

# Annual Report

## 2023-24



## Councillors and Staff May 2023-April 24\*

### Corsham Gastard Ward

**Cllr Tina Ellis** 10 Monks Lane, Gastard, Corsham SN13 9PH

### Corsham Ladbroke Ward

**Cllr Steve Abbott** Weaver's Cottage, 71 High Street, Corsham SN13 0HA (Chairman)

**Cllr Alan Brown** 21 Hitherspring, Corsham SN13 9UT

**Cllr Tanvir Bush** c/o Town Hall

**Cllr Neville Farmer** 1a Post Office Lane, Corsham SN13 0HJ

**Cllr Ruth Hopkinson\*\*** Priory Cottage, Bences Lane, Corsham SN13 0DD

**Cllr Dave Jarman** 3 Paul Street, Corsham SN13 9DG

**Cllr Adrian Jones** 5 Tasker Close, Corsham SN13 9UF

**Cllr Ruth Williams** 39 Priory Street, Corsham SN13 0AS

### Corsham Neston Ward

**Cllr Jeremy Brook** 29 Elley Green, Neston, Corsham SN13 9TX

**Cllr Nicholas Brakspear** Pickwick Manor, Corsham SN13 0HU

**Cllr Anna Mackie** 10 Silman Close, Corsham SN13 0RG

### Corsham Pickwick Ward

**Cllr Helen Belcher\*\*** 3 Masons Way, Corsham SN13 9XW

**Cllr Alun Crockford** 30 Paul Street, Corsham SN13 9DG

**Cllr Richard Munn** c/o Town Hall

**Cllr George McCaffery** 68a Pickwick Road, Corsham SN13 9DB

**Cllr Jane Robertson** c/o Town Hall

**Cllr Amanda Thomas** 35 Pickwick, Corsham SN13 0JE

**Cllr Gareth Ward** 5 Macie Drive, Corsham SN13 9EJ

**Cllr Anthea White** 2 Dairy Mews, Pickwick, Corsham SN13 0BT

\*These were serving Councillors as of April 2024. For the most up-to-date contact details for Town Councillors please get in touch.

\*\*Cllrs Belcher and Hopkinson are also Wiltshire Councillors



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01249 702130 [towncouncil@corsham.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@corsham.gov.uk)  
[www.corsham.gov.uk](http://www.corsham.gov.uk)



### Chief Executive

**David Martin**

**Head of Community Services**

**Sharon Thomas**

**Community Services Officer (Arts)\***

Sarah Leigh

**Community Services Officer (Health and Wellbeing)\***

Vickie Fauset

**Community Services Officer (Tourism and Events)**

Tracey-Ann Walpole (until September '23)

Charlotte Phillips (from November '23)

**Head of Finance and Administration\***

**Maxine Jones**

**Planning and Finance Officer\***

Kirsty Gilby

**Administration Officer\***

Rachel Sellens

**Cleaner/Caretaker\***

Alex Debank

**Head of Technical Services**

**James Whittleton**

**Environmental Project Officer**

Beth Searle (until May '23)

Garry Ford (from September '23)

**Technical Assistant**

Carol Clark (until June '23)\*

Abigail Leverett (from September '23)

**Lead Groundsperson**

Neil Ash (until April '23)

