

Dorchester on Thames



Parish Plan

September 2005

Introduction

This plan was supported by the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) who provide funding and advice so that rural communities can identify issues affecting their community and prepare a plan of action to tackle those issues.

It was led by the Parish Council, who adopted the key findings and managed the on-going issues in conjunction with local representatives.

Why Dorchester?

- The village is changing rapidly – we need to deal with the implications of this change and identify how to meet the challenges it brings in a structured, measured and fully consultative way.
- Some burning issues have emerged and others deserve our attention, but we have to prioritise.
- New people have moved in, bringing a change in the population structure, new interests and new issues.
- Action plans are an effective mechanism for getting funding for new community projects and we don't want to miss funding opportunities.

Methodology and Timeline

The widest possible input from the community has been sought both in the issues to be tackled and in the solutions recommended.

Key steps have been:

- April 2003: project was announced at the Annual Parish Meeting. A preliminary exercise in identifying and prioritising issues was carried out. Several public meetings were convened during 2003 to further identify and prioritise the key issues.
- November 2003 to February 2004: a series of questionnaires were distributed. Preliminary results were presented at the Annual Parish Meeting and the Village Fete.
- August 2004: The Action Plan was adopted by the Parish Council and distributed to the community.
- May 2005: Ongoing activity and consultation included a youth-focussed event with actions adopted by the Parish Council that month, concluding the Parish Plan consultative process.
- August 2005: Preparation of this final Action Plan.

Next Steps

The Parish Council and the Working Groups have been busy implementing Actions wherever possible since their adoption. Some actions have been completed, others are in progress, either by Working Parties or by the Parish Council directly. Therefore this document is a summary of the key topics raised and prioritised during the consultation process. Each action has a status, as at 31st August 2005.

The Parish Plan will not be static and unchanging. In recognition that some projects will 'fall by the wayside' over the coming years, and new ones will present themselves, it will be formally reviewed and updated by the Parish Plan Management Committee annually, in consultation with the Parish Council, to reflect changing priorities over the previous and forthcoming years.

Acknowledgements

The Parish Plan was organised by a Management Committee whose members were part of the Steering Group which managed and ran Working Groups for each topic. The Working Groups then pulled in additional residents, societies or specialists as required. Members of the Steering Group have put a considerable amount of work into the preparation of the Parish Plan, amounting to over 300 hours of voluntary time input. The contribution of everyone involved is acknowledged.

We thank the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and SODC for proving the funding for the Parish Plan exercise and especially thank David Fisher and Anton Nath of ORCC for their valuable assistance throughout the process.

The Parish Plan Steering Group

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Crime and Safety

Action 1 To support an initiative to re-launch Neighbourhood Watch

how

- Provide a list of questionnaire respondents willing to participate in Neighbourhood Watch to the local co-ordinator
- Liaise with local and regional co-ordinators to support a re-launch of Neighbourhood Watch

who

- Neighbourhood Watch
- Parish Plan Crime and Safety Working Group

status

- Done. List sent to local and regional co-ordinators March 2005.



Action 2 To publicise the correct telephone number to report crime

how

- Identify suitable means of communicating the number, eg. *Dorchester News*, village website, notice boards

who

- Editor of *Dorchester News*
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Parish Plan Crime and Safety Working Group

status

- Done. Number placed on website and highlighted in each edition of *Dorchester News*.



Action 3 To investigate and implement security measures for the School and Pre-school premises

how

- Instigate a campaign with the relevant authorities

who

- Primary School and Pre-school
- Parish Plan Crime and Safety Working Group

status

- Done. Measures reviewed, but no further action.



Local Shops and Services



Action 4 To make information on village activities more widely available

how

- Distribute the activity list to the 133 questionnaire respondents who requested it
- Make the list available to the village website project
- Establish the responsibility for maintaining the list

who

- Parish Plan Shops and Services Working Group
- Dorchester Abbey Church Wardens
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- DOTWeb (the village website working group)

status

- Done. A list was published in *Dorchester News* and on the village website.



Local Shops and Services

Action 5 To consider and recommend options for a lunches/snacks venue

how

- Assess likely venues
- Engage in further consultative work in the village
- Liaise with local authorities

who

- Parish Plan Shops and Services Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC)
- Village Hall Management Committee

status

- Ongoing

Action 6 To consider the creation of a Local Exchange Trading Scheme (LETS)

how

- A presentation to interested parties by Wallingford LETS

who

- Parish Plan Shops and Services Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Wallingford LETS
- Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

status

- Done. Presentation made. No further action.



Car Parking

Action 7 To increase the use of car parking at the Recreation Ground

- Or Drayton Road and Oxford Road when wet
- Possible all-weather parking in the longer term

how

- Improved signage
- Provide marshalls
- More advance publicity to visitors
- Park 'n Ride package for Abbey bookings
- Floodlighting

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council with funding from fees charged to promoters

status

- Done. Measures implemented, Abbey parking package in place.



