead Volunteer. Those seeking more information should contact: lrdsoutgroup@gmail.com

The Horticultural Society is planning a busy 2025 and, no doubt, will feature again in these pages. We are pleased to carry in this issue a complete annual programme of interesting and novel events set out in detail.

There is an element of sadness for many in Dorney this month with the passing of very long-term village resident Jean Tyler. We are proud to publish an appreciation of Jean based on the eulogy delivered at her memorial service by her son Gerard. He, of course, refers to her expert photography which recorded every phase of her life. Accordingly, this column best recalls Jean and her pictorial record of Dorney life and specifically her contribution to the 2000 exhibition in the Village Hall which accompanied the launch of the Millennium Map and the later event at the (then) Eton Dorney Centre to mark the formation of the Dorney History Group. We will not see her like again!

On the subject of local history, this column was honoured to tour around Dorney's historic sites last summer in the company of Jane Williamson, herself a distinguished Australian history academic. She investigates her local ancestors in our pages this month.

Last month we spoke of our mission to 'update our readers...in a constantly changing local environment'. Again, we urge you to read an expert briefing from Bill Dax focusing on the New Towns Taskforce which is due to report to the government in the summer. There are no firm government proposals, outside the Oxford-Cambridge corridor or even a shortlist of sites. However, this area does conform to many of the Taskforce's criteria, not least the favourable transport infrastructure.

Thanks to all those who have already paid their 2025 subscriptions to Dorney Parish News. It is all very encouraging, but once again we appeal to Dorney's generosity in this issue.

DofE volunteering at TVAP.



I am a Dorney resident and a student at Burnham Grammar School. We had the opportunity to take part in the Bronze Duke of Edinburgh awards via school and part of that is to do 12 weeks of volunteering. I wanted to find somewhere locally that was in need of helpers and would be willing to accept me as part of the DofE scheme.



Thames Valley Adventure Playground (TVAP) is just around the corner from us on the A4 just past the car boot field and before the BMW garage. They help children and adults with special needs and provide much needed support for them and their families.

TVAP have a flexible arrangement for allowing you to volunteer as part of your DofE. You are able to work on your own initiative at home as well as offer to help at any of their events and knowing that I can work from multiple locations made it easier for me to help out in more ways. Some of the activities I helped with were gathering clothes from home and from relatives to donate to them for their clothing collection, helping watering and organising the plants from Ascot and Kew to prepare them for the plant sale, setting up as the Dorney plant hub at our house so people could choose plants/flowers and leave a donation, having a clear out at home and finding things to donate for their fun day stalls and helping out at the Fun Day by running one of the games stalls.

It has been great fun, and I would really encourage you all to support this great local charity. If you know of anyone who is looking to volunteer locally either as part of DofE or just in their spare time, I'm sure they would appreciate you getting in touch (contact Lucie@tvap.co.uk). It was a great opportunity to help out in the local community and it's even more satisfying knowing that you're helping others and doing your bit for the community.

Phoebe Ansell

Time is passing by, leaving its marks on our lives in the form of minutes, days, and years. As time goes by, our children grow up and transform, and we also change as we watch them.



So, why not cherish those precious moments now?
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Services in the Local Churches



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St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

St. John the Evangelist, Eton

Vicar: Vacant

Churchwardens: Stephen Baker & Mark Procter

Correspondence Address: St. James the Less, C/O

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

Windsor, SL4 6JA

Email: Helen O'Neill stjohnstjamesed@hotmail.co.uk

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

RCCG Praise Embassy, Haywards Mead, Eton Wick, Windsor, SL4 6JN

Pastor: Olusegun Omotayo 07712 126334 www.rccgchurchatslough.com

Our Lady of Peace Catholic Church, Burnham

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

News from St. James the Less:

As we approach the period of Lent, it gives us time to reflect on how fortunate we are as a nation, compared to some places within the world. Conflicts, natural disasters and oppression of individual rights are becoming more common place in the news.

Lent was the 40 days and 40 nights when Jesus went out into the desert and was tempted by Satan. It also remembers the 40 days and nights when Moses went out into the wilderness to pray prior to receiving the Ten Commandments. It is a time when Christians pray daily, participating in fasting (replaced generally today by giving up something you enjoy) and a time for reflection on our lives and the values by which we live.

Lent begins this year on Ash Wednesday (5th March) and concludes on Maundy Thursday (17th April) Services will be happening on both these days in St. James the Less, Dorney (see service times). We will be having a quieter Good Friday this year and the subsequent set of Services will take place on Easter Sunday starting with the Sunrise Service at St. Mary Magdalene, Boveney and working then through the other Parish churches (see service times).

Unfortunately, we are no further in appointing a new Priest in Charge. Whilst we had applications again this time, the Diocese felt they were too inexperienced to take on three separate Parishes consisting of five churches in total. We will restart the recruitment process again in six weeks' time.

As a final thought, take a moment to consider how fortunate we are - whilst everything may not be perfect, there are many people considerably worse off at home and abroad.

