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SEPTEMBER-
OCTOBER 2016

A photograph of two men in cowboy hats driving a horse-drawn carriage at a show. The carriage is red and has 'WELAND EXPRESS' written on it. Two dark horses are pulling the carriage. The background shows other people and vehicles at the show.

**Report on new
town centre
redevelopment**

**Fight to save
Dorchester TIC**

**Dorset could
become a
national park**

**Dorset County Show
round-up and pictures**

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New plan for Dorchester town centre

Dorchester should continue to focus on becoming a regional shopping centre and launch another town centre redevelopment scheme.

That is the verdict of a report commissioned by West Dorset District Council, which has ignored calls to exploit the town's historic heritage and huge tourist potential instead.

The report outlining ways the centre of Dorchester could be developed has been prepared by retail experts GL Hearn.

Astonishingly, one option still recommends building a semi-underground car park, albeit smaller than previously envisaged. It was the potential destruction of Roman, Neolithic and medieval archaeology that scuppered the previous scheme, after English Heritage demanded a full-scale dig.

However, the report does say the town should build on its strong heritage brand. The council will consider whether further work should be carried out to help

determine what would be a more balanced, smaller-scale scheme. Members will be asked to approve a review of the archaeology, market testing to assess demand, and a retail capacity study.

Cllr Anthony Alfrod, Leader of West Dorset District Council, said: "We realise any scheme has to be market-led, viable and deliverable whatever economic challenges lie ahead.

"Nothing is decided; we now need to carefully consider this report and decide what other actions, like an archaeological review, should be carried out.

"It seems increasingly likely that any future scheme will need to be simpler and more deliverable. Car parking and preserving our archaeology will be considered as part of any future plan."

The report outlines three options for redeveloping the town centre:

- Maintain and improve Charles Street in its current form, but with environmental improvements and 'pop-up' activities such as perfor-

mances, exhibitions, and niche local markets;

- Build a large food store, with a two-tier car park in front of the South Walks offices, or a decked car park on some of the existing parking area;

- Create several larger retail units to meet the need of existing retailers to up-size, and build a semi-underground car park. Waitrose and Marks & Spencer's are both keen to move to bigger premises.

Cllr Alfrod added: "We want a scheme that the public can support. We need to deliver the right scheme for residents, businesses, customers and communities. It has to be viable and must be welcomed now and still valued in years to come.

"Our vision has always been to make Dorchester a thriving regional shopping destination and we remain committed to keeping retailers in our county town."

The report can be downloaded at dorsetforyou.gov.uk/dorchester-centre-news.



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Resident's fury at new recycling charges

A Dorchester resident has slammed new recycling charges saying she was told she would have to pay to leave an old flower pot at the recycling centre.

The woman, who asked not be named, told the Voice she had gone to the Louds Mill site with some cardboard, an old flower pot and a broken tile, but the attendant had said the pot and the tile would be charged as rubble.

She said he then followed her as she unloaded her car to make sure she didn't leave it in one of the other skips or had anything else that needed paying for under the new rules.

"He said it counted as rubble and I would have to pay. It's ridiculous if you can't even take a plant pot to the tip without being charged for it," she said.

"If this is how they treat people trying to dispose of waste responsibly, you are just going to get mass fly-tipping. I would never do that, but there are plenty that would. Dorset relies on tourism for income, but they won't want to come here if there is rubbish dumped by the roadside. It's just really short-sighted."

Dorset's household recycling centres (HRCs) started charging for certain items from 1 September, including asbestos, plasterboard, tyres, gas bottles, rubble (eg bricks and tiles) and soil.

Karyn Punchard, director of the Dorset Waste Partnership, said: "I am sorry that the visitor did not receive a satisfactory service at our Dorchester site. The resident should not have been told that those specific items would be

charged for and we are investigating this incident with our contractors.

"While the introduction of these charges has generally gone smoothly at this early stage, we will continue to keep an eye on how the new policy is being enforced and provide additional training for staff where necessary.

"When the Dorset Waste Partnership was consulting on introducing charges at our household recycling centres (HRCs), we received data from 10 authorities regarding fly-tipping.

"Based on these experiences, we acknowledge there is a risk of a slight short-term increase in fly-tipping after the charges come into effect. However, the savings achieved should outweigh the cost of dealing with these incidents."



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Tourist Information Centre faces axe

The public is being given the chance to have its say on controversial plans to move – or even scrap – Dorchester’s popular Tourist Information Centre.

The annual value of tourism spending in West Dorset was £329 million in 2014, employing more than 7,000 people – 16 per cent of all employment, according to a report produced for the Dorset Tourism Partnership.

Yet despite the massive importance of tourism to the local economy, West Dorset District Council insists it needs to save cash. The council is now looking at two options:

- Relocating the tourist information centre service into the Dorchester Library & Learning Centre in South Walks Road;

- Replacing the existing service with an unstaffed tourist information point.

Now residents are being asked to have their say on the proposals. The consultation will run until Tuesday 11 October 2016.

People can fill in the questionnaire online at dorsetforyou.com/DorchesterTICconsultation or for those not able to go online, a paper copy is



available from the district council’s offices at South Walks House.

Cllr Mary Penfold, West Dorset District Council’s Enabling Portfolio Holder, said: “We are asking the public for their views on the future delivery of the tourist information service in Dorchester.

“No decisions have been made yet. The results of the consultation will be taken into consideration when a decision is made in December 2016.”

The review aims to achieve savings of £300,000 by April 2017. Bridport TIC has already been transferred to the town council.

A red advertisement for Jordans Jewellers. At the top is a logo consisting of a stylized 'J' made of two crossed lines above the word 'JORDANS' in a serif font, with 'Jewellers' in a script font below it. Below this is the text 'ANTIQUe, PRE-OWNED & NEW' in a large, outlined serif font. In the center is a row of six images of various diamond and gemstone rings. At the bottom is a banner with the text 'Free Valuation Day Sat 15th October' in a serif font. Below the banner is the address 'Jordans Jewellers, 1 Royal Mews, Princes Street, Dorchester, DT1 1RL' and the contact information 'Telephone: 01305 250413 | www.jordansjewellers.co.uk'.

Vision needed on town centre and TIC

I'm scratching my head and wondering what it is we have to DO to make West Dorset District Council (WDDC) – or rather the seven-person 'cabinet' of WDDC – understand that Dorchester's long, varied and fascinating story (and the many visible remains and reminders of that story) is a vital part of what attracts people to the town where they happily spend their time and their money.

It appears that, despite the passing of 40 years and four failed attempts to develop the Charles Street site, WDDC is still intent on pursuing its dream to create 'a sub-regional shopping centre'. There is no hint of a new and exciting vision for this important part of Dorchester and certainly not a whisper of any imaginative thinking.

I don't expect my elected representatives to be able to see through the ground beneath their feet, but I do expect them to have some idea of, and respect for, what lies under their feet and to accept that some of these time-given gifts are of great significance and real interest to both visitors and locals alike.

Am I being completely bonkers when I think that these amazing and fascinating prehistoric and historic features of the county town (including Neolithic henges and Roman baths) are among our most precious secret treasures, which, together with the town's rich associations (Hardy, Barnes, John White, Judge Jeffreys, Tolpuddle Martyrs, Prince Charles etc.), make up its unique and special character?

Surely it is these singular characteristics which, if made more



By
Alistair
Chisholm

visible and better promoted, will serve to distinguish Dorchester from many other market towns of a similar size and whose retail offering is much the same? Such actions can only benefit the town and its immediate surroundings in both the near and more distant future.

A local authority, particularly one facing its imminent demise*, which makes the same mistake again and again, is surely one addicted to stupidity and failure. That this is painfully true of WDDC was clearly recognised earlier this year by the electorate of West Dorset, who voted overwhelmingly against the cabinet system and for a return to the more democratic committee system. Despite this clear message, NOTHING has changed and poor decisions are still being made by just seven out of 42 councillors. Oh for the day when our so-called 'representatives' listen and respond to the clear messages we send them...

And now, just at a time when Dorchester Town Council recognises the increasingly important role that tourism is likely to play in our future, this seven-person district council cabinet (not one of whom represents Dorchester) has determined the 'choice' that the public is being 'consulted' on over the future of the Dorchester Tourist Information Centre (TIC).

The 'choice' being offered us by the justifiably discredited cabinet is a classic of the 'between a rock and a hard place' type.

Choice one – a much-reduced TIC service in a little corner of the

new library building off the beaten visitor path and some distance from the much-heralded 'heritage quarter'. Choice two – an automated electronic tourist information point.

There is, however, a THIRD WAY and I would counsel those completing the consultation form to point this out clearly in the comment boxes available on the form. If WDDC cannot continue to fund the TIC as generously as it has in the past, then it is clearly time for the council to work in partnership with those local organisations such as the Dorchester Chamber for Business and the Dorchester Business Improvement District (DBID).

Both these bodies value the TIC and have expressed deep concern over its future. The DBID raises about £120,000 per year from its levy payers and may well be prepared, in any future successful ballot, to part-fund for a limited period the existing first-class TIC service in, or very near, its present location in Antelope Walk. The town council itself may consider a request for some funding over the short term to help maintain a service which is as valuable for locals as it is for visitors.

If the Dorchester TIC were to be re-established as a stand-alone Community Interest Company (CIC) then the excellent staff, free of any constraints imposed by WDDC, would be able to run a service equal to, if not better than, that which over 170,000 people use and cherish every year. I am confident such a venture would break even within three years.

** Dorset's district and borough councils look set to be amalgamated into a unitary authority.*

Church still angry over prison site access risk

Churchgoers are still fighting for better protection for the historic grade I listed St Peter's Church when the town's prison redevelopment eventually goes ahead.

