



Datchet Parish Council

1 Allen Way, Datchet, Berkshire, SL3 9HR
Telephone: 01753 773499

Clerk to the Council – Mrs Sonia Masikito
Email: clerk@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk
Website: www.datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF DATCHET PARISH COUNCIL HELD IN THE VILLAGE HALL ON MONDAY 2ND JUNE 2025 AT 7.00PM

Present: (11 Members) Cllr. D. Buckley (Chairman), Cllr. S. Young, Cllr E. Larcombe, Cllr. I. Bacon, Cllr. M. Davies, Cllr I. Thompson, Cllr. C. Wise, Cllr. A. Clemens, Cllr D. Loveridge, Cllr A. Whelan, Cllr T O'Flynn.

In attendance: Clerk - Mrs. S. Masikito, Finance Assistant – Mrs J. Freeland

Public: There were 100 members of the public present and 2 members of the press.

There is no audio recording of the meeting.

25/41 APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Apologies for absence were received from: Cllr. S. Glover, Cllr. D. Sanders
Absent without apologies: Cllr C. Jones

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, which had been arranged by the Parish Council to facilitate the residents' concerns regarding the use of The Manor Hotel.

25/42 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25/43 PRESENTATION: HISTORY AND CONTEXT

A presentation was given to the meeting by Cllr A. Whelan, which gave the history, background to the recent use of the hotel and what the future may be for The Manor Hotel. [See appendix A](#) attached to these minutes.

The Chair advised that RBWM and The Manor Hotel owners were invited to this meeting but they were unavailable to attend.

The Chair read out an email from Andrew Durrant, RBWM, Director of Place Services, which provided clarification on RBWM's involvement with the Manor Hotel. It advised that the hotel has now ceased being used for asylum seekers and that accommodation has closed and there was no current contract held with the hotel. [See appendix B](#) attached to these minutes.

The Chair also advised that the Parish Council had received an email from The Manor Hotel owners, who apologised for not attending the meeting but would attend a private meeting

with the Parish Council. This is scheduled to take place on 06.06.25, subject to confirmation, he asked residents points or questions, which he would take to that meeting and report back at the Council meeting on the 09.06.25.

25/44 PUBLIC FORUM (GENERAL QUESTIONS)

Questions and comments were received from the public, summary of points raised:-

- i) Who funds and supervises homeless people, is this a contracted intention by and to an outside agency? RBWM to confirm Yes or No, Owners?
- ii) What can be done to remove the owners from Datchet, as they were by the residents of Henley, with regard to the damage they have inflicted on Datchet over the past years.
- iii) A comment was made that the owners have stated their intention to refurbish the hotel bedrooms and re-open as a hotel. It was noted that refurbishment work has already begun. A resident expressed the view that if the owners are to succeed, they will need the support of local residents. A successful reopening could potentially encourage more businesses to return to the village.
- iv) Another resident felt that Datchet already has sufficient activity to support business and tourism, noting its proximity—only five minutes—to Windsor.
- v) A resident read aloud a list of questions for the Council to consider during the evening's discussion. The Chair clarified that the purpose of the meeting was for the Parish Council to facilitate communication between residents and The Manor Hotel.
- vi) Concerns were raised regarding the use of the hotel by groups of unvetted individuals, and questions were asked about what legal options exist to prevent such use.
- vii) It was noted that the hotel owners have commissioned a new website that actively promotes Datchet. <https://www.manorhoteldatchet.com/>
- viii) Borough Councillor Jodie Grove reported that she had spoken with LM at RBWM, who confirmed there was no current intention to use the hotel again for previous purposes. She questioned why Datchet Parish Council (DPC) had not reached out to RBWM for this information, and emphasized the need for a transparent and appropriately managed approach.
- ix) Residents requested written assurances from the hotel confirming that it will not be used—now or in the future—for non-commercial purposes, citing past assurances that were not upheld.
- x) There was a strong call for the hotel owners to be open, honest, and inclusive of the local community in their plans.
- xi) A suggestion was made to hold a community event or launch date to introduce the reopened hotel to residents and visitors.
- xii) One resident noted that while the hotel itself may be of limited use to locals, the restaurant and bar could help generate activity and appeal in the village, especially for passing traffic.

The Chair reiterated that the presentation given at the beginning of this meeting, shows the history of the use of the hotel and that there had been a repetitive pattern by the owners. He commented that the Borough and community could look at having supplementary planning controls put in place for hotels, although he advised this would not control any requests from the Home Office.

25/45 TO DISCUSS ONGOING CONCERNS RELATING TO THE MANOR HOTEL

A resident, Mr I. Thompson, had contacted Jack Rankin, MP for Windsor and read out his response email, which advised that he would support the village in any way he can as a MP. [See appendix C](#) to these minutes.

