

Dorney Parish News

March 2026



Orchard Herbs Site:

Clear Progress and a Defined Timeline



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EDITORIAL

We were driving through the rain, dodging the puddles and potholes of Lake End Road, and my passenger said that he hoped this column would give due thanks to the flood relief channel for saving this parish from the rising waters. I was reminded that a couple of years ago the headline on our front cover was the 'Jubilee River continues to do its job' alongside a flood alert map that splashed red or orange from Reading to Taplow and Old Windsor to Teddington. Of course, we had gleefully highlighted the alert-free gap in the middle.

How it has rained and how those waters have risen! Reading University's Atmospheric Observatory have said that the 31 consecutive days of rain up to mid-February has only been exceeded once before since 1908. As we write the Environment Agency has issued this weekend flood alerts from Hurley to Cookham and Datchet to Shepperton. We read that George Clooney's basketball court and Debbie McGee's garden are under water. Any Dorney based celebrities would not have suffered such indignities.

Concern over the River will focus on its future adequacy in the face of climate change and this month we cover continuing issues around Lake End Bridge. Also in this issue is a 'reader's letter,' the first of many we hope. A parish magazine should reflect the lived experience of residents. Two issues raised to us by residents – abandoned vehicles on our roads and bus services – have caught the attention of local councillors and our MP (a letter from Carousel to Joy Morrissey also features this month). In general, 'councillors' in recent times have not been unfriendly to Dorney, so it was interesting that our reader's letter is on proposed reforms to local government. It is said that the current proposals show little sign of deep thought. From the 1980s onward national governments ravaged local government. My newspaper said this week that we have fewer local representatives than other countries. In 1965 there were 75000 councillors and after the current reforms there could be around only 11000. What Virginia Silvester's letter points towards is more uncertainty for our South Bucks enclave only a few years after the upset caused by the introduction of Bucks own unitary council.

If you listened closely, you could probably have heard Dorney's (inadequate say many) broadband humming in February as a gratifying proportion of our readership renewed their membership online for 2026 following last month's appeal (repeated this month). We are very appreciative. Please direct any questions at the Editor or your distributor. Be assured, cash is equally welcome.

If like this column, you have wondered about why Old Marsh Lane just runs down to the M4 and stops or are intrigued that community life here was once so rich that DPN regularly reported on the local train spotters club, then you'll enjoy reading our article about this village in the early 1960s. We welcome again news of the horticulturalists at Crocus, and on that subject, it's good to hear about the Horticultural Society's Spring event. Speaker Guy Deakins sounds an interesting character based on his online presence. We urge attendance!

In the meantime, stay safe...and stay dry!

Services in the Local Churches



St James the Less, Dorney

St. John the Baptist, Eton Wick

St. John the Evangelist, Eton

Team Rector: Revd Andreas Sistig

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

From Mountain Tops to Everyday Paths

Dear friends,

"Mountains are not stadiums where I satisfy my ambition to achieve; they are the cathedrals where I practice my religion." So wrote the mountaineer Anatoli Boukreev once. But even if he was not speaking about religion in the usual sense, I'd like to think that many of us understand what he meant. Mountains — like great cathedrals — lift our eyes, stir our imagination, and help us feel closer to something beyond the ordinary routines of daily life.

Throughout the Bible, mountains are places where important things happen. Moses receives the commandments on Mount Sinai. Elijah confronts the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. Jesus delivers the Sermon on the Mount and is later crucified at Golgotha. And in the Gospel story known as the Transfiguration (Mt 17.1-9), Jesus takes three close disciples up a mountain where, for a brief moment, they see him shining with divine glory, accompanied by Moses and Elijah. They hear God's voice and glimpse the deeper truth of who Jesus is.

It is a dramatic and dazzling scene — and it comes at a surprising moment in the church year. Just as we enter Lent, a season that feels much more like a journey through the wilderness than a stay on the mountaintop, we are given this sudden vision of radiance and wonder.

The disciples' reaction is very human. Overwhelmed yet inspired, they want to stay there. Peter even suggests building shelters, hoping perhaps that this moment of glory might last and that the hardship Jesus has foretold could somehow be avoided. But the vision fades, and they must walk back down the mountain to the ordinary world, with all its challenges and uncertainties.

Matthew's telling of this story deliberately echoes the story of Moses on Sinai: the mountain, the cloud, the chosen companions, and the fearful response to God's voice. Yet there is one crucial difference. In the Sinai story, the people keep their distance in fear. In the Transfiguration, when the disciples fall terrified to the ground, Jesus comes to them, touches them, and says simply, "Do not be afraid."

That small human gesture matters. It reminds us that faith is not only about overwhelming displays of glory or distant divine power. Christians believe that God draws close in a way we can receive — in the person of Jesus, in a reassuring touch, in quiet words of comfort.

As the theologian John Calvin once reflected, God makes himself "little" in Christ so that we can approach without fear. The glory of God may be vast beyond imagining, yet it meets us in simple, gentle ways: in kindness, in community, and, for believers, even in the humble symbols of bread and wine.

