SPONSOR

Blanchards Bailey DORCHESTER
CHRISTMAS CRACKER
PROGRAMME

DORCHASTER CHRISTMAS 2025

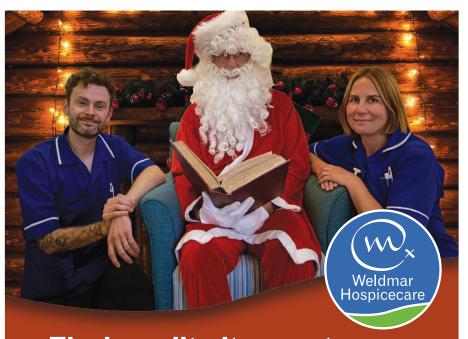


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DUCHY of CORNWALL





Find quality items at affordable prices, and support hospice care in Dorset this Christmas!

Shop with Weldmar Hospicecare in Dorchester at our shop on Trinity Street, our Bookshop on South Street, and our outlets at Marabout and Poundbury West.



Watch Weldmar's 'Twas the Month Before Christmas ad here!







weldmarhospicecare.org

Shop Local and Celebrate the Magic of Christmas in Dorchester

s the festive season draws near, Dorchester begins to sparkle. There's something truly special about this time of year in our town — a sense of togetherness, tradition, and community spirit that can only be found when we come together to celebrate locally.

This Christmas, let's make it our mission to support the wonderful independent shops, cafés, and businesses that give Dorchester its unique charm. Every purchase from a local maker, every coffee enjoyed in a family-run café, and every meal shared in a town restaurant helps to keep our community thriving. Local businesses don't just offer beautiful gifts and warm welcomes — they're the heart of Dorchester, employing local people and adding personality to our high street.



Beyond shopping, the season brings plenty of opportunities to soak up the festive atmosphere. Wrap up warm and join in the Christmas Cracker, enjoy carols in the Borough Gardens or support one of the many charities working to ensure everyone can enjoy the festivities.

This year, why not make Christmas in Dorchester a celebration of everything local? Discover the joy of finding the perfect handmade gift, share a toast with friends in a cosy pub, and make memories that will last long after the decorations come down. Dorchester is full of Christmas spirit — and it's made even brighter when we support the people and places that make our town feel like home.

Cllr Andy Canning and Mel Lane

Mayor and Mayoress of Dorchester

#PARK4FREE – Free Parking in Dorchester

SATURDAY 6th DECEMBER and THURSDAY 11th DECEMBER in the following car parks: Acland Road, Colliton Park, Durngate Street, Fairfield, Old Market, Top O Town, Trinity Street (south), Wollaston Field. This excludes on street parking.

Thank you for Shopping in Dorchester.

Dorchester has a unique mix of independent traders. Please support these shops on National Small Business Day, Saturday, 6th December and every day. When you spend with local retailers, the money stays in the local community, benefiting other businesses and people in the area. Let's build on our positive community spirit and pull together to support Dorchester by buying local goods and services.



Dorchester Christmas 2025

Editor: Miranda Woodgate Produced by: The Resourcery Designed by: Clearlight Design Contact: dorchester@theresourcery.co.uk Information correct at the time of publication. Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of content, we cannot accept responsibility for information given or claims made by our contributors and advertisers.







THE DUCHY of CORNWALL

wishes all those living and working in Dorchester

A VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND BEST WISHES FOR 2026

Please do visit our website poundbury.co.uk

for information about Poundbury and the many wonderful retail and hospitality venues available



Blanchards Bailey

Business



& Charity: A Lifeline Collaboration Taking Flight in Dorset

n a county where traditional values meet community resilience, Dorset's business community continues to prove that meaningful collaboration can make a lifesaving difference. One shining example is the partnership between *Blanchards* Bailey LLP and the Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance (DSAA), highlighting how local businesses and charitable causes can work together for the greater community good.

Over the past year, the Dorset law firm - rooted in the county since 1924 - has mobilised its team, clients and partners to raise over £5,000 for the DSAA through a series of community events. These included the DSAA's Jail or Bail fundraising campaign, which saw local CEOs' 'imprisoned' in Shepton Mallet Prison for a night; the summer Twilight 5K run, and Blanchards Bailey's Barrow of Booze Raffle held at the Dorset County Show. The raffle drew crowds, with lucky winner John Chambers taking home a wheelbarrow brimming with wine, beer, spirits and festive cheer.

