



DESTINATION CORSHAM

DESTINATION MARKETING PLAN 2015-2018

July 2015



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Executive Summary

The aim of this document is to devise a plan to develop Corsham as a vibrant, dynamic visitor destination.

Based on previous research, workshops facilitated by external consultants, and the desired results of the Town Council, efforts should be particularly concentrated on the following target groups:

- Mature Mainstreams (60+, retired)
- Experience Seekers (35-55, independent, couples, groups of same sex friends)
- Families
- Business Visitors

To be able to attract these market groups to the area, the brand awareness of Corsham will need to be increased and built upon so that the town becomes recognisable for what it has to offer and its 'personality'.

Among the activities that will need to be undertaken to accomplish the targets set out in this marketing plan, are the following:

- Support the coordination and promotion of quality events in town that strengthen the local culture, arts and heritage, and promote leisure activities.
- Raise Corsham's brand awareness in a variety of channels, increasing the visibility of the town.
- Realise the specific opportunities open to Corsham, eg the Poldark Effect.

The effectiveness of this marketing plan relies on a strategic partnership between organisations who can commit to help delivering the projects suggested in this document. It is also of utmost importance to regularly conduct market research and receive feedback so that results can be continuously monitored, revisited and changes made as required.



1. Corsham Town Council's Strategic Plan

In 2014, Corsham Town Council created its Strategic Plan 2014-2018, with an overall vision: "Corsham – a place where people want to be".

One of the six main themes of the Strategic Plan is Destination Corsham and, within that theme, are three main **aims**:

- To produce a Destination Marketing Plan which puts Corsham 'on the map' as a visitor destination.
- To enhance the tourist offer locally through a Destination Management Plan.
- To ensure visitor services are co-ordinated across the relevant agencies.

The **objectives** from those aims are to:

- Increase the number of visitors to Corsham from within a 20-mile radius.
- Develop an overarching Corsham 'brand' to fit with the vision: 'Corsham – a place where people want to be'.
- Encourage visitors through highlighting and promoting Corsham's Unique Selling Points (USPs), such as the Arts, independent retail and heritage.
- Extend marketing initiatives to a wider audience of prospective residents, workers, employers and visitors.

The **actions** from those objectives are to:

- Produce a Destination Marketing Plan
- Produce a Destination Management Plan that supports an enhanced marketing plan
- Engage a marketing professional to review local marketing and branding materials, and recommend improvements
- Expand the remit of the Communications and Marketing Working Group to deal with branding, marketing and promotion
- Consider creating a specific Communications and Marketing role within the Town Council team
- Use innovative ways of local marketing, eg advertising on buses, social media, association with existing events and community groups
- Explore potential collaborations with major local employers and institutions, eg Bath Spa University and the MOD, in order to market to their existing staff and students, and to encourage a deeper relationship with the town, its history, its character and its culture
- Work with existing events and organisers to better market major events within the town, eg Sci-Fi Day, the Food and Drink Festival, the Peacock Arts Trail

- Initiate contact with local tourist attractions and agencies to explore: who our existing visitors are and why do they come here; how we can build links and associations with more successful tourist venues such as Lacock, Bath and Bradford on Avon, and how we can enhance our existing attractions or develop new ones
- Build on our emerging walking groups and potential Walkers are Welcome status to enhance Corsham as a walking and/or cycling destination
- Review and improve existing signage, interpretation and promotional materials
- Create new physical and electronic materials to support the marketing strategy, including a Town Map outlining attractions/shopping opportunities/facilities, and an Annual Events Programme

The possible **challenges** to these actions are:

- Competition from other local towns and tourist destinations
- Achieving market penetration (financial and staff costs)
- Keeping the number of USPs down – resisting being all things to all people and all interest groups
- Distinguishing ourselves in a region with a lot of natural and architectural beauty and many other market towns with Arts, cultural and retail aspirations
- Sourcing the appropriate professional guidance to create an effective brand
- Competition from local sites as they might not want to collaborate
- The lack of a clear ‘honeypot’ attraction to draw in visitors and the patchwork ownership of existing sites which lacks coherence
- Co-ordinating the marketing strategy effectively alongside the Destination Management Plan
- Co-ordinating the work and input of different agencies responsible

The **measures used to evaluate** Destination Corsham’s offering could include:

- Increased local tourism value and engagement in events
- Increased take-up of local services, events and amenities by staff and students at major local employers
- Increased visitor numbers
- Pre- and post-rebrand surveying of regional populations about their perceptions of Corsham as a place to live, work and visit
- Customer surveys of visitors to Corsham

2. Marketing Vision

The marketing vision for Corsham should highlight that this is a town that is growing and thriving, and yet still retains its individuality. It has kept its historic local character, but also has a modern buzz and vibrancy. This should mean that people want to live, work and visit now and in the future, and when they do come they should be encouraged to stay longer, enjoy and explore all that the area has to offer and return again.

In terms of marketing strategy, all efforts should point towards the following objectives:

- Improving Corsham's image and marketing
- Promoting business development and growth
- Improving the environment and encouraging visitors

