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Chairman: Councillor Peter Anstey

Town Clerk: David J Martin

# ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12



**It's GOLD for  
Corsham!**

**Corsham wins Gold in  
South West in Bloom!**



**MAY 2012**

## Annual Reports

These reports were presented to the Annual Town Meeting held at the Town Hall on 5 April 2012.

### (i) ***Chairman of the Council (Councillor P Anstey)***

The Chairman introduced the Committee Chairmen and Town Clerk. He thanked Councillor Allan Bosley, who had stood down as Chairman of the Town Council in May 2011 after five years in the role. His efforts to raise the profile of Corsham had yielded many benefits.

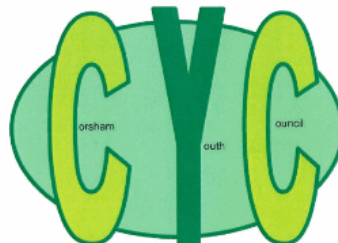
The Chairman reported that during the past 12 months Councillors Issy Langsford and Chris Stewart had left the Council and Councillors Charles Fuller and Anne Lock had joined. One seat remained vacant which was due to be filled by an election on 24 May. The Chairman thanked all Councillors, both past and present, for their input.

Earlier in the year, Groundsman Adrian McHugh had resigned after 10 years with the Council. The Council had recently appointed Amy Schuring who had a background in horticulture and public land management.

Many other people had made valuable contributions to the development of Corsham. One of those was Ian Storey who sadly passed away in November.

Good, two-way communication was essential. The Council welcomed residents' participation in all public meetings. Communication was not limited to these meetings - the Council offices are open every working day; the website contained a wealth of information and was complemented with Facebook and Twitter feeds. For those who prefer personal contact all the Councillors contact details are available from the office or website and there is an open surgery every Friday. The Council sends four newsletters per year to every house in the area and last summer a new Town Guide was launched. The Town Council received and welcomed regular feedback from residents.

The Corsham Youth Council (CYC) continued to go from strength to strength. A new Council was selected in September 2011, with some long-standing members returning and some new faces. The Chairman praised the schools for supporting this initiative and the children for volunteering and participating so enthusiastically. The purpose of the CYC was to engage the youth of Corsham in the decision-making process relating to issues which directly affect them. To this end the Youth Council carried out a survey of young people who live or are schooled in Corsham. The response was overwhelming and a credit to young people. The results of the survey would inform the decisions of not only the CYC, but also the Town Council and hopefully the Campus Operations Board.



A number of Youth Councillors visited Jargeau as part of the twinning trip, to meet their counterparts in France. These Councillors were tremendous ambassadors for Corsham and British young people generally. The Youth Council had continued to support and promote the Cinemania project which provided youth cinema at The Pound Arts Centre.

Over the coming year, the Youth Council would be engaging in the Jubilee Celebrations, Corsham in Bloom, the Christmas Lights switch-on and many more activities.

A local Police Officer regularly attends Council meetings enabling debate on issues affecting the policing and safety of our community. The proactive approach of the police had reduced anti-social behaviour and crime.

The Council was keen to support sustainable Tourism. The Tourism Working Group continued to promote Corsham and was starting to work with neighbouring Councils to promote the Area. Wiltshire Council had terminated the lease for the Heritage and Information Centre in Arnold House. The Town Council stepped in and, as a part of new agreements, provided rent-free accommodation and £2500 towards the running costs of the Centre.



The built environment in Corsham was changing. The open spaces at Katherine Park were due to be adopted by Wiltshire Council in August 2012. It was hoped that the play areas and community facilities could be designed and installed soon.

Over the last four years there had been little change in the number of planning applications brought before the Council. However, the impact of the applications was increasing. On the positive side, there had been an increase in the number of pre-application meetings the Council was invited to. Some applications would be of great benefit to the community. The Campus development would require the transfer of a small parcel of land from the Town Council to Wiltshire Council. Significant applications had been seen for the sites of the Flamingo Club and Park Lane Quarry. Applications had been made for the sites of Royal Arthur and Copenacre.

Further applications were likely to be made for the sites of Sands Quarry, and the old explosives factory off Westwells. Developments in Box Parish at Rudloe Site Two and behind Fiveways Industrial Estate would also impact the local community.