\* part-time

**Groundsperson (Amenity)**

Trudy Boughey/Mark Gilby

**Groundsperson (Property)**

Brendan Kelly

**Street Cleaner\***

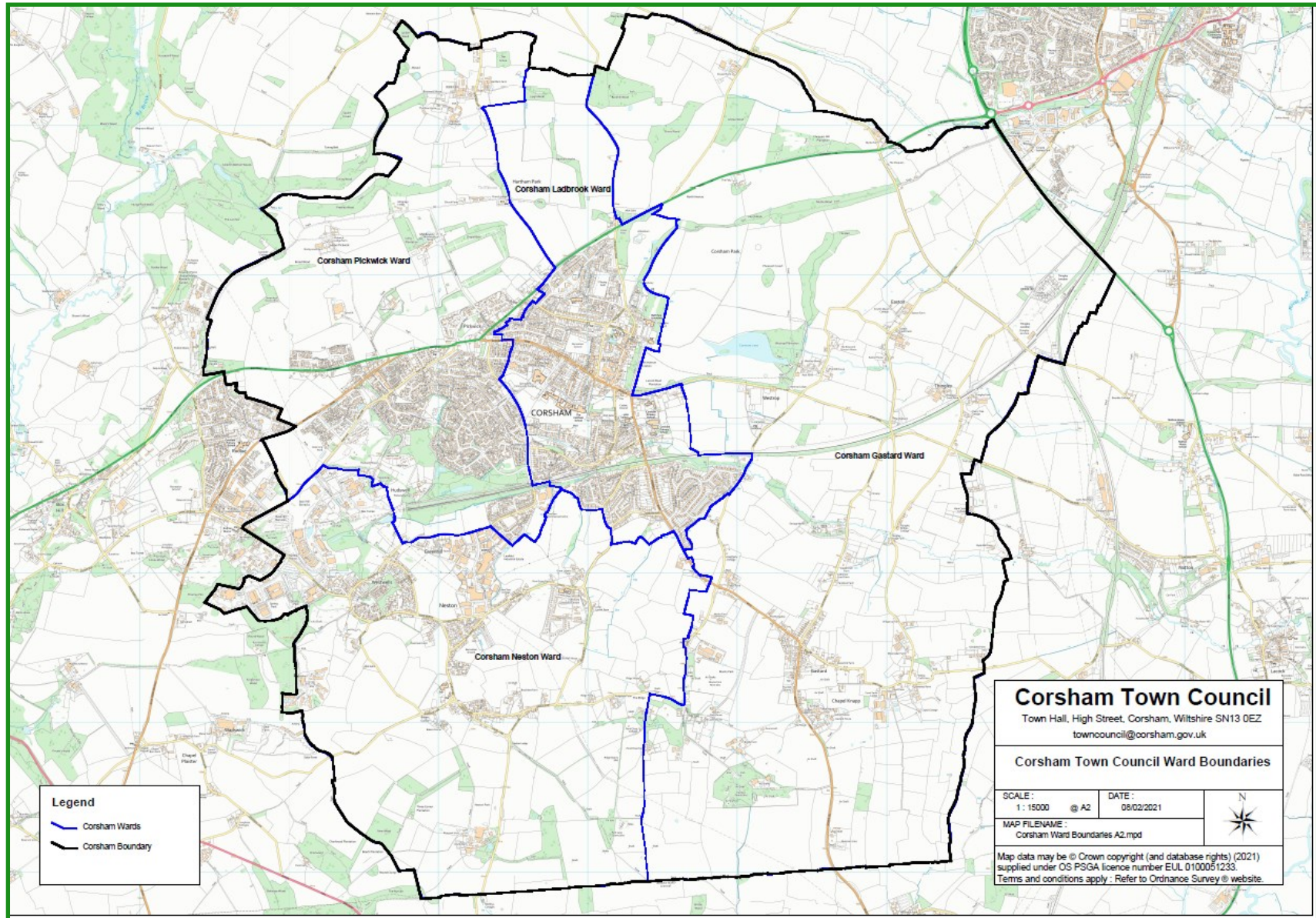
Martin Hirst/Eddie Harvey (from September '23)

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# Corsham Parish - 2023-24 Ward Boundary Map





# Corsham Town Council's Vision 2022-2026

In November 2022, the Town Council launched its Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

There is a strong desire to make sure the Strategic Plan reflects community aspirations and addresses local issues. Objectives within the plan are based on research and feedback from a wide range of sources.



The Town Council exists to improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of Corsham.

The Council provides leadership through community governance and engagement in a democratic and representational way.

To find out more about the work of the Town Council and the aims of the Strategic Plan visit [www.corsham.gov.uk](http://www.corsham.gov.uk)

## A Vision for Corsham

The Town Council's vision for Corsham for 2022-2026 is 'An engaged community - making life better in Corsham through equality, accessibility and inclusivity'.

A guiding principle of delivering this vision is the strong desire to create an engaged, sustainable community which balances environmental, social, cultural and economic needs.

### There are four overall strategic themes:

- **Environment and Climate Change** - Minimising the town's impact on climate change and protecting our natural environment
- **Transport and Highways** - Implementing a sustainable Transport Plan
- **Business and the Economy** - Ensuring a thriving and successful town centre and supporting local businesses
- **Community Wellbeing** - Supporting local interest groups and delivering targeted activities to improve health and wellbeing

At the heart of the Strategic Plan is community engagement and we want to continually improve our engagement with people and groups in our community. We plan to open up new ways of getting a clearer understanding of the concerns and priorities of those who live and work here so that we improve our decision-making and allocation of resources. We are always open to approaches from individuals or groups who have something to say.

Our Community Engagement Strategy is available to download from our website, or you can obtain a copy from the Town Hall. EasyRead versions of this and the Strategic Plan are also available.

