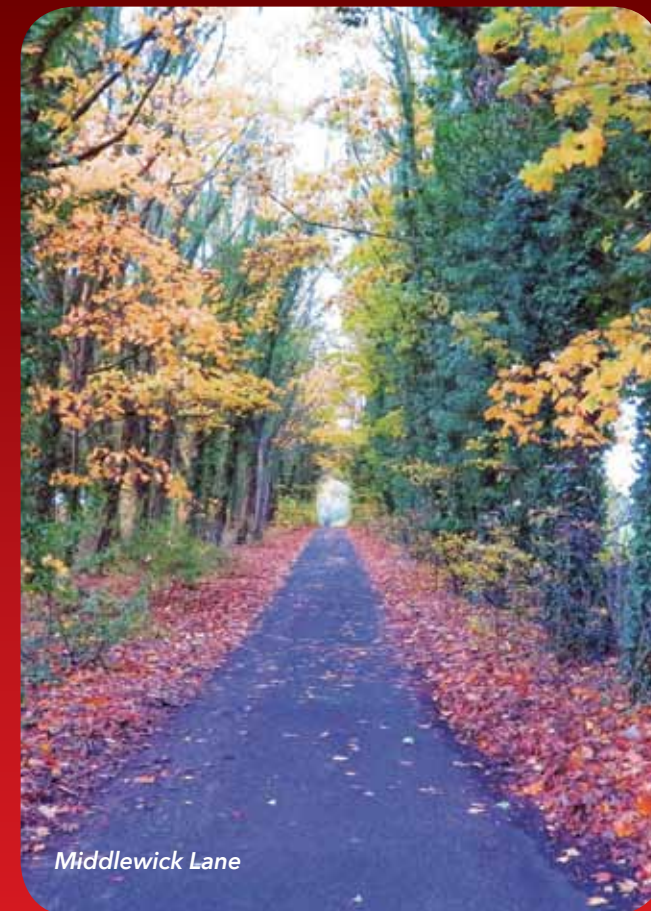


Corsham Red Heritage Trail



The walk follows Public Rights of Ways (PRoW). It is an easy walk, on footpaths and lanes without stiles to climb over. Suitable footwear is required as parts of the walk are through woodland and occasionally muddy footpaths.

The walk starts at the Springfield Community Campus on Beechfield Road, SN13 9DN. There is a public car park to the rear of the Campus and the nearest bus stops are at Newlands Road, SN13 0BH and Valley Road SN13 9DT.

The walk is 5 miles long and has a total ascent of 231 feet.