The plan by developers City & Country to convert the former prison into 189 new homes is temporarily in limbo following the decision by West Dorset District Council to refuse planning permission.

Councillors decided the scheme should include some social housing, overruling the recommendation of officers to approve the scheme without.

City & Country is now reviewing its options, and could appeal the decision.

However, there is little doubt the redevelopment will go ahead in some form, and members of

St Peter's Church are angry that Dorset Highways has ignored its concerns over the threat to the church that will be caused by lorries driving past the 15th century church into North Square.

Dorset Highways has proposed kerb 'bumpers', but says bollards next to the church would not meet official regulations over pavement width on the narrow road.

Churchwarden Brian Hellin said Dorset Highways had failed to address his concerns.

"If we don't have bollards then it's inevitable that wall and possibly the church itself will be damaged," he said.

"St Peter's is a grade I listed building in the conservation area. Even the railings are mentioned in the listing. We've heard nothing from Dorset Highways – they

don't seem to have taken account of our concerns.

"We would be left with a half-metre width of pavement which would be little more than a kerb. The first truck to come round there will mount the pavement and scrape the wall, which we've had twice before even with a wider pavement.

"There needs to be some substantial physical barrier that is going to cause people to think."

A Dorset County Council spokesperson said: "Should the prison site achieve a planning permission, we would look carefully again at the proposals for the area around the historic St Peter's Church. This would be in liaison and consultation with the church, the developer, the town and district council."

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Historic white hart restored to site of former pub

The Mayor of Dorchester, Cllr Tim Harries, has unveiled an iconic statue of a white hart on the site of the former pub of the same name in High East Street.

The 8.5ft-high statue is part of Dorchester's rich history. It once stood above the entrance to the landmark White Hart inn, which dated back to 18th century and features in a short story by Thomas Hardy.

The original inn was rebuilt following a fire in 1926, before closing in 2006.

The site's developer, Metis Homes, has restored the statue to its original glory and given it pride of place on the site, now occupied by the new homes. Councillors from Dorchester Town Council, together with members of the Dorchester Civic Society



Celebrating the unveiling of the white hart are Helen Lange (left) of the Thomas Hardy Society; Peter Mann of the Dorchester Civic Society; Cllr Anita Harries, the Mayoress of Dorchester; Cllr Tim Harries, the Mayor of Dorchester; Andrew Sinclair of Metis Homes and Town Crier Alistair Chisholm

and Thomas Hardy Society, joined with other guests to celebrate the white hart's homecoming.

Dorchester's Town Crier, Councillor Alistair Chisholm, marked

the occasion with a traditional cry. The Mayor of Dorchester said: "The white hart is very significant to Dorchester and it's lovely to see it back in its rightful place."

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National Park bid for Dorset and Devon

Parts of Dorset and East Devon could become a National Park in a new government review.

Natural England, the government Agency responsible for designations, is undertaking an assessment of the area's merits for possible National Park status in recognition of the importance of Dorset and East Devon's outstanding landscapes, geology, biodiversity and recreational value.

Sandra Brown, chairwoman of the Dorset and East Devon National Park Team, said: "This is a great opportunity to create a National Park for the 21st century. The National Park would work in full partnership with communities, businesses, farmers and landowners, recreation and conservation organisations and all local authorities to boost local communities, jobs and tourism, while caring for our unique landscape and heritage."

The team says the National Park would:

- Be a champion for thriving local communities and a strong and diverse economy, achieved with sustainability and sensitivity to the environment.

- Lead to improved and 'joined-up' care of the area's natural heritage, mitigating climate change and saving species.

- Provide sustainability, landscape-scale conservation and a coherent approach across current boundaries.

- Be a great opportunity to promote the area and its many attractions for leisure and tourism, including increased scope for open-air recreation.

- Deliver a wide range of economic and social benefits,



The proposed new National Park for West Dorset and East Devon

including good quality employment, sustainable development, and increased resources for investment in the area.

"We want the communities and businesses of the National Park area to benefit from such advantages. The first independent review of the South Downs National Park, designated in

2009, shows it is already achieving wide-ranging benefits for people in and beyond the National Park area," said Ms Brown.

"Our AONBs do good work, but a National Park... would do much more to help local communities, business, farming and tourism, as well as to promote recreation and the area's other attractions, including the area's beautiful and healthy environment."

Actor Edward Fox, who is president of the Dorset CPRE, said: "This is a great opportunity and well-deserved recognition for the Dorset and East Devon landscape and heritage. The area narrowly missed designation as a National Park after the Second World War. This second chance must not be missed."

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Families face a further wait for action on parking

Residents angry over parking difficulties in the Monmouth Road area have been told they will have to wait for funding to become available.

Dorchester Town Council asked Dorset County Council (DCC) to look at options for alleviating the problems at the back of Dorchester South station. Now DCC has come back with a detailed response on several proposals.

■ **Double-yellow lines:** The scoring for this request will be submitted to DCC's Network Project Team, along with other requests, so that a priority list can be put together to match against next year's funding. This year's budget is already fully committed.

■ **Residents' parking permit scheme:** This needs to be considered in line with DCC's holistic transport review currently being undertaken. The scheme would also need to secure its own funding, assuming the majority of residents are in favour.

■ **20mph speed limit:** A total of 16 areas were considered in the report and the area which includes Monmouth Road was not among the highest ranked areas. Cost is also a major barrier.



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Bid to close Maud Rd PO under fire from council

Plans to move the Maud Road post office to Poundbury have come under fire from Dorchester town councillors.

They say the move would hit residents in the Victoria Park area and remove a vital amenity.

And they point out that Poundbury already has a post office in the Buttermarket, without the need for an additional one at the nearby Poundbury Village Stores.

Councillors say the town has already lost a number of small post office branches in the town and this move would make matters worse, moving all post office provision, apart from the main post office, further out from the town centre – with two branches close to each other in one area.

Members of the town council's planning committee considered that ideally, a new branch post office should be provided in the existing location, or failing that at another location a similar distance from the town centre – but not in Poundbury. It was agreed to hold a meeting with the Post Office to progress this.

Squadron ops board for Keep



Keep curator Chris Copson with Thomas Hardy headmaster Mike Foley

The Keep Military Museum has recently received a superb piece of Dorset aviation history – an operations board from the former RAF Warmwell.

The board dates to the period 1942-43 when the airfield was home to the RAF's 263 Squadron, flying Westland Whirlwind fighter-bombers on ground-attack missions, or 'rhubarbs', into occupied France and Belgium. In storage at the Thomas Hardy School for some years, the ops board will now form a central exhibit of a new Dorset At War gallery at The Keep to be opened in 2017.



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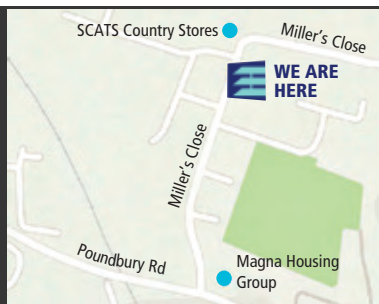
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Crowds defy weather for a great show!

Thousands of people defied the weather forecast on the first day of the Dorset County Show and enjoyed a great spectacle – until the heavens opened mid-afternoon.

But that only gave the excuse to crowd into the local produce tent, and sample ciders and ales, including some great new stouts from the Cerne Abbas Brewery.

The Red Devils may have been rained off on the Saturday, but they more than made up for it on Sunday, putting on a breath-taking display and landing with pinpoint accuracy in the arena, despite a blustery wind.

Of course, as usual the animals were the star attractions, with farmers coming from all over the South-West to display their livestock.

There was also a gun-dog display, falconry, vintage tractors, vintage cars, showjumping, scurry driving, a heavy horse musical drive – and much more besides!



*TOP:
Youngsters
line up with
their wards in
the friendliest
sheep contest*

*BELOW LEFT: A
prize Hereford
makes its way
into the ring*

*RIGHT: A
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*Two of the contestants in the woolliest
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The Red Devils made a spectacular sight on Sunday



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The story of Dorchester's

Dorchester is one of the few towns lucky enough to still enjoy an independent cinema, with the Plaza in Trinity Street selling out seats after a major refit at the end of last year.

In fact, Dorchester residents have been entertained by the 'big screen' since the Electric Picture-drome opened on 24 April 1911 in Durngate Street.

Also known as the Dorchester Picturedrome, it was rebuilt and altered in the 1920s and re-opened as the Palace Theatre.

The premises when bought by Mr P J Dunne & Co. was converted into a picture house, with seating provided in stall and circle levels. There were 400 seats packed into the narrow hall, making it cramped compared to cinemas today.

When Mr Dunne passed away in the 1920's the building was taken over by Mr Albany Ward. Mr Ward managed and owned several cinemas in the West Country, including in Trowbridge and Warminster, Wiltshire.

Extensive rebuilding and alterations were carried out, the architect

By Jennifer Prince

commissioned was at the time Dorchester-based F.T. Maltby, with the building work carried out by Jesty & Baker who were based in Weymouth.

On 2nd November 1920 there was a grand ceremony to reopen as the Palace Theatre. A number of guests attended including the Mayor and Mayoress of Dorchester, Mrs Thomas Hardy, and members of Dorchester Town Council.

Fitted with the latest projection equipment as well as full-stage facilities, the first film to be shown was *Possession*. The British-made silent romance film was directed by Henry Edwards, who also starred in the film. Henry Edwards also starred as Gabriel Oak in the 1915 silent movie *Far From the Madding Crowd*, an adaptation of Thomas Hardy's novel.

Over the course of the early 1920s Albany Ward sold his cinemas and theatres to the Provincial Cinematograph Theatres (PCT), including the Palace Theatre in Dorchester in 1929. PCT eventu-

ally merged with Gaumont British Picture. In the 1930s it was the largest movie company in the UK, owning 343 cinemas, theatres, dance halls and restaurants.