25/46 PUBLIC FORUM (CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS)

Residents raised the following points:

- i) It was proposed that a working group be established, comprising members of the Parish Council, representatives of the hotel ownership, and members of the community. The aim would be to collaboratively explore the hotel's plans, identify any challenges or needs, and develop mutually beneficial solutions.
- ii) An online petition was suggested as a way to gauge community interest and identify residents willing to actively support and engage with the hotel's future.
- iii) It was noted that the village would benefit from a quality venue suitable for hosting meetings, parties, and community events.
- iv) A resident referenced the National Trust, which owns and manages heritage buildings, and questioned whether The Manor Hotel might be eligible for such support. It was suggested that a trust could be established, with the community contributing financially.
- v) It was recommended that the restaurant be operated as a separate entity. High-quality catering and a well-run bar were seen as key components for success.

25/47 ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE MEETING

Cllr Susan Young summarised some of the points raised, would take these to the meeting with the owners on the 06.06.25 and report back to the Council meeting on 09.06.25.

- i) To meet and find out what the owners plans are and to request this in writing.
- ii) Advise that residents are willing to support them in continuing as a hotel.
- iii) Advise that the residents would consider being part of a working group to support the owners.
- iv) Suggest that the restaurant and bar could be run separately.
- v) To be honest, open and transparent.

She commented that trust takes time to build but the planned meeting is a good start.

The Chair commented he would report back to the next Council meeting.

25/48 THE NEXT MEETING OF THE COUNCIL WILL BE HELD ON MONDAY 9TH JUNE 2025

**THE CHAIR THANKED THOSE WHO ATTENDED THE MEETING
AND CLOSED THE MEETING AT 8.26PM**

CHAIRMAN

DATCHET PARISH COUNCIL



The Manor Hotel: Past, Present, and Future Impact on Datchet

Past – Community & Business Asset

- Operated as a public hotel supporting tourism, events, and local businesses.
- Provided local employment and boosted the high street economy.
- Acted as a central venue for weddings, community events, and visitors.



By: Cllr A. Whelan

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Present – Restricted Use & Economic Impact

- 2020–2025: Used under various government contracts for temporary accommodation (Covid-19 response, homelessness, asylum housing).
- Hotel closed to the public; tourism and event bookings ceased.
- Local businesses experienced reduced footfall and revenue.
- Rise in takeaway outlets and decline in village centre balance noted.
- Ongoing concerns raised about community safety and cohesion.



By: Cllr A. Whelan



Future – Community Priorities & Strategic Need

- RBWM contract remains in place, despite no current occupants.
- Local call for cancellation of the contract to enable economic recovery.
- Restoring hotel to public use could revive tourism, events, and local trade.
- A clear decision is essential for Datchet's long-term planning and investment.



By: Cllr A. Whelan



DATCHET BITES BACK

Extraordinary Parish Meeting Called to Discuss the Future of The Manor Hotel

Datchet, Berkshire – Datchet Parish Council (DPC) is inviting residents, media, and all interested parties to an extraordinary public meeting on Monday, 2 June 2025, to openly discuss the future of The Manor Hotel and the long-term wellbeing of Datchet village.

The meeting follows growing concern across the community after Paul Bracchi's report in the Daily Mail (21 April) highlighted the possibility of the hotel once again being used for temporary accommodation. Although Cllr Catherine Del Campo, Cabinet Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing at the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM), has said there are "no immediate intentions" to use the hotel in this way, RBWM has not cancelled the contract—leaving the village uncertain about its future.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, Cllr David Buckley, Chair of Datchet Parish Council, said:

"This is an opportunity for our village to come together, have a respectful and constructive conversation, and ensure our voice is heard. The continued uncertainty over The Manor Hotel is holding Datchet back. We need a hotel that serves our community, welcomes visitors, supports our High Street, and brings life back into our village centre."

The loss of a publicly accessible and functioning hotel has created a significant vacuum in the heart of Datchet. Once a valued destination for

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tourists and a hub for local events, its absence has impacted the surrounding businesses, restaurants, and local economy. With three schools in the village and NHS statistics showing that 1 in 7 children are obese, the rise in takeaway outlets—filling the commercial gap—has raised growing concerns around health, planning, and balance on the High Street.

Between 2020 and 2025, The Manor Hotel has been used for various temporary housing purposes, including for the homeless and as asylum accommodation, under both local and national directives:

- 2020–2021: Homeless housing (Covid-19 emergency, RBWM directive)
- 2021–2022: Asylum accommodation (Home Office, Conservative government)
- 2022–2023: Temporary housing for the homeless (RBWM)
- 2023–2024: Asylum accommodation (Home Office, Labour government)
- 2025: Asylum residents removed in May, but RBWM contract remains in place

Local residents have voiced concerns about a range of issues experienced during these periods, including anti-social behaviour, retail theft, and harassment. Despite invitations, RBWM and Thames Valley Police have declined to attend or send representatives to the upcoming meeting.