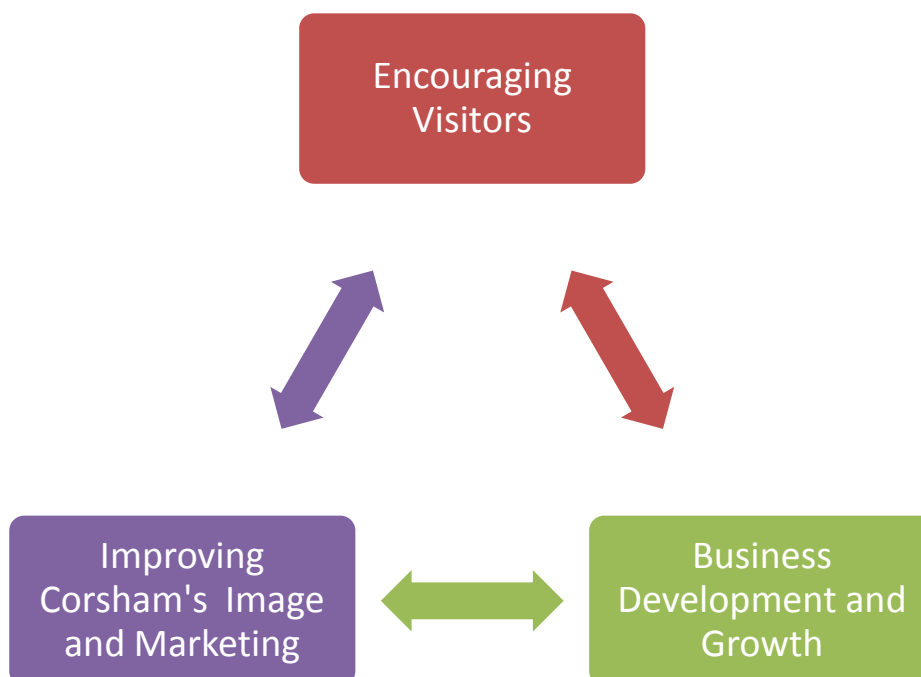


Fig. 1 - Marketing Objectives

3. Marketing Environment

Definitions

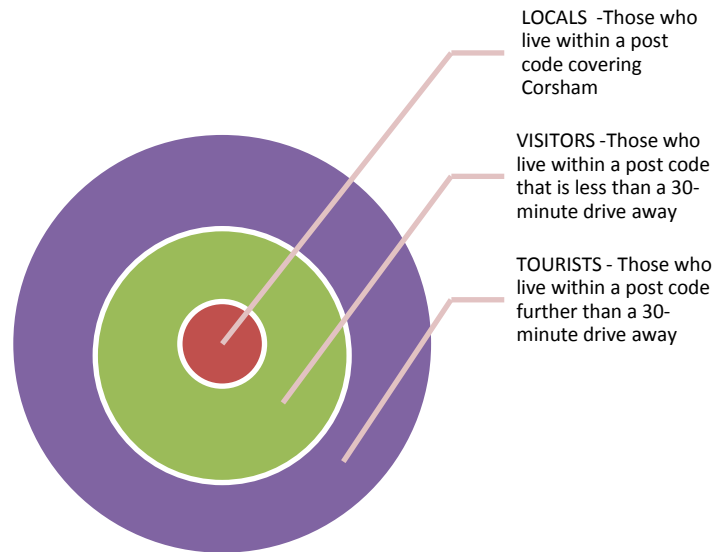


Fig. 2 - Marketing Environment Definitions (as defined by AMT Town Benchmarking Report 2012)

In 2012's Benchmarking Report, of the 754 postcodes gathered from those who had used Corsham's town centre businesses, 74% were locals, 20% were visitors and 6% were tourists. (The Shoppers Origin Survey will be repeated again in 2015.)

Research: Tourism and the Visitor Economy

From Wiltshire & Swindon Destination Management & Development Plan 2015-2020 by Blue Sail for Visit Wiltshire (Jan 2015)

A successful visitor economy helps to create and support a high quality of life for local communities, sustains business viability and diversification, helps to shape places that are attractive for investment and attracts inward investment in its own right.

In Wiltshire & Swindon, the visitor economy is worth £1.4 billion and supports over 28,000 jobs – around 9% of Wiltshire and Swindon's employment. These figures include spending from visitors on accommodation, food and drink, leisure and attractions and travel. The benefits of the visitor economy are recognised by the Swindon and Wiltshire LEP (SWLEP) and tourism is one of its five priorities.

2013 Economic Impact of Wiltshire's Visitor Economy

1.7 million trips by staying visitors

18 million trips by day visitors

Average length of stay of 2.8 nights (domestic visitors);
6.1 nights (international visitors)

Average spend per trip of £179 (domestic) and £335
(inbound)

1.4 billion total tourism generated turnover

Over 28,000 jobs supported by tourism

The visitor economy is made up primarily of small and micro-businesses, and it touches on nearly every aspect of the day-to-day life of a place. Visitors contribute to the local economy using local transport, shops, eating places, attractions and accommodation and cultural and entertainment venues. Visitors want to enjoy the

public spaces in towns and the byways and the scenery of the countryside.

Trends in Tourism

Two out of three people in the UK have changed their holiday-taking behaviour since the economic downturn – switching, cutting back, or taking different types of breaks. New research shows a trend towards multiple trips per year, shorter holidays, more last-minute planning and growth in city and rural breaks. Demographic and social changes are having an impact on the visitor economy. The ageing population is staying active for longer and the Baby Boom generation is moving into retirement. These people have more time and money. The changing shape of the family has implications for leisure trips and breaks. More single parent, single child families, more divorced and step-families means more multi-generation trips and a need to cater for the interests of a wide age-range travelling together. People are also looking for their breaks to deliver special experiences – whether that means physical wellbeing, active challenges, or emotional, spiritual or intellectual fulfilment.

New technology means that people use multiple sources when searching for holiday ideas and planning a trip, often touching many different marketing channels. Referrals and peer reviews also heavily influence many travel decisions.

Day visitors are important repeat, year-round customers who support tourism businesses and services that are also used by local people. Some day trips to Wiltshire are made by people staying overnight in neighbouring destinations, and by people travelling through on the way to their holiday destination.

Business tourism accounts for more than 20% of domestic staying visits to Swindon, and an estimated 15% to Wiltshire. Swindon – as a business centre and base for several of the South West's largest companies – currently attracts the majority of the higher spend business trips. It has a concentration of larger, branded hotels which are looking for weekend leisure trade.

4. Marketing Strategy

The overall aim of the Destination Corsham theme of the Strategic Plan is to help grow tourism in Corsham. This has to be done by developing a quality visitor experience, with high standards of customer service.

Corsham has a history that can be traced back to Anglo-Saxon times, but is at the forefront of digital innovation. It has, as architectural historian Nikolaus Pevsner (1902-83) wrote, ‘no match in Wiltshire for wealth of good houses’, all of which are surrounded by beautiful countryside – and the town stands on the edge of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. You can view Old Masters in a picture gallery designed by Capability Brown, or discover the most contemporary of art at The Pound. You can shop, eat, drink, walk, cycle, revel in heritage and culture, listen to music in all its forms, play in open spaces and parks, watch sport or take part in sport... All of this presents reasons to visit for a number of target groups.

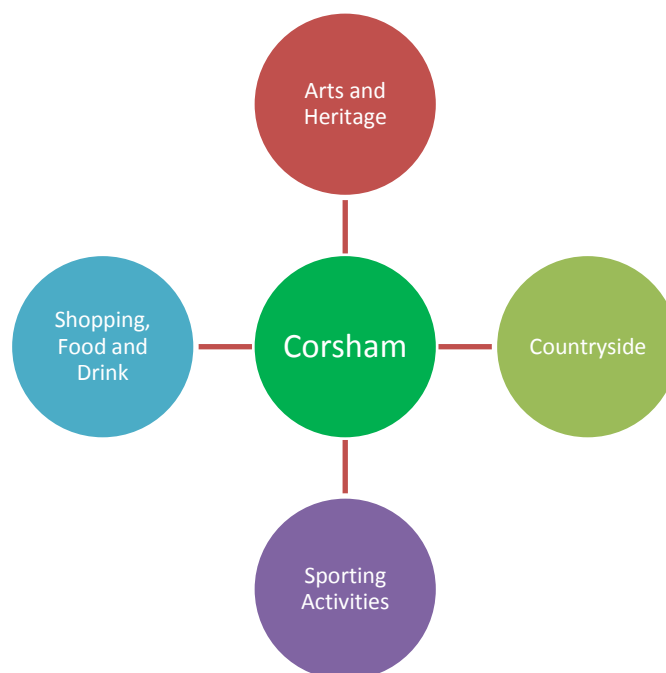


Fig. 3 - Target Groups



5. Target Markets

Motivating Factors

There are a number of main motivating factors that the tourism industry recognises as influencing tourism demand:

- Changing demographics
 - An ageing population, who are active and with more disposable income
 - A rise in single-person and child-free households, who are looking to try new experiences with money to spend on both luxury and budget offerings
- Changing work patterns and increasingly flexible life stages
- Cash rich, time poor consumers
- Concern about health and well-being – with a growing interest in outdoor activities, opportunities to relax, get away from it all and experience peace and tranquillity
- The search for authentic experiences – looking for genuine and local distinctiveness and culture
- The importance of “experiences” – people are increasingly looking to try something new
- Interest in the environment – with a growing appreciation of the outdoors, landscapes, scenery and in protecting the environment
- More sophisticated customers – looking for quality and value but willing to pay for worthwhile experiences
- A rapid growth in electronic technologies – with greater access and increasingly sophisticated customer options
- Increased competition – locally, nationally and internationally

Who are the Target Markets?