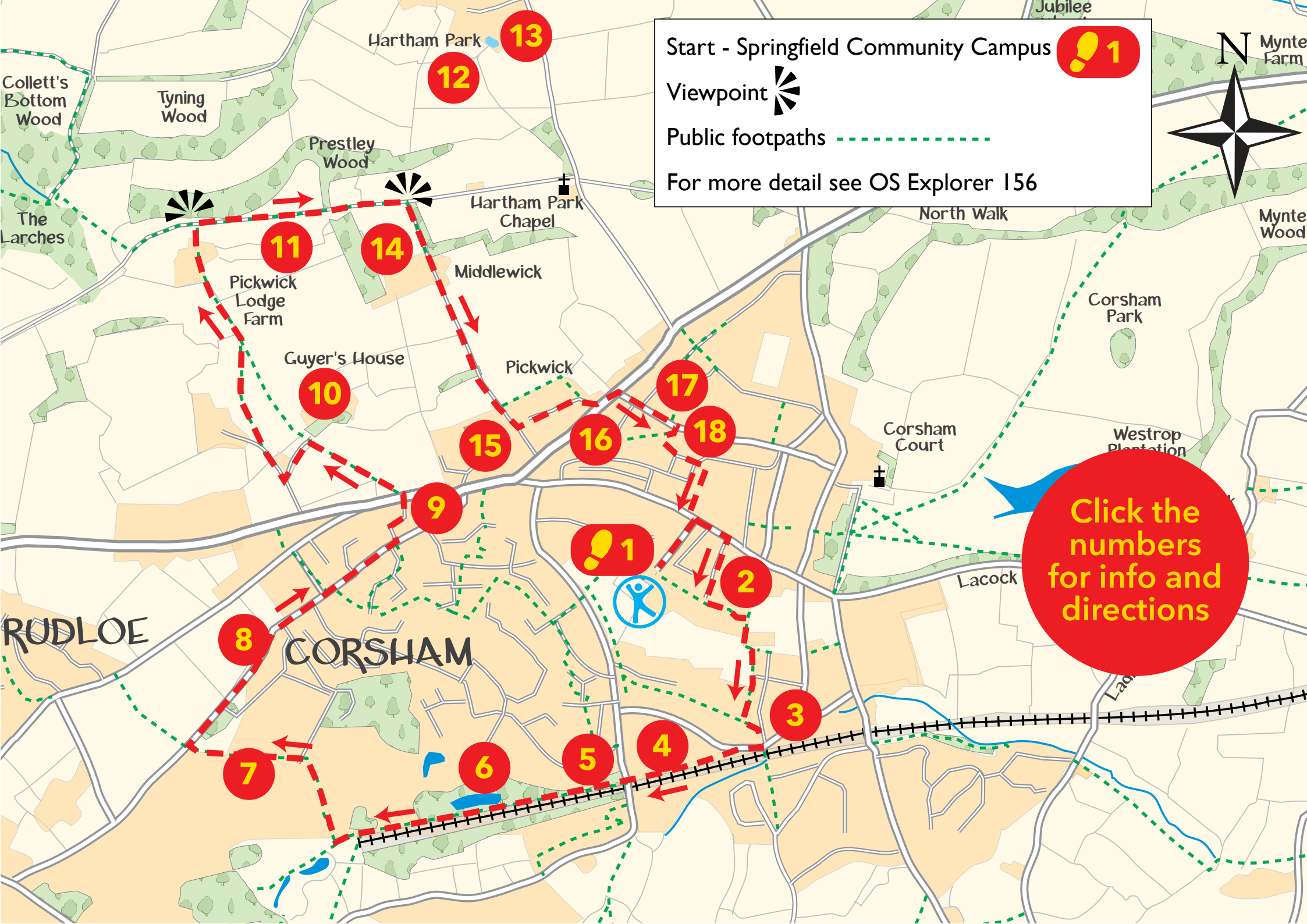
Introduction


This walk seeks to explore the area to the south and north of Corsham Town Centre, visiting Pockeredge Drive and Lakes, then out north to Guyers House and the old turnpike road with views out to Hartham House with its Stické Tennis Court, before returning past Middlewick House, the old Dairy and the Spackman family home, explaining the heritage associated with several fine buildings and landscape. The historic market town of Corsham is surrounded by beautiful countryside and sits on the fringe of the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB), and has a population of around 14,000 people. But Corsham's most colourful - and noisiest - residents are its peacocks strolling down the High Street!


The town has excellent access to the M4 motorway at Chippenham and Bath. Bus travellers are well served with a number of local services linking Corsham to its nearest towns.


Corsham's attractions include; 'The Pound Arts Centre', Corsham Court - with its stunning art collection and fabulous garden walks, the 400-year-old Almshouses and the diverse Martingate Shopping Centre and quaint High Street shops.

Follow and click the numbers on the map for info and directions



Start - Springfield Community Campus  1

Viewpoint 

Public footpaths 

For more detail see OS Explorer 156

Click the numbers for info and directions

1 Springfield Community Campus

The walk starts from the Springfield Campus built in 2015 to replace the old Corsham Library and Community Centre. In WWII this area was once the Married Quarters Site No.1

- ▶ *Head right downhill, left around the corner of the Doctor's Surgery, right down Pickwick Road towards town and then take the second right along Paul Street.*

2 1st Telephone Exchange

The first telephone exchange for public use in Corsham was opened here on 3rd October 1905, in the converted front room of 8 Paul Street at Mr Townsend's house (for an annual rent of £16.10s). On the 30th September 1936 the exchange became automatic and moved to the new purpose built building at the end of Alexander Terrace nearer to the town centre.

- ▶ *Walk down to the end of Paul Street. Turn left and continue heading along the winding footpath, keeping the school on your right until you get to the very bottom of the hill where you turn sharp left to reach South Street. Turn right on South Street and at the end, cross over the road towards the railway footbridge.*

3 WWII Garden Of Remembrance Memorial

One hundred yards to the left of the railway footbridge is the triangular grassy area of the WWII Garden of Remembrance bequeathed to the Corsham Parish Council by Miss Agnes Tennant and Miss Laura Rigden (Claremont School Principals 1891-1931). It was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh (then Lieutenant Mountbatten) on his first appearance at a public function on 1 November 1946.



Springfield Community Campus



WWII Garden of Remembrance

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- ▶ *Turning right at the railway footbridge head up along Tramways keeping the railway line to your left.*

4 Tramways

On the far side of the railway line, alongside the old Corsham railway station, once stood a busy stone wharf owned by the Bath Stone Firms. On this side of the railway line, along the Tramways road, stood a number of stone mason's yards.

- ▶ *Continue to the end of Tramways passing the newly reconstructed aqueduct, then cross over Valley Road onto Potley Bridge.*

5 Potley Bridge

Designed by Isambard Kingdom Brunel, this Grade II listed structure was erected c1836-41 across a rock-faced cutting. It is a rare example of a flying arch bridge with a segmental arch. The Box Tunnel East Portal is visible from the bridge, to the west. To the east is the location of Corsham's old railway station which opened in June 1841 and closed in January 1965.