Dorset resident, Christine Roberts, who is 87, says "I remember both cinemas the Palace and Plaza. When I was around 10 years old we used to travel on a Saturday from West Knighton on the bus into Dorchester, just to visit the cinema.

"We would go to the Palace Theatre as they had cheap seats, the Plaza was posh in comparison. There would always be lots of people packed in to see Old Mother Riley, Laurel and Hardy and Shirley Temple films. Once the film was over we would buy fish and chips to eat on the bus ride back home."

The Palace Theatre was finally closed by the Rank Organisation on 4 May 1957. The last film shown was *Kelly and Me*, a comedy starring Van Johnson. The building was then used as a motor accessories store and demolished in the 1970s, and a block of flats now stand on the site, suitably named Palace Court.

However, another cinema in the town had been thriving for many years. The Plaza Cinema in Trinity Street, Dorchester proudly opened its doors on 10 July 1933. The construction work caused quite a spectacle, with a steel skeleton weighing 125 tons and with a height of 46 feet.

The architect, Mr Robin Audrey Thomas, planned and built seven other theatres in his time, and the Plaza in Dorchester was the second to open, at a cost of £20,000. The art deco architecture can be seen throughout, from the striking symmetrical windows in the frontage



The Plaza Cinema in Trinity Street looking resplendent after its recent refit

independent cinemas

to the bold geometric lines in the foyer and interior lighting.

The majority of labourers working on the building were locals. Watts Bros of Dorchester were contracted to start the foundation work in September 1932, and the company was praised for finishing before the deadline, despite heavy rain during the building work.

On 8 July 1933 the *Dorset Daily Echo* produced a two-page spread on the opening of the new cinema, stating it was 'The Event of the Year!' The official opening was also reported in the *Dorset County Chronicle* and *Somersetshire Gazette*, announcing the first film to be shown, Edgar Wallace's *King Kong*. The film was secured direct from Sir Oswald Stall, manager of the London Coliseum, where the premier was shown, and was

the first screening outside London.

The cinema opened as a single screen, with balcony circle seating and stalls below and a seating capacity of 986. The upper seating was accessible through two sets of staircases either side of the foyer, the left-hand staircase now mostly hidden by a false wall. The cinema also included a café, serving tea, coffee, light refreshments and ices.



The Plaza has some striking art deco features

Articles advertising the opening matinee offered seats on sale at 1s.6d for the circle and 1s for stalls. Major W.P. Colfox, M.P, gave an opening ceremony speech, after a song showing off the acoustic properties of the hall. Cinema manager, Mr James A Makinson and managing director, Mr John Gordon Woods were also in attendance, with several other respected guests.

Mr Lynes, then chairman of the Plaza Cinema Company, spoke of how the cinema came to be built, when Mr J G Woods, passing through the town, asked of the possibilities of a cinema being established. A further two performances

on the day of opening were shown in the evening, with proceeds amounting to

£29 7s being donated to the Dorset County Hospital.

Congratulatory telegrams were received, including one from Gracie Fields to the manager suggesting the Plaza would become a top attraction in Dorchester, putting "rings around Maumbury".

The cinema itself was one of the most up to date at the time, with the latest lighting, projection and sound apparatus. A feature was the state-of-the-art heating and ventilation system, ensuring constant air-flow. The Plaza screened the latest sound news of important events such as Wimbledon tennis finals, as well as the latest films.

When war was declared in 1939 the Home Office closed all cinemas as a safety precaution and stated the venues would remain closed for the duration.

However after public outcry calling for normality and some relief from their tensions to keep



The former Palace Theatre in Dumgate Street, shortly before its demolition

Photo courtesy A Century of Cinema in Dorset by Peter Dyson

spirits high, the decision was reversed. When an air-raid siren sounded a message flashed across the screen without interrupting the performance. Viewers wishing to leave could do so, with the rest, surprisingly, having the option to stay to watch the film.

It was said the cinema's prominent white frontage caused German aircraft pilots to use it for target practice, and on the night of 16 October 1940 several bombs fell on Dorchester. One fell only 300 yards away from the Plaza on the pavement outside the cinema, but luckily failed to detonate.

The Plaza continued to show films, hosting free showings for evacuee children at Christmas. During this time the building was used many times by the military, especially the Americans, for meetings. Towards the end of the war, 1,000 American officers and men, who were in Dorchester at the time were welcomed to the Plaza for a film show and cocktails.

In 1956, the screen was modified to show the latest Cinema-Scope technology, for wider screening, almost twice as wide as the previously common format. In 1974 under new ownership the Plaza split, with a bingo hall on the ground level and two screens upstairs. Building work continued until January 1975, becoming the first Dorset cinema outside Bournemouth with two screens.

The bingo hall remained open for 25 years until its closure in 2003. During its time the Plaza cinema has been owned by many companies including Reeltime Cinemas. In October 2008, Picturedrome Electric Theatre Company took over the cinematic services, and in 2015 took over ownership of the building from The Dorchester Cinema Company. Picturedrome Electric Theatre



The old 35mm film projector

Company, which runs four other cinemas in the UK, converted the bingo hall back into cinema space, providing the Plaza with two new screens. The third screen opened in January 2011, with the fourth added in 2012.

In 2015 the Plaza was treated to a complete costing £500,000, with no expense spared in restoring its original art deco features. The Plaza now boasts new leather seating throughout with extensive leg room and a restored foyer. In the main screen the original ceiling

light has been made fully operational for the first time since 1985.

The Plaza Cinema has always changed with the times but their prices have stayed practically the same, for circle seats at 1s.6d. in 1933, equating to around £2.50 today, which is the same price for a weekday showing at the Plaza to date, with weekend showings at £3.50. You can also now book through their website and app. This year the Plaza had a midnight premiere screening of the latest Star Wars film *The Force Awakens*, selling out all four screens.

There have been many changes in technology used in the cinema – all screens now use digital projectors and even the lighting and curtains are controlled by the computer.

The Plaza has a 35mm projector on display in the foyer and another 35mm projector still in working order set up to show in the main screen, though getting hold of films can be tricky and expensive, and the reels have to be spliced up.

The Plaza is able to get all the latest films, including live theatre, ballet and opera streamed by satellite, and has even won a Trip Advisor award. With its strong local support, this independent cinema has a long and prosperous future! ❖



The Plaza's plush new foyer with a showbiz-style velvet chain barrier

Remembering the 'Gasworks Academy'

By Jerry Bird

The Dorchester Free School was built in 1567-9 on the site now occupied by the Hardye Arcade in South Street, thanks to the efforts of the townspeople, as a Protestant grammar school designed for the free education of local boys in (Latin) grammar prior to university.

It was eventually closed for rebuilding in 1879 by the Charity Commission. It re-opened in 1883 with the official title of Dorchester Grammar School, with an imposing new 'Tudor-bethan' front by Crickmay, but retaining the original school-room behind, with a further storey on top. This building was demolished in 1965.

It had been known as 'Hardy's Grammar School' in the 19th century to distinguish it from other schools in the town – after 1885 this became 'Hardye's' with the newly-added final 'e', in local directories. Hardye's School was housed in Wollaston House off Acland Road from 1946, now used as offices by the National Farmers' Union.

The Dorchester Girls' National School at 49 Bell Street (now Icen Way) was established in 1816. Mary Hardy (1841-1915), Thomas Hardy's sister was headmistress of the school from around 1885-95, and Katherine, her younger sister (1856-1940) also taught there, the pair having trained together at Salisbury Training College for Teachers.

At this time the school had a capacity of 315 pupils, with an



The folorn-looking former Dorchester Girls' National School in Icen Way

average attendance of around 270. Mary was a talented artist, as the portraits in the Dorset County Museum show, and a church organist in more than one parish "during all her active years". She and Thomas were very close, and it has been suggested that the character Thomasin Yeobright in *The Return of the Native* was at least partly based on her.

The school was enlarged in 1901 to take 345 pupils, though it became somewhat oversubscribed, with an average attendance of 370 in 1907. It was rebuilt again in 1910 with the new building which still stands today. At this time the headmistress was a Miss E Lydford Davies, and the school now had a capacity of 272 pupils, with an average attendance of 263.

By 1935, however, the building had been condemned, and the school closed soon afterwards, but it was taken over by the Hardye Junior School and given a new lease of life.

In the 1950s boys would walk over from Wollaston House to the premises in Icen Way for woodworking classes with Mr Westlake, or to use the gymnasium. The latter was reached via an open passage way which ran along the north side of the building to a side door towards the rear.

Due to its close proximity to the Dorchester Gas and Coke Company's premises, the building was known to pupils as the 'Gasworks Academy'. It was last used in 1977, after which Hardye's School moved to new premises in Culliford Road.

Mystery of hidden treasures

By Jerry Bird

Whitcombe is a tiny, picturesque village on the Wareham road, a couple of miles from Dorchester, set in a shallow chalk valley between Winterborne Came and Broadmayne.

The largely 18th-century buildings appear much gentrified these days, with around a dozen neat cottages dominated by the magnificent 17th-century barn and a farmhouse which was largely rebuilt in the early 19th century. The compact settlement is just to the south-east of the church, which stands by itself in pasture, accessible from the stile on the main road.

The church itself is the most noticeable of Whitcombe's treasures. The Grade I listed building nestles in its churchyard surrounded by memorials to members of its past congregations, many of whom would have listened to the sermons of Dorset's poet-parson William Barnes, in whose memory the church was restored. The 18th-century brick churchyard boundary wall encloses a remnant of a medieval cross, along with 32 monuments, the oldest dated 1680, to Melchisadeck Gillet. There are 18th-century memorials to several members of the Spratt



The picturesque village of Whitcombe

family. The most recent burial here was in July 1983 when 91-year-old Elsie Barnes was laid to rest with her husband James, who had died in December 1957.