Best wishes,

Stephen Baker

Church Services in March 2025 and Early April 2025

Sunday 2nd March

09:30 Holy Communion

11:00 Any Age Service

St. James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Wednesday 5th March (Ash Wednesday)

10:00 Holy Communion

19:00 Ash Wednesday (Holy Communion)

St. John the Evangelist, Eton

St. James the Less, Dorney

Sunday 9th March

09:30 Holy Communion

10:00 Holy Communion

St. James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Sunday 16th March

09:30 Holy Communion

10:00 Morning Worship

St. James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Wednesday 19th March

10:00 Holy Communion

St. John the Evangelist, Eton

Sunday 23rd March

09:30 Morning Worship

10:00 Morning Worship

St. James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Sunday 30th March

09:30 Holy Communion

10:00 Holy Communion

St. James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Wednesday 2nd April

10:00 Holy Communion

St. John the Evangelist, Eton

Sunday 6th April

09:30 Holy Communion

11:00 Any Age Service

St. James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Sunday 13th April

09:30 Holy Communion

10:00 Holy Communion

St. James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Wednesday 16th April

10:00 Holy Communion

St. John the Evangelist, Eton

Thursday 17th April (Maundy Thursday)

19:00 Foot Washing & Tenebrae Service

St. James the Less, Dorney

WHAT ARE GLIMMERS? And why are they good for us?

When you're hunkering down in the winter months, I find it's the best time to cosy up like a bee curling into yourself, to nurture, rest and let your body put its energy into restoring itself for the more active season of spring.

In times like this it can be difficult to raise one's spirits. The weather is dull, clouds seem constant, the sun is low, and the trees are stark with their fractal patterns dominating the Dorney landscape.

One way of raising the spirits is to look for 'glimmers' in our lives. I read about 'glimmers' a little while ago and I loved the concept of something quite different to the negative 'triggers' we are reminded about so often. Glimmers are like triggers but in a wholly positive way.

Glimmers are small, unexpected signs that give us happiness. It could be the unexpected arrival of blue skies or late afternoon sunshine. A smile from a stranger. A leaf bursting into brand new bright green foliage. All regular occurrences and, depending on what makes you smile, all glimmers.

In and around Dorney, I think we are fortunate to catch many of these glimmers – little dopamine hits of pleasure. The sight of a hawk arising suddenly from the hedgerows or red kites wheeling above our heads in superb circles of serenity. The horses grazing gently and contentedly in their pastures. The raft of snowdrops in the gardens of Crocus or the aroma of delicious cakes and coffee brewing in their warm, welcoming café.

The term 'glimmer' emerged from a book published by psychologist Deb Dana in 2018, when she argued our bodies can locate glimmers – "micro moments" that encourage our nervous system to feel calm. The more we actively seek out and engage with glimmers, the more we will be able to "shape our system in very gentle ways."

The small, beautiful moments of everyday life in Dorney can bring us comfort and satisfaction if we look out for and notice them. For example, the vibrant scent in the air and the crackle of rusty leaves underfoot when walking through the woods.

Experience the fresh energetic rush standing above the weirs of the Jubilee River or the Thames as the waters bubble excitedly below. Watch the majestic swans pirouette proudly along the river, especially as they welcome their cygnets into the watery world.

There are now myriad dogs scampering freely as you walk along the riverside paths, usually accompanied by smiles and nods from strangers, acquaintances or friends alike. The brilliant red of the dogwood brush alongside Dorney Lake is a welcome sight in the drab grayscale vista of a winter's day.

The first vibrant yellow daffodils and purple crocus poking their heads along the verges bring a smile, along with a calm sense of continuity. The warm red bricks of the ancient houses in Dorney village glow in the sunshine and remind us of our ancestors, just as the ambulant cows on Dorney Common, so often a challenge to those drivers in a hurry, can give others joy and peace as symbols of a timeless idyllic tableau.

These can all be glimmers.

Once you've noticed them, take time to enjoy them. Let the sun rest on your face for a minute and absorb that valuable Vitamin D, all too scarce in the winter months. Look up at the blue sky see the clouds as they pass silently and slowly. Let your thoughts do the same and watch them travel slowly through your mind.

Be more present. Take in the world around you. Noticing glimmers takes practice, but it's a useful way to help ground yourself when you're feeling overwhelmed. Glimmers can even make the world a more beautiful place to be.

I hope you find some glimmers emerging for you - welcome glimmers of spring and lighter, brighter days ahead.

Karen Kimberley



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Dorney Playground Update

At the moment, there is a lot happening behind the scenes of Dorney Playground.

We were very excited at our AGM, in early February, because a decision was made to go ahead and order the fence to go round the playground. In April, the quote for the fence was £16100 +VAT. The contractors had been down to the playground to confirm the measurements but hadn't managed to get an updated quote to us before the AGM. The committee decided, that if the price was the same as in April, we had sufficient funds to proceed. BUT, when the updated quote arrived, the price had gone up to £18495 +VAT, an increase of £2395! We don't have sufficient funds for this, and the chances were, that by the time we did raise the additional amount, the price would have gone up again!

So, we have now gone back to everyone who gave us a quote for the work in April and are looking at alternative materials. The quote was for galvanised steel; we have rejected a wooden fence because of maintenance, but mesh fencing may be a cheaper option.

Watch this space!

On a more positive note, the decision at the AGM was made to:

Order a new rope for the Junior MultiPlay – one of the ropes has broken loose.

Arrange for the tennis and MUGA courts to be power washed and treated for moss. It is possible that the tennis court may need resealing and repainting in the near future, but that's on hold for the moment. Hopefully, the cleaning will take place late March / early April.

We have started a fund me page for the maintenance of the tennis court, which is free to use. So, if you want to donate, please use the QR code below or contact us, using the information below, for our bank account details.