Visitors/tourists can be split into two categories: leisure and business, and leisure visitors can be split into three categories: Mature Mainstreams, Experience Seekers and Families.

Leisure

Mature Mainstreams

Mature Mainstreams are part of the Baby Boom generation. They make up 20% of the UK population and have 80% of the wealth. They also take 40% of all UK short breaks. Numbers of people in the UK aged 55+ will grow by 10% over the next 10 years.

Mature Mainstreams are most likely to be repeat visitors, looking to explore further afield beyond the main tourism ‘honeypots’, and seeking quintessentially English countryside,

small towns and villages, and heritage. They are looking for quality attractions, eg historic houses, castles and gardens; good quality accommodation; good quality food – restaurants,

pubs and cafes; attractive small towns set in rural beauty and authentic experiences with interesting stories.

MATURE MAINSTREAMS – IN A NUTSHELL

Older Baby Boomers – in their 60s, retired or approaching retirement

Higher socio-economic groups

Empty nesters with time and money to take several breaks each year

Travelling as couples, friends and in groups

Relatively prosperous, but also careful spenders – seeking quality and value

Conservative values

Interested in gardens, heritage, walking

Could be from overseas as well as UK – in groups and independent travellers

Mature Mainstreams are well-travelled, relatively affluent, sophisticated consumers. They do not consider themselves to be “old” – they are “grown-up” and “experienced”. Inspiration-seeking, information-gathering, planning and booking will be a mix of offline and online. This is a market that is confident online and increasingly using mobile devices, including social media. They are increasingly using the internet, although they are more likely than some to consume print media and still like to use print (maps,

leaflets, guide books) during the visit.

Experience Seekers

Experience Seekers are high consumers of leisure trips. They are free to travel year round and are always looking for, or planning, their next break. They are relatively high-spending adults, aged 35-54, without children and have the highest spend per trip for domestic holidays. There are significant numbers of childfree adults aged 35+ living in relatively affluent London and the South East. Wiltshire, and therefore Corsham, is within easy reach – and highly accessible for short breaks that can be squeezed into busy lives. They are visitors travelling with a purpose and often put an activity or experience at the heart of their mini break.

Experience Seekers are prepared to spend for the right experience and accommodation. They are looking for a chance to experience something together, ie learn a new skill or be

EXPERIENCE SEEKERS – IN A NUTSHELL

Independents, in their middle years

Aged 35-55

Couples and groups of same sex friends

Childfree – Double Income No Kids (DINKs), singles, empty nesters

Busy, active people in well-paid careers

Relatively affluent – high percentage live in London and the South East

Frequent leisure break ‘treats’ as an antidote to busy lives: ‘Because I’m worth it’.

Travelling with a purpose – an activity/experience at the heart of their mini break

Prepared to spend for the right experience

pampered, which means they are looking for quality and interesting places to stay, great places to eat and new experiences which are VIP and unique in some way.

Families

Families will always be an important visitor category, in particular for day trips throughout the year. Any marketing needs to take into account new family compositions and family travel trends. New patterns of visiting include the growing numbers of active boomer grandparents treating families – with or without parents – to leisure trips (there is some crossover with Mature Mainstreams) and ‘vertical families’ where several generations are on trips together. Other trends are increases in families with one child, single-parent families, same-sex parents, step families (often resulting in a family group needing to meet the needs of a very wide age range of children).

Business

Business Visitors

Business tourism is an important market. It is high value, takes place outside peak leisure times, and is year round. Both Bath and Swindon are main business and conference destinations. Bath Spa University (up to 250 students and staff on site) and MOD Corsham (with up to 800 external consultants on site every day) also offer promotional opportunities.



Fig. 4 - Target Markets

Residents

While Destination Corsham is a targeted campaign to bring visitors/tourists to the town, encouraging the town’s 13,000 residents (plus staff and students at Bath Spa University and MOD Corsham) to engage with Corsham’s tourism assets, events, facilities, etc is also vital.

Where Are The Target Markets?