## Corsham Town Council - Chair's Annual Report

This report on the Council's year from May 2023-April 2024 was given by Town Council Chair, Cllr Helen Belcher OBE, at the Corsham Celebrates event, incorporating the Annual Town Meeting, held at the Town Hall on Thursday, 18 April 2024.

Firstly I would like to thank all of you for coming out this evening. When the weather has, at last, started to improve, and the evenings are getting brighter, I'm sure a civic event doesn't rate that highly on your must-do list, so I and everyone at the Town Council appreciate your time.

There is a formal part to this evening's meeting and that is me giving the annual update of the Council's activities - a kind of State of the Parish address.

I'd like to start by thanking all the Officers and Councillors for the immense amount of hard work they have done this year. We have a thriving town, with a clear vision, and that does not happen by accident.

As a Council we are committed to doing our bit for the environment and to reduce our impact on climate change, hopefully to zero. We lost our excellent Beth Searle in the summer, but recruited in her place the equally excellent Garry Ford, who has ensured that the Eco Fair continues - the next one is this coming Saturday (20 April); that Councillors and staff are trained in climate change awareness, that our new Biodiversity Action Plan is bedded in, and that our carbon footprint auditing has been very significantly strengthened, which is actually quite a scary thing when you get down to the brass tacks.

### Environment and Climate Change

One of the specific jobs undertaken has been improving the energy, efficiency and reducing the energy use of this very building, and that included insulating the roof space above our heads.

Another is the planting projects at Meriton Rec and also at Coppershell, the Gastard play area, and we are looking at ways to improve biodiversity by wild flower planting in some of the areas we are now managing on behalf of Wiltshire Council.

I am pleased to say that we are continuing to work closely with Corsham Climate Action, the Environmental Task Group and the Active Travel Group, and are looking to improve bus services and cycle paths around the whole parish.

CCA, of course, do monthly litter picks which augment what we do, and I am sure they would appreciate your help - fourth Saturday of

the month, 10am, at Springfield. And talking of litter picks, I was saddened to hear, in the last few days of the death of community stalwart Ann Love, who lived in and contributed to our town for many, many years and could often be found picking up litter in the High Street. I would also like to mention Maurice Hancock, a real Corsham character, who was not only a Corsham firefighter for many, many years, but was also the town's go-to beekeeper, and was responsible for Corsham being twinned with Jargeau in France - a friendship that began in 1981. Thank you, both of you.

### **Transport and Highways**

We finally gained approval for 20mph speed limits in Neston, and the speed limit signs are currently being commissioned. We have approved plans for 20mph speed limits on the main roads in the town centre and are waiting for the legal process to complete.

Speeding remains an issue in some parts of the town. We have continued to deploy our two Speed Indicator Devices and pass data on to Wiltshire Police to inform where they might like to target.

Due to cost pressures, last year we decided to postpone the big scheme for public realm improvements along Newlands Road until external funding is available, but we have agreed plans to improve the visual appearance along the road by Wyvern House and Moxhams. We will look at improving other areas over the coming years.

We are also developing a local Transport Plan for Corsham, part of which is looking at places where we can improve the transport infrastructure. We are making sure, as far as possible, that it aligns with what we know about Wiltshire Council's plans. Hopefully more of that in next year's annual report.

### **Business and Economy**

Councillors Dave Jarman and Ruth Hopkinson, together with Sharon Thomas and Charlotte Phillips - who replaced Tracey-Ann Walpole - have developed a series of very successful Business Networking Breakfasts. The next one is on 26 April at Digital Mansion Corsham at 8am so, if you run a business in town, please do book and come along.

We have continued funding the two hours free parking in the car parks. While this is not cheap, we can see the benefit in terms of the very low number of empty retail units in the town centre. We have also ensured that blue badge holder not only have an additional free hour's parking, but only need to display their blue badge for the free time rather than having to get a ticket.

We have produced a new map showing retail outlets in the town centre, and an interactive version of this will be appearing on our website in the next few weeks.

One new retail vacancy has been caused by Boot's withdrawing from the town in the last few weeks. While it is up to the Martingate owners to fill that vacancy, we are very concerned about the NHS' strategy for providing joined-up healthcare and associated services in the town. We have recently written to the Integrated Care Board, which manages NHS' resources across Wiltshire, asking for a meeting to discuss issues we are experiencing in Corsham. I cannot pretend this is easy, and we have no specific powers in this area, but we will continue to push for improvements.

## **Community and Wellbeing**

We have been pleased to note an increased police presence in the town, and have paid for an e-bike for police officers to use.

