DNL Dockenfield newsletter

News and events from in and around the village of Dockenfield

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Photo: Amanda Adolph

Welcome to the spring edition of the DNL. Spring seems to be springing with the lovely sunshine of the last few weeks. The trees with their gorgeous blossoms are flowering cheerily. The garden has been alive with early butterflies, Brimstones and Red Admirals. Frogs and toads are migrating and spawning and the birds are looking for mates and nesting sites.

I've been spending my spare time opening up the windows and doors, sitting outside in the sunshine, or pottering in the garden, breathing in the fresh air. It is a joyous thing to be able to turn and face the sun, absorb a few rays and watch nature shake off the winter and reawaken. It's the perfect opportunity to grab a copy of the DNL and have a look at what Dockenfield has to offer in April and May.

Our newsletter is filled with upcoming events, everything from village lunches and coffee to The Annual Dockenfield Parish Meeting (p4). Plus news and reports from the last two months, in and around the parish. Do write to/email us if you want to have an article included in the next DNL. Full instructions on how to do this are on p8 and I hope to see you around and about at village events.

The Editor and the DNL team.

The Bomb on the Boundary

21st March 2026 dawned an ordinary, but stunning, spring day. With a view to keeping my niece and nephew occupied we decided to make use of their toy metal detector.

In the garden we have one of the old boundary oaks. In a past search with a metal detector (a far stronger one), I had found a Napoleonic cap badge.

So, armed with that knowledge I suggested we start there just in case lighting might strike twice!

Well, our search soon paid dividends as we found a brass horse buckle which my niece (aged 5) and nephew (aged 6) thought was amazing. We had found "pirate treasure" and, definitely not a horse buckle.

They asked if we could keep looking as 'the chest' couldn't be far away and, they were 'half' right.

On the other side of the boundary oak the beepers sounded, and my spade hit something metallic.
We held our breath as I lifted the turf and saw another semi brass coloured object covered in dirt.
I picked it up but very quickly noted the shape and placed it gingerly back into the hole. I immediately got everyone away from the hole.

I was 90% sure it was something bomb-like... perhaps a remnant from WW2. So, I rang 999. The operator was great and within an hour a police officer was on the scene and only 10 minutes after that the Army bomb disposal unit arrived. They took an x-ray to confirm that it was 'live' and a WW2 mortar.

They needed somewhere local to detonate it safely which luckily enough we were able to provide. Our family farm is only three minutes down the road. It was the perfect site. It's possible that you heard the bang on that Saturday afternoon.

The whole process was incredible, and we want to say a big thank you to the Army and to the Police for dealing with 'our little find' safely and efficiently and making some amazing memories. I know I'll be gentler with the spade while digging in the garden in the future.

Left Upper: WW2 Mortar being x-rayed to check if it was 'Live'.

Above: Mortar being safely detonated at our family farm.

Left Lower: Remains of the Mortar and the Pirate horse buckle, mounted for posterity.

Article and Photos by Ben Poulsom

Dockenfield Village Fete – We Need You

Saturday 6th June, 2pm–6pm

Last year was a first in living memory, the fete was cancelled, beaten by weather that had no business arriving in June. But the bigger picture is harder to ignore. The number of people actively getting involved in the fete has been quietly shrinking, and that's something worth paying attention to. A village fete needs a village behind it.

So, this year we want to make it count.

The Christmas drinks in December were brilliantly attended, the kind of evening that reminded everyone why this village is worth showing up for. That energy is exactly what we want to carry into June.

But the fete doesn't run itself. We need volunteers of all ages, people willing to help set up beforehand, run a stall for a couple of hours, and stay a little at the end to clear away. It's been fantastic to see some of our younger villagers honing their entrepreneurial skills and running their own stalls with real confidence and flair, and we'd love to see more of that this year. We're also open to new stall ideas, and if you or a group are looking to raise money for a cause, a fete stall is a great way to do it. Get in touch and we'll make it work.

One more thing: the raffle is one of the easiest ways to raise money on the day, and we need more people willing to sell tickets in the run-up to the fete. If you can help with that, please say so when you email.

None of it is hard work, but without enough hands it simply isn't possible to put the event on.

If we don't get the numbers, there won't be a fete. It really is that straightforward.

If you can help, even for part of the day, please drop an email to dockenfield.activities@gmail.com to let us know you're available. The earlier the better, so we can start planning properly.

Let's make this year's Dockenfield-Day fete one to remember.

The Activities Committee

Rainfall Totals

Dockenfield's resident amateur meteorologist Jack has sent in the rainfall totals for January and February. Thank you, Jack!