20 Mile Radius of Corsham

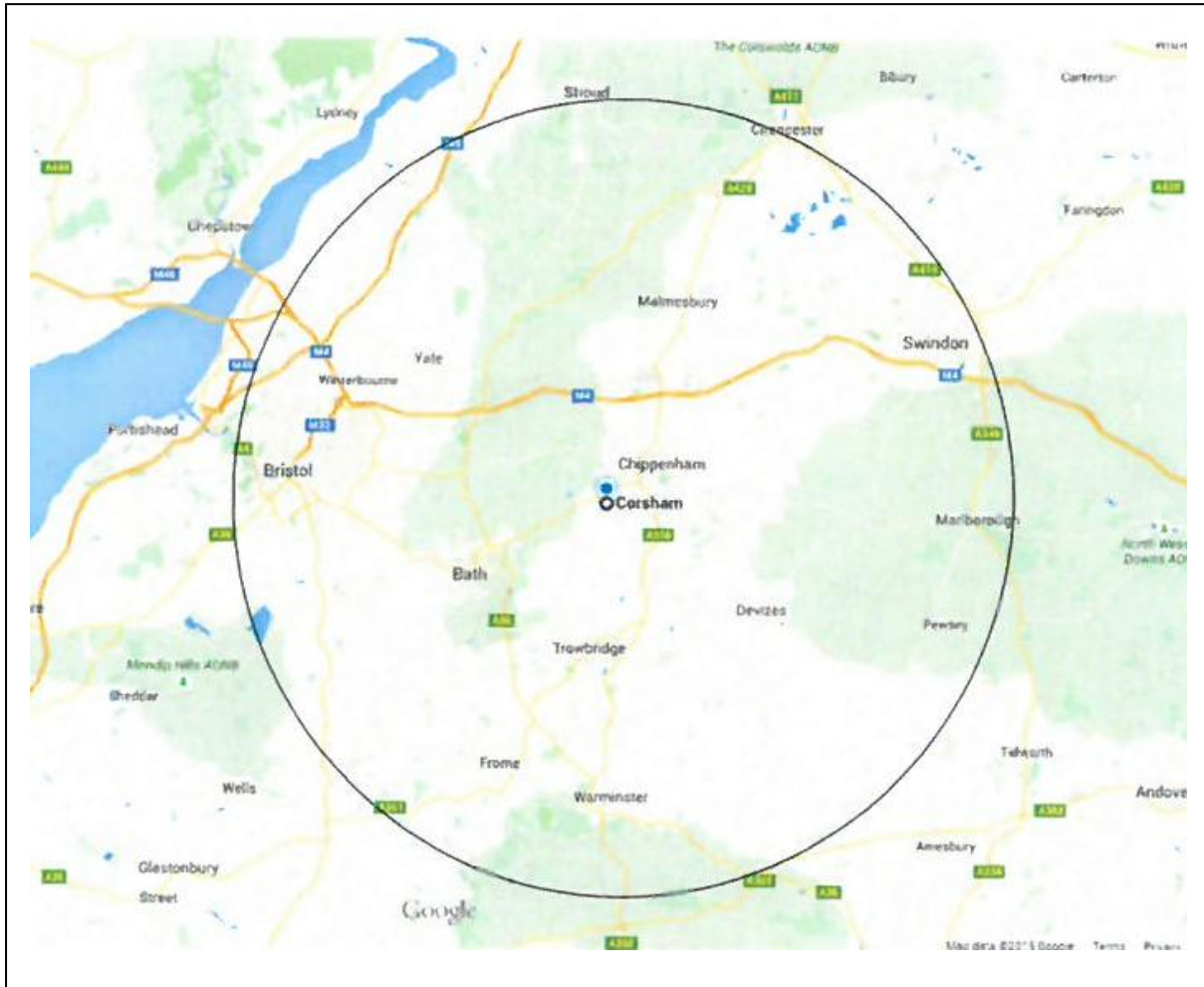


Fig. 5 - Twenty-mile radius of Corsham

Within a 20-mile radius of Corsham you have the honeypot tourist destinations of Bristol and Bath; Marlborough, Devizes, Malmesbury, Frome and Bradford-on-Avon, all with a reputation for independent shops and the Arts - something that they share with Corsham, and Swindon's business visitor potential.

While these areas are also competitors for the same target markets, there is huge potential for joint marketing projects – ie the A4 Tourist Route, an Arts trail, Independent Shopping – many of which could be co-ordinated by Visit Wiltshire or Bath Tourism Plus.

National and International Markets

The nationally recognised Walkers are Welcome status (www.walkersarewelcome.org.uk) that Corsham now enjoys, and the huge interest created by the town's regular appearances in BBC One's *Poldark*, means that Corsham's tourism ambitions can expand to include a national potential.



The 'Poldark Effect' has great potential to bring international visitors to the area, given that the series has been shown in the US, Canada and Australia as well as Europe.

Bristol and Bath attracted 448,000 and 236,000 visitors respectively last year, putting them eighth and seventeenth in VisitBritain's Top 20 table of international visitor data. Building connections with both honeypot destinations with material that highlights Corsham's *Poldark* credentials can only be of benefit in the long term.

Special Interest Groups

Within the target groups will also be a number of special interest groups, eg those interested in history, arts and culture, film and TV, etc. In the longer term, specialist material can be created to meet the needs of these groups.



6. Visit Corsham – The Current Situation

Visit Corsham - Branding

The Town Council's strong – and much praised – logo was produced in 2009/10. Since then, a number of variations have been developed, all incorporating the peacock design – (Corsham's unique, and instantly recognisable, selling point), and all giving a consistency of approach and a connection to the town. For example:

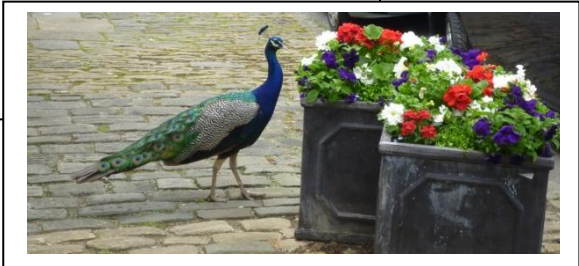


To continue with this consistent message, a Visit Corsham logo was added to the suite of designs. Initially developed for use on literature promoting the town, the Visit Corsham brand has now expanded to being featured on local and national advertising, and is the name of the visitor/tourism website that sits next to the Town Council's site at www.corsham.gov.uk/visit.



Corsham's Stars

These are – currently - the main reasons to visit Corsham, with the most marketing potential.



Clockwise from top: Town Hall, Campus, Peacocks, Filming, High Street and Independent Shopping, Corsham Court, Methuen Arms, Almshouses, The Pound Arts Centre.

SWOT Analysis of Corsham as a Destination

<p>STRENGTHS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attractive town centre ○ Historic High Street ○ Traditional market town ○ Contemporary arts culture ○ Independent retailers ○ Georgian Bath stone buildings ○ Unspoilt High Street ○ Welcoming and friendly town ○ High street used as a film location ○ Cycle network ○ Walking town ○ Good signage / finger posts ○ Proximity to Bath, Bradford on Avon, Castle Combe and Lacock (tourism honey pots) ○ Specific Visit Corsham website ○ Active social media sites 	<p>WEAKNESSES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Limited opening hours at attractions ○ Limited supply of accommodation ○ Restricted opening hours of shops – bank holidays/Sundays/Wednesday PM ○ Newlands Road / Martingate ○ Copenacre - not a good arrival in town ○ Public toilets ○ Empty shops ○ Poor public transport links ○ Road from Bath to Lacock not through Corsham ○ Poor signage to Historic High Street from A4 ○ Corsham Court not promoting presence in the town and accessibility ○ Tourist Information Centre
<p>OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Greater transport links – Railway station ○ A4 Tourism route ○ More joined up approach ○ Visit Wiltshire campaigns ○ Extended opening hours at attractions ○ Poldark and other filming ○ More walks and cycle routes ○ Visit Corsham website ○ Food and drink ○ Development of more events ○ Local business becoming Visit Corsham ambassadors ○ Links with Bath Spa University and Hartham Park ○ Town development through Public Realm study ○ New Information Points throughout Corsham ○ Swindon ○ Marketing Corsham through a new map with narratives and merchandise ○ Coach parking/group tours 	<p>THREATS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lack of focus ○ Resources ○ Competition ○ Credit crunch

Fig. 6 - SWOT Analysis



Marketing Organisation

Corsham Town Council is responsible for the planning and implementation of much of Corsham's marketing, advertising, communications and promotional activities. Sharon Thomas, Head of Community Services, and Rachel Avent, Tourism and Events Officer are the members of staff responsible for implementation. They both have extensive experience in marketing, publishing, print and PR.

Budget and Funding

Corsham Town Council currently invests in the region of £15,000 in tourism related activities per year, excluding subsidising the Tourist Information Centre through rent-free accommodation.

There is scope for Visit Wiltshire to match fund on future marketing activities, as well as additional capital project funding through the Area Board and national funding schemes such as Our Place. Other funding streams, particularly aimed at specific projects aimed at improving town centres and increasing footfall, are being investigated.

Marketing 2014-2015

The introduction of the Tourism and Events Officer role in November 2014, to work alongside the Head of Community Services, has seen a marked shift in marketing activity.