Mountaintop moments may inspire us, but most of life is lived on the plain. The good news of the Transfiguration is that we do not walk those ordinary paths alone.

I hope and pray that you will have a blessed journey through Lent.

Yours,

Andreas

Team Rector

Church Services in March 2026

Sunday 1st March

9.30 am	Holy Communion (said BCP)	St James the Less, Dorney
11.00 am	Any Age Service	St John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Sunday 8th March

9.30 am	Holy Communion	St James the Less, Dorney
11.00 am	Holy Communion	St John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Wednesday 11th March

10.00 am	Holy Communion (said BCP)	St John the Evangelist, Eton
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Sunday 15th March

9.30am	Holy Communion	St James the Less, Dorney
11.00am	Holy Communion	St John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Sunday 22nd March

9.30am	Morning Worship	St James the Less, Dorney
11.00am	Morning Worship with baptism	St John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Wednesday 25th March

10.00 am	Holy Communion (said BCP)	St John the Evangelist, Eton
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Sunday 31st March (Palm Sunday)

9.30am	Holy Communion	St James the Less, Dorney
11.00am	Holy Communion	St John the Baptist, Eton Wick

Dorney Parish News

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And more!

Health and social care when living in rural Bucks

Healthwatch Bucks latest project looks at how those living in the rural parts of Bucks access health and social care.

Project Manager, Alison Holloway says: "We know that people living in rural areas may experience health and social care services differently from those living in towns in Buckinghamshire. It's important for us to learn more about any difficulties these communities might encounter."

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) define a rural community as people living in areas with fewer than 10,000 residents. So, if you live in a village or a rural area, please tell Healthwatch Bucks what works for you and what could make it easier for you to access any health or social care such as dentists, hospitals, and respite care.

People can share their feedback in confidence via their online survey via this QR code, or on their website <https://bit.ly/4jVz2HB>



The survey closes on 31 May.

Healthwatch Bucks would also like to have small group discussions with 6 to 12 people, especially if you're not comfortable using a computer to fill out our survey. Please call them on **01494 324832** if you would be interested in hosting a group to talk in more detail about this subject.

Healthwatch Bucks will write a report summarising what they have been told. It will include recommendations about what would make accessing health and social care rural in Bucks better.

Zoe McIntosh, Chief Executive of Healthwatch Bucks, says: "Our goal is to make sure local people influence the health and care services that residents of Buckinghamshire use. It's very important that those living in the countryside feel heard and can easily get the care they need. We will share what we find out so we can help to bring about positive change where it's needed."

Orchard Herbs: Clear Progress and a Defined Timeline

There has been significant and welcome progress at the former Orchard Herbs site in recent weeks.

Buckinghamshire Council has confirmed that trucks and trailers are now steadily leaving the site, and only a small number remain. The removal of heavy vehicles – long the most visible and intrusive element of the breach – marks an important turning point after many years of frustration.

The mobile home is no longer being lived in, and attention is now turning to the remaining containers and the “Carbo” shed. The site owner has indicated that container removal is the next priority.

Importantly, Buckinghamshire Council’s Compliance Officer continues to work constructively with the owner. While progress has at times been slower than residents would wish (the recent weather hasn’t helped), the current approach appears to be delivering tangible results. This is a marked change from previous periods where activity stalled for long stretches (years!).

The Council has also clarified its enforcement position. Criminal prosecution, while available in theory, would require upfront funding that is not currently available and could take two years or more to reach court. Crucially, prosecution alone would not guarantee that the site is cleared and could halt the cooperative progress now underway.

Direct Action remains an available alternative. The Council has confirmed that it has access to contractors capable of clearing the site if necessary. However, Direct Action involves costs (estimated in the region of £25,000) which must later be recovered, and there are practical considerations around securing repayment.

Encouragingly, Buckinghamshire Council is now looking to set an **eight-week deadline** for complete clearance of the field. After a long period without defined timescales, the establishment of a clear deadline is a positive development. Even if minor adjustments prove necessary, having a structured programme provides accountability and momentum.

Dorney Parish Council will continue to monitor progress and maintain dialogue with Buckinghamshire Council. For the first time in many years, there is visible change on the ground and a defined path toward full compliance.

If this pace continues, the long-running Orchard Herbs saga may finally be approaching its conclusion, if slowly.

Bill Dax

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? You can capture them and create beautiful wall art for your home and soul that will freeze those fleeting moments in time.

The Studio
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E. richard@shymansky.co.uk



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Crocus At Dorney Court - Growing Together as A Community

Without even realising February has passed us by in a flash. The monthly update for our works around the site is it's progressing well and we are on target for our launch event on the 28th of March. It is our Walled Garden Open Day aimed at families of all ages from Dorney and the surrounding areas! It features a market, arts and crafts and ticketed tours of the Walled Garden to inform you about the new design directly from our Head Gardener Ashley.

At the time of you reading this, Ashley will be working extremely hard with a dedicated team over a period of 2 days to conquer all the planting in the Walled Garden.

Our planting rebrand will include the addition of nine new beds featuring many different plants for your enjoyment, ranging from Herbaceous Perennials like this "**Euphorbia Mellifera**" (shown here) to English Roses surrounding the central Yew beds.