- ▶ *Turn back from the bridge and take the first left and go through the avenue of trees along Pockeredge Drive.*

The old Corsham Railway Station



Potley Bridge

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map**

6 Pockeredge Drive & Lakes

Pockeredge Drive originally went to Pockeredge House, built c1839. It was once a tramway route to Spring Quarry for the transportation of Bath stone to the Corsham Station wharf. Halfway along Pockeredge Drive, on the right, are two man-made Pockeredge (upper and lower) lakes, a sanctuary for wildlife and fish.

- ▶ *Continue through the metal gate at the end of Pockeredge Drive and turn right up the path to reach the quaint row of St Barbaras Road cottages in Hudswell. Continue straight ahead up Hudswell Lane towards Park Lane. To the left of Hudswell Lane was the Basil Hill Barracks site, to the right 100 feet below the surface is Tunnel Quarry, one of Corsham's WWII Central Ammunition Depots.*



Pockeredge Drive



Pockeredge Lakes

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7 Basil Hill Barracks and The Corsham Ammunition Depot

In WWII, Basil Hill Barracks were used by 15 Company Royal Army Ordnance Corps as the administrative headquarters for the Central Ammunitions Depots. Today, the site contains the Information Systems & Services organisation, a part of the MoD's Defence Equipment and Support agency; and 10 Signal Regiment part of the Royal Corps of Signals within the British Army.

The 125 acre Tunnel Quarry beneath Hudswell (capacity of 120,000 tons of ammunition) became known locally as 'The Dump'. Along with Neston's Ridge and Monkton Farleigh Quarries they became known collectively as the Central Ammunition Depot (CAD) and played a huge part in the success of WWII.

It was re-classified as a permanent depot after WWII and remained operational until its closure on 4 December 1962. Since then, it has remained empty of ammunition and in the hands of the Ministry of Defence under care and maintenance. See photo of one of the CAD's escalators.

► *Turn right at the top of the hill and continue along Park Lane until you reach the Park Lane Quarry depot entrance opposite the Katherine Park estate roundabout.*



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CAD Escalator

8

Hartham Park Quarry

On the far side of Park Lane, is the Hartham Park working quarry. Stone from here was used to build the City of Bath. The quarry dates back to 1810. The quarry was opened as a museum in 1986 but was closed by the end of the 1990s.

Now reopened, today, Hartham Park Quarry is the oldest Bath Stone Quarry that is still operational today, extracting high quality dimensional block.

Hartham Park stone was used to build the beautiful ancient City of Bath and is one of the most iconic stones in the UK. It is a fine grained, high quality limestone from the Jurassic period.

▶ *Continue along Park Lane and turn left into Chestnut Grange. Bear right through the houses to the short path leading to the main A4 road at Pickwick. Turn right at the A4 to reach the front entrance of the Catholic Church.*



Hartham Park Quarry

Pickwick District School now St. Patricks Catholic Church



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Pickwick School, Glove and Gas Mask Factories and Catholic Church

The church was originally built (see photo) as the mid-Victorian 'Pickwick District School' for up to 165 children in 1858 on land gifted in 1846 by Lord Methuen. The school closed in 1922 and was used for as while as a Glove Factory during the 1930s. It later became a Gas Mask Factory for a short while during WWII.

Due to the need of hundreds of Catholic Irish workers suddenly arriving in Corsham from 1938 onwards, the building was purchased in 1944 by Bishop Lee from the Diocese of Clifton, who blessed and opened it as the Corsham Catholic Church on 17 April 1945.

- ▶ *Carefully cross the busy A4 road immediately in front of the Catholic Church, enter through the kissing gate and take the diagonal public footpath across the field to the far kissing gate.*

Carry on in the same direction across the lane leading to Guyers House and through two more kissing gates. From here, the public footpath goes diagonally across the large field, but due to constant farming, you may have to turn left instead and skirt along the stone wall to reach Guyers Lane.

10 Guyers House

Guyers House is hidden in the trees to the right/north-west. Originally, it was a one-room farmhouse owned by the Snelling family who named it 'Snellings' in 1670. Around 1830, it was renamed 'Guyers'. Today, it is a 37 en-suite bedroom Hotel & Restaurant.

- ▶ *Turn right onto Guyers Lane and carry on walking for half a mile to the very end of Guyers Lane past Pickwick Lodge Farm then turn right onto the gravelled road that runs behind Pickwick Lodge Farm. The view across the wooded valley here is beautiful.*

11 Turnpike Road

This was once the main turnpike road from London to Bath, established in the 1600s. It originally took two days for a coach and horses to get from London to Bath. The horses had to be changed every eight miles.

