

idbury for a house

Dorchester & Weymouth

Western Gazette

Thursday 16 February 2006

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Cast away

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Knitting makes a comeback

Spring brides

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Your guide to getting married

Jobs in pipeline for Poundbury

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UP to 100 jobs could be created if new offices overlooking the historic gateway to Dorchester are given the go-ahead.

A large governmental organisation relocating to Dorchester is already in the pipeline to take over part of the 25,000 sq ft site in Sherperton Street, toward Monkey Jump roundabout, at the western end of Poundbury.

Another business, which cannot be named as final negotiations are still taking place, has also shown an interest and is in talks with developer Derek Newell, director of Woodpecker Properties Ltd.

Mr Newell said: "We cannot say too much about the businesses as we are still in talks and one of them is governmental, but we hope that around 50 per cent of the employment there will be new jobs. We want to see new workers in Poundbury and young blood moving to the town.

"At this stage, the plan has had good local support from the residents' association and a positive response from consultation. It will be quite a dominating building but a stunning piece of architecture."

Spokesman for site owners, the Duchy of Cornwall, Simon Conibear said the offices will be adding to the mixed use in Poundbury to help meet the needs of Dorchester and the surrounding area.

"We feel encouraged by this proposal, as it is addressing the needs of local people and attracting well-established organisations that are looking to relocate to somewhere such as Dorchester," he said.

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FLYING HIGH: Children in Dorchester make the most of their half-term holiday with fun sessions at the Thomas Hardy Leisure Centre. Youngsters took part in a range of activities, including skipping on the astroturf, football games and swimming at the centre in Coburg Road, which is run by West Dorset District Council. The fun club for all ages, held during school holidays, gives children a chance to meet up with friends and have fun, while keeping fit, healthy and active. For more information about activities today and tomorrow, call 01305 266772. **Picture by Len Copland.**

Letwin is out-gunned over smoking ban

WEST Dorset MP Oliver Letwin was one of the minority to vote against an all-out smoking ban in pubs, restaurants and private clubs in England on Tuesday.

Smoking will be outlawed by summer 2007 after MPs in the House of Commons voted for the ban by 384 to 184, a majority of 200.

But Mr Letwin, a cigar smoker, said he had supported the Government's initial proposal for a par-

tial ban, exempting private clubs and pubs which do not serve food.

"I do not think there is a perfect solution to this issue but I am sure we will all learn to live with a complete ban. There is a very strong case for preventing smoking in places where staff are working and where non-smokers can be affected," he said.

North Dorset MP Bob Walter also voted against an all-out smoking ban while South Dorset MP Jim

Knight supported the prohibition, which will also outlaw smoking in almost all workplaces and enclosed public places. Only private homes, care homes, hospitals, prisons and hotel bedrooms will be exempt.

Licensees could be fined up to £2,500 for not enforcing the ban and individuals will face a £50 on-the-spot penalty.

Health professionals have welcomed the ban amongst warnings that pubs and clubs could close.

In spotlight

DORCHESTER residents who feel their homes are flooded with unnecessary light from a neighbouring car showroom will find out if West Dorset District Council will allow the security measure will stay or go this week.

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Tip change

IT is the end of an era for the Warmwell landfill site, which saw its last load of rubbish tipped this week. The site is soon to be transformed into heathland and a habitat for local wildlife, including rare species.

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Crash inquest

A RECKLESS driver killed himself and a popular local man in a head-on smash near Portesham, an inquest heard. Richard Ford of Abbotsbury died following the collision with an "aggressive and impatient" lorry driver.

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Voles' home

A CONSERVATION project near Dorchester that will provide a natural home for water voles and wading birds while reducing the risks of flooding has been completed. Nunnery Mead, a small nature reserve, has been restored as a water meadow.

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Surgery move

A DOCTORS' surgery hopes to move to a bigger site in Dorchester to cope with increasing numbers of patients. The current premises are no longer able to offer suitable facilities as its patient numbers exceed 4,000.

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Jurassic show

A TEAM of Dorset gardeners, architects and craftsmen are taking their skills to the most prestigious show of its kind in a bid to boost tourism. A Jurassic Coast garden will be one of 20 on show at this year's Chelsea Flower Show.

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● Continued from front

"There are going to be job opportunities that will relate to this area, joining the 650 jobs already established in Poundbury.

"The building will also be an important one, in that it will be the western gateway to Poundbury and Dorchester and, for the first time in this area, will include underground parking."

Mr Conibear also said that consultations have been on-going with residents whose homes adjoin the site.

The grand multi-level design, created by London-based architect Barbara Weiss, will see the offices wrap around the corner of Bridport Road and Paceycombe Way.

More than 90 parking spaces will be provided under and over ground for the employees and the rendered and brickwork offices will be split into two, three and four storeys, as well as featuring a tower and large windows.

Plans for the offices were submitted to West Dorset District Council on 30 January and are yet to be registered by planning officials. It is hoped they will be available for public viewing and comments early next week.

The jobs boost comes as Dorchester has been designated a Dorset major development town, with 200 homes a year planned until 2020.

Around 120 of these will be built in the next phase of Poundbury, with the remaining 80 earmarked for central Dorchester.

President of Dorchester and District Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Rob Fox, said: "Poundbury is a vital part of the town and we have been working hard to ensure it is seen as an inclusive part of Dorchester business.

"We do not want to see any segregation of Poundbury to Dorchester town centre.

"Any increase in jobs in the area is welcome, particularly with the number of houses being built in Dorchester."