

Corsham Blue Heritage Trail



The walk follows Public Rights of Ways (PRoW). It is an easy walk, on footpaths and across fields with only one stile to climb over. Suitable footwear is required as parts of the walk are through grassland and occasionally muddy footpaths. The walk is 4.5 miles long and has a total ascent of 181 feet and takes approximately 90 minutes to complete.

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 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



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, across the zebra crossing on Pickwick Road and into the Recreation Ground via the footpath.*

2 Recreation Ground

The Recreation Ground was created in 1921 as the Meriton Avenue field to celebrate peace after WWI. Corsham FC's first ground was located above this field. A bandstand once stood near the top centre exit from 1926-1958 and a WWII shelter was sited at the bottom right.

▶ *Head down and exit bottom left. Head left along to the cutting alongside the Baptist Church to reach Priory Street. Turn right, heading downhill and across the zebra crossing to the entrance of Heywood School.*

3 Ivy House And Mayo Memorial

Opposite Heywood School is Ivy House, a Grade II Listed building dating from 1710. Charles Thomas Mayo, one of the town's most famous residents, lived there from 1868 to 1895. In recognition of his life and works a memorial (restored in 2007) was built at the end of Priory Street. The small lead mouse at the top left corner of the memorial is the 'Signature' of the restoration Lead Workers David and Jess Bevan.

▶ *Turn left at the Mayo Memorial and head north uphill to the last house on the corner.*



Mayo Memorial

4^A

Boltons

The fifteenth century house at 79 High Street was owned by the family of Bolton and is the oldest house now remaining in Corsham tithing.

Temperance Hotel

The houses adjoining Boltons, Numbers 75 (built circa 1740) and 77 High Street, Caxton House (late C1805 on an earlier core) was once a Temperance Hotel. Between the right-hand (upstairs and downstairs) windows of No. 75, you can still see the faded letters, 'TEMPERANCE HOTEL'.

1st Fire Station

On the opposite side of the road to the Temperance Hotel at 90a High Street (now the Curtain Workshop) was Corsham's first Fire Station c1800. In 1897 the Brigade moved into a small building at the very end of Priory Street and later around 1908 into the building opposite Ivy House (now the Nursery at Heywood Preparatory School).



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75 and 77 High Street

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CORSHAM TOWN HALL (previously Methuen Hall)

Originally built and known as the Market Hall in 1783 by Paul Methuen. Partly rebuilt in 1882 by adding a second floor and by closing in the arches to become the Town Hall. Between 1914-1919 it was a WWI Voluntary Aid Detachments (V.A.D.) Hospital for the British Sick and Wounded. A total of 875 soldiers were treated there by 75 nurses - at an annual cost of £2,500. This was one of Corsham's proudest and greatest achievements. Today, the Town Hall serves as the Town's Council Office and a popular functions venue.

► *From the Town Hall, cross the High Street into Church Street.*

Folly

On the left is the spectacular Corsham Court Folly, a sham ruin, designed to resemble a castle, built by John Nash c1797, to hide Ethelred House (No.6 Church Street) from the west wing of Corsham Court.

► *At the end of Church Street are Corsham Court and St. Bartholomew's Church.*



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5 Corsham Court

There has been a manor house here since 978 when it was a summer palace for the Kings of Wessex. Thomas Smythe erected an Elizabethan manor house on the site in 1582. In 1745 Paul Methuen purchased the house and it has remained in the Methuen family ever since. The house holds a significant art collection and along with the gardens, is open to visitors.

6 St. Bartholomew's Church

The church has 12th-century origins and underwent major Victorian restoration in 1875-8, including rebuilding the tower. A gruesome depiction of St Bartholomew the patron saint of the church holding his flayed skin can be seen outside on the west porch wall. In the north part of the graveyard, is Sarah Jarvis who died in 1753 at the age of 107 having grown a third set of teeth!