Action 8 To develop the car parking facilities at Bridge End

- Increase the number of parking spaces available
- Improve the efficiency of parking

how

- Re-surface and mark out the existing area into bays
- Make environmental improvements to the public toilet and parking areas

who

- Oxfordshire County Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Dorchester Abbey
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council

status

- Ongoing
Parish Council has allocated £10,000 in its 2005 business plan for improvements to the existing car park.



Action 9 To introduce parking controls in High Street

how

- Waiting time limit outside Co-operative Store
- Yellow/white lines at key points, eg. Queen Street junction

who

- Oxfordshire County Council

status

- Ongoing

Action 10 To influence the planning authorities so that all future development has proper regard for its impact on demand for car parking spaces

how

- Adopt a policy for parking requirements
- Lobby the District Council

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council

status

- Ongoing

Action 11 To campaign for changes to speed limits

how

- Lobby Oxfordshire County Council

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council

status

- Ongoing



Affordable Housing

Action 12 To progress the provision of affordable housing in Dorchester

how

- Consultation with the Housing Enabling Manager of South Oxfordshire District Council and the Rural Housing Enabler of Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Parish Plan Affordable Housing Working Group

status

- Ongoing

Action 13

To investigate possible building sites in Dorchester based on the questionnaire responses

how

- Establish land ownership, feasibility and appropriateness of developing the suggested sites

who

- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Parish Plan Affordable Housing Working Group

status

- Ongoing

Action 14

To consider and recommend the primary groups for whom housing should be provided

how

- By studying the experiences of other villages similar to Dorchester by consultation with SODC and ORCC

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Parish Plan Affordable Housing Working Group

status

- Ongoing

Facilities for the elderly

Action 15 To provide seats for the elderly to be sited on the Hurst Water Meadow

- how
 - who
 - status
- Approach the trustees of the Hurst Water Meadow
 - Parish Plan Facilities for the Elderly Working Group
 - Done. Two seats hewn from oak butts have been installed.



Action 16 To investigate whether the Village Co-operative Store can provide or support a home delivery service to the elderly and infirm

- how
 - who
 - status
- Discussion with the management of the store
 - Advertise for a person to implement the service
 - Parish Plan Facilities for the Elderly Working Group
 - Done. A paid-for service is available.





Environment and Wildlife

Action 17

To draw up and implement an environmental action plan

how

- Obtain blueprint from Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum
- Identify champion(s)
- Identify and map sensitive areas
- Identify suitable locations for new trees
- Survey flora and fauna
- Determine key actions
- Ensure long-term maintenance

who

- Volunteers
- Hurst Water Meadow Trust/Northmoor Trust
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Owners of designated areas

status

- Ongoing

Action 18

To prevent flooding

how

- Identify problem areas
- Determine the nature of the problem(s)
- Exert pressure on Oxfordshire County Council, Thames Water and the Environment Agency to solve the problems

who

- Persons affected
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Local elected representatives

status

- Ongoing until problems resolved

Action 19

To reduce litter (including weeds around Village Hall, school wall, etc.)

how

- Identify worst areas
- Site more litter bins
- Remove weeds and spray to prevent regrowth
- Educate public via schools and *Dorchester News*

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Northmoor Trust (Wild Waste Show)
- Schools
- Editor of *Dorchester News*

status

- Done. Parish Council increased regular litter picking. SODC provided more bins. Articles published.



Action 20

To reduce smells from the sewage plant

how

- Determine and record the incidence of smells
- Exert continuous pressure on the Environment Agency and Thames Water to solve the problems

who

- Persons most affected
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Local elected representatives

status

- Ongoing





Refuse and Recycling

Action 21 To establish a Community Composting Scheme

- either a central facility for the whole village
- or a series of small neighbourhood sites if this proves to be more suitable or practicable
- or the provision of a communal chipping machine

how

- Investigate schemes set up in other parts of the County to determine their suitability for Dorchester
- Depending on the outcome, convene a public meeting to decide on the type of scheme that should be created

who

- Parish Plan Refuse and Recycling Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council

status

- Ongoing

Action 22 To make recycling boxes readily available in the village

who

- Parish Plan Refuse and Recycling Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council

status

- Done. New, additional or replacement boxes are available from two sources within the village.



Action 23 To campaign for the kerbside recycling of glass bottles and jars

how

- Lobby South Oxfordshire District Council

who

- Parish Plan Refuse and Recycling Working Group

status

- Ongoing

Information Technology

Action 24 To provide Broadband Communication for all areas of the village

how

- Continue to pressure BT to ensure that plans for a May 2005 implementation are not delayed
- Investigate the extent to which any BT implementation might not provide full coverage
- Pursue an alternative 'wireless' broadband provision for any areas not covered or for those who require an earlier implementation

who

- Parish Plan IT Working Group
- South Oxfordshire District Council

status

- Done. Activities superceded by new BT roll-out.



Action 25 To establish training facilities for Information Technology within the village

how

- A further questionnaire to determine the topics for training
- Recruit a team of volunteer trainers
- Investigate funding and other resources
- Develop training programmes and schedules

who

- Parish Plan IT Working Group
- Volunteer trainers
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council

status

- Done. Training sessions started in January 2005.