Since November, Destination Corsham work has included:

- WW1 Commemoration events and activities
- Publication of the new 2015/16 Town Guide
- Christmas Lights Switch On
- Summer Street Fair/Armed Forces Event
- Discussion of Visit Wiltshire's 'Timeless' rebranding with Calne Town Council
- Attendance at Visit Wiltshire's Tourism Forum and Literature Exchange and other events
- Creation of the ongoing Poldark Photographic Exhibition and associated local and national press coverage
- Running a tourism workshop for local stakeholders, facilitated by Tourism Engineers
- Meetings with Calne Town Council's A4 Tourism Route group to discuss the potential for a co-ordinated marketing campaign
- Attendance at Corsham Area Heritage's AGM, and the Almshouses AGM
- Meeting with Bath Tourism Plus to discuss ways of promoting Corsham in the city

- Initial discussions with local artists to create a Peacock Feather Walk
- Participation in Visit Wiltshire's Press Pause advertising campaign
- Working with local artist Susie Brooks to create a new Corsham map (due to be ready in August 2015)
- Creation and launch of the Visit Corsham website
- Regular social media updates – at least three tourism-specific posts a week on Facebook, plus use of Visit Wiltshire's #timeforwiltshire hashtag to link with their 20,000 followers
- Assisting with and helping to co-ordinate the marketing and publicity for other events, ie the Walking Festival, Sci Fi Day, Blue Sky Festival
- Visiting Frome to discuss the town's regeneration with Frome Town Council's Economic Development and Regeneration Manager
- Assisting with the Public Realm Study
- Creating a regular e-newsletter to send out to Corsham's tourism stakeholders
- Local and national press advertising, that includes:

2015 Advertising Activity

The Commuter	½ page	1 month	£135.00 +VAT
Bath Tourism Guide	¼ page	Annual	£714.00 + VAT
Visit Wiltshire Press Pause Campaign	Feature ads; press, direct marketing, on-line	3 months	£295.00 + VAT
West Wilts Magazine	¼ page	Summer Street Fair	£188.80 + VAT

Fig. 7 - Advertising in 2015

- Spending time at the Tourist Information Centre to review its offering, lend support and help improve the exhibition space, etc



7. Strategic and Infrastructure Areas for Discussion

Provision of Visitor Information

Research and evidence clearly shows that there has been a considerable shift away from visitors using face-to-face destination visitor information provision (Visit Wiltshire “Growing Visitor Economy” study 2014). Much of this trend has been influenced through the growth of online marketing and visitor information, including user-generated content, ie the visitor’s own on-line searches.

As a result a significant downturn in visitor footfall to Tourist Information Centres across the country has materialised (Visit Wiltshire) which has led to many closing down and thoughts turning to alternative methods of provision.

The Town Council owns Arnold House, the building occupied by the Corsham Area Development Trust to provide tourist information services. The building is costly to maintain and run, in part due to its age, but also due to low occupancy on the ground floor and lack of investment in planned maintenance. The CADT currently enjoys rent-free accommodation and a contribution towards its operating costs. These combined costs mean that the CADT receives the largest annual Town Council subsidy of any outside organisation.

In Corsham, the volunteer-led visitor centre, while offering the value and benefit of a face to face provision, may not be able to deliver the effective methods of destination visitor provision required in the long term.

In the Mystery Visitor Survey carried out by Hidden Britain (now Tourism Engineers) on 26 September 2014, the Tourist Information Centre was rated as follows:

Strengths: *There is a dedicated TIC in Corsham, which is superbly situated on one of the main approaches on the High Street. Staff went out of their way to be helpful and provide the information requested (accommodation list and local visitor attractions). They proactively offered to book accommodation. Good stock of literature.*

Weaknesses: *The centre is staffed by volunteers on a shoestring and it shows. The lack of investment is at odds with the rest of the town’s quality offer. We found the service rather rushed (perhaps because the centre was about to close at 4pm?) and amateurish (eg the only available accommodation list needed to be photocopied). We were given leaflets on the Almshouses and Corsham Court but no single piece of promotional print for the town to enthuse the visitor to explore. There is huge scope for the TIC to tell the story of what makes Corsham special in a creative way, but*

currently displays, merchandise and ambience fail to excite and do not do justice to the town's distinctive sense of place.

In light of the issues and opportunities contained in this Destination Marketing Plan coupled with the emerging Asset Management Plan and Destination Management Plan, it is clear that the use of Arnold House should be reviewed by the Chief Executive within the next six months to enable the Town Council to decide how this asset should be managed.

This plan therefore recommends moving to alternative options, particularly around the engagement of local businesses as Tourism Champions, offering the opportunity for the deployment of visitor information points in key locations across the town and the wider location. Key locations to include:

- The Pound - literature promoting Corsham's tourism assets is already on display as part of the Service Level Agreement between the Town Council and The Pound.
- Springfield Campus – *Wiltshire Council's Joint Strategic Assessment for Corsham Community Area 2013-15* states that there were 193,394 visits to Springfield Leisure Centre in 2012/13 (9.26 attendances per person). Undoubtedly, now the leisure centre is incorporated into the Campus, and with all the other services available on site, including the library, this number has to rise considerably.
- Corsham Digital Mansion – Corsham Institute has confirmed that, should it become the operator of the site, it would be agreeable to having a local information point based at Corsham Digital Mansion. The original proposal for the Mansion House/Library site from Hadston in July 2011 states that the buildings would be kept in community use and could offer: “a new location for the Corsham local information centre” and “a new community event booking and information point”. It also states that the “... site would contain community points of contact to enhance the new community campus and provide a link to the town centre for event ticketing and community information. This would collaborate with existing community bodies including Pound Arts, Tourist Information, the Heritage Centre, the Civic Society and the Chamber of Commerce.”
- Town Hall - an expansion of the offering already available - and utilising the public WiFi - could be introduced to the main foyer.
- MOD Corsham – a small leaflet stand or noticeboard at MOD Reception or at the on-site Costa Coffee would be a way of promoting Corsham to the 2,500 staff on site. A request has been made to see if this would be possible.
- Bath Spa University, Corsham Court – It has already been agreed that the Town Council may use an area in the common room to promote the town.

Using volunteers to promote the town is an important resource, and there is no reason why those current TIC volunteers willing to be involved in the promotion of tourism in Corsham could not continue to help at various sites, particularly at the Town Hall. Training and supervision would be required to ensure the offering of a consistent, professional service that meets the requirements of Destination Corsham. Some resistance to change is to be expected but change is essential if the Town Council is to realise its vision for Corsham.

This change of in-town provision would require further analysis and discussion outside the scope of the Destination Marketing Plan, with a decision made prior to the launch of the 2016 Marketing Campaign.

8. Strategy Pyramid



Fig. 8 - Strategy Pyramid

Develop Brand Recognition

Develop brand recognition for Corsham through the use of effective advertising, marketing communications and promotion, utilising:

- Print and electronic advertising
- Visit Corsham website
- Specialist publications
- National and regional press
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
- Radio advertising/features
- Visit Wiltshire/Bath Tourism Plus publications
- Events – both in the local area and further afield, ie Mid Somerset Show
- Signage both in town and in the wider area, ie Welcome to Corsham signs

Strategic Partnerships

Create strategic partnerships and continue membership of tourism-related organisations, for example:

- Walkers are Welcome Status – pay annual fee; work with Corsham for Walking group; support Walking Festival
- Visit Wiltshire – Gold membership and its associated benefits
- Bath Tourism Plus – Standard membership and its associated benefits
- The Pound Arts Centre
- MOD Corsham
- Bath Spa University
- Corsham Institute
- Local retailers/businesses

Partnership Working Opportunities

Corsham's proximity with tourism honeypots, including Bath, Bradford on Avon and Lacock, offers opportunities to grow the local visitor economy through joined-up approaches and collaborative co-operation. Ideas to grow include:

- Provision of visitor information and cross selling
- Development of consumer trails which draw together all four areas (Corsham ~ Bradford on Avon ~ Lacock ~ Bath)
- Production of group and travel trade itineraries which showcase all four locations

Increase Visitor Numbers

To encourage visitor numbers the following need to be the main priorities:

- Visitor experience at Corsham's 'star attractions' and the overall impression of the town itself needs to be managed (*see Destination Management Plan (September 2015)*). Visitors/tourists are more likely to visit, stay longer, spend more, come back and recommend if they receive a warm welcome and the environment is well-maintained, cared for and respected.
- Support for the experiences that add to the range of things to do.
- Availability of visitor/tourist information both pre-visit and during
- New attractions (exhibitions, etc) to create further reasons to visit, stay longer and come back.
- Festivals and events that provide a reason to visit now, offer opportunities to extend the season, and showcase heritage, arts and culture, food and drink.
- Ways to make more of the independent shopping experiences and local food and drink offer.
- More accommodation – or, if that is not possible, then more support for, and promotion of, what is available.