Dorney Playground Management Group
07737053409
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Dorney Horticultural Society 2025 Programme

Thursday March 6th - 3.15 pm

(The Cafe at Crocus)

Farming Today with

William Emmett & John Barker

Refreshments will be served

Friday April 25th - 7.30 pm

Spring Supper Evening

Dorney Wildlife - How can I Help?

with Andrew Oliver

Wednesday May 21st - 2.30 pm

Deepwood Stud - Maidenhead

Private Garden Tour followed by

Tea and Cake

Saturday September 6th

Annual Show - entry free

(See separate programme)

Friday October 17th - 7.30pm

Autumn Supper Evening

An informal talk by Rob Reeder

of Farnham Common Nurseries

Plants for Autumn

Wednesday October 29th - 2.30 pm

Building Bird and Bug Houses

All ages welcome

Friday December 5th - 7.30 pm

Christmas Supper Evening

with Festive Entertainment

**All meetings held in the Village Hall, Dorney Reach
off Oak Stubbs Lane, SL6 0DW
(Unless otherwise stated)**



**Dorney Horticultural Society Presents
A Talk on
Farming Today - Thursday March 6th - 3.15 pm**



Dear members and friends of the Horticultural Society, we are very pleased to invite you to our first event of 2025 which is to be held in the afternoon in the Cafe Annex at Crocus at Dorney Court.

This will be an informal talk on farming around Dorney over the years. With farming attracting much discussion at the moment, we are delighted to welcome two local farmers William Emmett and our very own John Barker to tell us their stories and give us the benefit of their vast experience.

We do hope you can come and join us. Details are as follows:

Date: Thursday March 6th 3.15 pm in the Cafe Annex at Crocus

**Entrance is £10 per head for members and £12 per head non-members.
Entrance includes Tea and Cake which will be served at the end of the talk.**

Please book your place by email: ddhs@btinternet.com or with any committee member

Bank details for payment by BAC's is:

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Sort Code: 01-08-15

Account No. 53987179

Please use your 'SURNAME' as the payment reference followed by 'FARMING'

We look forward to seeing you all on the 6th for what promises to be a fascinating and informative talk.

Florence



Transitioning from a life in a small village to living in a foreign city despite it only being for a couple of weeks is an experience that is as exhilarating as it is daunting. Although I have been on two-week holidays with my family in past summers, going by myself and having to navigate the city of Florence alone was scary.

I picked Florence as my city of choice, one because of the journalism course available and secondly because of my love for the city. I have been there a couple times including once with school as I studied History of Art. During this trip I

really learnt a lot about the city, so when I went in January, I felt like I knew the city through its history, and it felt almost familiar.

I set off and before I knew it I was in the small Florentine airport. I arrived on the 6th and my course started on the 8th with an induction day on the 7th. So I had some time to settle in and start to explore the rich Italian culture. I was introduced to my other flat mates, eight girls all from New York and a couple of years older than me doing various courses the Florence University of America offered, ranging from cookery to architecture.

The first challenge I faced was being locked out of my apartment and left on the streets of Florence, something which I hadn't faced in Dorney! I walked to the accommodation building which was a 20-minute walk away from my building to get a 'new key', turns out that one didn't work either; after using lots of troubleshooting skills, I managed to get a key that actually worked. The first complication that I faced in the new city - resolved.

Despite Florence being a city and relatively big it felt smaller every time I walked around as I got used to my surroundings and found local bars, pizzerias and supermarkets. I started to see familiar faces and it started to feel like 'home'. I managed to do the 25-minute walk to where my meetings were held without the help of Google maps by my second trip. My walks to meetings were surreal, walking past such incredible buildings; The Medici Palace, The Duomo, the Town Hall and so many more. Despite Dorney having gorgeous countryside scenery, the architecture on display in Florence mesmerized me even more every time I walked past them.

Independence was one of the key skills that I learnt being in Florence, something I thought I was pretty confident on, but Florence heightened that. Back home there was a degree of independence, but I always had friends and family to fall back on whereas in Italy things were different. I took myself out for dinners, I went on walks, I solved being locked out of my building ... multiple times. It has cemented the skill of independence.

One thing that I found tricky to navigate and be assured of was the social aspect that came living in a city on your own. In Dorney everyone is close knit, and a large proportion of my friends live very locally to me and so I would say I have a lively social life back home. In Florence I had to put myself out there and create social situations for myself. Unusually, the person that I spoke to the most was a waiter at a restaurant that I went to often.

If you have never been to Florence, I would certainly recommend it. It gives you everything you'd want from Italy. Historic buildings, museums, art, fashion, amazing food, a river, music, crazy traffic and tourists!

Laila Marples

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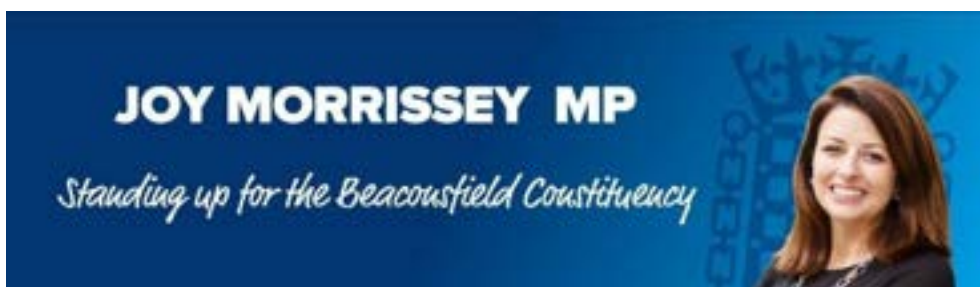


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I hope residents across Dorney have had a fantastic month. Despite the cold weather, I'm sure many of you have enjoyed a warming meal at The Pineapple or The Palmers Arms! As always, I wanted to take a moment to update you on my work over the past few weeks.