Behind all the fun lies a vital mission: Operating 19 hours a day, 365 days a year, the DSAA provides critical pre-hospital emergency care across the southwest. With no direct government funding and each mission costing around £3,500, community-driven fundraising is not just appreciated but essential.

For businesses like Blanchards Bailey, supporting local charities is more than philanthropy. It strengthens ties and builds shared purpose. Looking ahead, the firm continues its spirit of giving through its support of *Dorset County* Hospital Critical Care Appeal and backing its Arts in Hospitals initiative, which uses carefully curated artworks to lift the spirits of patients, families and staff.

This Christmas, as seasonal goodwill fills the air, collaborations like these remind us what Christmas is truly about - community, generosity and helping others.







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THE WONDER OF CHRISTMAS: GOD WITH US

ach year, as lights sparkle on our streets and familiar carols fill the air, we are reminded of a truth far more glorious than any festive tradition — God came near.

At Christmas, we celebrate the moment when heaven touched earth — when the eternal Word became flesh and dwelt among us John 1:14. In a humble stable, through a newborn's cry, God's love broke into our broken world.

The message of Christmas is not merely about nostalgia or generosity; it is about Emmanuel — God with us. It's about the God who didn't stay distant but entered our story to redeem it. Amid the rush of wrapping paper and shopping lists, this truth quietly calls us back to wonder: the Creator stepped into creation, not with fanfare or force, but with humility and grace.

Maybe this Christmas, you need to be reminded that God is still with you — in the quiet, the chaos, and the questions. His presence brings peace to anxious hearts and light to weary souls.

As we gather with friends and family, may our celebrations echo the angel's announcement: "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord." Luke 2:10–11

This is the heartbeat of Christmas — Jesus, our Saviour, God with us.

May this precious time of year be filled with Joy, Hope, Peace and Love for you all

Pastor Mark Topp

The Storehouse Church Dorchester

DATE	CHURCH	EVENT	TIME
SATURDAY 6th	United Church Dorchester	Journey to the Stable (interactive space)	11:00am
	St George's CofE Fordington	Carols on the Green	6:00pm
	St George's CofE Fordington	Christmas Tree Festival	7:00pm
SUNDAY 7th	Dorchester Family Church*	Nativity & Kids Christmas Party	10:00am
	United Church Dorchester	Family Crib Service	10:30am
	Dorchester Baptist Church	All Inclusive Christmas Service	3:00pm
FRIDAY 12th	United Church Dorchester	Journey to the Stable (interactive space)	11:00am
	United Church Dorchester	Quiet Christmas	3:00pm
SATURDAY 13th	The Storehouse Church	Christmas Messy Church	10:00am
	United Church Dorchester	Journey to the Stable (interactive space)	11:00am
	St Peter's CofE	A Ceremony of Carols	12:30pm
	United Church Dorchester	Flute Cakes – Action for Children Concert	5:00pm
SUNDAY 14th	Dorchester Family Church*	Carols Celebration – All Age Service	10:00am
	The Storehouse Church	Christingle Family Service	10:30am
	St Peter's CofE	Choral Eucharist	10:30am



SUNDAY 14th	Dorchester Baptist Church	Children's Nativity Service	10:30am
	United Church Dorchester	Cracker Day Carols Crafts & Mince Pies	12:00pm- 2:00pm
WEDNESDAY 17th	United Church Dorchester	Carol Singing in South Street for Action for Children	11:30am- 1:00pm
SATURDAY 20th	St Peter's CofE	Nine Lessons & Carols	4:30pm
SUNDAY 21st	Dorchester Family Church*	Christingle Service	10:00am
	St George's CofE Fordington	Nativity Service	10:30am
	The Storehouse Church	Carol Service	10:30am
	Dorchester Community Church	Carols by Candlelight	4:00pm
	St Mary the Virgin	Community Carol Service	6:00pm
	St George's CofE Fordington	Carol Service	6:00pm
	Dorchester Baptist Church	Christmas by Candlelight	6:30pm
	United Church Dorchester	Traditional Carol Service	6:30pm
MONDAY 22nd	St Peter's CofE	Blue Christmas	12:30pm
CHRISTMAS EVE	St Mary the Virgin	Crib Service	3:00pm
	St George's CofE Fordington	Crib Service	4:00pm
	Dorchester Community Church	Christingle Service (5+ with parents/carers)	4:00pm
	United Church Dorchester	Christingle Service	4:00pm
	St Peter's CofE	Carols around the Crib	6:00pm
	Holy Trinity RC Church	Carol Service	7:00pm
	Holy Trinity RC Church	Christmas Mass	8:00pm
	St George's CofE Fordington	Midnight Mass (Combined Service)	11:00pm
	St Peter's CofE	Choral Midnight Mass	11:30pm
	St Mary the Virgin	Midnight Mass	11:30pm
CHRISTMAS DAY	St George's CofE	BCP Holy Communion	8:00am
	Holy Trinity RC Church	Christmas Service Holy Mass	8:30am
	St Peter's CofE	Christmas Day Eucharist	9:30am
	St Mary the Virgin	Christmas Morning Eucharist	9:45am
	St George's CofE Fordington	Christmas Day Family Service	9:45am
	The Storehouse Church	Christmas Day Service	10:00am
	Holy Trinity RC Church	Christmas Service Holy Mass	10:30am
	United Church Dorchester	Christmas Day Family Service	10:30am
	Dorchester Community Church	Christmas Day Family Service	10:30am
	Dorchester Baptist Church	Christmas Day Service	10:30am