9. Specific Opportunities and Realising Corsham’s Potential

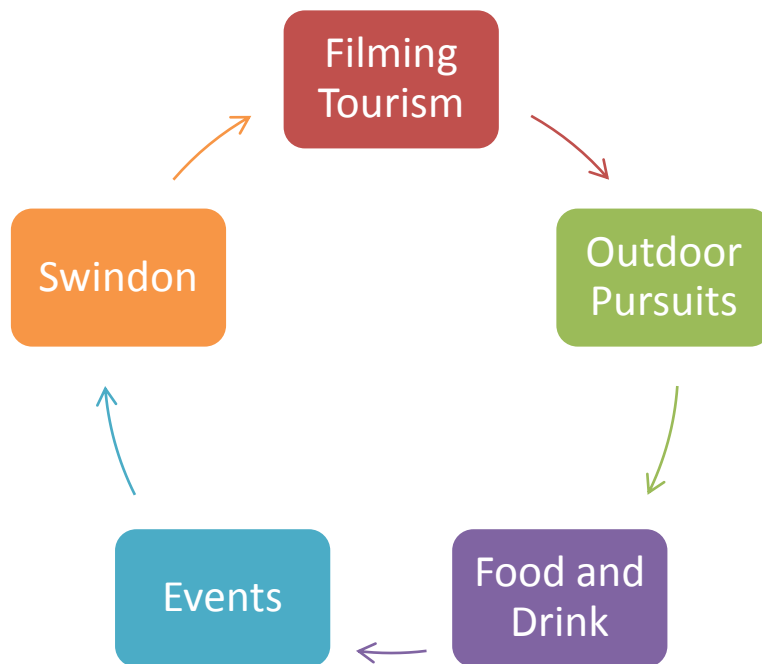


Fig. 9 - Specific Opportunities

Filming Tourism

In May 2014, when Mammoth Screen arrived in Corsham to film a new adaptation of Winston Graham’s *Poldark* for BBC One, no one could have anticipated the *Poldark*/Aidan Turner fever that would follow when the drama finally hit the screens in March 2015.



Corsham’s leading role as Truro in the series created a number of promotional opportunities: local and national (*Daily Mail*) press and magazine coverage; paid advertising, ie in *Commuter* magazine, highlighting Corsham’s *Poldark* connections; local TV and radio features, and Facebook and Twitter activity. The filming, and subsequent broadcast, also enabled the Town Council to organise and display a photography exhibition, made up

of pictures taken by local people as well as Mammoth Screen's own production shots. The call for photographs via Facebook created a huge amount of interest and community engagement in the project. Over 500 people went on to visit the exhibition at the Town Hall in March, and around the same number then visited it when it moved to the TIC in April. Through the summer a new Poldark exhibition, featuring behind-the-scenes pictures taken by local photographer Andy Rose, ran at the TIC, again giving local residents and visitors a reason to visit – or revisit – the town. And the appetite for anything *Poldark*-related continues: a picture of the Post Office's *Poldark* window display 'reached' over 1,900 people via the Town Council's Facebook page in less than 24 hours.

The '*Poldark* Effect' has already impacted on the town with increased visitor numbers, and there is no reason to think that this will diminish when future series – and there are rumoured to be at least five more – are filmed and aired. *Poldark* also crosses all our potential primary markets: Mature Mainstreams, Experience Seekers and Families. As a result, the potential for new, and innovative, *Poldark*-themed activities is already being investigated, eg becoming part of already-successful film and TV tours of the area. Interest from international visitors, particularly from the USA, is also likely to increase as a result of the series (as it did with *Downton Abbey*) and is, in the longer-term, an area worth investigating, eg in-flight publications, *Discover Britain* magazine, Visit England tourism activity.

Outdoor Pursuits

Wiltshire is predominantly a rural county, with some outstanding landscapes and scenic beauty. Approximately 44% of the county is designated as an AONB. There are over 20 long-distance walking paths and the National Cycle Network has several routes that are available to walkers and, in parts, to horse riders.



Corsham is set amidst that scenic beauty and, as a result, has the potential to be a strong base for outdoor pursuits that would appeal, in particular, to the Experience Seekers target market. Horse-riding, falconry, shooting, fishing, vintage car hire, 4x4 driving, high-speed driving experiences, painting, photography and even hot-air ballooning are all available within the easy-to-reach, 20-mile radius around the town. With the Wiltshire Cycle Route passing through Corsham, there is also potential for bike hire as a local business opportunity.

Corsham's strongest current strength – and one that would appeal to the Mature Mainstreams – is walking. The press and publicity, both local and national, for the Corsham for Walking group's Walking Festival is a starting point from which to grow Corsham's walking credentials. The town already has Walkers are Welcome status and this needs to be developed so that Corsham is making the most of what is a nationally-recognised scheme. Corsham Town Council has already pledged to pay the annual Walkers are Welcome membership and is working with the Corsham for Walking group to ensure that Corsham becomes recognised as a WaW town by a wide audience.

Alongside this, the Town Council Walking Map is as popular as ever, and has just undergone an amended reprint. There is potential for developing the map further – making it interactive, for example – in the future. A number of trails have been suggested, both in Corsham and taking in a wider area, so being part of joint projects with other towns – eg the A4 Tourism Route – is being investigated. Poldark and other filming, Arts and Crafts, Food and Drink; all of these would be strong enough subjects to work with. Geocaching (www.geocaching.com) - “the world’s largest treasure hunt” - is an inexpensive, easy-to-set-up and very family friendly way of encouraging walkers of all ages to come to Corsham and, again, is an idea being pursued, as is our own, unique, Peacock Feather Walk, with ongoing discussions taking place with local artists to create artwork for a permanent trail around the town.

Food and Drink

Food and drink is an important part of Wiltshire’s economy, and tourism provides an excellent way for the county to showcase its produce. It should be celebrated as part of local culture and is also an essential part of visitor spend. Foodies - and both the Mature Mainstreams and Experience Seekers could be described as such - will create a day trip or a short break around a destination restaurant or food experience. The Methuen Arms, with its plans to increase its food offering, is that destination restaurant in the town centre, and would be the focal point for any Food and Drink marketing, while also adding in what else is here to tempt foodies, ie. Lick the Spoon, the specialist chocolatiers based at Masons Wharf on Potley Lane.