"**Euphorbia Mellifera**" is one of my favourite plants included in the rejuvenation of the Walled Garden. It is a border hardy evergreen

(in protected areas) shrub that needs protection through the winter months from the freezing temperatures by covering and wrapping it from severe frosts. In mid spring it will flourish in a border that gets full sun with soil that drains well. The luminous leaves of this shrub will contrast very well with a more subtle toned plant when added

to your borders. Our recommendation would be "**Phlomis Italica**" or "**Verbena Hastata Rosea**," all purchasable from Crocus At Dorney Court with a 10% discount through March. If you do plant some of these, we would love you to tag us in your pictures!



For our avid gardeners reading at home March is the perfect time to sow your seeds. It is a cheap and enjoyable way to nurture and grow them, with plants like "**Cosmos**," "**Snapdragon**" and "**Sweet peas**" too! The picture of the Snowdrops to the left is one of the many seed trays we have created and of course they have all been protected in our greenhouse at Dorney! They have a slotted base for drainage and are ideal for both direct planting or to place small pots in and create a personalised herb garden for your windowsill at home.

March will also bring the arrival of potted vegetables for you to grow at home too. In the Walled Garden we will continue to grow vegetables including the Pumpkin patch that seems to sprout the biggest Pumpkins I have ever

seen. Vegetables are one of the easiest plants for beginner gardeners to grow so it is ideal for parents and grandparents to get the next generation of gardeners starting to develop their green thumb early! With vegetables, depending on taste of course, I would suggest Courgettes to grow as they require very minimal levels of care and are versatile too. As well as this you also have the reliable bare root vegetables like Potatoes, producing a plentiful harvest allowing you to reap the rewards of your hard work planting and tending to them!

Please check our social media pages for more updates @[crocusatdorneycourt](https://www.instagram.com/crocusatdorneycourt).

Drew MacGregor, Horticulture & Retail Manager, Crocus At Dorney Court

crocus

— at —
DORNEY COURT



Crocus Spring Fair!

Join us on the 28th of March from 10AM for our Spring Fair including:

- Ticketed tour of the Walled Garden from our Head Gardener Ashley
- Market stalls for you to browse and enjoy
- Kids arts & crafts
- Kids gardening session with our plant team



@crocusatdorneycourt



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Crocus At Dorney Court, Court Lane, SL4 6QP



Walled Garden tour tickets can be found by scanning the QR code

Arts & crafts and gardening sessions can be paid for on the day via the shop

www.crocus.co.uk/dorney-court/

crocus
— at —
DORNEY COURT

Making beautiful possible

What's the future for Dorney playground?

The trustees of Dorney Playground Management Group have written to Dorney Parish Council to ask them to consider merging the charities managing Dorney Village Hall and Dorney Playground.

As readers of Dorney Parish News, you will be aware that Dorney Playground is a charity run by volunteers. The charity does not receive any money from the Parish or County Councils to maintain the playground equipment, MUGA area or tennis court.

When the charity was set up in 2008 the premise was that it would be run by volunteers, applying for grants and donations to maintain and improve the site. Unfortunately, this model doesn't really work any more and it is becoming increasingly difficult to get volunteers; and grants are becoming difficult to get – particularly for maintenance of equipment. The equipment at the playground is showing signs of wear and tear and the cost of maintaining the equipment at safety levels is high.

Because of the nature of Dorney Playground, trustees and volunteers tend to be either residents of Dorney (normally with small children) or parents of children attending Dorney School. In July 2027, none of the existing trustees will live in Dorney nor have children at the Dorney School and they have indicated that they will resign from the Charity at that date.

Obviously, it is possible that new volunteers and trustees will come forward to be trustees of Dorney Playground by that date, but experience with replacing the secretarial role does not give us much hope.

The Playground committee is concerned re the future of Dorney Playground.

That is why Dorney Playground Management Group have written to Dorney Parish Council asking them to consider the merger of the Dorney Village Hall charity and the Playground charity. The charity running Dorney Village Hall have openly acknowledged that the facilities at Dorney Playground is sometimes a factor in the decision to hire Dorney Village Hall.

The combination of the two charities would ensure stability for the playground and other facilities and give Dorney Parish Council control of the only leisure facilities provided for the residents of the Parish.

Dorney Playground Management Group
Playground4Dorney@gmail.com

MEET, DRINK & EAT *Dorney*



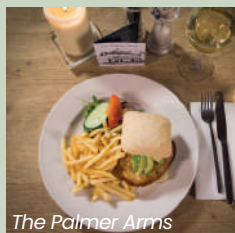
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#15 Bus: Letter from Carousel Buses to Joy Morrissey M.P.



With respect to the change of route 15 from 4th January, Cllr Caesar also contacted me to request a similar level of information as to the rationale for the change, which I responded to last month. Hopefully the below helps with the queries that constituents have raised with you also.

The Slough to Eton Wick section of the route is operated under contract to the Royal Borough of

Windsor and Maidenhead, and we began operating this service for an initial 5 year period from 6th April 2025. At this point, we also commercially extended this service to and from Taplow. In order to enable the bus to turn around to head back to Slough, whilst also serving the Bishop Centre and Sainsbury's stops, the route via Dorney Reach and then Dorney was selected.