Close examination of the wall itself reveals that it was built around a stone at its south-east corner, which leans into it. The fact that the wall was built to accommodate the stone is possibly an indication that the stone is an ancient standing stone, or menhir, as there were often strong taboos against interfering with such ancient relics of historical paganism.

A church has stood here since King Athelstan made Whitcombe (then known as Widecombe) part of the endowment of Milton Abbey around AD 934. It was served by a stipendiary priest until 1539, when the stipend was fixed at £13, a year after the dissolution of the monasteries. The parish is very sparsely populated – there were only 61 inhabitants in 1851, and with the increasing mechanization of agriculture this declined sharply, until just ten were recorded in the 2001 census. The church has been retired since

1971 and is now in the care of the Churches Conservation Trust.

Built largely of Portland stone, and some Ham Hill, the church consists of nave, chancel, tower and south porch. The nave is 12th century and there are traces of pre-Conquest masonry at the west end. The chancel and south porch were added in the late 15th century. The tower was completed about 1596.

The church contains some remarkable treasures. In the nave there are traces of 15th-century wallpaintings depicting St Christopher carrying Christ. There is also a mermaid, in classic pose complete with comb and mirror, and some attractive arcading, thought to be early 14th-century date. Opposite the medieval door, in a niche in the north wall, are two beautifully carved Saxon cross fragments, with interlaced decoration.

The early 13th-century font is carved from Purbeck marble. The two bells, both by John Wallis, are dated 1610. One is inscribed 'Hope Well' and the other 'Love God', while the communion table dates from 1637.

When William Barnes announced his candidature for Holy Orders at the age of 45 in January 1847, the father of a pupil at his Dorchester school,



Culliford Tree Barrow in winter

under village of Whitcombe

Col Seymour Dawson Damer, of Came House, offered him the living at Whitcombe. Bishop Denison fast-tracked Barnes so he could be ordained deacon the following month, and in March the Dorset poet and scholar duly became the rector – later becoming responsible for both Winterborne Came and Whitcombe, and taking up residence in the picturesque thatched rectory, still visible from the A352.

He died in 1886, but while he is buried at the tiny church of St Peter's at Winterborne Came, it was from the pulpit at Whitcombe that he preached his first and last sermons. This explains the plaque in the chancel which reads "To the Glory of God and to the memory of William Barnes, the preservation of this church was carried out AD 1912". Sadly, and unusually, Whitcombe church's dedication has been forgotten over time.

To the east of the church are many lumps and bumps in the 14-acre field which surrounds the churchyard – the remnants of Whitcombe's lost medieval village. Several medieval buildings still survived as hovels in the 18th century when the settlement emerged in its current form; their platforms and closes are visible on an old estate map of this date.

Whitcombe's history long predates the medieval period, however. Earthworks to the west and north of the church have been interpreted as part of the boundary of a Saxon enclosure. Older still are traces of Iron Age lynchets (terraces caused by ploughing narrow strips of land across hillsides).

The parish is also host to many prehistoric monuments, its landscape being studded with ancient



Whitcombe Church, parts of which date back to the 12th century

barrows of various types. Straddling the parish boundary near the Ridgeway is a massive Neolithic bank barrow along with an impressive group of 10 or so Bronze Age round barrows strung out along the chalk escarpment.

Most prominent of these, at around 470 feet above sea level, is Culliford Tree barrow. This barrow, which was planted with beeches in 1740, was probably one of Dorset's early tribal meeting places.

The massive tomb was illustrated on Isaac Taylor's 1765 map of the region and was dug into in 1858 "on the orders of a local magnate", damaging a substantial portion of the tomb.

Of this, the antiquarian John Thurnam wrote with evident displeasure: "A wide trench had been dug through it one side, from the summit and the rubble which had been thrown out had not been replaced... Another subject of regret was the fact that though, as we were told by the neighbouring rustics, human remains, with pottery and certain other relics, were found in the barrow, no authentic account of the exploration had been put to print."

The Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England

(1970) described the site thus: "Large trench on south and top almost certainly dug in 1858 when four secondary extended inhumations, one with necklace of amber and two gold-plated beads, and cremation with incense cup in colared urn, were found."

Unfortunately most early 'barrow diggers' were little better than grave robbers, and finds from 'digs' of this period were not usually recorded in any meaningful way.

Valuable artefacts were generally placed in private collections while funerary cremation urns were often discarded, to suffer destruction at the hands of impoverished farm labourers who would smash them, to get at the 'treasure' they believed lay within. Trenches dug during these 'excavations' were often left open, while the spoil could be left lying in heaps around the site. This, and the consequent erosion, left many of our ancient monuments badly disfigured.

The more enlightened and careful antiquary Charles Warne, who was later to excavate many Dorset barrows and record them in his 1866 book *Celtic Tumuli of Dorset*, also bemoaned the destruction at Culliford, and described the excavation as 'but partially effected'. It ➡

is possible that the barrow suffered further indignities during the Second World War – there is a rumour that an arms cache was buried here in 1940 in case of German invasion.

The barrow, with its obvious surrounding ditch and the massive clump of beeches is still impressive.

There is also interesting folklore attached to it. According to Leslie Grinsell in his 1959 book *Dorset Barrows*, “The Culliford Tree barrow, formerly the meeting place of the Hundred of Cullingford Tree, is also known as the Music Barrow from the belief that music could be heard beneath the mound by those who listened at the apex at midday”.

The folklore here is interesting – there is archaeological evidence for feasting and ceremonies carried out at many prehistoric sepulchral monuments. No doubt this would have been carried out to the accompaniment of flutes and drums of various kinds. Perhaps an ancient remnant of folk memory is enshrined here.

Close by, hidden in a corner of nearby Came Wood, is another still-impressive monument – a massive Neolithic chambered tomb, or long barrow, which would have been used as a communal sepulchre.

It is well worth seeking out – from Culliford Tree barrow you can see the gate into the (reputedly haunted) wood. There is a path just inside to the right which follows the fence line closely; it leads directly to the ancient, tree-covered, mound.

Another Whitcombe treasure is currently on display in the archaeology gallery of the Dorset County Museum. It was ploughed up in 1963, and consists of a relief



An aerial view showing the possible site of a stone circle

carving of Portland stone, 8ins thick and 2ft 3½ins wide.

The Royal Commission describes it thus: “It depicts a bearded horseman with bare head turned to face the onlooker, wearing a flowing cloak curving in folds behind him over a belted tunic. The rider carries in his right hand a thick lance and bears a round shield on his crooked left arm.”

The sculpture (below), perhaps of the later 2nd or 3rd century, may be either a tombstone of an auxiliary cavalryman or a dedication possibly to a Thraco-Danubian



hero-god regarded as a protector of hunters and a saviour in the struggle against forces of evil.

Excavations in the same field in 1965 and in 1966-7 uncovered a rectangular building with plastered walls, part of a settlement which had its origins in the pre-Roman Iron Age tribe known as the Durotriges. There were several burials, many with grave goods; one adult male wore an iron bracelet; two others had a pair of

Durotrigian pots, while one was accompanied only by animal bones, indicating food offerings to sustain the deceased on their journey to the afterlife. A girl aged about 16, one of two burials in rectangular graves, had a necklace of ten glass, one paste and two wooden beads, and two Durotrigian and two Roman Samian-ware vessels, dating the interment to c. AD90 at earliest.

The most spectacular burial was pre-Roman. It consisted of male who died about the age 27, possibly from a shoulder wound. He has since been dubbed the ‘Whitcombe Warrior’. The grave is unique in the area, the body having been buried with iron weapons as well as ornaments.

These were a sword 2½ ft. long, lying by the right side in a bronze-mounted wooden scabbard, a spear perhaps grasped in his right hand, and a hammer-like weapon with chalk pommel in his left. A bronze brooch lay above the right shoulder, and a bronze ring with a stud on the breast. The skeleton of the Whitcombe Warrior is currently exhibited in the County Museum.

Finally, in researching this article, I looked at aerial shots of Whitcombe. It was immediately obvious there was a circular feature to the east of the church, around 150ft in diameter.

Given the large number of prehistoric henge monuments in the vicinity, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that another henge lies beneath the remains of medieval Whitcombe. The standing stone in the churchyard wall may have existed as an outlying feature, perhaps marking the spot where the midwinter sun rose, as seen from the circle. ❖

Is this village font part of a Roman altar?

By Jerry Bird

Some practitioners of modern Paganism, and especially Wicca, quoting writers such as Doreen Valiente, will sometimes glibly announce that Christian churches were often built on pagan sites.

This kind of generalisation will annoy most historians and archaeologists, who will tell you that such instances are extremely rare, especially in the British Isles, though there is one example in Dorset at Knowlton Rings, near Wimborne St Giles, where a ruined church stands in the centre of a Neolithic henge.

However, a visit to the church of St Andrew and St Peter at Toller Porcorum, near Maiden Newton, is certainly worthwhile for the student of archaeology or the seeker after pagan heritage.

It is a typical small Dorset church of Ham Hill stone, of 14th- and 15th-century date, situated on a hillock and surrounded by a roughly circular churchyard, which the guidebook describes as having 'the appearance of a sacred prehistoric site'.

Outside the church gates stand two upright stones which were discovered built into an old wall that was revealed when part of the modern retaining wall collapsed.

According to the guidebook "They do not seem to be weathered enough to have been part of a stone circle but could have been the stumps of larger stones", suggesting the church may have been built on an earlier sacred site.

On entering the church, practically the first thing one sees is the font. It comprises two parts, of which the upper is of Ham Hill stone, octagonal, with decorative panels, and dated by the Royal



Is the font base part of a Roman altar?