Rainfall for January 2025 122.6mm: Rainfall for January 2026 300.4mm
Rainfall for February 2025 77.6mm: Rainfall for February 2026 106.4mm

January 2026 received the largest amount of rain in a month since Dockenfield records started in 2015.

Jack Bessant

News from Dockenfield Parish Council

All Parish Council meetings are held in the Church of The Good Shepherd. If any residents wish to speak at the meeting or bring any issues or ideas to our attention as there is always a slot on the agenda for you, but please could you advise the Clerk beforehand.
The agenda can be found on the Parish Council website a week before the meeting. Our web address is www.dockenfieldpc.org.uk. Alternatively, if you have any questions you would like discussed at the meeting, please contact the Clerk at dockenfieldclerk@hotmail.co.uk

Future Parish Council Meeting Dates

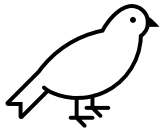
Tuesday 28 April 2026, 8pm at The Church of the Good Shepherd.

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on **19th May 2026** at **8pm** at The Church of the Good Shepherd.
Everyone is welcome to attend this meeting, but we do expect it to be quite brief as the outcome of the Local Government Reorganisation will most likely require a more detailed and focussed meeting for all residents which will be arranged once matters become clearer, probably in late summer.

The Editor received this from one of our dedicated parish councillors whilst taking a well-earned holiday.

"Greetings from Oz...I know it's cheating but we have seen our first Swallows today at Clontarf Nature Reserve. Sydney!" .... or is it the last swallow of the southern summer?



Cherubs Toddler Group

Thursday mornings 9.30 – 11.30 (term time)
at the Good Shepherd
A great space for all with fun; refreshments; sociability and singing.
£2.50 per family per session

Coffee Stop

Enjoy a hot drink and homemade cake and a chat at Coffee Stop at the Good Shepherd every Friday 10am – midday.

Barbara Potter

Frensham and Dockenfield History Group 2026 Programme

All meetings are held in the Marindin Hall starting at **7.30pm.** Membership is £15 per annum (subs due at AGM – cash/cheque) but visitors are welcome at £3 per visit.

The subject matter for some of the speakers is yet to be finalised. Contact chairman, Chris Bonner for any further information 07498916505.

Tuesday, April 14th. Neil Mumford - Forgotten Occupation – Guernsey during WW2

Tuesday, May 12th. David Rose

Tuesday, June 9th. Roy Waight Chris Bonner

DNL editor on behalf of Chris Bonner

Men's Night at The Bluebell

Dockenfield Men's Night: join us on the second Thursday of each month at 8.00 pm at The Bluebell. If you're new to the village, it's a great way to meet other people in a relaxed and convivial atmosphere. The next meetings are 9th April and 14th May.

Please note reminders are only sent to the WhatsApp group. If you would like to join us, please message me on 07930 98 66 77.

Sebastian Fox

Ladies' Nights at The Bluebell!

Ladies' Night continues to be a great success, with some people managing to get along most months and others popping in as their availability allows! However it works for you, if you come along, you'll be made to feel very welcome!

Ladies' Nights are **always on the last Thursday of the month**.

Thinking ahead to **2026 'Ladies Nights'! Save these dates**

Thursday 30th April
Thursday 28th May and then ***every last Thursday of the month!***

Want to get event reminders via WhatsApp? Simply send a message to Joolz Miles at 07833355359, and you'll be added to the group.

Joolz Miles

Frensham and Dockenfield Village Lunch

Frensham and Dockenfield hold a Village Lunch every fourth Wednesday from January to November at the Royal British Legion in Shortfield, Frensham.

The price of the village lunch has increased to £6 and is still very good value for a two-course meal and coffee or tea.

The meal on **April 22nd** is Fish Pie (with no prawns).

On **May 27th** it's Curry with Rice, with the charity stall run by the Bowls Club.

The lunch on **June 24th** will be Bangers, Mash and Beans with the charity stall for Woodlarks.

The lunch on **July 22nd** will be Ham and Egg Salad.

There is always an alternative for the main dish.

Pam Watmore

Frensham Royal British Legion Club

We have had two very successful quizzes in the last month, one a charity quiz organised by Harry Glover (see article below) and the other on behalf of the Bowls Club organised by Les Trusler and Chris Bonner.

If you enjoyed these or if you like quizzes but were unable to come, then don't miss **Val's quiz** on **24th April** as below.

There was also another very popular Otis B Driftwood lunchtime jazz concert on 8th March.

Bingo on a Friday evening is relaxing, humorous and friendly and you may win some money, a nice raffle prize or both. It is at **8pm for 8.30pm every Friday** – why not give it a try – you will be most welcome.