*Service held at Thomas Hardye School, Queen's Avenue Other times when the Churches are open can be seen on church noticeboards





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DORCHESTER CHRISTMAS CRACKER

Sunday 14th December 2025 ~ 11am to 4pm











YCARE

A day for Christmas shopping, stalls and entertainment for the whole family

High West Street and High East Street closed to traffic











11:00 FESTIVE STREET STALLS

11:00 CRAFT FAIR
Corn Exchange

11:00 CHRISTMAS FAIR
Dorset Museum & Art Gallery

12:00 SANTA HAT PARADE

Leaving from the Old Tea House,
top of High West Street

12:30 CRACKER LIVE

Outside St Peter's Church

- KeeP 106
- · Dorchester Rock Choir
- · Dorchester Family Church Choir
- Twirl Academy

13:00 UNVEILING OF STATUE TO SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER

Outside Goulds Fashion, South Street

16:00 **CLOSE**



KeeP 106, Local and Community Radio, will be outside St Peter's Church

from 12.00pm, keeping you up to date with events throughout the day, playing great music and managing Cracker Live.

Dorchester Rock Choir, led by vocal tutor, Sadie Kerslake, will again be performing at Cracker during the day.

St Peter's Church – Refreshments and "Crafts & Jigsaws" from 12pm.

United Church Dorchester will be providing carols, crafts and mince pies from 12pm to 2pm.

Santa's Grotto will be outside the Horse with the Red Umbrella .

...and lots more.

All performances subject to availability.



CRACKER CHAIR MESSAGE

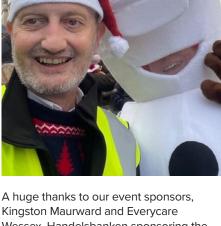
e are very excited to have a second new venue for our Christmas Fair, the Victorian Hall at Dorset Museum & Art Gallery, please make sure you pop in and see the vibrant sellers.

The team of volunteers and helpers have once again put together a wonderful festive day for the town. You can enjoy around 150 traders covering High West & Trinity Street, the Cornhill, both floors inside the Corn Exchange and new for 2025 the Victorian Hall at Dorset Museum & Art Gallery. There will be an eclectic mix of items available to buy when looking for those unique Christmas gifts.

Our Santa Hat Parade for the kids is back led by Santa. Turn up at the top of High West Street at 11:45am - we have 200 free Santa hats to give away.

There will be festive music outside St Peters Church from local choirs. The Rock Choir and the Twirlers will be performing again this year from 12.15pm.

We hope to see some beautiful classic cars in High East Street, with American and sports cars at the top of High West Street.



A huge thanks to our event sponsors, Kingston Maurward and Everycare Wessex, Handelsbanken sponsoring the Christmas Fair in the Corn Exchange, and Purnells Insolvency Practitioners who are sponsoring the Santa Hat Parade. The event receives support from Dorchester Chamber for Business, Dorchester Town Council, Dorchester BID, KeeP106 and The Resourcery.

Remember that being with your loved ones is the best gift you can give, stay well and have a wonderful festive time.