Commission to the 12th century. The lower is by contrast carved in white limestone, probably Portland, in the form of large column capital with swirling spirals at three corners and a ram's head at the other, with some curious symbols carved between them.

Close inspection reveals the upper bowl is deeper than it first appears as it sits in a recess carved into the upper surface of its pedestal. The most striking part of the carving, the ram's head, has its eyes set at an overly horizontal angle, giving it a slightly quizzical, anthropomorphic look.

In a paper read to members of the Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society in 1922, ET Legg considered: "The curious font at Toller Porcorum seems to

be formed from a portion of a Roman altar; but at what date this transformation took place it is impossible to say for certain – probably in Norman times." The Royal Commission seemed to accept its Roman origin, but thought it may have once been part of a much larger architectural feature, while to Arthur Mee its provenance as a Roman altar was "beyond question".

The ram in Roman religious symbolism is often associated with the army, and also has an association with the worship of both the goddess Minerva, and the god Hermes/Mercury. Besides being the messenger of the classical gods, Hermes was particularly associated with sacrifice, and also with the fertility of sheep – the god of flocks and herds. He is often depicted in classical iconography either as carrying a small ram, or riding on the back of a large one. Could it be that the strange carved symbol to the right of the ram's head is a stylised representation of the caduceus – the winged staff entwined by serpents that was his trademark? The possibility is certainly intriguing.

The symbol of the astrological age at the start of the Roman occupation of Britain was, incidentally, Aries. In Homer's *Odyssey*, the god Hermes gives Odysseus a herbal concoction to protect him after the witch Circe turned his friends into pigs. Rather appropriate, then, that this altar should have ended up in a place with porcorum ('of the pigs') in its name!

Take time out from that screen!

By Mark Sparrow

It's nothing new to learn that we are spending more and more time on technological devices.

In fact, research for communications regulator Ofcom said that in 2014 UK adults spent more time using technology than they did sleeping!

Studies have shown that one of the major effects of an excessive amount of screen time is a restructuring of brain matter, causing changes in sensory perception, emotions, self-control and cravings.

While the majority of us aren't likely to be using screens to this extent, many of us will be using screens regularly for work, for leisure and as a way of switching off from other stresses. The type of concentration that looking at a screen requires can lead to irritability, impatience, mistakes, risk-taking, exhaustion and low mood as the brain quickly becomes tired.

One way of countering the effects of too much screen time is to switch your attention to a different type of task, one that is fascinating for you but requires little effort. Examples might be watching a butterfly in the garden, or clouds moving across the sky or leaves rustling in a breeze. This uses a different part of your brain, giving you a chance to rest and relax, while having a restorative effect.

Why not make a list of things which fascinate you but don't require you looking at a screen? Try making your list under six headings – sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and activities – and note down six to 10 pleasurable experiences in each of these areas. Then when you begin to feel tired, stressed or in need of a lift, choose something on the list to do or focus on for a while, giving you the chance to recover.

If you find it hard to come up with a list that works for you, are troubled by difficult thoughts and feelings when you change your attention in this way, or you have trouble giving up using electronic devices, then you might find that a period of counselling might help you. Counselling is another way to learn to relax, reflect and restore, and an experienced counsellor will provide a calm and supportive atmosphere in which to switch off from the demands that modern life places on us all.

If you think you may benefit from counselling contact Mark via www.marksparrowcounselling.co.uk



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Fantastic food at one of town's gems

**The Old Tea House,
High West Street, Dorchester**

Whether you live in town or you're just visiting, The Old Tea House is one of those historic gems that you just have to visit to sample the amazing atmosphere – and the food!

Built in 1635, it is one of the oldest houses in Dorchester, originally built as a 'safe house' for the abbot, with underground tunnels and a priest's hole. It was a favourite haunt of Thomas Hardy, who regularly took tea here, and has been a tea room since 1902.

Reputed to be one of the most haunted buildings in town, it also happens to offer the most fantastic food, from all-day breakfasts to lunches and cream teas – and, of course, the famous all-day Sunday roasts, and a midweek roast for senior citizens.

We decided to try out Sunday lunch, and weren't disappointed. A plateful of wonderfully fresh home-cooked food duly arrived, my wife and her family all opting for roast beef, while I picked the lamb shank (reserved in advance).

Beautifully tender

The beef was beautifully tender, while the lamb just fell off the bone; cooked to perfection. There was a selection of fresh vegetables, roast potatoes, and Yorkshire pudding, all for £8.95 (lamb extra).

I was so full I couldn't manage a pudding, but everyone else had a magnificent lemon cheese-cake with fresh strawberries, which was beautifully light (I did try a mouthful!) and is also available with an Amaretto sauce.

Other options included apple crumble, treacle tart, sponge puddings, and of course The Old Tea House's wonderful selection of truly delicious home-made cakes – Dorset apple cake, orange marmalade cake, coffee cake, chocolate cake and many more besides.

The staff are incredibly friendly and really helpful. If you've got friends or family visiting then don't miss this wonderful experience. They also do bed and breakfast. On the last Friday of every month there is a psychic supper with a guest medium, which is a regular sell-out – so do book ahead.

Richard Reed



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Tour raises cash for charity



This year's Hardy Country Tour, in which 101 classic cars spent a day touring the scenic countryside of West Dorset, raised a total of £1,075 for the Weldmar Hospicecare Trust. Organiser Nick Aplin is seen here handing over the cheque to Matt Smith, the fundraising manager for the trust.

The event, held on 5 June, is an annual rally for drivers of vintage and classic vehicles and is sponsored by Auto Passion, specialist auto-repair services of Higher Bockhampton and Weatherbury Roofing of Dorchester.

Time to have a ball!

Local children's charity Home-Start West Dorset is busy organising its Snowflake charity ball to be held at Athelhampton House on 12 November.

Helen Horsley, Senior Organiser at Home-Start, explained: "Our Snowflake Ball is part of the annual Snowflake campaign championed by Home-Start ambassador and TV presenter Kirsty Allsop.

"It is so called because snowflakes are as unique and fragile as the children Home-Start supports. It's a fabulous opportunity to dress up and put on your dancing shoes after a delicious four-course dinner. Athelhampton has come up with a superb menu."

Kirsty Allsop said: "Please join me raising money for The Snowflake Appeal, so Home-Start can keep supporting unique and fragile children. Home-Start is in there, making a difference each and every day. It is changing all our communities for the future. It prevents parents' difficulties from becoming their children's problems."

Tickets for the Snowflake Ball are now on sale at £49.50 per person and are available from Home-Start on 01305 265072, or email office@homestartwestdorset.co.uk.

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Public gets to have say on £13m museum expansion



Dorset County Museum welcomed members of the public to have their say on the latest outline plans for the Tomorrow's Museum for Dorset project. The Victorian Hall was bustling with members of the community eager to discuss how their museum will look when it opens in 2020.

A Heritage Lottery fund grant of £9.9 million was secured last year, conditional on the museum raising £3.3 million. Project architects Carmody Groarke are designing a building which includes:

- Spectacular new galleries which tell the story of 200 million years of Dorset's history;
- Accessible, state-of-the-art storage;
- A new international-standard gallery which can host the best touring and temporary exhibitions;
- A new, publicly visible space for volunteers and researchers to work on the collections;
- A new learning centre in the restored medieval rectory at the rear of the site;
- A new shop and café in High West Street.

The plans are on display in the Victorian Hall and everyone is invited to comment on them.

Autumn fundraiser for arts

Dorchester Arts is staging a Wessex Autumn Fundraiser – a celebration of Dorset's season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, with plenty of Dorset cider, apple cake, bread, and cheese; everything that is good about autumn in this beautiful part of the world.

Folk musician and storyteller Tim Laycock will be on hand to entertain, together with demonstrations of traditional craft-making; and some poetry too!

DA Autumn Fundraiser, Thursday 27 October, Ashton Farm Barn, Martinstown, DT2 9HA, 6:30pm, £18, 01305 266926 dorchesterarts.org.uk

Literary Festival set to wow

Dorchester Literary Festival is back this autumn and aims to be even bigger and better than last year's hugely successful inaugural event.

This year the aim is to make it bigger and better, bringing you acclaimed authors that will enlighten, amaze and entertain you in the picturesque setting of our lovely county town.

There is an exciting programme to fill the five days of the festival, with more than 20 events confirmed. Headliners include our patron, Tracy Chevalier, Tony Robinson, Ann Cleeves, Victoria Hislop, Rachel Joyce, Dinah Jefferies, Richard Dannatt, Kate Adie, Alison Weir, Judith Millar, John Challis, John Wright, Elizabeth Luard, and many more.

The line-up includes a 'natural world' themed day at Kingston Maurward, plus a programme of free children's events. Highlights include:

- Blackadder's Tony Robinson discussing his memoirs, *No Cunning Plan*;
- Ann Cleeves, award-winning author of the Shetland and Vera crime series;
- Best-selling novelists Victoria Hislop and Tracy Chevalier.

19-22 October, Dorchester Literary Festival, venues vary. Full details and tickets from dorchesterliteraryfestival.com or the TIC, Dorchester.

Don't miss Cider Festival!

The Dorchester Cider Festival is back in the Borough Gardens with a huge selection of real cider producers selling over 65 of their finest drinks.

There will be delicious hot and cold food, and non-stop live music from top bands.

Ford Farm, Dorset-based cheesemakers, will be donating 50% of the proceeds from sales of their cheese to raise money for a new cancer outpatient facility at Dorset County Hospital in Dorchester.

Dorchester Cider Festival, Sat 17 September, Borough Gardens, 3pm to 10pm.