One of the highlights of the month was meeting Dr. Rachael de Caux, the new CEO of Thames Hospice. Hospices like Thames Hospice provide invaluable care, offering compassion and dignity to families during life's most challenging moments. However, the Government's Budget has placed even greater financial pressures on hospices nationwide, including this one. This is deeply concerning, and I will continue to push for the urgent support they need. My heartfelt thanks go to Rachael and her incredible team for everything they do.

At the end of January, I had the opportunity to speak in the Water (Special Measures) Bill debate. I made a promise to the people of Dorney to protect our local waterways – and I meant it. That's why I pushed for crucial amendments to safeguard the future of aquatic sports in our community. Unfortunately, the Labour Government refused to back my proposals for stronger protections. I won't stand by while our waters are put at risk, and I will keep fighting to ensure they get the protection they deserve.

I also visited Burnham Short Breaks Centre and had the pleasure of catching up with Sara, whose son, Patrick, benefits from this vital service. Centres like this provide much-needed respite for families, and it is essential that their voices are heard. The decision on these day centres has now been delayed until late summer, which gives us more time to make our case. I will continue working with local campaigners and parents to ensure Buckinghamshire Council recognises just how crucial these services are.

I know that residents in Dorney have a deep appreciation for the hard work of our farmers. Earlier this month, farmers from across the country gathered in Westminster to demand a U-turn on damaging Government policies that threaten family farms. These dedicated individuals are the backbone of our rural economy and vital to Britain's food security. I was also proud to stand with local farmers in the constituency last month, joining local farmer Colin Rayner to ensure their voices were heard.

I am always pleased to host my regular local surgeries, where I recently met with representatives from the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, resident associations from across the constituency, and local constituents. We discussed a range of important issues, including the rollout of fibre optic broadband and other key concerns affecting our communities. These meetings are a great opportunity to hear directly from residents and businesses.

I wish everyone in Dorney a fantastic month ahead. As ever, if there is anything I can do to help, please don't hesitate to get in touch.

Joy Morrissey MP



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BANGER RACING ON DORNEY COMMON

February arrived with its seasonal icy wind and persistent driving rain that zips across the Common to drown mere mortals with its chilling dagger. Despite multiple layers, the bones of my body brace the bleak onslaught. I hate the cold! Brace! Brace! Brace! Not just a quote from the 2009 emergency water landing of US Airways Flight 1549! The overuse of exclamation marks underlines my dislike for this deep winter freeze.

Inside the cottage, the logs are mounted high on the Jontul wood burner. I have had this Norwegian friend for some time. The fiery heat makes for a super cosy evening, my second good friend being my little brown cat, who takes her place curled up peacefully on a thick furry grey rug, strategically placed on an armchair. My son, who gave me this rug the Christmas before last exclaimed, 'your cat is sleeping on the £130 John Lewis rug that I bought for you!'. Such is the wonderful companionship of a pet on wintery long nights, and such is the comfort of a son who chastises my shortcomings with honest truth.

As Valentine's Day drew close, my boyfriend Bob (third and best friend), decided we would celebrate this love-day on an overnight trip. Luckily, he had a complimentary voucher to the brand-new Escapade Hotel at Silverstone. This modern futuristic development, created for petrolheads, centred around, would you believe... cars! Having hesitated for a few seconds (all cars look the same), I was seduced by the sweet temptation of the 5-course gourmet dinner that accompanied this alluring sojourn.



The accommodation comprised of pod suites alongside the main track. Surprisingly, in regular intervals, a F1 racing car zipped by with the customary whine, as I sipped my customary wine. Fortuitously, the late afternoon gave way to dry freshness and soft sunshine. Later, we learnt that these cars belonged to the Williams racing team, first time out testing new models for the next Grand Prix later this year. All the F1 teams had an allocated trial day, so we were lucky enough to coincide with one of these.

The fun did not end there. We found our way to the stunning pool in the main building to lollop around in glorious luke-warm crystal-clear water, empty, save for one other couple who were busy being broiled in a Swedish sauna adjacent. Eventually, we were joined by them and discovered that Bob knew the fella, a retired racing driver from the BCC and now 5th Gear TV presenter, (I knew nothing of either, and later found out BCC stands for British Classic Car, and the presenter was Jason Plato). His partner was delightful, and she was an accomplished BCC engineer.

The fun continued here. We spent the evening with them a truly memorable Valentine, smothered in old fashioned laugh out loud laughter, copious merriment and scrumptious food. All going swimmingly but... don't you love handovers? No! Not brace, brace, brace, but more bang, bang, bang!

That afternoon, back at the cottage we enforced a Jubilee River walk, to clear the bang and inhale some freshness. It was a beautiful day, blue and crisp which blew away the fumes of the night before. Along the way, as we drew closer to the car park on Lake End

Road, we saw various brightly coloured plastic bags, increasingly prolific, which lay scattered on the verges. It was obvious from the gathering amount as we neared the car park what the issue was. Dog spoils from car park stop offs. Maybe not entirely owner to blame, as searching around the main car park we could not find a litter bin. Over the road, behind a short row of cars there were two, full to the brim and overflowing with various coloured plastic hiding the grim contents.