Transcoco’s plans for its Food and Drink Festival are currently unknown but there is potential for linking this with the Town Council’s Summer Street Fair in 2016, or encouraging more food and drink providers to attend the Street Fair and developing a ‘Taste Corsham’ style event. This would also build on the town’s Fairtrade status – renewed in 2015. A targeted, stronger food and drink offering would also improve the town’s night-time economy.

Events and Festivals

Events and festivals, whether they are signature events put together by the Town Council, or are run by other organisations, provide reasons to visit now and are valuable marketing platforms. The Town Council’s own events: Christmas Lights, Summer Fete/Armed Forces March, WW1 Recruitment Day, even the Easter Egg Trail, bring, in total, thousands of people into the town. While the vast majority of these people are residents, attempts are made – via advertising, links with Visit Wiltshire and Bath Tourism Plus and social media – to promote the events to a wider audience, and thus encourage visitors/tourists to come and discover Corsham for themselves, thereby increasing footfall and the visitor economy.

Unfortunately, Corsham has lost a number of key events recently: the French Market is still mourned by some; Corsham Sci-Fi Day will not run in 2016 as the organisers need time away from such a huge commitment and workload; the monthly Farmers' Market ended two years ago, and the future of the Food and Drink Festival is unknown. With this in mind, the Town Council should offer help and support (financial, administrative and marketing) and encouragement to any organisers willing to run appropriate events in Corsham. This help has already enabled The Pound to run its regular festivals; Corsham for Walking to run two very successful Walking Festivals, 2015's having expanded into a three-day event, and the biennial Peacock Arts Trail will run in the autumn of this year. There is plenty of room for more, and initial discussions would suggest that there is a desire from local groups and organisations to be involved in events if there is support from the Town Council. Bath Spa University may be interested in a performing arts event for their students along the lines of a Corsham Fringe Festival. Frome runs a hugely successful Arts Market – the Frome Independent - on the first Sunday of the month, from March to December each year. On average, around 6,000 extra visitors come into the town when the market is on, with around 12,000 at the December event. Given Corsham's Arts and Crafts offering, something similar, on a smaller scale, would seem to be an idea to take further, and initial discussions with some of Corsham's retailers suggests that there would be interest in a regular Sunday event.

Swindon

Swindon is a key business tourism hub, but is also seeking to strengthen its cultural offer as part of its planned growth and repositioning. This provides opportunities for the visitor economy through the creation of additional visitor attractions to the north of Wiltshire. Major new proposed developments include:

- Oasis Leisure Centre, Swindon – a proposed £95m investment in a destination leisure experience, including a state-of-the-art ski centre; 6,500-seat music and leisure arena; cinema, leisure retail, hotel and other accommodation.
- Swindon Art Gallery – a new art gallery and museum to display the town's excellent modern collections, planned for the cultural quarter in the Kimmerfields scheme that will regenerate the whole town centre.

Swindon has a concentration of large hotels, primarily servicing business demand from Monday-Thursday, but currently with capacity to provide good-value weekend accommodation for the leisure travel trade and independent visitors. New leisure, entertainment and cultural development should increase that demand. A stronger offer in Swindon will encourage staying visitors and strengthen the tourism potential of northern Wiltshire, spreading the economic benefit.

While we now have a good working relationship with Visit Wiltshire and, independently of that, we are building relationships with our nearest neighbours, we have not considered making connections with Swindon. Given its tourism potential, and the fact that the town is within that 20-mile radius of Corsham, it would seem that this is a new market to pursue in the short-term.



10. Monitoring and Evaluation

Marketing efforts will be reviewed every two months, as part of the Destination Corsham Tourism Update presented to the Town Council's Community Services Committee.

On-going visitor research - through feedback forms, online surveys, benchmarking, social media, etc - will be carried out, as well as monitoring any increase in footfall, spend and overnight stays. This activity will enable the effectiveness of 2016's marketing campaign to be monitored and give a benchmark for future evaluation.

Key Outcomes

- Increase footfall and spend
- Increase unique website visitors
- Increase PR advertising value
- Increase Facebook likes and Twitter followers
- Increase the number of shops (eg no empty units) in the town centre

11. Strategic Plan Objectives

- Increase the number of visitors to Corsham from within a 20-mile radius.
- Develop an overarching Corsham 'brand' to fit with the vision: 'Corsham – a place where people want to be'.
- Encourage visitors through highlighting and promoting Corsham's Unique Selling Points (USPs), such as the Arts, independent retail and heritage.
- Extend marketing initiatives to a wider audience of prospective residents, workers, employers and visitors.

This Destination Marketing Plan, alongside the Destination Management Plan (September 2015) will ensure that the objectives set out in the Strategic Plan are met.



12. Summary and Conclusion

This Destination Marketing Plan brings together tourism research and work done prior to the implementation of the Strategic Plan and unites it with the work instigated by the Plan's approval in 2014.

Prior to the set aims and objectives of the Strategic Plan, the Town Council's approach to tourism was more ad hoc. Working on, and putting together, this detailed Destination Marketing Plan has allowed for the creation of a full Marketing Plan for 2015-18 and a Promotional Plan for 2016, both of which can be regularly monitored and evaluated.

This Plan offers a clear direction for the Town Council as well as valuable information for Corsham's various tourism and visitor stakeholders. Concentrating on highlighting the arts and heritage, countryside, sporting, shopping and food and drink interests of the leisure target groups (Mature Mainstreams, Experience Seekers and Families) and working with stakeholders in those sectors will give a focus to the work involved and help to give Corsham a distinct identity.

In the longer-term, this identity will also help to promote Corsham's offering to business visitors.

The work proposed will go a long way to meeting the aims and objectives of the Destination Corsham theme in the Strategic Plan.

Sharon Thomas
Head of Community Services

Rachel Avent
Tourism and Events Officer

July 2015

Appendix 1

Detailed Marketing Plan 2015-2018

1	Quality Destination	
1.1	Focus on quality and value	When?
1.1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage the support of quality assurance schemes for accommodation, visitor attractions and eating out - Support and enhance the “Walkers are Welcome” scheme and support and mentor local businesses 	2015-ongoing
1.1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encourage businesses to become members of Visit Wiltshire 	2015-ongoing
1.1.3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support and encourage a more joined up approach to opening times and open longer where possible 	2015-ongoing
1.1.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To consider providing funding to cover costs / subsidise the cost of training for tourism service providers 	2016
1.2	Develop Packages	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Help local businesses cross promote their services and attractions - Promote the newly developed www.corsham.gov.uk/visit website with the opportunity to promote events, attractions and special offers - Work with group travel operators on ‘Film Tourism’ trips - Link up with those local providers offering Outdoor Pursuits to develop a Corsham-based package 	2015-2016 2017-2018
1.3	Events	
1.3.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop and co-ordinate a range of events and entertainment throughout the year, establishing a programme of three annual events - Create and maintain a lively events calendar including external event providers including The Pound and The Walking Festival - Work with local Food and Drink providers to develop a range of food festivals/’Taste of Corsham’ style events 	2015-ongoing
1.4	Improve Infrastructure to Better Promote the Town	
1.4.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve signage and interpretation - Involvement with the Public Realm study with the view to best promote the town on arrival 	2015-2016
1.4.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Design a new map for Corsham 	2015
1.4.3	<p>Access to Corsham:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create a parking area for coaches and establish Corsham as a coach-friendly town with necessary facilities in place 	2016-2017
1.4.4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to tourism information at designated points around town - Research tourism information points in Swindon 	2016 2016