Music and poetry at Max Gate

Hardy's home comes alive with poetry, music and performance as Tim Laycock, explores the writer's love of poetry, music and 'tuneful stories'. Performer and folk musician Tim Laycock will be on hand at Max Gate to bring Hardy's home, Max Gate, to life. Booking not needed.

Tuneful Stories, Max Gate, Sat 17 Sep, Sat 1 Oct, Thu 13 Oct, 11:00am-4:00pm. General admission prices apply.



Challenging questions on the world we're creating

Dorchester Quaker Meeting has invited Multistory, a radical theatre company, to perform *Digging the Dirt* as part of Quaker Week (1-9 October). The play explores parallels between the activism of the Diggers, a protest movement in the 17th century, and whistleblowers in today's world.

Making the world a better place comes face to face with the challenges of working together. *Digging the Dirt* is a moving fable that provokes questions about the world we're making for ourselves.

The performance takes place at 7.30pm on Thursday 6 October at the Dorford Centre, Bridport Road, Dorchester. Everyone is welcome and there is no charge for entry. The play runs for one hour and will be followed by refreshments and an opportunity to discuss the themes with the cast.

6 October, 7.30pm, free, Dorford Centre, Bridport Road, Dorchester 01305 263544 or email warden@dorchesterandweymouthquakers.org.uk

Canzonetta at Holy Rood

Canzonetta makes a welcome return to the Church of the Holy Rood, Wool on 9 October for a concert of a cappella and piano accompanied songs: baroque, spirituals and fabulous arrangements of folk and 20th century favourites.

This group of nine accomplished ladies regularly travels to the lovely churches of Dorset to perform a unique brand of three- and four-part harmony songs.

9 October 3-4pm. *The Church of the Holy Rood, Church Lane, Wool. Free admission.*

Moving story of human bonds

What can a teenage boy who is into free running and a middle-aged woman with Parkinson's possibly have in common? The desire to move...

Kinetics is based on the remarkable true story of two people seemingly at polar opposites. As Rose tries to come to terms with her diagnosis, an unlikely friendship springs up when Lukas literally lands on her doorstep.

But will the bond between them be strong enough when things go wrong?

Thurs 29 September, Corn Exchange, Dorchester, 8pm, £10/£8/£5 Livefor5, 12+, dorchesterarts.org.uk

Thurs 6 Oct, 7.30pm. New Barn, Milton Abbey School. 01258 881872. £10, £7 u18s, £28 families artsreach.co.uk

Medieval music at Cerne

An evening of medieval music is being staged at St Mary's Church, Cerne Abbas starring Katy Marchant and Steve Tyler. This is a virtuosic programme of medieval music, toe-tapping Italian C14th courtly dance music, haunting Trouvere melodies and 13th century Spanish pilgrim songs played on an exotic array of period instruments including hurdy gurdy, English bagpipes, shawm and gemshorn.

Tickets £10 including refreshments from Cerne Abbas Village Stores or from Helen Hewitt on 01300 341950, or visit events@cernechurchfriends.org.uk.

Friday 7 October 7:00pm St Mary's Church, Cerne Abbas, £10 including refreshment from 6.30pm



Fun take on Canterbury Tales

Blast from the Past present six of the best-loved Canterbury Tales, told in a variety of styles. The three-man cast use drama, verse, physical theatre and song to bring Chaucer's characters to riotous life. This show is fast, furious, occasionally filthy and very funny!

Friday 14 October, Corn Exchange, Dorchester, 8pm, £12/£10, 01305 266926 dorchesterarts.org.uk

Heavenly musical harmonies

In the space of just a few years, Miranda Sykes and Rex Preston have emerged to become one of the most sought after duos on the English folk & roots scene. The striking combination of the flame-headed double bass player and virtuoso mandolin player create music that *Folk Roots* describes as "a musical partnership made in heaven".

Saturday 24 September Corn Exchange, Dorchester, 8pm, £12/£10, 01305 266926 www.dorchesterarts.org.uk

Musical stories from the sea

In 1969, storyteller Malcolm Green spent three months on an uninhabited island off the coast of Iceland studying colonies of seabirds. Now in *Shearwater*, Malcolm shares his stories with musician Tim Dalling (The New Rope String Band).

Sat 15 Oct, 8:00pm. Evershot Village Hall. 01935 83784. £8, £6 u18s, £25 family

Sun 16 Oct, 7:30pm. Milborne St Andrew Village Hall. 01258 837371. £8, £6 u18s, £25 family



PuppetCraft show for children

An old man lives in a dreary junkyard, full of other people's broken and unwanted rubbish. He dreams that one day his life will be full of life, colour and sound. His wish is about to come true...

PuppetCraft – The Tin Forest is an uplifting, humorous and touching show, full of visual invention, puppetry and musical fun, with mechanical birds, a wind-up circus and exotic animals.

Tues 25 Oct, 5:30pm. Portesham Village Hall 01305 871925. £6, £5 u18s, £20 family

Fri 28 Oct, 2:00pm. Cerne Abbas Village Hall 01300 341332. £6, £5 u18s, £20 family Suitable 3+

Pre-show workshop available on 24-27 October for children aged 7+. Places limited.

Shakespeare at the opera

Olivier award-winning OperaUpClose mark the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death with a performance of songs, operatic arias and ensembles inspired by his plays and poetry.

These bite-sized jewels of music theatre are performed by a quartet of singers accompanied by a virtuosic pianist, in staged scenes of romance, comedy and drama which will surprise and delight.

Friday 7 October, Corn Exchange, High East Street, DT1 1HF, 8pm, £19/£17/£5 Livefor5, dorchesterarts.org.uk

Middle age under microscope

Following a complete sell-out spring tour professional grumpy old woman, Jenny Eclair extends her hit tour *How To Be A Middle Aged Woman (Without Going Insane)* into the autumn.

Eclair puts middle age under the microscope and decides whether to laugh, cry or buy a dachshund! You are welcome to join her, just button your cardi up properly and wipe that lipstick off your teeth.

Wednesday 5 October, Corn Exchange, High East Street, DT1 1HF, 8pm, £17.50/£15.50, 16+, dorchesterarts.org.uk

Spikedrivers blend the blues

The Spikedrivers' music has been described as "haunting", "gutsy", "tribal" and even psychedelic.

Ben Tyzack, Constance Redgrave and Maurice McElroy are a new sound of transatlantic blues. From the early blues of John Lee Hooker and Big Bill Broonzy they have added their own blend of north African and Native American rhythms, gospel harmonies, sixties blues and rock guitar.

Saturday 1 October, 8pm, Corn Exchange, £13/£6.50 in advance, £14/£7* on the door. dorchesterarts.org.uk.*

McGough: poet of our times

Hilarious and surreal, Roger McGough is a poet of many voices. Menace and melancholy there may be, but with plenty of McGough's characteristic wit and wordplay too.

Performing with the 'must have' act at literary festivals LiTTLe MACHiNe, setting classic poems to music and performing them with passion and humour.

Sunday 23 October, Corn Exchange, High East Street, DT1 1HF, 7pm, £17.50/£15.50, 14+, dorchesterarts.org.uk

Blockheads set to rock town

The legendary Blockheads return to Dorchester for another night of their top hits and poetic lyricism.

With Derek Hussey now fronting the band in place of the late Ian Dury, the Blockheads are still revered as one of the most underrated British bands with a strong following of all ages.

Relive classics such as *Hit Me With Your Rhythm Stick*, *What A Waste* and, of course, *Sex & Drugs & Rock & Roll*.

Friday 28 October, Corn Exchange, Dorchester, 8pm, £20/£18, 01305 266926 dorchesterarts.org.uk

Magic from Morgan & West

Time-travelling Victorian magic duo Morgan & West unload another boxful of bafflement and impossibility. Witness a mountain of mysterious magic, a hatful of hyper-reality, and of course a truck full of tricks. Mixing brain-busting illusion and good old fashioned tomfoolery, Morgan & West present a magic show for all the family.



25 Oct, 6:00pm. Toller Porcorum Village Hall. 01300 320373. £6, £5 u18s, £20 family

27 Oct, 6:00pm. Piddletrenthide Memorial Hall. 01300 348247. £6, £5 u18s, £20 Suitable 5+ artsreach.co.uk

Boy who climbed into the moon

Some pretty odd ideas are floating around Paul's street. There's Clarence the poodle who thinks he can fly – but Paul has the oddest idea of all. He thinks that the moon is a big hole in the sky and he's going to climb into it. *The Boy Who Climbed into the Moon* is suitable for children over five.