We have been pleased to continue to work with a huge number of community groups and centres, as well as the local schools and Bath Spa University. There really are too many to mention, but I will highlight my Chair's Charity of the Year, Corsham Foodbank, which is facing greater difficulties in meeting the sadly increasing need. If you can, please do donate or help.

I would also like to give credit to the annual Corsham Walking Festival and the 10k, both of which bring substantial numbers of visitors to our lovely town, as well as the Pound Arts Centre which continues to punch well above its weight. We were also recently pleased to confirm the town's continued membership of the FairTrade scheme.

I would also like to draw your attention to the new Deaf/Disabled People's Organisation, Same Difference, which is being led by Councillor Tanvir Bush to produce an information, and work with us to improve the environment, for disabled people.

The Council continues to run, support and promote a number of events, including the Summer Busking Saturdays (for which special thanks to Councillor Neville Farmer), the Peacock Arts Trail, the Taste of Corsham food festival and the Street Fair, as well as holiday quizzes and trails for the younger residents of the town.

I would like to thank Councillor Alan Brown for his continued hard work with the Rise Trust in providing regular and increasing services for our youth around the town.

There is an awful lot more I could mention under the Community and Wellbeing heading, but you will want to get home before midnight. But all the hard work across our community by many volunteers, Councillors and Officers, including Vickie Fauset, our Community Wellbeing Officer, is noted and appreciated. I would also like to single out Sharon Thomas for special thanks. She always seems to have at least three major projects on the go.



The town continues to attract the attention of developers, both big and small. Work has already started on updating our local Neighbourhood Plan, and I would particularly like to note the hard work of Kirsty Gilby and Councillor Steve Abbott alongside other Councillors and Officers in this often controversial area.

Another group from whom we attracted attention was some civil servants at the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. We hosted a meeting with them and other town and parish council officers from across Wiltshire, and heard many approving comments as we took them on a tour of the town centre. It went very well, and is a credit to our Chief Executive Officer, David Martin.

We continue to manage our finances carefully, and many thanks to Councillors Ruth Hopkinson, Gareth Ward and Head of Finance and Administration Maxine Jones for making sure we continue to run accounts which are very carefully controlled and audited.

We have seen enormous inflationary pressures in construction-related projects, such as building repairs and highways improvement. We have had to shelve our plans for a new workshop in Park Lane because the costs had trebled. As a result, we are now looking at options for better use of the space and improvements at Arnold House, in a way which will contribute to our climate change commitments and support our excellent grounds team of Brendan Kelly, Trudy Boughey, Mark Gilby, Martin Hirst and Eddie Harvey.

Because we are not the only ones experiencing huge inflationary pressures, we have increased the amount we can grant to local groups, and have been please to support a number of local initiatives this year.

I have already noted Garry Ford and Charlotte Phillips as new starters; our third new Officer, replacing Carol Clark, is Abigail Leverett, who is working with Head of Technical Services James Whittleton on our growing commitments around local amenities.

Thanks also go to Rachel Sellens, the Town Council's Administration Officer, for being the first point of contact for phone calls, emails and visitors to the Town Hall.

In terms of Councillors, Councillor Stephen Senior resigned in June last year, and was replaced by Councillor Adrian Jones, who has already got stuck in. We were also really sad to lose Councillor Mervyn Jackson after 25 years of service, who stepped down recently because of health problems. Merv has been replaced by Councillor Richard Munn. Either Merv or his dad, Roy, had been on the Council since 1967, and Merv's knowledge of local history and experience of how the Council works is very deeply missed. We remain ever so grateful for all he has done for Corsham over many years and I am really pleased and honoured to be able to present him with a silver salver as an acknowledgement of his long service and commitment to Corsham.

As you can see, the Council continues to be extremely busy and bold. We work best when we work together, and we welcome your feedback.

# Grants Scheme 2023/24

## Grants

Twenty-three grants were awarded during the 2023/24 financial year.

### APPLYING FOR A GRANT

The Town Council runs its own Grants Scheme awarding sums of money up to £750 to community organisations working to benefit residents by improving the range of activities and services within Corsham.

Each application is considered at the Town Council's Finance and Administration Committee's meetings which take place in February, April, June, August, October and December.

Projects for young people and community wellbeing projects can apply for £751-£2,000 and these applications are considered by the Community Services Committee at their meetings in January, March, May, July, September and November.

Grants can be awarded to new, as well as existing groups and there are no restrictions on whether the funds are for a capital or revenue project, but the organisation applying must be not-for-profit or charitable and grants will not be made to individuals.