1.5	Accessibility	
	- Promote accessibility to Corsham by public transport through the availability of information on-line	2015
2	Customer Relationship Management	
2.1	Visitor Care Programme	
2.1.1	- Coordinate a visitor database for promotional purposes from on-going visitor research and visitor books	2015-2016
2.1.2	- Visitor feedback forms to be on-going and evaluated to monitor the market and help co-ordinate ongoing marketing and promotions - Create feedback mechanisms to monitor market trends and create products based on demands	2015-ongoing
3	Marketing Development	
3.1	Marketing Plan	
	- Measure the effectiveness of the marketing plan	2016-ongoing
	- Promote the content of the marketing plan with local residents and organisations	2016
	- Review the plan regularly and make amendments based on visitor and local feedback and whilst responding to market changes	yearly
3.2	Brand Management	
3.2.1	- Brand development achieved through a workshop with stakeholders to develop a consistent brand for Corsham	On-going
3.2.2	- Use the Visit Corsham logo – to be used in all promotional activities and to raise awareness for Corsham	2015-2016
3.2.3	- Develop a consistent visual style and identity across all promotional material	2016
3.2.4	- Provide simple guidelines to all stakeholders to encourage use of the brand identity and message	2016
3.2.5	- Create a narrative for the town	2015
3.2.6	- Highlight the town's USPs – Peacocks and Poldark	On-going
3.3	Public Relations	
3.3.1	- Prepare a Public Relations plan - Develop a database of press contacts - Use a template for press releases - Supply images to Visit Wiltshire to encourage use in their marketing material	On-going
3.3.2	- Attend networking events to strengthen alliance with existing partners – Visit Wiltshire, Bath Tourism Plus	On-going
3.3.3	- Organise tour guided visits for potential prospective partners (tour operators)	2017-2018
3.3.4	- Enter relevant Tourism awards - Encourage local businesses to enter industry awards	2017-2018



Appendix 2

Promotional Plan 2016

Campaign Objectives

- In addition to Corsham's core accommodation and attraction product, promote the specific tourism assets / key visitor draws of –
 - Independent retail, food and drink
 - Walking and cycling
 - Arts, culture and heritage with an emerging festival and events programme
 - Corsham as a film location, focussed on Poldark.
 - Poldark and Peacocks – UPS and lead tourism attack brand
- Extend length of day visits and promote overnight stays
- Reinforce and capitalise on the towns locality to nearby tourism honey pots (Bath, Lacock etc)
- Raise the profile of events, festivals and arts as key tourism drivers

Campaign Activity

- Design and print a dedicated piece of visitor focussed promotion print, including editorial featuring the tourism assets of the town and the outlying areas
 - Opportunities for businesses to buy in enhanced coverage and presence
 - Downloadable version on www.corsham.gov.uk/visit
 - Local and regional distribution
 - Key focus will be to provide inspirational and compelling content.
- A consumer PR programme to stimulate interest and pick up on the campaign, maximising PR opportunities to raise the profile of Corsham
- Social marketing activities
- Full use of Visit Wiltshire:
 - Display of Trip Advisor reviews on VW website
 - Our social media feed on VW website
 - Listings of events
 - Use of their Geofencing technology
 - Link to the www.corsham.gov.uk/visit website
 - Use of #timeforwiltshire in all social media activity
 - Paid for inclusion with the Press Pause campaign 2015/2016 and in future relevant campaigns and use of banner advertising
 - Increase presence via competition offers
 - Entry in group travel publication
 - Literature Exchange – part of Visit Wiltshire's Tourism Forum

- Distribution of leaflets in Bath Tourist Information Centre
- Promotion of website www.corsham.gov.uk/visit
- To evolve the brand, positioning and effectiveness of campaign activity, encouraging immediacy of travel and to improve visitor understanding of what Corsham has to offer, targeting and response
- Use of point of sale communications (posters, notice boards, Community Campus) Sales Promotions; offers and coupons available on-line
- Encourage visitors to leave reviews on Tripadvisor
- Direct Marketing campaign Swindon business area
- Leaflet stands in B&Bs, pubs, other town's tourist information points, etc within 20-mile radius

Design and Print – Visitor Promotion

Publication	Content	Duration	Value
Visit Corsham A4, 4 page full colour printed brochure	Information on Corsham as a visitor destination	Annual Distributed throughout the South West at visitor destinations, tourist information points	£300.00 design £638.00 print (priced based on 7000 copies) +VAT
Corsham Map	Susie Brooks designed map	On-going	TBC
Corsham Map merchandise	Tourist souvenirs based on Susie Brooks illustrations	On-going	TBC

PR, Including Publicity through Membership

Publication	Content	Duration	Value*
The Bath Magazine	2 page editorial	One month during Poldark screening	£1000.00
Visit Wiltshire	Facebook and Twitter feed included on listing	Annual	£50.00
Visit Wiltshire	Geo targeted push notifications on the Visit Wiltshire App	Annual	From £25.00

* PR - advertising cost equivalent

2017 Onwards

After monitoring a full year of marketing activity in 2016, it may be appropriate to consider other methods of promotional activity from 2017 onwards. A radio campaign at specific times of the year, or advertising Corsham, perhaps using the Poldark Effect, on the back of buses are both suggestions to investigate further.

Paid for Advertising

Publication	Content	Duration	Cost
Visit Wiltshire Website	Home page banner ad	3 months during Poldark screening	£283.50 for 3 months
Visit Wiltshire e-newsletter	Feature article to 50,000 names	One week	£105.00
Visit Wiltshire	Groups & Travel Trade Package Inc: Print, online advertising features and exhibitions*	Annual	£275.00
Time for Wiltshire Visitor Guide 2016	Quarter page	Annual	£185.00
Great Days Out	On-line listing: Wiltshire Page & featured as on South West page	Annual	£100.00
Index:Wiltshire	On-line listing, ad, advertorial, social media feeds, web link	Annual (advert and advertorial 1 month)	£200.00
Discover Britain	Quarter page ad	2 months– during Poldark screening	£195.00
Bath Magazine	Quarter page ad	2 months	£300.00
Bath Tourism Plus	TBC		
South West Attractions	Full page advert with a web link	Annual	£325.00
Group Leisure (to be confirmed when coach parking available)	Quarter page ad	One month (during Poldark screening)	£315.00
Group Leisure Who's Who (to be confirmed when coach parking available)	Quarter page ad plus logo on lead article page	Annual	£565.00

External Events for Promoting the Town

To include

- The Wiltshire Emergency Services Event
- Bowood Living Heritage Country Show
- Visit Wiltshire Groups and Travel Trade partner exhibition
- Visit Wiltshire networking events

Timescale

This is a four year plan 2015-2018 with emphasis on a campaign roll out in 2016, with regular reviews to monitor effectiveness and budget.

Next Steps

Consumer marketing activity should be visible from spring 2016, however some travel trade advertising will commence in 2015. A decision about potential marketing activity should be made by November 2015 for the 2016 campaign.

A branding workshop with Tourism Engineers will be arranged for autumn 2015 to help with developing the brand and to create a narrative for future campaigns.



Appendix 3

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