Sat 15 Oct, 3:00pm. Martinstown Village Hall. 01305 889963. £6, £5 u18s, £20 family

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Out & About

September

- 15 September** 4.00pm-5.00pm Tea with Mr Hardy. Performance by some of the Hardy Players at Max Gate. Tickets £3. 01305 262538
- 16-17 September** 8.00pm (doors & bar 7.30pm) Me and My Friend – Somerleigh Players. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £10/£8 members and concessions. 01305 266926
- 16 September** 7.30pm Country & Western – Line Dancing Fundraiser. Weymouth Pavilion Ocean Room. 01305 783225
- 17 September** Tank 100 – Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the tank. Bovington Tank Museum.
- 17&18 September** Storytelling for families: King John. Corfe Castle. 01929 481294
- 17 September** 1.00pm-4.00pm 'Tuneful Stories' with Tim Laycock. Max Gate
- 17 September** 3.00pm-10.00pm Dorchester Cider Festival. Borough Gardens.
- 17 September-2 October** Lyme Regis ArtsFest 2016
- 17&18 September** 11.00am-5.00pm Art & Craft Exhibition. Chaldon Herring Village Hall.
- 18 September** 10.00am-4.00pm Osmington Antique Fair. Osmington Village Hall. Free entry.
- 18 September** 12.00pm-5.00pm Smedmore House & Gardens Open Day. Kimmeridge, Wareham. 01929 480174
- 21 September** 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Every Brilliant Thing – Paines Plough. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £12/£10 members and concessions/£5 Livefor5. 01305 266926
- 22 September** A Guide to everything Lorton. Lorton Meadows Conservation Centre, Upwey. Guided walk to discover fantastic species and history of the reserve. More info 01305 816546
- 22 September** Morrish & Banham Wine Tastings. Brewery Square.
- 23 September** 8.00pm (doors & bar 7.30pm) His Way – Robert Habermann. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £14/£12 members & concessions. 01305 266926
- 24 September** 11.00am-3.00pm Michaelmas Fair, Stinsford Church.
- 24 September** 10.00am-12.00pm Crossways Community Market & Café. St Aldhelms Church, Crossways.
- 24&25 September** Storytelling for families: Edward I. Corfe Castle. 01929 481294
- 24 September** 10.30am-4.00pm Wessex Local Craft & Food Producers Market. Brownsword Hall, Poundbury.
- 24 September** 11.00am-3.00pm Archaeology Day. Max Gate
- 25 September** Caterpillar Kids – Seed Extravaganza. Lorton Meadow Conservation Centre, Upwey. Discover the secret life of plants and the lengths they go to when dispersing their seeds, burrs berries & exploding pods. More info 01305 816546
- 25 September** 2.30pm Durnovaria Silver Band. Borough Gardens
- 28 September** 7.30pm The Wihan Quartet. Dorset County Museum. £15 01305 262735
- 29 September** 1.00pm-2.00pm Lunchtime concert - Dorset County Museum. 01305 756827
- 29 September** 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Kinetics – DT2 Productions. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £12/£10 members and concessions/ £5 Livefor5. 01305 266926

October

- 1 October** 1.00pm-4.00pm 'Tuneful Stories' with Tim Laycock. Max Gate
- 1 October** 7.30pm Dorset Chamber Orchestra Concert. St Mary's Church, Dorchester. Tickets £13.50 on the door or from Harmony Music 01305 260360 £12.50.
- 1 October** Caterpillar Kids – Bizarre Badgers. Lorton Meadows Conservation Centre, Upwey. Discover how to spot a secret badger route and remarkable facts about badgers. More info 01305 816546
- 5 October** 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) How to be a Middle Aged Woman (Without Going Insane) – Jenny Éclair. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £17.50/£15.50 members & concessions. 01305 266926

- 7 October** 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Music Of't Hath Such a Charm – Opera Up Close. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £19/£17 members & concessions. 01305 266926
- 7 October** 7.00pm Archaeology Unearthed – Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Jewellery by Professor David A Hinton - lecture. Dorset County Museum. Free, however £3 donation encouraged. 01305 756827
- 7 October** 2.00pm-5.00pm Portland House Autumn Opening. Stunning 1930s art deco villa. Belle Vue Road, Weymouth. 01297 489481
- 7 October** 6.30pm Concert of Medieval Music. St Mary's Church, Cerne Abbas. Tickets £10 from Cerne Abbas Stores or Treasurer@cernechurchfriends.org.uk.
- 8&9 October** 11.00am-5.00pm Portland House Autumn Opening. Stunning 1930s art deco villa. Belle Vue Road, Weymouth. 01297 489481
- 8 October** TankMod Modellers Exhibition. Tank Museum, Bovington.
- 9 October** 11.00am-3.00pm Kingston Maurward Wedding Fair. £3.50 01305 215003
- 9 October** 2.30pm (doors and bar 2.00pm) Why the Whales Came – Wizard Presents Theatre Company. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £10/£8 members & concessions/ £30 family ticket. 01305 266926
- 9 October** 3.00pm-4.00pm Canzonetta in Concert. Church of the Holy Rood, Wool. 01202 840483
- 10 October** 7.30pm The Nutcracker – Russian State Ballet. Weymouth Pavilion. 01305 783225 boxoffice@weymouthpavilion.com
- 12 October** 6.30pm for 7.30pm Geology Revealed – Nautilus: Beautiful Survivor – 500 million years of evolutionary history by Wolfgang Grulke – lecture. Dorset County Museum. £3 donation encouraged. 01305 756827
- 12 October** 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Jon Richardson – Work in Progress. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £14. 01305 266926
- 12 October** 1.45pm Eddie the Eagle will landing. The Evergreen Cinema, Age UK, Prince of Wales Road. Info on 01305 269444
- 12 October** 5.00pm Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens Enchanted Illuminations Charity Preview Evening. In aid of Weldmar Trust. Book at www.weld-hospice.org.uk/floodlight
- 13 October** 1.00pm-4.00pm 'Tuneful Stories' with Tim Laycock. Max Gate
- 13-30 October** until 8.30pm Abbotsbury Subtropical Gardens Enchanted Illuminations. 01305 871092
- 14 October** 8.00pm (doors & bar 7.30pm) The Canterbury Tales – Blast From The Past. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £12/£10 members & concessions. 01305 266926
- 14-16 October** Autumn Steam Gala. Swanage Steam Railway. 01929 425800
- 15 October** Deer at Dawn. Watch the autumn deer ret at Pow-erstock before a full breakfast back at the Kingcombe Centre. 01300 320684
- 15 October** Lorton Apple Day. Lorton Meadows Conservation Centre, Upwey. Try out the traditional practice of apple juice & cider making with the Weymouth Transition Town Group. 01305 816546
- 15 October** 3.00pm The Boy who Climbed in to the Moon – Theatre Alibi. Martinstown Village Hall. £6, £5 u 18s, £20 family. 01305 889963
- 16 October** 7.30pm Shearwater – Tim Dalling & Malcolm Green. Milborne St Andrew Village Hall. £8, £6 u18s, £25 family. 01258 837371
- 16 October** Kingcombe Farm Walk & Feast. Guided walk followed by Sunday lunch. 01300 320684
- 19 October** 7.30pm Daniel Lehardt (Piano). Dorset County Museum. £12 tickets from www.dorset-county-museum-music-society.org.uk
- 19 October** 7.30pm My Big Fat Cowpat Wedding – Kali Theatre. Portesham Village Hall. £9, £6 u 18s, £25 family. 01305 871925
- 19-23 October** Dorchester Literary Festival. Dorset County



Out & About

Museum, Town Hall & Duke's Galleries in Brewery Square. For more information www.dorchesterliteraryfestival.com or 01305 267992

19 October – 4 November 9.00am-5.00pm Semblance Exhibition. Duke's Auctioneers. Free entry. 01305 266926

19 October 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) One For The Road – Seann Walsh/ Dorchester Corn Exchange. £14/£12 members & concessions. 01305 266926

20 October 7.30pm Kelly Oliver – Royal Manor Theatre, Portland. £8, £6 u 18s. 03336 663366.

20 October 1.00pm-2.00pm Lunchtime Concert – Dorset County Museum. Richard Frewer and David Price perform a selection of West Country folksongs. £3 donation encouraged. 01305 756827

20 October 7.00pm for 7.30pm Literary Lives – T.E. Lawrence and the centenary of the Arab Revolt by Andrew Munro - lecture. Dorset County Museum. £3 donation encouraged. 01305 756827

21 October 7.30pm She'Koyokh. The Pamela Hambro Hall, Winterborne Stickland. £10, £7 u 18s, £30 family. 01258 880920

22-31 October Spooky Seas, Weymouth Sea life Centre.

22-30 October 10.00am-4.00pm Hallowe'en at Corfe Castle.

22-30 October Great Half-Term Dinosaur Hunt. The Dinosaur Museum. 01305 269880

22-30 October Tut's Treasure Hunt. Tutankhamun Exhibition, Dorchester. 01305 269571

23-28 October Spooky Fun @ Lulworth. Lulworth Castle & Estate. 01929 400352 information@lulworth.com

24-28 October Tanks in Action. Bovington Tank Museum. 01929 405096

24-28 October 10.00am-5.00pm Spooktacular Halloween Half-Term, Farmer Palmer's Farm Park, Wareham. 01202 622022

25 October 5.30pm The Tin Forest, puppetcraft. Portesham Village Hall. £6, £5 u 18s, £20 family. 01305 871925

25 October 6.00pm Utterly Spiffing Spectacular Magic Show for Kids – Morgan & West. Toller Porcorum. £6, £5 u 18s, £20 family. 01300 320373

27 October 6.30pm (doors 6.00pm) A Wessex Fundraiser. Ashton Barn Farm, Martinstown. Folk musician and storyteller Tim Laycock will be on hand to entertain, together with demonstrations of traditional craft making. £18 01305 266926

27 October Caterpillar Kids – Minibeasts in the Wild Woods. Lorton Meadows Conservation Centre, Upwey. Discover beetles, bugs & slugs lurking under logs in Withy Woods together with crafts and games. 01305 816546

27 October 6.00pm Utterly Spiffing Spectacular Magic Show for Kids, Morgan & West. Memorial Hall, Piddletrenthide. 01300 348247

28 October Caterpillar Kids – Spooky Spiders & Halloween Bats. Lorton Meadows Conservation Centre, Upwey. Discover the secret life of bats and make bouncing bats to take home. 01305 816546

28 October 2.00pm The Tin Forest, Puppetcraft. Cerne Abbas Village Hall. 01300 341332

29 October 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Who Do I Think I Am? Mark Steel. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £15/£13 members & concessions. 01305 266926

29 October Apple Day at Hardy's Cottage.

29 October 10.00am-12.00pm Crossways Community Market & Café. St Aldhelms Church, Crossways

29 October-4 December (every weekend) Christmas Craft Sale, Dorset Wildlife Trust. Kingcombe Centre, Toller Porcorum.

29 October 10.30am-4.00pm Wessex Local Craft & Food Producers Market. Brownsword Hall, Poundbury.

30 October 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) When The Eye Has Gone – Live Wire Theatre. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £10/£8 members conc/ £5 Livefor5. 01305 266926

