



ARNOLD'S NEWS

News from Corsham Area Heritage & Information Centre

Spring 2011



OUR FUTURE: YES, WE DO HAVE ONE

The Corsham Area Heritage & Information Centre is safe, at least for 2011. Over the last three months we have faced a reduction in funding support of 60%, plus the threat of having to vacate Arnold House by 31 August.

With the help of supporters and three Councils we have minimised the funding reduction to 26% and secured an anonymous donation plus private sector support. Survival until early 2012 is now a possibility.



However, we're not quite there. Key decisions have yet to be made. By the time you read this, things will be clearer. The Corsham Annual Town Meeting on Thursday, 7 April could well be the opportunity to reveal all. We hope so. Then we can get on with doing the work.

The really good thing is that a working relationship is developing between the CADT and the Corsham Town Council. Prior to a meeting on 4 March, we felt we were being excluded from the activities of the Council's Tourism Working Group. As of that meeting, things have changed. Some very imaginative and collaborative proposals have emerged. We now go forward together.

The development of the Corsham Area's Heritage and Tourism for the benefit of the community is now properly at the heart of the discussion.

Issue 4

Page 2
Latest News

Page 3
New sales lines
Visit from our MP

Page 4
Tourism Day
Primary schools
Friends

*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

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING: THURSDAY 7 APRIL - TOWN HALL

Combined with the Community Awards Presentation, the evening starts at 6.30pm for 7pm. It's a 'must' for all of us. It's the one night of the year when all of the Town can get together to make their feelings known.

We, the CADT, have a special reason to be there this year. We expect there to be a lively debate on our own future. Please be there to support us.

'WALKERS ARE WELCOME' SCHEME LAUNCHED

Corsham Area Heritage and Information Centre initiated a "Walkers are Welcome" scheme at the Tourism Day event it on 14 February. Alan Roberts, from Chippenham Ramblers, explained the national scheme which was launched by the community in Hebden Bridge in 2007.

There are six criteria to be met and the first establishes the level of local support. A petition has been completed in both Box and Colerne, and Corsham has almost achieved its signature target. Details of the national scheme and the criteria can be found on the website www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk.

There are many walking opportunities in the Corsham Area. They form an extensive, beautiful and healthy network for us all to enjoy.



OUR WEBSITE TAKES GIANT STRIDES FORWARD

Have you looked at our website recently? We commend it to you. It is www.corshamheritage.org.uk. It's grown over recent months. We don't just mean the 'What's On' guide that gets updated every Thursday - although we have added content to that too.

There's a listing of all the major events going on in and around Corsham throughout 2011. This is helpful when planning your own events and activities.

There's a Corsham Timeline which charts events in the Corsham Area dating from the year 700AD. It's fascinating. It's the work of Dr. Negley Harte, FSA, FRHistS. He created it for the Corsham Civic Society. You can find it on its website too - expressed in chronologically-reverse order. Both have their places.

DRASTIC TIMES CALL FOR CREATIVE THINKING

It is clear that nobody is going to pay us to supply free information to visitors - well, not enough to cover even a fraction of our costs. Those days are gone. Our tourism activity was once all that earned us funding. We must now find other sources of income.

We must behave more like a shop - where both local residents and visitors buy things which bring us a return. We've always done it. We must do it more.



This is why you saw some new products on sale at Arnold House on the run-up to Christmas. They were carefully selected to suit our 'market' - and hopefully found favour with you as being appropriate for gifts at that time. Why were they special? They were all handmade within 15 miles of central Corsham by local independent craftspeople. Jewellery, preserves, soap & other toiletries and candles, sourced from Gastard, Lacock, Cresswells and the like.

We do hope you approve. More than that - that you **BUY!**

CLAIMING THE CONSTITUENCY TIME OF OUR MP

We've been doing pretty well on this score just recently - and we aim to keep it up. These folk need to work for us, we feel. Our MP is, of course, Duncan Hames. We have played an active part in ensuring he sees plenty of Corsham and the surrounding area.

He spoke at the Chamber of Commerce's AGM held at the Century on 15 October. We had him visit the CAH&IC on Saturday 5 March. He is booked to present to the Corsham Civic Society on Friday 1 April - when he will take as his subject 'My first ten months as an MP'.

We have booked him again for Saturday 25 June - to be on hand for one of the early-morning events on the programme being assembled to mark Corsham's participation in Civic Day 2011.

CORSHAM AREA TOURISM DAY

We held our first Tourism Day on Monday 14 February. The morning session was held at the Methuen Arms Hotel. The afternoon session provided an opportunity to meet our team at Arnold House.

Approximately 60 people participated, 2/3rds of them accommodation-providers. They, indeed, were the 'target audience'. VisitWiltshire's Membership Development Manager provided useful information on VW's new 'entry level' registration system. Providers clearly valued the opportunity to network.

Attendee comments were extremely favourable - such that we have decided to hold another Tourism Day in October. A different provider has already asked to be the host venue for that event.

WORKING WITH OUR LOCAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS

The Corsham Area Heritage Centre works hard to develop its links with our 7 local primary schools. (There are 199 in Wiltshire, in total.) Representatives of the CADT and the Corsham Civic Society will be attending a meeting with the 7 Heads on 6 April; to explain how their schools might become involved in events we are planning for Civic Day on 25 June.

Separately the Centre has set up 'Community Noticeboards' at two local primary schools, Broadwood and St. Patrick's. These inform pupils and their parents what we do at the CAH&IC. We also contribute towards their newsletters.



We have recently helped the schoolchildren of St. Patrick's to erect a display of their own work at the Centre. Please come along and see it. They came on Saturday, 5 March, with their parents. Our picture shows Ian Storey talking to some of the children about Brunel's broadgauge, watched by Ms Rita McLoughlin, the School's Headteacher. The School's display is off to the right.

BIRTH OF THE FRIENDS OF CORSHAM AREA HERITAGE CENTRE

The development of this Group has taken a big step forward. Uncertain of our future, we had sought to discourage its formation. Things were taken out of our hands towards the end of 2010.

A rallying leaflet has now been created which sets out the objects of a Group that could generate financial support for the Centre. We are very appreciative of this initiative.

Arnold's News is published by the Corsham Area Development Trust.
Printing donated by Corsham Print (www.corshamprint.co.uk)

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