Steve Bulley

Chair – Christmas Cracker
President – Dorchester Chamber for Business

SANTA HAT PARADE

Led by Santa

Meet: 11:45 (outside the Old Tea House)

Start: 12:00 Santa Hat Parade End: 12:30 at St Peter's Church.

Join us – All welcome Santa Hats provided



Sponsored by Purnells Insolvency Practitioners purnells.co.uk





STREET STALLS

HIGH WEST STREET & TRINITY STREET

Ali's Homemade Produce Ali Shawls Almost Peachy Angel Rabbit Rescue Ashleigh Olivia Crafts Bakes by Tess Bambi's Cakes Basia Cake Creation Bottle House Crafts

Buckshaw Sweets and Treats Carol's Tovs Chris Frost Photography

Bright Little Seeds

Chocolate Arthouse **CK Print Gifts** Clare a Beau's Country Crafts Dorset Crazy Cow

Deepsearesin **Dorchester Baptist Church**

Crystal Jewellery

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Dorset Climate Action Network

Dorset Dried Flowers

Dorset Eco **Dorset Home Crafting** **Dorset Seaside Silver** Jewellery

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Endless Incense Crystals

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Everycare Dorchester

Fordington Gin

Galiani Glass Art

Georgia Louise Accessories

Hayley Bespoke Crafts

Hidden Treasures

Inspirations

Jane Elizabeth Confectionery

Kawaii Crafts

Liberty's Cottage Bakery

Luna Boo

Marnhull Leathercraft

Miss Macabre

Mosaic

My Scotch Egg

New Barn Bakes

Neil's Award-Winning Chutneys & Preserves

Oscars

Pastel Tuesdays

Purbeck Chocolate

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RNLI Charity

Shroton Fair Gin

South Paddocks

Sue's Handmade

Sugar and Spice Bakes

Starry Night Sewing

Sweetopia

Taste of the Wild

The Compton Candle Company

The Peacock Emporium

The Rhubarb Candle Company

The Saddle Stop

The Village Blacksmith

Tilly and Family

TJT Gifts

V's Creative Reading Haven

Viv Hughes Prints

Waggy Wolf Dog Products

Weldmar Hospicecare Wellbeing Practice

Wendy's Xmas Goodies

West Dorset RSPCA

Weymouth 51

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for 2025

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Muggable
Ocean Gifts
Petal and Stem

Phoenix Designs
Reindeer with Sunglasses
SG Creative Bright
Styloo Studios
The Art Machine
Wax N Co
Wild Cove Studio





CORN EXCHANGE 11AM TO 4PM

~ GROUND FLOOR CORN EXCHANGE ~

Brent Shore Buddy and Ben Craftybird Designs Crochet by Jem Dorset Nectar

Handmade by Maureen Kay's Tombola and

preserves

Keen & Crafty

Levoco Chocolates Magic Meltz

Marjorie's Stained Glass

MJ Loves Crafting

Nashira Jewellery -

Paddock 21

Pumpkin Kat

Quirky Zebra

Rosemarys handmade homeware

Sue Pitt

Sue's Crafts

Sunshine et Buttercups

The Lime Green WartHog

Tom Best Craft

Travel Counsellors

Woodturning by Barbara



~ CAFE AREA ~

Coastline Soaps
Curiosity Home Crafts
Dorchester Men's Shed
Dorset Council Fostering
J's Pottery
Lillie Rocks
SwimFun Books

~ TOWN HALL (FIRST FLOOR) ~

Beguiling Bee's Emporium

Bonfield Glass

Dawn IIsley

Dorset and Somerset Air Ambulance

Fantasy Forest Mushrooms and Pumpkins

Grinning Dog Records Happy Bottom Books

Hevans art

Jurassic Fudge

Made by Jem

Nick Dale Artist Rags to cushions

Sally's Delightful Knits

Sunshine and Daisy

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- Welcome@coastland.ac.uk
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- Kingston Maurward Campus, Dorchester,
 - Coastland.ac.ul
- Welcome@coastland.ac.uk
- 🖔 01305 215000





long-overdue tribute to the remarkable Sylvia Townsend Warner will be unveiled in the heart of Dorchester at 1pm on Sunday 14th December, outside Goulds Fashion Store, as part of the Dorchester Christmas Cracker celebrations.

The new statue has been commissioned by the charity Visible Women UK, which campaigns to redress the gender imbalance in public statues across the country. The unveiling will be conducted by the charity's patron — acclaimed author Tracy Chevalier, whose novels include *Girl with a Pearl Earring*.