Since assuming operation of this service, we have been investigating ways to efficiently extend this service to Maidenhead, which is something that the residents of Eton and Eton Wick had been keen on seeing provided, and indeed was something that we committed to working on options to deliver in the RBWM tender process. Due to other network improvements being made in the Maidenhead network from 4th January, the opportunity presented itself to be able to achieve this extension of service 15 into Maidenhead. Before determining the optimum route to do this, we analysed passenger numbers across all stops on the route, and identified that the highest demand on the route in Buckinghamshire was over three stops - Dorney Palmer Arms, Taplow Sainsbury's and Bishop Centre. As part of this change process, we consulted with all local authorities affected, namely The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Buckinghamshire Council and Slough Borough Council.

Dorney Reach maintains its provision on routes 63 and 68, supported by Buckinghamshire Council, which I believe remains largely unchanged since before the introduction of service 15 through the village from April 2025. Due to the way the buses interwork in Maidenhead (the way this extension can be delivered commercially, in an efficient manner), we cannot spare any additional time to double back between Marsh Lane and the Lake End Road roundabout, which was a suggestion that Cllr Caesar had passed on from a resident. Moving forwards, I am keen to work with Buckinghamshire Council to assess the feasibility of new stops being added in on Lake End Road to provide better access to the 15 for residents in Dorney, mainly near to the junction by Court Lane (for access to Dorney Court) and by The Pineapple. By means of my previous response to Cllr Caesar, I have picked this up with the relevant officers in the Council for their evaluation of this proposal.

Glenn De Sousa

Head of Commercial at Oxford Bus Group (which owns Carousel)



It has been a busy and productive month in Parliament as I continue to champion the issues that matter most to residents here in Dorney.

In my last column, I raised concerns about the changes to the Carousel Buses route and the impact this has had on local people. Reliable public transport is vital for our rural communities, particularly for those commuting to work, school, or medical appointments. My understanding is that the company's full response is being published in this edition. I am now carefully considering the next steps and will be working closely with Dorney residents to find a constructive way forward that ensures our village has the transport links it deserves.

I also highlighted the growing issue of abandoned vehicles on local roads. These cause frustration, obstruct access, and can quickly become an eyesore. If you are aware of an abandoned vehicle in Dorney, please do send me the exact location along with the number plate details, and I will raise it directly with Buckinghamshire Council on your behalf. I will continue to press for swift action where needed.

Protecting the beautiful Colne Valley Regional Park, just a short distance from Dorney, remains one of my top priorities. This treasured landscape is deeply valued by our community - whether for walking, wildlife, or simply preserving the character of our local area. I recently had a productive meeting with the Park team and local councillors to discuss the next steps in safeguarding this vital green space. I am also due to meet with Natural England to explore further protections. I will, of course, keep residents updated as this work progresses.

In Parliament, I have also been speaking up for young people who are struggling to find employment after graduating. Youth unemployment has risen sharply, and many local businesses tell me they are feeling the pressure of increased costs and regulatory burdens. We must ensure that young people in villages like Dorney and across the constituency have real opportunities to build their futures.

That is why I continue to champion apprenticeships and practical routes into work. We are fortunate to have strong local schemes across the constituency that help young people gain valuable skills and qualifications. Apprenticeships offer a proven pathway into stable employment and should be supported far more robustly by Government.

This is just a snapshot of what I have been working on this month on behalf of Dorney residents. You can follow more regular updates on my Facebook and Instagram pages. And as always, if there is an issue I can help with, please do not hesitate to get in touch. I am here to serve you. You can email me at joy.morrissey.mp@parliament.uk.

Joy Morrissey MP

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DORNEY SCHOOL



RESPECT * COLLABORATE * GROW
Headteacher: Mrs Lee

News from Dorney School

National Storytelling Week

As part of National Story Telling Week the children in Year 6 have spent some time reading stories to younger pupils. Reading is a pastime we all enjoy as a school. The school has multiple dedicated reading areas (even a cosy book cabin in the playground!) to encourage reading and stories.



Year 5 Playdough Decorating

Year 5 have been busy last week testing out different joining and decorating techniques in playdough before we start making our clay vases. They enjoyed using embellishment and imprinting to decorate and practise creating smooth joins whilst having a lot of fun! Well done Year 5 for your enthusiasm and creativity!

Interested in becoming a Dorney School governor?



School governors and trustees play a vital role in education. By volunteering as a governor for our school you can make a difference by shaping the future of children and young people. We currently have a vacancy for the role of school governor. There are no specific qualifications or requirements for the role - every governing board needs a balance and diversity of knowledge, skills and experience.

