



# ARNOLD'S NEWS

News from Corsham Area Heritage & Information Centre

Spring 2013



## ALL CHANGE AT ARNOLD HOUSE

**B**ack in 2006, North Wiltshire District Council announced the closure of the TIC and Heritage Centre based at Arnold House on Corsham High Street. A group of local volunteers formed the Corsham Area Development Trust (CADT) to keep these important community facilities open to the public. Now, seven years later, our funding has been cut by more than 90% and we need to save Arnold House from closure all over again!

Although from April 2013 we will receive no further funding from Wiltshire Council, our friends at Corsham Town Council have generously agreed to provide us with free rent and a contribution to our operating costs. This has been supplemented by a major donation from Bill Hall of Martingate Ltd, for which we are all hugely grateful.

However, in order to survive without Wiltshire Council funding, we need to completely reinvent how we use Arnold House, and find new ways of generating our own income, with the ultimate goal of becoming a sustainable business - for the community, and run by the community.

A new business plan has been agreed, and Arnold House is currently undergoing a major refurbishment. We relaunch in April, with a new shop ('Made in Corsham') and a new space available for events, exhibitions and meetings ('The Pictor Room').

Alongside these exciting new developments, we will be refocusing our tourism services around the promotion of businesses in the Corsham Community Area and launching a new tourism association to help us support those local businesses that benefit from the Information Centre's survival. To find out more, please visit our new website at [www.visitcorshamarea.co.uk](http://www.visitcorshamarea.co.uk). Join us!

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New exhibition  
Suffragettes  
Corsham heritage

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New Tourism  
Association  
Tourism Week  
Arnold needs You!

*Corsham Area  
Heritage &  
Information  
Centre is  
operated by the  
Corsham Area  
Development  
Trust (CADT),  
formed in 2006 as  
a 'meeting of  
minds' between  
the Corsham Civic  
Society and the  
Corsham Chamber  
of Commerce.*

*The CADT's  
primary purpose is  
to develop the  
tourism economy  
of Corsham by  
offering  
information and  
services to  
residents and  
visitors.*

# LATEST NEWS

## LAUNCH OF 'MADE IN CORSHAM' SHOP

**A**s part of our sustainable business plan, we are refurbishing the old Wool Room at Arnold House and transforming it into a smart new retail space. The new shop, 'Made in Corsham', will be selling quality products made by talented individuals in the Corsham Community Area. The range will include jewellery, accessories, soft furnishings, pictures, cards, toiletries, candles, preserves, confectionery and glass products.



'Made in Corsham' will provide these local makers with a showroom on the High Street, while generating income to help the CADT pay the bills and keep the doors open to the public. All suppliers have been extremely enthusiastic about joining us and supporting our new venture. The shop is due to open around the middle of April, so please come in and see us...preferably with your purse or wallet!

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## THE PICTOR ROOM: A BRAND NEW EVENTS SPACE ON CORSHAM HIGH STREET

**A**rnold House was left to the (then) Parish Council by Ms Joan Pictor upon her death in 1959. Since 2000, the building has been the home of Corsham's Heritage and Information Centre, providing information and services to both visitors and residents.

Following our refurbishment, we will be renaming the middle room in honour of Ms Pictor, and making it available to local individuals and groups for events, exhibitions, talks and meetings. For further information, please contact [andrew@visitcorshamarea.co.uk](mailto:andrew@visitcorshamarea.co.uk).



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## LUNCHTIME TALKS PROCEED ASPACE

**O**ur monthly Lunchtime Talks are gaining a reputation for being the event to have in your diary every month. Normally held at Arnold House, on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday in the month, talks start at 1.00pm and with an expected duration of one hour.

The April Talk takes place at Arnold House on the 23<sup>rd</sup>, when Claire Skinner of the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre will speak on the Lacock Archives Project. On 28<sup>th</sup> May, Combe Down Heritage Society's Rosemary Simmons will tell us about the Stone Legacy Centre presently under construction. Pre-registration at the Information Centre is essential. Admission is only £2.00, with Friends enjoying free entry.