Casting your mind back, anyone who came to my little back garden charity plays, might remember the leading lady, a charismatic girl called Tori. She is now appearing as the lead in 'Spider's Web' by Agatha Christie at the Old Court in Windsor, 2nd to 5th April. She will be fabulous, as it's a light drama, fun to watch, so if you have a window, do support this local Arts Centre. I say this because local theatre is on the decline, both professional and amateur, so we need to get our bums on seats so that it continues to exist. Give Netflix a night off and come out... see you in the bar!

Returning to my pottery studio (garden shed) post broken ankle, I have been busy throwing little plates, painting using raw pigments, which makes finer detail possible. My boyfriend Bob, and my son Robert, have been competing to make the biggest cereal bowl, both being quite accomplished at avoiding wobblers now. I would say they are neck and neck, and as they commandeer my wheel, I turn to hand-built pottery, more inspiring, but that is for overmorrow.



'Overmorrow' is a word I learnt recently, it means the day after tomorrow. However, it is a pointless word since it is rarely used, and most likely to be assumed a fat finger. Our language constantly floats in and out with the tide, some words disappearing into a rabbit hole?! What is that?! Interestingly, ?! has a name, it is called an 'interrobang' otherwise known as a non-standard punctuation mark, designed for use especially at the end of an exclamatory rhetorical question. A product of the 60's (peace and love), 'interro' derived from the technical name for the question mark (interrogation point) and 'bang' is the printers' slang for the exclamation point. I love this! Why?!

Dorney Horticultural Society, having ended last year with a set of successful events, in particular the Annual Show with record entrants, and the Christmas Supper with plates licked clean, this year, at our first committee meeting, it was interesting to see how many brilliant new event ideas were brought to the table. They are all on our new yellow members card, so if you haven't got yours give us a shout on our email ddhs@btinternet.com or via this email you can join up or ask any questions.

Our first event is 'Farming Today' with William Emmett and John Barker, Thursday March 6th at 3.15pm at the Café at Crocus, tea and cake included. See you there?!

Kristina Perkins

New Towns Taskforce: What It Means for Our Area

The government's New Towns Taskforce, launched in July 2024 under the leadership of Sir Michael Lyons, is now actively working to identify locations for a new generation of large-scale communities across England. With Taplow's strategic location and transport connections, our community should be aware of the process and criteria being used to select sites.

Scale and Timeline

The Taskforce is focusing on communities of at least 10,000 new homes each, with many expected to be significantly larger. These developments will be in addition to normal local planning targets. The Taskforce should deliver its final recommendations to ministers by July 2025. The New Towns Taskforce comprises twelve planning experts appointed by the government.

Selection Criteria:

Key factors that could affect Taplow's potential consideration include:

- **Transport Connectivity:** The Taskforce is prioritising locations around busy transport hubs, with rail stations being a particular focus. Taplow's existing rail Elizabeth Line station could make it relevant for consideration, alongside Iver/Langley and Twyford. The possible expansion of Heathrow will be another factor affecting the Elizabeth Line.
- **Housing Need:** Areas of very high housing need are being targeted. Our location within the South East's high-pressure housing market means this criterion applies to our area.
- **Environmental Considerations:** The process aims to avoid nature spots and important green spaces. While some of our surrounding area includes protected landscapes, not all local land has such designations.
- **Infrastructure Capacity:** Sites must have potential for necessary infrastructure and public services, with developments required to include 40% affordable housing.

The Process

The identification of potential sites involves both "top-down" and "bottom-up" approaches:

- Government departments are creating "heat maps" using spatial data to identify suitable areas
- Think-tanks are making proposals
- Local leaders can propose sites for consideration
- The Taskforce will engage with communities on design aspects
- Final recommendations will follow consultation with mayors and local leaders

Sir Michael Lyons' previous work on this subject, particularly his 2014 Housing Review, suggests the Taskforce will look for locations that:

- Can exploit existing or planned infrastructure networks
- Support wider economic growth objectives
- Have potential for good transport links
- Can deliver sustainable communities

What This Means for Us

While local support will be considered, the views expressed to date by government suggest it may not be a decisive factor. The Minister's statement that these developments will be "over and above" existing housing targets indicates this is a separate process from normal local planning.

Next Steps

The Taskforce is currently in its assessment phase and will be engaging with communities in the coming months. Residents interested in this process should:

- Stay informed about local consultation opportunities
- Engage with local authority discussions about potential sites, as they occur
- Monitor Taskforce announcements for our region

The final recommendations are expected by mid-2025, after which the government will make decisions about specific locations.

We will continue to keep parish residents updated as this process develops.

Bill Dax


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In 1794, the state of agriculture in Buckinghamshire was reviewed, as part of a series of county surveys. The surveys were commissioned by the newly formed Board of Agriculture, not a Government department but a private society set up to encourage improvements in farming. They sought to spread ideas about best practice so that food production could be increased to meet the needs of a rapidly growing population.

The report on Buckinghamshire noted how much of the cultivated land - over 90,000 acres in total - throughout the county was contained in common fields. This was true for Dorney,



with 600 acres of arable land – three-quarters of all its farmland - in these open fields, along with the other parishes with land on the “*flat rich loams*” along the Thames. These fields were fertilised with manure from urban areas, including Eton and Burnham, and as a result the crops were “*for the most part abundant*”. Nevertheless, the Board of Agriculture

considered that common fields would become much more productive if they were enclosed, enabling adoption of modern techniques and individual decision making instead of old-fashioned traditional practices. Their ideas for improvement covered a range of topics from the type of plough used to the greater profitability of growing malting barley rather than wheat. It's hard to know how much these generalisations were applicable to farming in Dorney. We do know that the Trumper family, who were significant farmers in Dorney and the surrounding area for much of the 19th century, did take an active part in local agricultural organisations and shared suggestions about different varieties of wheat they had developed and experiments with techniques.