November

Throughout November Contemporary Lantern Display. Corfe Castle. 01929 481294

2 November 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Martin James Bartlett. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £14/£12 members & concessions/ £5 Livefor5. 01305 266926

3 November 7.00pm for 7.30pm Literary Lives – The Influence of Hardy on the Cornish Poet, Jack Clemo, by Luke Thompson -lecture. Dorset County Museum. £3 donation encouraged. 01305 756827

4 November 7.00pm for 7.30pm Archaeology Unearthed – Gold from Bronze Age Dorset and Beyond by Dr Neil Wilkin - Lecture. Dorset County Museum. £3 donation encouraged. 01305 756827

4 November 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Dare Devil Rides to Jarama – Townsend Productions. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £12/£10 members and concessions. 01305 266926

5 November Caterpillar Kids – Hedgehogs. Lorton Meadows Conservation Centre, Upwey. Discover the mini 'hogs' of the hedgerow plus crafts and games. 01305 816546

5 November Lyme Regis Bonfire Night. Lyme Regis Seafront.

5-6 November 10.00am-5.00pm Christmas Craft & Gourmet Food Fair. Kingston Mauward. 01305 215003

7 November 10.00am-12.30pm Dorset Buttons Creative Workshop. Hardy's birthplace Visitor Centre, Thorncombe Woods. Workshop £13 plus £1 materials.

7 November to Jan 2017 The Great Reindeer Hunt. The Teddy Bear Museum, Dorchester. 01305 266040

11-14 November 10.00am-4.00pm Book Sale. Dorset County Museum.

12 November 7.30pm Concert – The Purbeck Village Quire. St Martin's Church, Broadmayne.

13 November 2.30pm (doors and refreshments 2.00pm) Olwen Foulkes & Nathaniel Mander. Dorchester Corn Exchange

13 November Remembrance Sunday Service. Bovington Tank Museum.

17 November Morrish & Banham Wine Tastings. Brewery Square

19 November 7.30pm BSO Principal Winds Briantspuddle Village Hall. £10, £6 u 18s, £25 family. 01929 471002

19 November Dorset County Orchestra – Concert. The Dorford Centre.

Corn Exchange regular bookings

Dorchester Bridge Club - Monday Evenings

Leroc Dance Classes - Tuesday Evenings

Taekwondo - Tuesday Evening

Fizzy Boppers - Children's Dance Classes - Wednesdays am

New – Argentine Tango Classes – Wednesday Evenings

Dorchester Country Market - Friday Mornings

Kingcombe Centre

The Kingcombe Centre, Toller Porcorum offers a wide range of courses, walks and talks throughout the year. 01300 320684

REGULAR EVENTS

2nd Friday of every month 7-8pm Kirtan – group singing to open the heart and uplift your spirit. £5 Dorchester Yoga & Therapy Centre. 14 Trinity Street. For more info call Sue 07962 797479 or sueblanch@gmail.com

Tuesdays 6-7.30pm Gentle Yoga – gentle physical movement & yoga nidra (deep relaxation). Dorchester Yoga & Therapy Centre. 14 Trinity Street. All welcome. Pre-book by calling Sue 07962 797479 or sueblanch@gmail.com

Most Saturdays 9.30-10.30am Relaxation, yoga nidra and gentle yoga. Durnovaria Band Hall, Kings Road, Fordington. All welcome, no experience necessary. £5 Book by calling Sue 07962 797479 or sueblanch@gmail.com

MARKETS

Poundbury Farmer's Market – 1st Saturday of the month

Bridport Farmer's Market – 2nd Saturday of the month

Dorchester Farmer's Market – 4th Saturday of the month

Sherborne Farmer's Market – 3rd Friday of the month

Broadmayne Community Market – 3rd Friday of the month at St Martin's Community Hall, Broadmayne.



September

15 September 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

16 September 9.00pm Road Hogs (blues). The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

17 September 9.30pm The Sharpies. Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

17 September 8.30pm Loose Connections. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

18 September 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

18 September 7.30pm Traditional Folk Music Session. Chalk & Cheese, Maiden Newton 01300 321396

19 September 8.30pm Troubadour Showcase (original music by local singer-songwriters). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

21 September 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

22 September 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

22 September 8.00pm Stompin' Dave. Sunray Folk Club, Broadmayne 07786 654074

23 September 8.30pm The Crack (party covers). The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

23 September 7.30pm His Way – Robert Haberman (Sinatra tribute). Corn Exchange, Dorchester 01305 266926

24 September 7.30pm Miranda Sykes and Rex Preston (folk). Corn Exchange, Dorchester. £12/£10 members and concessions. 01305 266926

24 September 8.00pm The Watkins & Swarbrick Band (folk). Village Hall, Briantspuddle (booking essential) 01305 837299

24 September 8.30pm Pronghorn (folk-rock). The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

25 September 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

25 September 2.30pm Durnovaria Silver Band. Borough Gardens, Dorchester 01305 266079

28 September 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

28 September 7.30pm The Wihan Quartet (Classical). Dorset County Museum, Dorchester 01305 262735

29 September 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

30 September 7.30pm Southern Tenant Folk Union (Americana). Corn Exchange, Dorchester £12/£10 members and concessions/ £5 Livefor 5. 01305 266926

30 September 7.30pm Beaminster Gallery Quire (West Galtary Music). St Michael & All Angels, Winterbourne Steepleton.

October

1 October 9.30pm Million Dollar Bash (American folk-rock). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

1 October 8.30pm Dubhart. The George, Dorchester

1 October 7.30pm Spikedrivers (DA Blues). Corn Exchange, Dorchester £14 advance/£7 on the door, seniors £11 advance/£12 on door. 01305 266926

2 October 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

2 October 7.45pm Traditional Folk Music Session. Chalk & Cheese, Maiden Newton 01300 321396

3 October 8.30pm Troubadour Showcase (original music by local singer-songwriters). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester

5 October 8.30pm Jazz Club. The Three Compasses, Charminster 01305 263618

5 October 8.30pm Traditional Folk Music Session. The Blue Raddle, Dorchester 01305 267762

5 October 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

6 October 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

7 October 7.30pm Music Oft Hath Such a Charm – Opera Up Close (Opera/Shakespeare). Corn Exchange, Dorchester 01305 266926

7 October 8.30pm Beat Safari. The George, Dorchester

8 October 8.30pm Mod tribute band '5.15'. Bull Inn, Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

8 October 8.30pm Compass. The George, Dorchester

9 October 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

12 October 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington,

12 October 7.30pm Simon Blake's Startling Songs (singer/guitarist/entertainer). Corn Exchange, Dorchester 01271 321706

12 October 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

15 October 9.30pm Howlin' Bones. Tom Browns, Dorchester

15 October 8.30pm V8 Hearts. The George, Dorchester

16 October 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

17 October 8.30pm Traditional Folk Music Session. Fox & Hounds, Cattistock 01300 320444

17 October 8.30pm Troubadour Showcase (original music by local singer-songwriters). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester

19 October 7.30pm Daniel Lebhadt (Classical Piano). Dorset County Museum, Dorchester 01305 262735

19 October 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

19 October 8.30pm Matt Tarling & Friends (Irish Folk Session). The Blue Raddle, Dorchester 01305 267762

19 October 8.30pm Jazz Club Open Session. The Three Compasses, Charminster 01305 263618

20 October 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

21 October 8.30pm Ricky Solo. The George, Dorchester

22 October 9.30pm 4 Go Mad in Dorset. Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

22 October 8.30pm The Remedy. The George, Dorchester

22 October 8.30pm Vanilla Radio (jazz-rock/funk). Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

folk sundays

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23 October 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020
23 October 7.00pm (doors 6.30pm) Roger McGough + Little MACHiNe. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £17.50/£15.50 members & concessions. 01305 266926

26 October 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

27 October 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

28 October 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) The Blockheads + Support. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £20/£18 conc.

29 October 8.30pm Skinfull. The George, Dorchester

29 October 8.30pm Lewis and the Sound of the Suburbs. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

29 October 9.30pm State of Undress (lively folk-rock). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

30 October 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

31 October 8.30pm Troubadour Showcase (original music by local singer-songwriters). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester

November

2 November 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

2 November 8.30pm Jazz Club. The Three Compasses, Charninster 01305 263618

2 November 8.30pm Traditional Folk Music Session. The Blue Raddle, Dorchester 01305 267762

3 November 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

5 November 8.00pm (doors and bar 7.30pm) Catfish Keith - DA Blues. Dorchester Corn Exchange. £13/£6.50 in advance: £14/£7 on the door, seniors £11 in advance/£12 on door.

5 November 8.30pm Shooter. The George, Dorchester

5 November 9.30pm The Lanterns. Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

6 November 7.45pm Traditional Folk Music Session. Chalk & Cheese, Maiden Newton 01300 321396

6 November 7.30pm Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

9 November 8.00pm Open Mic. Night. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

10 November 8.30pm 'Howl' - Open Mic. Night. The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

11 November 8.30pm The Crack (covers). The George, Dorchester 01305 251046

12 November 9.30pm The Crack (covers). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

12 November 8.30pm K'uffle. Bull Inn. Fordington, Dorchester 01305 257353

13 November 7.30pm~ Folk Sunday (traditional and contemporary folk session). Tom Browns pub, Dorchester 01305 264020

Telephone numbers are those of the venue/box office/organiser. DorchesterVoice suggests you check for ticket availability and prices (where necessary) before attending. Please note, regular music sessions sometimes vary times.

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