The Council had spent a large amount of time and effort considering its responses to the Wiltshire Core Strategy proposals. The Town Council believed that a well-written Core Strategy would help protect Corsham from unwelcome development in the future.

There would be no increase in the amount of Council Tax each household provided for the Town Council in the 2012/13 financial year. Frontline services would be maintained and efficiency improved through a continuing programme of internal Service Reviews.

The Chairman thanked the Town Hall team and grounds staff for their support and efforts to make Corsham 'the most desirable place in Wiltshire to live, work and visit'.

**(ii) Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee (Councillor M Simpkins)**

The Committee Chairman explained that the Finance & General Purposes committee dealt with the money and business side of Council activity. The Committee monitored Council budgets, and all accounts had passed through the audit stage with no concerns raised.

The Town Council was about to take ownership of four play areas and allotment sites previously owned by Wiltshire Council. These were Ivyfield and The Ridge allotments, and Dicketts Road and Westwells play areas. The new Localism Act could mean that more services and assets would be delegated to Town Council level.

The Council had increased its reserve holdings by £25,000. Council reserves are held to meet unexpected expenditure and enable the Council to take advantage of opportunities that may arise.

The Committee Chairman stated that probably the most enjoyable role of the Committee was to give money away in the form of grants to local groups and organisations. In 2011/12 well over £10,000 has been awarded to 26 different groups. The grants had ranged from £50 to £2,000.

Grants were awarded every two months. Non-profit organisations that provide a service to the people of Corsham were encouraged to enquire at the Town Hall to see if they were eligible to apply for a grant.

**(iii) Chairman of Amenities Committee (Councillor Mrs R Hopkinson)**

The Committee Chairman reported that 2011/12 had been a very busy and successful year for the Amenities Committee.

Firstly, Corsham in Bloom, which was not run entirely by the Town Council but was headed up and mainly financed by the Amenities Committee. Last year was the most successful yet with the Town achieving a Gold award. This achievement would not have been possible without the overwhelming support and work of those on the Committee, the Council grounds staff (both from Corsham and Wiltshire), community groups, local traders, local artists and individual members of the public. The benefit of all their hard work could be enjoyed by everyone. The Town looked stunning as it celebrated 90 years of the Royal British Legion.

This year the Corsham in Bloom Committee was hoping to emulate the previous success using a joint theme of the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics. Work and planning was underway, with new volunteers and suggestions always welcomed.

One of the main reasons for entering Corsham in the In Bloom competition was to improve the visual aspect of the town. In line with this the Town Council had erected new town entrance signs on the A and B roads into Corsham, replacing the old, faded and outdated ones already there. They still featured a peacock and acknowledged the links with Jargeau.

The Committee was also in the process of reassessing and replacing some of the other street furniture around the town.



In a bid to increase biodiversity at Beechfield Nature Area, the Amenities Committee decided to create a wildlife pond. A trial hole had been dug to test the water table and retention. Should this prove successful, the full pond would be dug and stocked in autumn 2012.

Planning for the new cemetery had continued. Surveys had taken place, plans drawn up and money put aside for the purchase of the necessary land. The Council was still negotiating with the landowner over the final transfer, but everything was going well and should reach a resolution soon.

Transport was one of the main areas for discussion of the Amenities Committee. The Committee had considered and made recommendations to Wiltshire Council on a number of issues relating to speeding traffic. A speed indicator device would be utilised periodically on roads in the parish which had led to the most concern.

The Committee had also passed on opinions concerning on-street parking restrictions. Wiltshire Council had introduced a new policy whereby it would consider any requests for increased restrictions annually and ask for the opinion of the Town Council.

A traffic calming trial was due to take place in South Place in April 2012. The layout for the trial was suggested by the Highways Department of Wiltshire Council and was considered in full by the Amenities Committee. There had been much debate about the benefits or otherwise of the proposal. In the end it was decided to approve the experiment for a two-week period, during which time the effects would be monitored by both Councils and a team of volunteers. If after those two weeks it was deemed to be a success and that pedestrian movements were safer without too much impediment to the traffic flow then the scheme would, in time, become permanent. If, however, it proved to be a failure then the traffic system would return to normal.