You don't need to be a parent or to have a background in education; just passion, commitment, and a few hours a month for meetings. This rewarding role provides professional development in strategic leadership, risk management, and decision-making while supporting community children. Do get in touch if you wish to find out more AWitchell@dorneyschool.co.uk or office@dorneyschool.co.uk

Mrs S Lee, Headteacher





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The Engagement Ring

www.theengagementring.co.uk

www.lifecoach-directory.org.uk/lifecoaches/karen-kimberley

Dear Editor,

I wonder whether any other Dorney residents are curious about the effects on our parish of the proposed devolution of powers to English unitary authorities. This hardly sounds like the sexiest of topics, but could there be significant repercussions given our location at the southern tip of Buckinghamshire, with neighbouring authorities set to follow a very different path?

The official definition of devolution is the process of transferring power from the centre (Westminster) to the nations and regions of the United Kingdom. Moves to establish regional authorities in England have been gradually progressing since the 1980s, most visibly in the creation of combined authorities led by elected mayors. These have been not just in urban areas such as London and Manchester but also covering more rural parts of the country such as the West of England and Cambridgeshire/Peterborough. Views will differ on how successful English devolution has been so far, but it is clear that mayors are able to stand up for their areas much more strongly than the leaders of smaller authorities and are able to access pots of funding. Powers delegated to mayoral authorities vary but include, for example, economic development, integrated transport systems and planning and land use.

In the ongoing process of devolution, the government aims to introduce a strategic authority for every part of England. Further new mayoral strategic authorities are already well on the way to being formed, including Essex, Sussex and Hampshire.

Within our area, discussions are underway about forming a Thames Valley mayoral strategic authority. The councils actively interested in becoming a part of the new body comprise the six unitary authorities in Berkshire and the six councils in Oxfordshire; Swindon is also interested in joining. A Thames Valley strategic authority would be the largest in economic terms outside London and its first mayoral election could be held next year.

Our unitary authority, Buckinghamshire, was invited to take part in the discussions about a Thames Valley authority but declined. This is because they are pursuing a lower-level form of devolution in which Buckinghamshire would be granted limited devolved powers (adult education and skills, and land assembly and compulsory purchase) as a stand-alone unitary authority meeting certain criteria. There would be no strategic planning with neighbouring authorities and no elected mayor. Bucks Council has already signed a framework agreement with the government for this approach.

What is happening in the other councils around Buckinghamshire? Hertfordshire is hoping to combine its current county, district and borough councils to form a mayoral strategic authority. Milton Keynes is looking to form a mayoral strategic authority with Luton and Bedfordshire; Northants councils had hoped to join with them in a South Midlands strategic authority.

The hopes and plans in most parts of England are to become part of the landscape of strategic authorities with elected mayors. Why? Because it unlocks the route to greater funding and decision making at local level rather than central government; and it provides a mayor with clout who can stand up for their area.

So where does this leave Dorney? On the banks of the Thames, we are clearly physically part of the Thames Valley, but we will not be part of a new Thames Valley authority. Obviously we will be affected by it because it will surround us on three sides, but we will not directly feel the benefits of additional funding and we will not be able to influence any decisions. Are we going to be the democratic losers in this brave new world?

Virginia Silvester



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Draft Action Plan 2025/2026

Updated: 12 January 2026

		In Progress
		Completed
Action	Purpose	
Heritage		
Review formal proposals for new Conservation Areas	Establish Dorney Common and Lake End Conservation Areas	NP Working Group 2026/27
Orchard Herbs Site	Monitor compliance with enforcement action	Robert Stopford
Environment		
Complete roadside verges management review	Implement biodiversity-friendly approach to verge management	Jill Dax
Complete planting improvements	Finish landscaping at Dents Corner, Marsh Lane/Harcourt Road areas	Jill Dax
Trumper's Field	Consider protection strategy: Local Green Space (LGS) Designation, Community Right to Bid (CRB) Listing, Community Asset Transfer (CAT)	NP Working Group
Memorial Garden	Implement recommendations from tree survey	Jill Dax
Trail bikes prevention measures	Continue to monitor	Jill Dax/Robert Stopford
Annual Footpath Audit	Ensure all footpaths are usable and maintained according to standards	Cath Knight, Chiltern Society
Investigate Official Bridleway	Jubilee River: Marsh Lane to Lake End Rd	Parish Clerk
Volunteer litter-pickers support	Provide equipment if available	Jill Dax
Dorney Lake resident access	Continue dialogue for summer weekday access for residents	Jill Dax
Community		
Dorney Village Hall	Management	Anna Palmer/Parish Clerk
Planning and Architecture		
Resume Neighbourhood Plan	Support Neighbourhood Plan Working Group when Bucks Council issues Local Plan	NP Working Group 2027?
Infrastructure		
Speed limit reduction proposals	Continue formal proposals to Bucks Council for three priority roads. Obtain MVAS data	Parish Clerk
Ensure EA replace Manor Farm bridleway gates	Following incident in 2025	Parish Clerk
Road condition surveys	Conduct regular surveys and maintain prioritised repair list	Parish Clerk
Ashford Lane footbridge	Continue pressure on Bucks Council for repair/replacement	Jill Dax
Dangerous Parking at Pineapple	Install mirror for junction of Ashford Lane and Lake End Road	Jill Dax
Conduct Street Furniture/Signage Review	Annual review to reduce unnecessary signage clutter	Stephen Baker
Flooding management (Lake End Common and Dorney Common with EWWG)	Consider reports	Martin Hardman
Resources		
Parish Councillor vacancy	Continue advertising	Parish Clerk
Parish Plan 2026/27	Consider	All

Speed, Traffic — and Cattle Safety on Dorney Common

Many residents will be aware that traffic speeds on the B3026 as vehicles leave Dorney village and cross Dorney Common have been a long-standing concern. Recent data from Bucks Council's official traffic counter at the Village Road cattle grid helps to explain why.