Dorchester's literary heritage has long been defined by the legacies of Thomas Hardy and William Barnes. Now, with this new statue, Sylvia Townsend Warner — one of the 20th century's most original and influential writers — will rightfully take her place among them.

Townsend Warner was not only a pioneering novelist, poet, and short-story writer but also a woman of great personal courage. She lived openly for nearly forty years in a same-sex relationship with the poet Valentine Ackland, at a time when such openness was rare and often risky. Her life and work continue

to stand as a powerful example of independence, authenticity, and quiet defiance of convention.

The campaign to honour
Townsend Warner
was funded entirely by public
donations, with the writer
chosen following a public vote.

The statue will be Dorchester's first ever monument dedicated to a non-royal woman, marking a significant moment in the town's cultural history.

The statue has been created by sculptor Denise Dutton, the same artist commissioned by Visible Women UK to sculpt the statue of Mary Anning, unveiled in Lyme Regis in 2022.



The THOMAS HARDY Society



presents

GONG THE ROUNDS 2025 A musical performance



Thursday, 11th December 2025

In the Church



Friday, 12th December 2025

Around the Parish

Musicians, Singers and Players recreate
The Mellstock Quire in Hardy's Under the Greenwood Tree

Ticket price: £20/£15 (THS Members) includes mulled wine and mince pie

6.30pm until 8.30pm St Michael's Church, 3 Church Lane, Stinsford, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 8PT

For more information and to book hardysociety.org/events



CHRISTMAS AT POXWELL MANOR

oin the **Thomas Hardy Society** for a special fund-raising Christmas event. Enjoy Mulled Wine, Mince Pies, Carols and Hardy Readings in a friendly atmosphere around a blazing fire in this wonderful home.

A delightful event to put you in the mood for your own Christmas festivities!

Tickets: £20 THS members £30 Non-members

Poxwell Manor, Poxwell, Dorset DT2 8ND

New Members welcome – Membership of The Thomas Hardy Society starts from just £20.00

THS is an educational charity supported solely by volunteers. The Society is based in Dorchester and organise local events throughout the year.

Find out more and Book online: hardysociety.org



CAROLS IN THE GARDENS

e're rounding off a year of community events and festivals in Borough Gardens with

Carols in the Gardens on Thursday 18th

December. With music by the Durnovaria

Silver Band and the Encore Singers, it's a magical opportunity for all the community to start the Christmas celebrations with traditional carols, refreshments and

the bandstand swathed in Christmas lights. This popular event, organised by the Friends of Borough Gardens and the Town Council, attracts hundreds of people. The music starts at 6.30pm and last for about an hour, and it's free.

So do come along – wrap up warm and bring a torch!





- The Poundbury Clinic Middlemarsh Street. Poundbury, Dorchester, DTI 3FD
- 01935 609453
- clinic@wessexprivategp.co.uk
- wessexprivategp.co.uk

- The Kingston Wing, Yeovil Hospital, Higher Kingston, Yeovil, Somerset, **BA21 4AT**
- 01935 384234









Dorchester Choral Society

Saturday 6th December

7.30 pm

St Mary's Church **Dorchester DT1 2HL**

Duruflé

Reduiem

Interval with Festive Fare Christmas Music including Vaughan Williams

Mezzo Soprano Baritone **Organist**

Cellist

Sophia Brumfitt Samuel Mitchell John Carnelley Sally Flann

Duncan Emerson Director of Music

Tickets from £15

available from dorchesterchoralsociety.org

Dorchester Choral Society Charity No 285911





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Deans Court

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Heale House Gardens

Highcliffe Castle

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Milton Lodge Gardens
Minterne House &
Gardens
Sherborne Castle &
Gardens
Stock Gaylard House
Wilton House
The Bishop's Palace

& Gardens Wells

Wolfeton House



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Colliton House, Colliton Park, Dorchester, Dorset DTI IXZ Tel: 01305 224503 www.collitonclub.co.uk Email: info@collitonclub.co.uk



BEST WISHES THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

As a proud local business, we're thankful for the continued support from our community. This holiday season, we want to express our heartfelt gratitude to our valued customers, dedicated local suppliers, and - most importantly - our incredible team here at Legg and Son.

Your trust and hard work have made this year a success, and we couldn't have done it without you. We look forward to another year of keeping your spaces clean and sparkling.

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