The Amenities Committee had instigated energy efficiency measures at both Arnold House and the Town Hall. A CCTV camera had been installed inside the Town Hall. The Committee had undertaken service reviews of the Cemetery and Town Hall and updated the Cemetery Regulations. In the coming year the Council would review the management and maintenance of Arnold House.

**(iv) Chairman of Leisure Committee (Councillor M Jackson)**

The Leisure Committee and staff had worked hard promoting leisure and recreation by attending fetes and organising the successful Christmas Lights Switch On event. Some of the Christmas Lights displays had been replaced and there was a huge variety of stalls at the event.

The Spring Walks were up and running again following a review of the timings.

There had been a Service Review of recreation grounds, play areas and allotments to help ensure the services were well run and effective.

The waiting list for allotments was about the same as the previous year at 120 people. Discussions over available land were continuing with the MoD.

The Committee Chairman reminded people of the Jubilee Fete planned for 2 June at Springfield Recreation Ground. He thanked the staff for their hard work over the past year.



## FINANCIAL REPORT TO ANNUAL TOWN MEETING

THURSDAY 5 APRIL 2012

		£	Income £	Expenditure £	£
<b>Balances as at 1 April 2011</b>	General Purpose Fund	62,459			
	General Reserves	110,000			
	Committed Reserves	112,347	<b>284,806</b>		
Precept			558,647		
Finance & General Purposes			34,550	416,273	
Leisure			5,800	38,646	
Amenities			33,159	34,987	
Capital projects			10,000	34,811	
Agreed projects from reserves/outstanding invoices/budgets c/f			34,628		
			961,590	524,717	
<b>Balances as at 31 March 2012</b>					<b>436,873</b>
General Purpose Fund	General Purpose Fund - Reserve		135,000		
	Current Year Fund		126,092		
	Coppershell charity		800		
Committed Reserves	Play area improvements		22,969		
	Promotions/web site		2,167		
	Building contingency		18,319		
	New cemetery		83,365		
	Street furniture		707		
	Highway improvements		1,000		
	Springfield improvements		1,961		
	Ground maintenance equipment		6,743		
	New allotment site		21,000		
	Transport Schemes		10,000		
	Road Safety		4,000		
	Beechfield Nature Area		750		
	Grant Reserve Fund		2,000		
					<b>436,873</b>
<b>Subject to Audit</b>					

## **CORSHAM TOWN COUNCILLORS 2007 – 2013**

**(DIALLING CODE 01249 UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED)**

### **CORSHAM WARD:**

Lucy Bray	4 Brunel Close, Corsham	SN13 9DP	
Peter Davis	14 Beeches Green, Shaw, nr Melksham	SN12 8JD	(01225) 705935
Ruth Hopkinson	Priory Cottage, Bences Lane, Corsham	SN13 0DD	701595
Nicholas Keyworth	Osborne House, 1 Station Road, Corsham	SN13 9EU	713509
Anne Lock	Little Lypiatt Farm, Rough Street, Neston	SN13 9TR	(01225) 810357
Chris Riley	17 Oathills, Corsham	SN13 9NL	712731

VACANCY

### **GASTARD WARD:**

Jenny Collier	Old Post Office, Silver Street, Gastard	SN13 9PY	713968
Rod Taylor	11 Chapel Knapp, Gastard	SN13 9PS	713430

### **NESTON WARD:**

Peter Anstey	25 Elley Green, Neston	SN13 9TX	(01225) 810586
Charles Fuller	The Garden House, Jaggards Lane, Neston	SN13 9SF	713270
Nikki Kenna	Overmoor Farm, Neston	SN13 9TZ	(01225) 810493
Allan Bosley	28 Pickwick, Corsham	SN13 0HY	715145
Jock Fraser	12 Hitherspring, Corsham	SN13 9UT	712374
Mervyn Jackson	28 Purleigh Road, Corsham	SN13 9LJ	716121
Christopher Lynch	1 Adult House, Box Hill, Corsham	SN13 8HA	(01225) 744111
Elaine Marston	30 Pickwick Road, Corsham	SN13 9BU	713343
Maz Wakeman	46 Poynder Road, Corsham	SN13 9LZ	714143
Pamela Witts	14 Ivyfield, Corsham	SN13 0DG	701545

### **RUDLOE WARD:**

Michael Simpkins	20 Arnolds Mead, Corsham	SN13 0BL	715688
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