Action 26 To establish a Community Website

- Provide comprehensive information for potential visitors
- A source of local news and information for residents
- A forum for individuals to express their views
- Provide links to other village and local websites

how

- Develop the existing village website into one that serves the needs of both residents and potential visitors

who

- DOTWeb (the village website working group)
- Parish Plan IT Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- All village clubs/societies/businesses

status

- Done. Website was launched October 2004.



Public Transport



Action 27 To press for shelters at the two bus stops at the Berinsfield roundabout

how

- Lobby Oxfordshire County Council

who

- Parish Plan Public Transport Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Oxfordshire Rural Community Council

status

- Done. Shelters were installed June 2005.



Action 28 To summarise and publish bus service timetables of interest to Dorchester residents and visitors

how

- Compile extracts from the relevant timetables
- Print and deliver to all households
- Publish extracts on the village website

who

- Parish Plan Public Transport Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Thames Travel
- DOTWeb (the village website working group)

status

- Done, as described.



Action 29 To ensure that the Volunteer Driver Scheme remains robust

- Following the questionnaire circulated by the Parish Plan Public Transport Working Group in November 2003, sufficient volunteers were identified to re-activate the Berinsfield Volunteer Driver Scheme

how

- Supply the Berinsfield Information and Volunteer Centre with contact details of residents who expressed an interest in the scheme
- Follow up to ensure that as many volunteers as possible have been recruited either to the Berinsfield or the Wallingford schemes

who

- Parish Plan IT Working Group
- South Oxfordshire District Council

status

- Done, as described.



Action 30 To liaise with neighbouring villages regarding the provision of a community minibus

who

- Parish Plan Transport Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Berinsfield Parish Council
- Drayton St Leonard Parish Council
- Berinsfield Information and Volunteer Centre
- Berinsfield Community Business
- Oxfordshire Rural Community Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council

status

- Ongoing



Tourism Development

Action 31

To develop a tourism management plan

how

- to maximise benefits to visitors and local facilities/businesses
- to minimise detrimental impact on the village
- Set up Tourism Working Group
- Support the implementation of relevant elements of the Parish Plan (eg. car parking, environment)
- Carry out visitor survey
- Carry out tourism impact study
- Prepare outline plan
- Identify projects to improve tourism management and services

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Dorchester Abbey Parochial Church Council
- Parish Plan Management Committee
- Parish Plan Working Groups
- Local businesses
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Hidden Britain

status

- Ongoing



Conservation

Action 32

To develop a new Conservation Plan

how

- Encourage greater public awareness of the concepts of 'conservation area' and 'listed building' and how they affect decisions on village planning and development
- Promote and make available for consultation the forthcoming SODC Conservation Guide to Dorchester (which includes listed buildings)
- Develop appropriate additional material, such as location maps and lists of buildings relating to the parts of the village outside the conservation area
- Assist in further development of the conservation plan

who

- Parish Plan Working Groups
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Dorchester on Thames Society
- South Oxfordshire District Council

status

- Ongoing

Action 33

To react to public opinion of 'unloved' buildings and where possible implement changes

how

- For specific public or community-owned areas (eg. toilets/car park and sports pavilion/recreation ground), identify potential improvements and where appropriate, sources of funding.
- Seek to ensure that all proposals for new developments take a long-term view of their impact.

who

- Parish Plan Conservation Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- Dorchester on Thames Sports Club

status

- Ongoing

Action 34

To support implementation of Parish Council decisions regarding the cemetery building

how

- Obtain necessary permissions
- Identify sources of funding
- Cap and make the building safe
- Further develop plans for memorial plaques
- Improve the surrounding area

who

- Parish Plan Conservation Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council

status

- Done. Work scheduled to start as soon as grant clarified.



Youth and Recreation



Action 35

To set up a Youth Parish Council in accordance with National Association of Local Councils guidelines

how

- Assess NALC guidelines and propose implementation timetable
- Convene a follow-up youth meeting to present NALC guidelines, agree the timetable, funding and role.

who

- Parish Plan Youth Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council

status

- Ongoing

Action 36

To consider and implement a range of Summer activities for Dorchester's young people

how

- Liaise with local youth groups, ORCC, TRAX and inviting interested individuals to run sessions as appropriate
- Liaise with Parish Council and others for seed funding

who

- Parish Plan Youth Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council Youth Team
- ORCC

status

- Ongoing

Action 37

To investigate options for setting up a youth club in the village

how

- Liaise with local youth groups, ORCC, TRAX and invite interested individuals to run sessions as appropriate
- Liaise with Parish Council and others for seed funding.

who

- Parish Plan Youth Working Group
- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council
- South Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council Youth Team
- ORCC

status

- Ongoing

Action 38

To upgrade the childrens' playground

how

- Consult the village children regarding requirements
- Obtain quotations for equipment and installation
- Form a fund-raising committee

who

- Dorchester on Thames Parish Council

status

- Ongoing