THE SOCIETY OF DORSET MEN

NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2026

County Dinner 2026



The County Dinner once again takes place on the third Saturday in May, which this year is the 16th. Full details are included with this Newsletter and you are encouraged to make your bookings as soon as possible in accordance with the notes on the form. The Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood VR PC is our guest. A former MP with links, both political and military to the county, he will be a most interesting speaker.

Charitable Donations

The Society has made a donation to the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance and has received the following message from Julie Plowden, their Deputy CEO:

"On behalf of Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance, I would like to thank you for your very generous and kind donation of £500.00.

As we celebrate our 25th Anniversary, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude for your support. Your generosity is instrumental in allowing us to continue providing a critical care service both by air and by road, through close cooperation with our NHS colleagues across the region. With each mission costing approximately £3,500 and the demand for our service growing every day, your amazing donation is helping us reach more people and save more lives.

Thanks to your support, we're now working towards the exciting goal of adding a second helicopter to our fleet."



A donation of £500 has also been made to the Weldmar Hospice at Dorchester.Alan Holley and Chris Goodinge visited on 20th January to present the cheque, which was most gratefully received.

Events Diary for 2026

A full programme of Events has been organised for the Society in 2025.

Please watch the website for alterations and updates

Hambro Cup – Golf Competition

Came Down GC, Dorchester. **Friday 8th. May, 2026**. Contact d.upshall@googlemail.com (Pay on the day) **PLEASE NOTE THE REVISED DATE.** First tee time 10 am

County Dinner

George Albert Hotel, Warden Hill, **Saturday 16th. May, 2026**. Cost £49.50 per head. Speaker—The Rt Hon Tobias Ellwood

Wimborne Walking Tour, including the Minster

Tuesday 26th May, 2026. Meet at the Minster at 2 pm. To be followed by a cream tea. (Pay on the day) PLEASE NOTE – you must indicate your intention to attend to chrisgoodinge@hotmail.com in advance

Founders Day

Dorchester Cemetery, Weymouth Avenue, **Sunday 5th July at 2.00 pm** (Details to be announced) Contact Peter Lush chairman@societyofdorsetmen.co.uk

Walking Subterranean Tour of Dorchester

August - Guided Tour by Mark Chutter (Chair of the Thomas Hardy Society) (free) and Cream Tea (pay on the day). Date and details to be announced

Visit to Highclere Castle

September – details to be announced – please see separate item on opposite page.

Annual General Meeting

Dorset Golf and Country Club, **Sunday 25th. October, 2026** – Details to be confirmed in due course.

Christmas Lunch

Dorset Golf and Country Club, **Sunday 6th. December, 2026**. Details and menu to be announced in due course. **PLEASE NOTE THE NEW VENUE**

Except where otherwise mentioned, further details can be obtained by email to
chrisgoodinge@hotmail.com
Bookings should be made to the Treasurer
mogwich@hotmail.com
Pay 'Society of Dorset Men' by bank transfer to 40-46-23 A/c 21182226
For those not using internet banking, please email the Treasurer for alternative arrangements

Dorset Year Book 2027

The committee are once again preparing the Year Book for publication, but this year have arranged for a professional type-setter to prepare the edition for printing. This will remove the most difficult aspect from the shoulders of those involved.

Articles are invited from members and former contributors. Submissions should be as a Word Document and photographs should be of not less than 300 dpi. with an indication of where they should go in the text. Please send your copy to editor@societyofdorsetmen.co.uk

And a plea from the Treasurer, Paul Newman:

"Should any members of the society, or their friends, have businesses, groups or interests they would like to advertise, please consider doing this in our Year Book, it is a prestigious production read by our membership and sold in selected bookstores throughout Dorset.

Income from our very valued advertisers helps and supports our society and we feel provides benefits for our advertisers' businesses, many of which have been advertising with us for many years and we thank them all for this.

If you have any leads, please let me know by email to: mogwich@hotmail.com"

Membership

The Membership Secretary continues to pursue what can sometimes seem a thankless task and although resignations have increased, these are mainly from members who have not been active for some years. This gives us a more realistic measure of total membership.

New members continue to keep pace with losses through death and so the decline in numbers appears to have halted. Our current membership is 700, and we now have 4 joint members, another two this month. Equally, we have gained 6 new members since our last newsletter, and we now have 9 lady members.

The following continue to elude efforts to trace them and are all registered as "address unknown". Anyone with information of their whereabouts should contact the Membership Secretary at membership@societyofdorsetmen.co.uk

Sir David Checketts KCVO, Sir Christopher Colville, Robert Cornick, RN Hannay, A Hatcher, K James, Geoff Jeans, David Potter and J Rogers.

Highclere Castle

It is hoped to have an outing this year to Highclere Castle, aka Downton Abbey. To arrange this, it is necessary that we have some indication of demand beforehand. If you would like to join this visit, could you please give notice of intent to Chris Goodinge at chrisgoodinge@hotmail.com as soon as possible. A viable number is essential for the trip to take place. It would be good to see this connection with our immediate past President.

Purbeck Dinner

Following the successful re-introduction of their Annual Dinner last year, the members of the Society living in Purbeck met again at the Isle of Purbeck Golf Club for a most enjoyable evening of company, conversation and conviviality.





The excellent meal on a Dorset theme – Blue Vinny Soup, Dorset Lamb, Dorset Apple Cake, Dorset Knobs and Blue Vinny – was enjoyed by all and solicitously served by the Golf Club staff.

Members were then addressed by Nick Caddy who related much of his life as a policeman in the County, a career far removed from today's model. The raffle which followed raised £165 towards the provision of an Admiral nurse in the area.

Organisation was again in the capable hands of Neil Hardy, ably assisted by Nic Caddy and Mike Blomfield.

Dorsets Weekly Wonders

A new website has been launched for everyone who loves Dorset. Every Friday, dorsetsweeklywonders.com will cover a place, building or object that helps to make up Dorset's unique appeal. The Wonders will be drawn from all over the county, from Lyme Regis to Christchurch, from Gillingham to Portland. Among the first Wonders were a traditional village cross with a modern twist, a construction that has been in place for over 700 years, and perhaps the most beautiful stretch of the river Frome.

There is a brief text about each Wonder, a photo and a location map. Over the weeks, an alphabetical index will build up that will become a guide to all the best things to see and enjoy in Dorset.

You can just visit the website, but there is also the opportunity to subscribe: every Friday, the week's Wonder will be emailed to subscribers, completely free of charge.

The website has been created by John Newth, a Life Member of the Society and former editor of *the Dorset Year* Book, who also for 23 years was editor of the county magazine, *Dorset Life*. He says: 'The idea is to celebrate all that is good about this wonderful county, and to provide ideas for visits within Dorset. I hope, too, that users of the site will enjoy finding out things that they might not have known before: all the obvious features will be included, but so will some less famous oddities.'

John Newth dorsetsweeklywonders@gmail.com