

A Brief History

The present Dartington Morris side was formed in 1968. In the early days the side practised in the 13th Century "Pillar Studio" at Dartington Hall near Totnes, Devon. Whilst practising and contemplating a name for the side, Leonard Elmhirst, a founder of the Dartington Hall Trust, informed the team that he had once danced the Morris. He suggested that the side call themselves The Dartington Morris Men and use the Dartington crest of a white hart on a red rose, the crest of Richard II and John Holland (who was given the manor of Dartington for services rendered in battle.)

Two previous Dartington Morris sides are known to have danced in the Totnes area; one at the end of the 19th century, the other in the 1930s. One of these sides apparently danced in bare feet.

We are a mixed gender dance side, comprising dancers, musicians, our white hart "Leonard" and our Collector and Announcer. We perform Cotswold dances in many styles (or "traditions") and we include a North Skelton Longsword dance and a Mummers' Play in our repertoire.

The Filkins Dances

We are proud performers of dances from the lost "Filkins" tradition, reconstructed from scant evidence by Christopher Farr, a respected and well-known member of our side. Filkins is a village in Oxfordshire and it is believed that Morris was danced there in the 19th century (see our website for more information).

Morris Dancing

The English Morris is performed traditionally by men and women and may have its origin in pagan fertility rites, although the present form of dance is more recent. The name "Morris" may be derived from "Moorish", in reference to a dance style based on the Spanish "Moros y Cristianos" ("Moors and Christians"). This may have been first introduced to England through the household of John of Gaunt and Constance of Castile, following John of Gaunt's active involvement in the politics of Northern Spain during the Hundred Years War (1337–1453). Related dancing spread to other European countries too, but it was in England that the dance form thrived. For more detailed history and fascinating stories, please visit our website.

The Morris Ring

The Morris Ring is a national association of Morris clubs and is concerned with maintaining the traditions and performance of the Morris in its various forms, including Mummers' plays. Dartington Morris became a member of the Morris Ring in 1978.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

We welcome anyone who wants to learn to dance or play music for Cotswold Morris.

We practise on Friday evenings from October to April at Dartington Primary School near Totnes. We can also arrange summer workshops for beginners.

Squire: Stephen Holley
Bagman: Martin Jones
Foreman: Dan Shearer
Treasurer:
Graham Kennett





Scan to donate


CONTACT DETAILS

For further info about Dartington Morris, including bookings, enquiries, or joining us, email the Bagman:

bag@dartingtonmorris.uk

 <https://dartingtonmorris.uk>

 [@dartingtonmorris](https://www.facebook.com/dartingtonmorris)

 [@dartingtonmorris](https://www.instagram.com/dartingtonmorris)



Summer Programme 2026



Where to see Dartington Morris from May to September 2026

MAY

Friday 1 May (May Day)

Totnes castle: dancing at dawn 5:30am

Church House Inn, Harberton 7:30pm

Friday 8 May

Totnes town & the Albert Inn 7:30pm

Saturday 16 May

Glory of the West Day of Dance, Topsham All day

Friday 22 May

Dolphin Inn, Newton Ferrers 7:30pm

Saturday 30 May

Exeter Morris Day of Dance, Exeter All day

JUNE

Friday 5 June

Monk's Retreat, Broadhempston 8:00pm

Friday 12 June

Union Inn, Denbury 8:00pm

Saturday 20 June

Teignmouth Folk Festival 10:30am

Friday 26 June

Buckfastleigh 8:00pm

JULY

Saturday 4 July

'All things Morris', Ilfracombe All day

Friday 10 July

Dartmouth town tour 8:00pm

Saturday 18 July

Brutus procession, dancing and Mummers Play, Totnes 10:30am

Friday 24 July

Church House Inn, Holne 8:00pm

AUGUST

Saturday 1 August

Sidmouth Folk Festival 11:00am

Thursday 6 August

Church House Inn, Stokeinteignhead with Beltane 8:00pm

Friday 14 August

Ivybridge Brewery tap room with Lodestone Border Morris 7:30pm

Wednesday 19 August

Pack Horse Inn, South Brent with Plymouth Morris 7:30pm

Saturday 22 August

Torre Abbey Summer Fair, Torquay 2:00pm

Friday 28 August

Salcombe town tour 7:30pm

SEPTEMBER

Saturday 5 September

Dartmoor Border Morris Day of Dance, Princetown All day

Saturday 12 September

Dartington Morris Day of Dance, Totnes, with many visiting sides 10:30am

Saturday 19 September

Totnes Heritage Day, Totnes 11:00am

Sunday 20 September

Orchard Millennium Green, Buckfastleigh 1:30pm

Dancing usually takes place outdoors and can be affected by the weather. We make every effort to dance as advertised, but reserve the right to alter times, dates and venues of performances if necessary. Please check our website or email bag@dartingtonmorris.uk for the latest information.