What the data shows

The cattle grid counter records both **traffic volumes** and, since 2023, **vehicle speeds**. In 2025, more than **2 million vehicles** passed through this point, with traffic continuing to increase year-on-year following the post-COVID recovery.

Crucially, the speed data shows a consistent pattern. Vehicles **entering the village** tend to slow down naturally, reflecting driver awareness of houses, junctions and pedestrians. Vehicles **leaving the village**, however, behave very differently.

As drivers exit the 30 mph village limit and head out onto Dorney Common, many accelerate quickly. While average speeds remain close to the limit, a significant minority of vehicles travel well above it. Each year since 2023, speeds above **40 mph** have been recorded regularly for vehicles leaving the village.

This is not a one-off issue or the result of a few bad days. The pattern repeats year after year.

Why this matters for cattle

Dorney Common is unfenced and actively grazed for much of the year. Cattle move freely across the Common and regularly cross the road. When vehicles are travelling at higher speeds, particularly just after leaving the village, the risk of a serious collision increases sharply.

Sadly, cattle deaths caused by vehicle strikes are not theoretical. They have occurred, and when they do, they are distressing for everyone involved — residents, drivers and, most of all, those responsible for the animals.

At higher speeds, drivers have less time to react, stopping distances increase dramatically, and the likelihood of a fatal outcome rises. This is especially true at night or in poor visibility, but the risk exists at all times.

Why enforcement alone is not the answer

It is tempting to assume that better enforcement would solve the problem. However, the data suggests otherwise.

Most drivers are not dramatically exceeding the speed limit; instead, they accelerate just enough to feel they are “making progress” once clear of the village. This means the issue lies less with individual behaviour and more with the **road environment and the speed limit context**.

As soon as drivers perceive they have returned to a national-speed-limit road, behaviour changes — even though they are still crossing open common land shared with livestock.

What the Parish Council is doing

Dorney Parish Council has been reviewing three years of traffic data and is continuing discussions with Buckinghamshire Council about potential measures to improve safety on Dorney Common.

One option under consideration is a reduction of the B3026 speed limit across the Common from **60 mph to 40 mph**. This would not prevent access or inconvenience responsible drivers, but it would significantly reduce stopping distances and collision severity, particularly where livestock are present.

The aim is simple: **to reduce risk before an accident happens**, rather than responding after the fact.

Looking ahead

Traffic volumes are increasing, and the data shows that speed behaviour at the village exit is unlikely to change on its own. Managing this risk is about protecting people, animals and the character of Dorney Common.

Bill Dax

Dorney Horticultural Society

Spring Supper Evening

'How to commit the perfect Murder'

Friday April 3rd - 7.30pm

Dear members and friends of the Horticultural Society,

Our Spring Supper evening is just around the corner. This year's supper evening will include a talk entitled **'How to commit the perfect murder'**.

No, we are not encouraging you to bump the old man off!

We often spend a lot of time and effort tending our new plants and seedlings often to be disappointed by the outcome. Our speaker Guy Deakins will discuss the importance of the soil with insights into plant food basics, healthy soil and biodiversity.

The evening will start off with a hot supper of cottage pie and vegetables (* Lentil vegetarian option available) supplied by Chrys Fisher of the Palmer Arms.

Don't forget to bring your own glasses and drinks.

Date: Friday April 3rd - 7.30 pm - Dorney Village Hall - Spring Supper Evening

Entrance is £12 per head for members and £15 per head non-members.

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

*Please let us know if you require the vegetarian option.

Our bank details for BACs payments are:

Dorney Horticultural Society (Business Account)

Sort Code: 01-08-15

Account No. 53987179

Use your 'SURNAME' as the payment reference followed by 'SPRING'

Dorney Horticultural Society 2026 Programme

Friday April 3rd - 7.30 pm
Spring Supper Evening
with Guest Speaker

Tuesday May 12th - 2.00 pm
Beech House - Jordans
Private Garden Tour

Wednesday July 8th - 2.00 pm
Woodlands House - Marlow
Private Garden Tour followed by
Tea and Cake

Saturday July 18th - 2.00 pm
Build your own Bird Box
Refreshments included

Saturday September 5th
Annual Show - Entry Free
(See separate programme)

Friday October 9th - 7.30 pm
Autumn Supper Evening
Wild Dorney
with Andrew Oliver

Saturday December 5th - 7.30 pm
Christmas Supper Evening
with Festive Entertainment

All meetings held in the Village Hall, Dorney Reach
(Unless otherwise stated)

Ashford Lane Footbridge – Why This Matters and What Must Happen Next



The complete collapse of the Ashford Lane footbridge into the Jubilee River on 26 June 2025 was not a freak or unforeseeable event. It was the end point of a long-identified structural failure, and it raises serious questions about how public infrastructure is managed and replaced.