In the 20th century, two world wars focused attention on the need to maximise home grown food production, in the face of rationing.

Dorney Common was requisitioned by the authorities during the Second World War. This involved fencing it which could have been perceived as enclosing the land and was of concern to Dorney Manorial Court in 1949, when the Common had still not been derequisitioned. In the early 1940s, there were official national surveys covering every farm. This process was designed firstly to bring uncultivated land under the plough and to improve poor farms, and secondly to aid post-war planning for the future of farming.

The mid-century Land Utilisation Survey displayed graphically the uses to which land was put and shows clearly the predominance of arable land in Dorney and the surrounding area.



Since then, the cropped land in Dorney has shrunk, most notably when Thames Field was swallowed up by the rowing lake and by Thames Water. The arable land that remains is

still broadly regarded, for strategic planning purposes, as highly likely to be among the best and most versatile land for farming, Grades 1 and 2 under the Agricultural Land Classification.

Another important use of the land in and around Dorney has been as a natural flood plain for the river Thames. Historically, the fields were flooded on a regular basis. The last serious flooding in Dorney occurred in 1947, caused by a combination of frozen ground, melting snow and heavy rain, which inundated much of the country. Aerial photos taken in March 1947 show Dorney Reach surrounded by water. The whole of the Common was flooded, Village Road was under two to three feet of water and Dorney was effectively cut off.

Dorney is now protected from Thames floodwaters by the Jubilee River flood relief channel. This also brought environmental benefits, incorporating different habitats which attracted a range of bird species. Even though the Environment Agency has not continued maintenance to the level originally envisaged – for example by keeping vegetation on the islands at a height suitable for nesting birds – this man-made river remains a positive asset to our local natural environment, with plenty of birds, butterflies and wild flowers to enjoy. The rowing lake has similarly made efforts to enhance the natural benefits of its extensive grounds.

Since the second half of the 20th century, the use of land to improve the environment has been of growing importance. As long ago as 1949, Dorney Manor Court approved the Common being registered as a bird sanctuary and it is still a Local Wildlife Site. More recently, Thames Water designated the area of land behind the houses on the south side of Harcourt Road to be “rewilded”. Apparently ignoring the way in which this land had already rewilded itself, the water company paid for hundreds of trees and shrubs to be planted, the vast majority of which have subsequently died. The same fate befell the planting by Highways England along the motorway works, replacing the scrub they had previously removed.

Meanwhile, underneath the soil lies a mineral resource. Within Dorney, gravel extraction has been limited to the site now occupied by the rowing lake. In years gone by, much of the land each side of the line at Taplow was dug out to provide construction materials for the railway, the sites now built over or used for recreation.

Currently, the Government is carrying out a consultation, intended to inform development of a new land use framework. This won't be prescriptive but will then be used in making strategic decisions on farming and food as well as supporting planning. The competing demands on land are spelled out – producing food, protecting and enhancing the natural environment, building houses and infrastructure, expanding renewable energy – the list is endless. The classification of agricultural land for growing crops is still regarded as important but it is envisaged that as much as 9% could cease to be used for farming. This would mainly be in order to achieve environmental benefits; the amount of land required for building is comparatively quite small.

How might all of this affect future land use in Dorney? Will we continue to see crops grown on our doorstep or will the area shrink until it becomes unviable? Will our remaining farmland disappear under the mooted Taplow New Town? Will there be a more sustained effort to improve our natural environment? At some point in the future, will we need to extract the reserves of sand and gravel lying under the fields? Only time will tell....

Virginia Silvester

JEAN TYLER

10 May 1939 – 29 January 2025



Jean was born in Windsor in 1939. Her parents were James Ireland, a local builder, and later a magistrate and councillor and Phyllis, who supported the family business and volunteered for several charities. They lived in Eton Wick, initially in a house her father built, adjacent to Dorney Common and later next to their builder's yard. Jean's father built several of the houses now in Harcourt Road and Oak Stubbs Lane.

Jean attended Eton Wick primary school and then passed the entrance exam to Slough High School. This meant a cycle ride across the fields to school on the edge of Slough Trading Estate.

She was a member of the girl guides and a keen sportswoman. She played for, and then captained, one of Slough ladies' hockey teams and enjoyed tennis.

When she left school, she went to work at Pest Infestation Control Laboratory in Langley. It was here that she developed her life-long interest and career in photography. She also met Peter, a work colleague, whom she married in 1961 and moved to Dorney. She duly left Pests to raise their two children, Sue and Gerard.

In 1968, the family moved to Botswana for two years. Jean soon found an opportunity to help some of Peter's colleague at the local agricultural college with photographs of their work. She also took pictures of rural life and on visits to Victoria Falls and South Africa.

On returning to Britain, Jean started working as medical photographer at The Canadian Red Cross Memorial Hospital on the Cliveden Estate in Taplow. The hospital specialised in treating Children with a form of arthritis and photographs and video were important in assessing their progress. Later when Cliveden Hospital closed, Jean moved to Wexham Park Hospital for the remainder of her career. Among other things, she worked with medical consultants helping them prepare articles and books for publication and lecture slides for teaching and conferences.