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Jack Rankin MP has sent his apologies along with a statement of support for Datchet Parish Council's efforts.

The Parish Council is urging residents to join together and ask RBWM to finally cancel the contract with The Manor Hotel, allowing Datchet to focus on rebuilding its High Street, attracting sustainable businesses, and restoring tourist accommodation that supports the village's long-term future.

Meeting Details:

Date: Monday, 2 June 2025

Time: 7:00 PM

Location:

Datchet Village Hall, 3 Allen Way, SL3 9HR

For Press Enquiries contact;

Sonia Masikito Clerk@datchetparishcouncil.gov.uk

Tel: 01753 773499

By: Cllr A. Whelan

APPENDIX B

Email received from RBWM on 02/06/2025

Dear Datchet Parish Council,

I would like to provide clarification regarding the Manor Hotel (MH) in Datchet and RBWMs involvement with the hotel ahead of your meeting this evening at the Village Hall.

Firstly, I know this point has been made previously, but all matters relating to the MH being used as an asylum hotel is entirely the decision made by the Home Office (HO) and therefore any contractual arrangement for it to be used in this way rests firmly between the HO and the owners of MH.

Some further key points of clarification are set out below:

- The hotel was previously used during covid when it was 'everyone in' and the Council used it on a nightly rate.
- The owner of the hotel cancelled that arrangement in 2022.
- RBWM did have a contract in place for Koala house, which is also owned by the same owner, however this contract was terminated in 2024.
- RBWM does have some arrangements to use a couple of flats that the same owner has in the borough for nightly TA, but they are not part of the hotel and not part of a formal contract.
- When the home office closed the hotel last year the owner approached us and other LAs about using the accommodation again, this was declined by the Council.
- As everyone will be aware the hotel has now ceased being used for asylum seekers and that accommodation has closed.

In the absence of a formal agreement or contract that the Council holds with the hotel, it is our suggestion that any further discussion relating to the hotel's future use is picked up directly with the owner as the best course of action.

Finally, like many Councils, we will need to continue to monitor central governments statements that they are going to pass over the responsibilities of housing asylum seekers to local authorities from the home office. If this happens there will be a need to carefully consider how this will work in practice, which will involve reviewing the previous arrangements that were in place to support asylum seekers.

I would be very happy for you to read out this information at the meeting this evening.

Kind regards

Andrew



Andrew Durrant

Executive Director of Place Services

Place Directorate

Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead SL6 1RF

APPENDIX C

Statement from MP Jack Rankin

Datchet Parish Council Meeting – Manor Hotel

Thank you to everyone for attending this evening's meeting, and special thanks to the Parish Council for organising it. As it is recess I've taken the opportunity to go on holiday with my family this week for the first time since the election, so I am sorry I could not be there with you.

I know many will share my relief that The Manor has been vacated of illegal migrants, who had been there for the best part of seven months. I had official confirmation from the Home Office last week that they had all been moved out.

Having written to the Home Secretary, raised this twice at Home Office questions, met with officials and even held a debate in Parliament on migrant hotels, I am pleased that our campaigning paid off and thank all constituents and businesses who shared their experiences with both me and the media to keep making the point that this location was never appropriate.

Shortly after the news came out that the illegal migrants would be moved on, I met with the proprietors to discuss the hotel's future and endeavour to have a constructive relationship with them. I made the point that The Manor Hotel should once again be a hotel at the heart of village life – to welcome tourists and business travellers, somewhere to pop in for a drink or have dinner.

I am aware of rumours around the potential housing of homeless individuals here. I am not aware of any plans to do so and the Royal Borough have confirmed to me they have no such plans themselves – but that does not stop other Councils from doing so. I want to assure everybody that if this is the case, I will campaign equally vociferously against it. I do not feel comfortable with the hotel, on the green in the centre of the village and within close proximity to both Datchet St Mary's and Churchmead schools, housing illegal migrants or homeless individuals who will come with an array of complex issues that our community is ill-equipped to handle.

I want to see The Manor returned to a quality functioning hotel, like it used to be. It is prime for tourists, a mile and a half from Windsor Castle and just round the corner from Datchet railway station, and will restore trade that businesses in the village have lost.

I'll keep campaigning on this issue and look forward to hearing the comments from the public and any formal updates from this meeting. I will look to support the village in any way I can as your Member of Parliament.