# HERITAGE

## NEW EXHIBITION: ARNOLD HOUSE TIMELINE

**O**ur first use of the revamped Entrance Area is to display our Arnold House Timeline. As many will know, the building takes its name from its first occupant, William Arnold, the producer of fine woollen cloth. It was also the home of the Pictor family, another leading member of Corsham's business community, who made their money by quarrying the local limestone.

The gifting of Arnold House to the people of Corsham by Ms Joan Pictor upon her death in 1959 is recorded in the carved stone next to our front door. Please study the new Arnold House Timeline for all the details!

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## CORSHAM'S DREADNOUGHT PROJECT

**I**n July 2013, it will be 100 years since a group of dedicated suffragettes walked from Land's End to London. They met with others in Marlborough, and arrived in London on 26th July 1913 for a rally supporting 'Votes for Women'.

This year, a small group of Devon ladies will mark the centenary by travelling the route, performing a specially commissioned drama in each town. The original pilgrimage visited Bath, Box, Corsham, Chippenham, Calne and Marlborough. Newspaper reports at the time were mixed - the party often had to be rescued by the police from a hail of rotten fruit or stones! Not so in Corsham, it seems.



A Corsham group has been formed to welcome the pilgrims again. They have arranged several events and a display for our new Pictor Room. If you would like to participate, or if you know of a family member who was a supporter of the suffrage movement, please leave your details at the Information Centre and we'll be in touch.

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## ARNOLD HOUSE - GATEWAY TO CORSHAM'S PAST & PRESENT

**W**here tourism and heritage are concerned, things are changing in Corsham. Those of us committed to presenting the Area's heritage are now using Arnold House differently. Gone is the dusty old Wool Room. We now have a permanent Corsham Timeline exhibition in the Entrance Area. We are also mounting changing exhibitions in the new and improved Pictor Room. It is already being used for our monthly Lunchtime Talks, and many other events are planned.

And how will we, the Friends, present ourselves to the outside world? We will be 'Corsham Area Heritage'. Adoption of the new title is in hand. In time, we envisage seeking recognition as a charity.

# TOURISM

## LAUNCH OF NEW TOURISM ASSOCIATION

**C**orsham Area Tourism Association (CATA) launches in April 2013. It will be managed by the Corsham Area Development Trust and based in the revamped Information Centre at Arnold House on Corsham High Street.



The Centre provides information and services to more than 17,000 customers, and there are now approximately 35,000 unique visitors to our website every year.

Alongside the new developments in Arnold House, we will be refocusing our tourism services around the promotion of local businesses in the Corsham Community Area (including Corsham, Box, Colerne and Lacock).

As a result, we are launching a subscription-based tourism association for businesses in the Corsham Area that can benefit from the services we provide, covering five main categories of business: Where to Stay / Where to Eat / Where to Shop / What to Do / Local Services. For a full list of membership benefits, please visit our new website [www.visitcorshamarea.co.uk](http://www.visitcorshamarea.co.uk).

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## ENGLISH TOURISM WEEK IN CORSHAM

**I**n March, we celebrated the start of the new tourist season with a series of special events at Arnold House for English Tourism Week, which showcases the quality and vibrancy of visitors' experiences and the value tourism brings to our local and national economy.

Events in Corsham this year included book signings by local authors, demonstrations of jewellery making and flower arranging, and advice on digital photography from Corsham Photographic Club. These events brought lots of extra visitors into Arnold House, so many thanks to everyone who took part!

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## ARNOLD HOUSE NEEDS YOU!

**A**rnold House is operated by a team of local volunteers, and we are always on the look out for friendly and outgoing people to join us in running both the Information Centre and the new 'Made in Corsham' shop.

For further information, please email [andrew@visitcorshamarea.co.uk](mailto:andrew@visitcorshamarea.co.uk) or pop into Arnold House for a chat. We're open Tuesday to Saturday 10.00am - 2.00pm.

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**Corsham Area Heritage & Information Centre | Arnold House, 31 High Street, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 0EZ | Tel: 01249 714660 | [www.corshamheritage.org.uk](http://www.corshamheritage.org.uk)**