At this time, Peter travelled extensively in Africa and could be away for several weeks at a time, with only occasional airmail letters home. There were no mobile phones then! So, Jean had to take care of everything at home.

Jean took great pleasure in her family. She was an only child and looked after her parents as they became elderly, and both lived to be over 90. She was fond of her four grandchildren, Dan, Lauren, Robert and Chris and was a wonderful grandma to them. Lately she and Peter got to know their six great-grandchildren too.

One of the challenges in summarising Jean's life is finding photographs of her. She was always behind the camera taking pictures of other people.

Jean has always participated in voluntary work. She was a magistrate in South Buckinghamshire for 29 years, serving in Burnham, Beaconsfield and Wycombe. She was a governor at Dorney

School and of the Eton-Dorney project. In her retirement she was a member of the committee and chairman of the Old Paludians Association of old boys and girls from Slough Grammar and High School, and later Upton Grammar. She enjoyed meeting former classmates at the annual reunions.

She also joined the local Soroptimists branch and became involved in some of their charitable activities, including Slough Contact Centre. She attended several annual conferences in Britain and even travelled abroad to an international meeting in the Caribbean with Peter.

In their retirement Peter and Jean travelled widely, to Australia and New Zealand, where Jean had relatives, China, Africa and Europe. Sometimes their travel was connected to contracts that Peter still carried out. They worked together on several books including one on the Double Bass and a history of Slough Grammar School. They also shared an interest in family history and collected extensive data on their ancestors.

In 2021, Peter and Jean celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary and received a royal message. Sadly, Peter had become poorly with Parkinson's disease and died in 2022. Jean's own health weakened, and she moved to Kingfisher Nursing Home in Bourne End. This also meant the end of the long association with Dorney. She has spent the last couple of years being cared for by the lovely staff at Kingfisher and we are grateful to them.

Gerard Tyler

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Progress on Dorney Common Speed Management



In a significant development for our community, Buckinghamshire Council has formally recognised the unique status of Dorney Common in their approach to speed management and road safety. This acknowledgment marks an important first step in addressing longstanding concerns about vehicle speeds and animal safety on Common Road.

The Council's recognition came in a January 2025 letter responding to a local resident's concern about animal collisions. While standard speed limit assessments typically rely heavily on human accident statistics, the Council has acknowledged that Dorney Common's situation requires special consideration due to the presence of free-ranging livestock on unfenced roads.

This recognition mirrors the approach taken by Hampshire County Council in managing similar challenges in the New Forest, where a comprehensive

speed management strategy has proven highly successful. In the New Forest, authorities implemented a blanket 40 mph speed limit across forest roads where animals roam freely, departing from standard Department for Transport criteria (with DfT agreement) to offer special protection for livestock.

The New Forest experience demonstrates that such measures can be highly effective. Their implementation of a forest-wide 40 mph limit, combined with specialised signage and public awareness campaigns, led to a significant reduction in animal casualties. Importantly, the system maintains a clear distinction between village environments (30 mph) and open areas (40 mph), creating logical transitions that drivers understand and respect.

Dorney Parish Council has submitted detailed proposals to Buckinghamshire Council, drawing on this successful precedent. The proposals recommend reducing the current unrestricted (60 mph) limit on Common Road (and Boveney Road!) to 40 mph where it crosses Dorney Common, supported by enhanced warning signs and possible use of vehicle activation signs.

While Buckinghamshire Council has committed to gathering additional speed data to inform their decision-making, their recognition of Dorney Common's unique status represents a positive shift in approach. This acknowledgment that standard assessment criteria may not be appropriate for our distinctive landscape hopefully paves the way for meaningful changes to protect both our agricultural heritage and road users.

The Parish Council has confirmed that it will continue to work closely with Buckinghamshire Council to develop appropriate solutions that balance modern traffic needs with the preservation of Dorney Common's special character as one of the few remaining unfenced commons with free-ranging cattle in Southern England.

Bill Dax



**Join us for the Dorney Parish Litter Picking Morning
Sunday, 23rd March 2025 at 0930hrs for an hour.**

Meet at The Palmer Arms, Village Road at 0930hrs

Three grabbers and Hi-Viz vests are available on a first come, first served basis. Black sacks will be provided at the Meeting Point.

Please choose your preferred area in the parish – Dorney Reach/Marsh Lane, Dorney Common, Dorney Village, Boveney or Lake End - and advise Jill Dax, by emailing jill@daxfamily.com. Please also indicate whether you will be joining the bacon buttie brigade at Rose Cottage (opposite The Pineapple) at 1030 -1130hrs.

At 1030hrs, the hungry pickers are then invited for tea/coffee and bacon or sausage baps at Rose Cottage (opposite The Pineapple).

My Dorney Family

Jane Williamson (née Ridge)

When I started my genealogical journey, I had very little information. The view was that Dad's family had always been in London; Mum's lot came from Yorkshire and, oh yes, there was an Irishman in the mix, namely Thomas Henry Golightly, my father's maternal grandfather. There was some truth to all of this. London did figure significantly in Dad's family, but Thomas Henry Golightly was a Geordie lad and he had married Alice Martin from the little village of Dorney in Buckinghamshire.