Do try **Club Pizza**, which is outside the Legion from **4pm to 8pm every Thursday**. Feel free to eat your pizza in the Legion with a drink, or maybe at our outside tables when the weather warms up.

Upcoming events:

Saturday 24th April 7.30pm: Quiz – organised by Val Gubby, on behalf of the Legion Club. All welcome, teams of up to six, entry £5 per head.

Janet Caiger

Royal British Legion Club Quiz held 21st February

A big THANK YOU from Harry Glover to all who were able to support the evening at Frensham Royal British Legion Club.

There was a very good turn out, and I am pleased to report that we raised a total of £612. Half of the sum has been donated to the Macular Society and half to RNIB, and letters of thanks have been received from both charities.

The winning team was an all-ladies team: Janet, Jo, Pam and Penny – a formidable combination of talent!

Congratulations ladies!

Harry Glover

Frensham and Dockenfield Horticultural Society (FDHS)

The primroses and blossoms are here again in all their glory. I think we can safely say, bar the odd hail storm, that Spring has arrived.

The April meeting of the FDHS is on **23rd April** at The Marindin Hall. Stella Diamond will be talking about the Therapy Garden. **7.30pm** for refreshments; the talk starts at **8pm**.

If you're keen to garden and would like to get discounts at suppliers and hear interesting talks, join the society. Contact membership@fdhs.org.uk

Jilly

Wild Dockenfield: Bealeswood Wildlife Recording Group

Do you have early memories of lying in the grass watching tiny creatures busying about? Ants, beetles, or woodlice: where do they go? What do they eat? Do bees really go down holes in the ground?

Have you always loved wildflowers but not known many names: why do different flowers grow in different places, and is it a 'wildflower' or a weed? Perhaps you have a feeder for garden birds and want to learn their names, or have noticed different birds, overhead?

Bealeswood Common in the centre of our village is being watched! A group of us with different interests in wildlife came together during lockdown and decided to make a note of all the species we see living on or passing through or over our village common. One or two of us were already quite knowledgeable, a few more of us just knew some of the common flowers, butterflies and birds, and are on a steep learning curve.

After five years we have recorded nearly 1000 species (plants, animals, insects and birds): we are amazed! And so is our Council and Natural England as the common has just been made a Local Nature Reserve.

This year, we are running some family-friendly walks around the common and would love you to join us. These will start at the bench and noticeboard on the common (just wander a bit further down the lane past The Bluebell's garden) :-

May 21st (Thursday) **10 am**: Searching for spiders, led by Darren Hill e: darren.hill@waverley.gov.uk .

July 5th (Sunday) **11 am**, butterflies and bees. e: phall3422@aol.com .

September 26th (Saturday) **10am**, small mammals, (wood mice, voles and so on) led by Roger Trout e: rabbitwise@hotmail.co.uk .

October 17th (Saturday) **10.30 am**, mushrooms, led by Manda Adolph. e: amandaadolph@gmail.com .

Please email to the names above if you plan to come. We need your contact details to let you know of any changes if the weather is bad.

Information will be posted on the notice board on Bealeswood Common (by the bench) and on our website www.dockenfieldpc.org.uk/wildlife .

If you have a particular interest in any of our native wildlife, we would welcome some help with our watching and recording. Please contact us. Alison or Dan Bosence at: albosence@yahoo.com or dwjbosence@btinternet.com (on behalf of BWRG Bealeswood Wildlife Recording Group).

Roger Trout. Leading the Small Mammals Walk 2024.

Male Bullfinch. Photo by Alan Cox.

Alison and Dan Bosence

Birthday Congratulations

Please join all at the DNL in wishing Diana Parratt a very happy, big landmark 90th birthday on 23rd April 2026. She will be celebrating this with a party for which her daughter Helen is making her favourite birthday treat, a big, boozy, fruit cake using a family recipe.

Letter to the Editor: Possibly lost cat

Hello DNL we just wondered if you could possibly post a notice in the Newsletter about a cat that has recently arrived at **Manor Farm Mews**.
He is a big, stocky, well fed and very well-groomed tabby male, so we reckon not a stray or feral. He has fine mottled stripes with a black top to his head, and he knows about swatting the cat flap when my cat runs away from him. We think he is likely to be domesticated. He's certainly not afraid of being around houses and in private gardens. He doesn't slink around. He might be lost and we'd love to get him home. Sadly, for our own cats, he is pretty ferocious.
It would be very helpful if you could put a notice in the Dockenfield Newsletter to see whether anyone has lost him or if anyone knows him. He is very aggressive with the cats in Manor Farm Mews, who are afraid to go out.
(Please email DNL on dockenfieldnewsletter@gmail.com if you have lost or are looking for this cat. Thank you.)

Ronnie Bennett

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