This bridge was not a minor amenity or an optional crossing. It was constructed as part of the Maidenhead, Windsor and Eton Flood Alleviation Scheme following the 1992 Public Inquiry, when existing public rights of way were diverted. The Inquiry Inspector was clear that a permanent footbridge was required. Ashford Lane therefore forms part of the public footpath network and carries clear statutory responsibilities.

Buckinghamshire Council's own commissioned inspection reports in 2024 identified severe defects, a "very poor" condition rating, and a critical Bridge Condition Index score. The risk of failure was known. Despite temporary closures, the structure collapsed completely, depositing timber and metal into the river and creating significant public safety hazards.

The Parish Council has also examined what has happened elsewhere. The Berry Hill (Mill Lane) footbridge in Taplow — built to the same design and at the same time as Ashford Lane — failed after only around 20 years and required prolonged closure and costly intervention. Temple Footbridge near Marlow, although not a Jubilee River bridge, has now been declared "beyond economical repair" after similar timber decay. RBWM has closed two similar bridges downstream.

The pattern is unmistakable. Timber footbridges in exposed river environments are repeatedly failing far earlier than their intended design life. Replacing Ashford Lane "like for like" would simply recreate the same risk and leave future councils and residents facing another avoidable failure.

For this reason, Dorney Parish Council is pressing Buckinghamshire Council, with the support of Ward Councillor Cole Caesar, to take a decisive and responsible approach. This means:

- accepting that Ashford Lane is a highways liability, not a discretionary asset
- rejecting short-term timber replacement
- committing to a durable replacement with a design life measured in generations, not decades
- addressing immediate safety issues, including debris removal and secure barriers, without delay

This is a moment for clear decisions. Ashford Lane should mark the point where known problems are finally resolved — not repeated. Clearly, the Parish Council will continue to pursue this robustly with Ward Councillor Cole Caesar and we will keep residents informed as matters progress.

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What is the Community Infrastructure Levy – and How Can Dorney Use It?

Many residents will have heard or seen references to the **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** at recent parish meetings and Minutes. CIL is an important source of funding for local improvements, but it is not always well understood. This short explainer sets out what it is, how it works, and how Dorney Parish Council can use it.

What is CIL?

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge that **Buckinghamshire Council**, as the local planning authority, places on certain new developments. When a development is granted planning permission and then commenced, the developer pays a set amount based on the size and type of the development.

CIL exists to make sure that growth in an area helps pay for the facilities and infrastructure that communities rely on—such as transport improvements, green spaces, community buildings, and flood-mitigation measures.

How does the money reach Dorney?

A portion of every CIL payment is passed directly to the town or parish council where the development takes place.

- For parishes **with a Neighbourhood Plan**, the local share is **25%** of the CIL collected.
- For parishes **without a Neighbourhood Plan (as in Dorney at present)**, the local share is **15%**, paid as a cash transfer twice yearly.

CIL is *not* guaranteed income: it depends entirely on whether development happens in the parish. In some years Dorney may receive nothing; in others, a small number of permissions can generate useful funds.

A recent demolition and rebuild in Harcourt Road has resulted in a CIL being sent to Dorney Parish Council of approx. £4,200. Social Housing, such as the new properties in Harcourt Close, does not pay the CIL.

What can Dorney Parish Council spend CIL on?

CIL money must be used for projects that support the development of the area or address the demands growth places on it. Typical eligible uses include:

- Road safety, footpaths, and signage
- Flood-risk and drainage improvements
- Biodiversity and green-space projects
- Play and recreation facilities
- Community facilities and public-realm enhancements

The Council must publish an annual report showing how CIL funds have been received and spent. These will be available on the parish website.

How decisions are made

Each year the Parish Council reviews CIL opportunities as part of its budget and Action Plan discussions. Residents are welcome to suggest suitable projects at any time.

Bill Dax



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DPN: THE EARLY 1960s

Have you taken a look yet at the archive of parish magazines on the Dorney History Group website? They really are a fascinating resource, providing a pretty good picture of what Dorney was like at a given point in time. More recent editions remind me of people and events which I knew, but the earliest issues available – 1961/2 – offer a glimpse of another era, which perhaps few, if any, current Dorney residents can remember.

In the autumn of 1961, Dorney Reach was still recovering from the construction of the motorway, in its original unwidened form. Indeed, there were complaints about piles of earth still left lying around. The motorway had severed the original Marsh Lane into two separate parts and this was causing confusion for anyone trying to locate a specific address. After polling residents for their views, the parish council decided that the section north of the motorway should be Old Marsh Lane and the section on the south side, from Meadow Way to Harcourt Road, should be called Oak Stubbs Lane. This had apparently been the original name of the road from Climo's Corner (i.e. the entrance to Dorney Lake) to Harcourt Road. The through road up to the A4 then became Marsh Lane. Another issue making it difficult to find addresses in Dorney Reach was the fact that houses had names but not numbers, and the parish council sought the views of the Dorney Reach Residents Association on a proposal to introduce house numbering. The first steps were being taken towards acquiring what became Trumpers Field, to be open land for recreation for the village, as the motorway had resulted in this becoming an isolated plot.