**For more information visit [www.corsham.gov.uk/community/grants](http://www.corsham.gov.uk/community/grants) or call the Town Hall on 01249 702130. Details of other grant funders can also be found on the website.**

*In exceptional circumstances, such as large capital projects, grants over these sums can be awarded. The Town Council must be notified of such requests by September so that funds can be earmarked in the following year's budget.*

\* Match-funded with Corsham Area Board

Name of Organisation	Amount Awarded
Alzheimer's Support	£440
Carer Support Wiltshire	£750
Corsham Badminton Club	£750
Corsham Bowls Club	£2,000
Corsham Civic Society	£750
Corsham Community Club	£800
Corsham Cricket Club (Under 18s)	£750
Corsham Orcas	£750
Corsham Running Club	£1,680
Corsham Windband Association	£750
Crimestoppers	£500
Gastard Village Hall	£2,750
iID (Creative Lunch)	£1,600*
iID (My Space)	£925
Jacqueline Anderson Artist	£613.70
Neston Memorial Hall	£750
Peacock Arts Trail	£1,500
Portable Wellbeing Studio	£2,000
Souper Friday	£655.63
Stay Safe Initiative	£725
Wessex MS Therapy	£500
Wiltshire Air Ambulance	£750
Wiltshire Citizen's Advice	£750

## Diary Dates for 2024

<b>Blue Sky Festival</b>	<a href="http://www.poundarts.org.uk">www.poundarts.org.uk</a>	27 May-2 June 2024
<b>Corsham Walking Festival</b>	<a href="http://www.corshamwalkingfestival.org.uk">www.corshamwalkingfestival.org.uk</a>	7-9 June 2024
<b>Taste of Corsham</b>	<a href="http://www.corsham.gov.uk">www.corsham.gov.uk</a>	15 June 2024 + FREE parking
<b>Summer Fete</b>	<a href="http://www.corsham.gov.uk">www.corsham.gov.uk</a>	6 July 2024
<b>Street Fair</b>	<a href="http://www.corsham.gov.uk">www.corsham.gov.uk</a>	7 September 2024 + FREE parking
<b>Magic and Mayhem Festival</b>	<a href="http://www.poundarts.org.uk">www.poundarts.org.uk</a>	11-17 November 2024
<b>Wishing Tree</b>	<a href="http://www.corsham.gov.uk">www.corsham.gov.uk</a>	30 November 2024
<b>Christmas Lights Switch On</b>	<a href="http://www.corsham.gov.uk">www.corsham.gov.uk</a>	6 December 2024 + FREE parking

## How to Contact the Town Council

If you require further information on any aspect of the work of the Town Council, or to comment on our Annual Report, please contact us:



**Town Hall, High Street, Corsham,  
Wiltshire SN13 0EZ**

**Tel: 01249 702130**

**Email: [towncouncil@corsham.gov.uk](mailto:towncouncil@corsham.gov.uk)**

**Website: [www.corsham.gov.uk](http://www.corsham.gov.uk)**





## Corsham Town Council Accounts - Balances as at 31 March 2024 Subject to Audit

<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>£</b>
Debtors	847
Prepayments	360
VAT	18,061
Current Account (Lloyds)	18,183
Investment Account (Santander)	213,686
Deposit Account (CCLA)	1,200,000
Petty Cash	300
<b>Total Assets (rounded to nearest £)</b>	<b>1,451,438</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Creditors	752
Accruals	86,425
Receipts in Advance	350
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>87,528</b>
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>	<b>1,363,910</b>
<b>Capital and Reserves</b>	
General Purpose Fund	273,179
Earmarked Reserves	1,090,731
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,363,910</b>

You can find more information about the Town Council and its finances at [www.corsham.gov.uk/home/council/council-information/finance/](http://www.corsham.gov.uk/home/council/council-information/finance/)

# Welcome to Corsham



## Key

- 1 TOWN HALL
- 2 FLEMISH COTTAGES
- 3 CORSHAM COURT
- 4 ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S CHURCH
- 5 METHUEN ARMS
- 6 ALMSHOUSES
- 7 THE POUND ARTS CENTRE
- 8 SPRINGFIELD COMMUNITY CAMPUS
- 9 MARTINGATE SHOPPING PRECINCT
- BUS STOP
- WC
- PARKING
- CAR CHARGING STATION

Visit  
Corsham  
TOWN COUNCIL  
[www.corsham.gov.uk/visit](http://www.corsham.gov.uk/visit)

Springfield Community Campus  
and play area

Illustration by  
Susie Brooks  
Artwork by  
Brooks Smith Creative  
Designed in Corsham