On the basis of these early discoveries, my husband, Bob, and I visited Dorney in 2016 on a trip to the UK from our home in Australia. I was amazed to see the Common – so few places remain unfenced – and we were enchanted by the charming cottages, the view of Dorney Court and, indeed, by the Lake. We visited the Church of St James and, thankfully, it was open and full of flowers from a wedding that had apparently occurred the day before. The beauty of those moments in the Church prompted me to think of all the religious ceremonies my family must have experienced there, more particularly the marriages of my 4th great grandparents, John Martin and Elizabeth Blay in 1785, my 3rd great grandparents, Richard Martin and Rebecca Wood in 1824 and my 2nd great grandparents, Thomas Martin and Elizabeth Dorrell in 1847.

Of course, my romantic musings and the lovely, gentrified village that Dorney has become bear little resemblance to the experiences of my family or the village they knew. The little that can be discerned about their lives indicates that they were agricultural labourers, and this includes the women, who were likely to have supplied field labour at various times. They led hard-scrabble lives in times that became increasingly uncertain for farm workers.

For example, John Martin (1751-1830) born and bred in Dorney was identified as a labourer in the *Buckinghamshire Posse Comitatus* of 1798, which sought to identify the men and resources that might be available in the event of a French invasion. John was a family man with four children and probably fit enough to bear arms, but he had nothing material to contribute to the potential war effort in terms of horses or carts.

Similarly, John's son, Richard Martin (1796-1865) spent much of his life in agricultural labour, although he may have had some opportunities to work elsewhere. It's possible he had a stint in the Royal Navy, voluntarily or otherwise, as his wife Rebecca Wood (1798-1873) came from Plymouth. Additionally, the couple lived in Peascod Street in New Windsor for a time, where he might have sought to diversify his skills. However, by 1840, Richard, Rebecca and their growing family had returned to Dorney. They acquired a tiny village cottage, on land owned by the Palmer family, and they subsisted on agricultural work augmented by what they might raise in their small garden. In her old age, Rebecca took in laundry to support their limited resources.

As a young man, Thomas Martin (1824-1882) Richard's son, found work as a farm servant at Dorney Court Stables. He too was to remain an agricultural labourer all his life but his work with horses suggests that he may have risen to the role of horseman or ploughman, a position that remained central to arable farming for most

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of the 19th century. Nevertheless, the shortage of work was what probably forced Thomas to move his family from their home in Lake End to Farnham Royal and finally to Cippenham.

Rural life was certainly not a bucolic paradise for agricultural workers like the Martins. Indeed, during the 19th century, processes such as enclosure, increased mechanisation and the widespread movement from arable to pastoral farming in areas close to growing towns reduced the demand for rural labour and depressed wages. The Swing Riots of the 1830s and the depopulation of villages were indicators of the economic pain felt by rural workers.

Survival in the country, and avoidance of the dreaded workhouse, depended on the contributions of all family members but, increasingly, agricultural work was deemed inappropriate for women. It was seen to render them “coarse” and “masculine” making them unfit for their “proper duties in the home” Fraser 1868/9). On the other hand, domestic service amongst their social ‘betters’ in the burgeoning towns would teach country girls womanly skills, while providing economic advantages for their families. For many young rural women, like Alice Martin (1862-1914) this was to be their destiny.

My great grandmother, Alice, was born at Lake End in 1862. She was the eighth of the eleven surviving children of Thomas Martin and Elizabeth Dorrell (1826-1904) and their fourth and youngest daughter. Two of Alice’s sisters left home to become servants and it’s likely that this occurred when they were very young. Girls could be ‘in service’ by the tender ages of 11 or 12, while others might not leave home until they were young teenagers. Alice followed her sister, Eliza, to London where census data indicate she was a maid-of-all-work, for a young builder and his family in Lambeth, and, subsequently, a cook for a family of artists in Hampstead.

Alice spent many more years ‘below stairs’ in London than she did with her natal family and her marriage, in 1892, to Trooper Thomas Henry Golightly of the 2nd Life Guards ensured that London or Tyneside would be her future home. However, she returned to her widowed mother’s place in Upton cum Chalvey in 1899 following Thomas Henry’s untimely death in late 1898. There Alice gave birth to her second child, but the visit was brief and, shortly thereafter, she returned to London with her two little daughters in tow to become the housekeeper for her widowed brother in law. My branch of the Martin family disappeared into the working poor of London.

Our tangible links with the Martins of Dorney ended with Alice’s death in 1914. My grandmother, Beatrice Golightly/Ridge (1893-1965) had no memory of her Buckinghamshire heritage; the family has no mementos, photographs or stories about the Martin family and its long association with Dorney. Similarly, and sadly, there is nothing to see in Dorney or Lake End that points to the existence of generations of the Martins there. However, in attempting to reimagine my family’s past, I am very grateful to the work of the Dorney History Group. The website of transcribed documents they have produced has enabled me to get some glimpses of my family and their experiences. Thank you!

Jane Williamson (Brisbane, Queensland, Australia)



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	Nov	1, 8, 15, 22, 29	1, 15, 29	8, 22	1, 15, 29	1, 15, 29	1, 15, 29
	Dec	6, 13, 20, 30		6, 20	13, 30	13, 30	13, 30
2025	Jan	6, 11, 17, 24, 31	24	6, 17, 31	11, 24	11, 24	11, 24
	Feb	7, 14, 21, 28	7, 21	14, 28	7, 21	7, 21	7, 21
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Dorney Parish News

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Our current print run is 250. Estimated readership is around 400 people. There are approximately 300 residential properties in Dorney Parish.

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