Despite the arrival of modern travel links via the motorway, Dorney still seemed anchored in a past time, with wartime memories not yet faded. The last remnants of the former World War 2 army camp on the Eton Wick side of Dorney Common had finally been cleared away and the land had been fully reinstated. In the village, the post office and village shop opened every day, from 8am to 7pm, and on Sunday mornings. The shop offered groceries, stationery, hosiery, sweets, tobacco and soft drinks. At White Heather garage, there were petrol pumps as well as car servicing. There was, however, no mains drainage at this time; the first plans for this did not appear until January 1962. Indeed, even when it arrived, not every house took advantage; when we moved to Dorney Reach in 1981, our house was not connected to the sewer and the cess pit in the back garden had to be emptied periodically. The mains gas supply only reached Dorney some time later.

Residents could enjoy a vibrant social life through a wide range of clubs and societies. The Square Dance Club and the Youth Club had amalgamated to form the New Dorney Square Dance Club, and they met most weeks in winter, in the old village hall, alternating square dance with bingo. The Dorney Women's Institute met monthly, but also organised weekly handicraft sessions in early 1962. Activities varied from a marmalade competition to a spring outing to Blenheim Palace. The branch even formed a drama group which achieved instant success in the novices' section of the Bucks WI drama festival. DPN waxed lyrical: *"It is a tremendous honour to this small Parish that the Women's Institute, pitted against the giants from all over the County, succeeded in obtaining the coveted first prize for a one-act play, a silver cup and certificate, and also a bursary for a drama course at Denman*

College". Acting was popular, and the village supported another drama group, the Dorney Players. They put on a play, went to the theatre, and had a treasure hunt (by car), a play reading and a junior review.

One of the few organisations from that time still operating today is the Horticultural Society. Their programme of events in 1962 included talks, the show in mid-July with prizes presented by Lady Astor from Cliveden and a spring garden competition in early May. I remember that spring and summer garden competitions were still running in the 1980s. The Horticultural Society also provided DPN with a column of seasonal gardening advice by "Cyclamus" (later revealed as Roy Bundy). Pseudonyms were popular for contributors to DPN. Nature notes were written by "Naturalist;" when she (Mrs Toms) moved away, the column was taken over by "Wayfarer." A "Roads and runways" column by "Charioteer" kept readers up to date with the latest developments in transport, including car reviews. Advice on photography came courtesy of "Hypo." There were also regular reports on the activities of the Dorney loco, aircraft and ship spotters club, organised by the indefatigable editor of DPN at that time, TWE Roche. When he was able to make time around his responsibilities as a senior immigration official at Heathrow Airport, he took the club on visits to Gatwick, Heathrow and the Bluebell Railway.

DPN made efforts to include younger residents in its coverage. A children's short story competition on the subject of "Danger in Dorney" attracted a good number of entrants and the winning entries were published in the April 1962 issue. Later that year, children were encouraged to write for a regular junior page in DPN, but this was less successful. Amid growing concern about the dangers to children of increasing traffic, the Dorney Road Safety Committee organised a competition to compile hints for parents of under five-year-olds to help keep them safe on the roads. The winning entry was published in DPN in May 1962 and opened with advice for keeping toddlers away from the kerb side when out walking with mother and pram – the latter a mode of transport rarely if ever seen today! Dangers of traffic to cattle on the common was a problem in 1962 as it is today, but then commoners drove the animals away from the road each evening to reduce the risk of accidents.

The village school had moved to Dorney Reach in 1958 and in June 1962 its grounds were the setting for a garden party for all Dorney residents. The idea originated with the church social and service committee as an event that would be free of charge, depending on voluntary donations of food and prizes and help with the organising. Several hundred locals came along to enjoy a programme of entertainment including a display of folk dancing by pupils from the school and a performance by the Dorney Players. There was a pet show, a children's fancy dress competition, side shows and comic races, and, to top it off, the all-important afternoon tea.

For me, this single event encapsulates the liveliness and togetherness of our village that emerges from those early issues of Dorney Parish News.

Virginia Silvester

Dorney Village Hall

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	Nov	7, 14, 21, 28	14, 28	7, 21	14, 28	14, 28	14, 28
	Dec	5, 12, 19, 29	12, 19	5, 19	12, 29	12, 29	12, 29
2026	Jan	5, 10, 16, 23, 30		5, 16, 30	10, 23	10, 23	10, 23
	Feb	6, 13, 20, 27	6, 20	13, 27	6, 20	6, 20	6, 20
	Mar	6, 13, 20, 27	6, 20	13, 27	6, 20	6, 20	6, 20

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Dorney Parish News

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Dorney Parish News is an A5 newsletter that is circulated monthly (except January and August) to residents and businesses in Dorney Village, Dorney Reach, Boveney and Lake End.

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

Rate Card:

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Quarter Page (Horizontal)	45	130	£45	£6

Contact: Peter Bowman, Editor
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