- ▶ *Keep walking ahead along the gravelled track through the farm gate and past Hillsgreen Lodge until you reach the top of Middlewick Lane.*



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Guyers House

12 Stické Tennis Court

As you walk along the Turnpike Road on the left, and on the horizon to the left of Hartham House, is the Grade II* listed wooden 1904 Stické Tennis Court building. This is one of only three remaining Stické Tennis Courts in the world. Corsham has a Stické Tennis Club.



Sticke Tennis Court

13 Hartham House & Park

Originally a former Tudor farmstead in the 15th century and was replaced by Hartham House that was built between 1790-1795. Originally designed by James Wyatt, and set today in 50 acres. Hartham Park is now an active business campus.

- ▶ *Turn right down Middlewick Lane through the avenue of trees. On the right, behind Mermaid Cottage lodge house, is Middlewick House.*

14 Middlewick House

Middlewick House is the home of Pink Floyd drummer Nick Mason CBE and his actress wife Annette Lynton Mason, who acquired it from the previous owners, Andrew and Camilla Parker Bowles, now Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall, in 1995.

- ▶ *Continue down Middlewick Lane past the allotments on your left. On your right is Beechfield House.*



Hartham House



Middlewick House

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map**

15 Beechfield House

The original house was called 'Leyceters', owned by the family of Leyceter until 1614. During 1794-1799 Pickwick House was built there. Acquired in 1839, Sir Gabriel Goldney renamed it to 'Beechfield House'. During WWII the site was used by the military and then from 1946 to 1983 Bath Academy of Art. In 2002 Beechfield House was refurbished and made into apartments.

▶ *Opposite the original wooden entrance gates to Beechfield House, turn left up the two stone steps and along the narrow footpath with garden hedges both sides. Continue ahead along the Woodlands road and then bear right at the bottom of the estate to reach the A4 road at Pickwick.*

Cross over the A4 here but be very careful, as there is normally a high volume of traffic. Turn left and take the first right into Priory Street. On the corner of the A4/Priory Street was Corsham Dairy.

16 Dairy

In 1928 James Batley ran the Dairy at Priory Farm, which stayed in the family as a dairy business. The old Dairy and milking parlour was redeveloped recently and is now 'Dairy Mews' a small housing development.

▶ *From the old Dairy site, continue down Priory Street. On the left, at the Priory Street/ Kings Avenue junction once stood Corsham's last Police Station.*



Beechfield House

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17 Police Station

A purpose-built red-bricked Corsham Police Sub-Divisional Headquarters was built here in 1950. It was knocked down in July 2015. Corsham's Neighbourhood Policing Team relocated into the newly built Springfield Community Campus during June 2014.

- ▶ *To get back the start of the walk, keep heading down Priory Street until you reach the path between Dill House (once the Spackman family home) and the Goldney House flats.*

18 Dill House

Dill House (then named Rose Cottage) is where Herbert Spackman's family once lived. Herbert was a keen photographer who produced many iconic images of Corsham in the early 1900s. Herbert and his wife Daisy are buried together in the Ladbrook Cemetery.

- ▶ *Turn right and head west up the footpath. Turn first left into Oliver Avenue and continue south until you reach Pickwick Road. Cross over and keep heading south along the cutting and follow the path left alongside the Fire Station. This brings you out opposite the Springfield Campus.*



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map**

Pickwick Road - 1906

COMING OF AGE - OF THE HON. P.A. METHUEN, PICKWICK ROAD

The Countryside Code

- Be safe – plan ahead and follow any way signs
- Leave gates and property as you find them
- Protect plants and animals and take your litter home
- Keep dogs under close control
- Take only pictures and leave only footprints



Corsham Historic Past

For further information on Corsham heritage, please visit the Corsham Bookshop and its comprehensive set of books by local author Julian Carosi ('Corsham Revealed' published 2019, 'Corsham Revealed More' 2019, and 'Corsham Revealed Three' available mid 2020.

This leaflet was sponsored and supported by the following, to whom many thanks:

- Corsham Town Council
- Cotswold Conservation Board
- Wiltshire Council
- Corsham Walking Festival



Safety Information

Please be aware that you are walking this route at your own risk. At all times you are expected to use your own judgment regarding personal safety before proceeding along any of the routes on the Corsham Colerne Peacock. A separate section in this leaflet refers to extracts from the Countryside Code which provides general advice on walking in the countryside.

We hope you have enjoyed your walk back in time through parts of the historic market town of Corsham and Colerne.

It is advisable to use Ordnance Survey map Explorer No. 156 Chippenham and Bradford-on-Avon (1;25,000) in conjunction with this leaflet.

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Other Heritage Trails:

- *Box Heritage Trail*
- *Corsham Blue Heritage Trail*
- *Biddestone Heritage Trail*
- *Peacock Heritage Trails*
- *Colerne Heritage Trail*

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