► *Go diagonally left from the church porch through the churchyard to enter Corsham Park via the Kissing Gate. Inside Corsham Park turn left and follow the wall to the back of the graveyard.*



Corsham Court



St Bartholomew's Church

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7 Corsham Park

Once a deer park, and has been owned by the Methuen family since 1745 and was designed by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. The hundreds of lambs that are born here each Spring are a favourite with all who walk there.

8 Haha Wall and Sunken Fence

Lancelot (Capability) Brown, sank all the boundary ditches, hedges and iron fencing within the park to create a scene across the estate giving a view of gently undulating ground, falling away towards the distant lake. The HaHa wall forms the boundary of the Court's garden.

- ▶ *Follow the public footpath to the right of sunken iron fence, across the fields and through two kissing gates until reaching a third kissing gate which gives you access into Mynte Wood and the Dry Arch.*

9 Dry Arch

The Dry Arch was built of skull-like shaped petrified stone gathered from the brook at nearby Ford near Slaughterford c1803. It spans a part of Corsham Court's private north/east walk. The arch bears the scars of several army regiments, with the carved names and initials of many a WW1 and WW2 soldier still visible there. The most prominent inscription dated 27th April 1917 is attributed to Private W.L. of the 27th BATTALION CANADIANS with the N's carved back to front.

- ▶ *Follow the footpath out of Mynte Woods via the kissing gate into the fields. Head downhill through another kissing gate in the fence line to reach the far left-hand bottom of the fields at Chequers Hill.*



Corsham Park Haha and sunken fence



Dry Arch

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10 Chequers Inn

The house at the bottom of Chequers Hill was once an Inn (Chequers Inn).

- ▶ *Once through the bottom Kissing-Gate, turn right and follow the road up the hill to Humphrey Repton's large gated Corsham Park entrance on the right. **Please be careful, as there are no pavements and vehicles tend to speed along this road.***



Chequers Inn

11 TURNPIKE ROAD

The London to Bath turnpike road (established in the 1600's), passed to the right of the gate piers and ran west towards Corsham, just inside the current north boundary fence of Mynte Wood.

- ▶ *Carry on walking along the road passing 10 Chequers on the left, originally called Brick Kiln Cottage.*



Turnpike Road

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12 Lime Kiln

The little cottage at 10 Chequers was once home to Eli Angell (a farm labourer), his wife Alice, their 13 children and their dog Micky. Behind the cottage on the wooded hilltop was a productive Lime Kiln quarry which produced bricks and pottery and charcoal for industrial and domestic uses.

- ▶ *Continue along the road and take the first right into a narrow lane for about a mile through to Westrop. **Please be careful here, as the road is narrow and occasionally used by vehicles and cyclists.***

13

Mallie Etherds

As you walk towards Westrop, to your left you can see the homesteads of Easton, a tything (hamlet) of Corsham parish. Mallie Etherds 'The Wise Woman of Easton' once plied her trade here, using her occult powers to cure all kinds of illnesses and medical conditions, including childbirth and in some cases, abortion!

- ▶ *After leaving Westrop, enter the field by taking the first footpath on the right, through a kissing gate. Follow the diagonal footpath to the kissing gate at the far end of the field and then over a wooden stile into Corsham Park. **If you use the farm gate here, please make sure to close it securely after you.***

Note Corsham Lake on your right. Take a detour there if you wish to see the wildlife and scenery.

- ▶ *Head along the stony footpath back towards town, keeping the narrow 'Lacock Road Plantation' wood to your left until you reach the end of the path. Exit either through the metal gate into the middle of the 'Avenue' of trees or via the wooden stile near to the church; turn left and continue on to the end of the 'Avenue' alongside the picturesque lodge house.*



10 Chequers Brick Kiln Cottage



Mallie Etherds

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14 The South Avenue

The South Avenue was created in the mid-1700s as part of the enhancements to Corsham Court when three avenues of Elm trees once radiated from the house to the North, South and East respectively. During the late 1970s, thousands of Elm trees (including those in the South Avenue) were felled across the Corsham Estate as Dutch Elm disease took hold. The South Avenue was replanted with Lime trees and is now a beautiful place to walk.

▶ *Make your way through the South Avenue metal gates onto Lacock Road.*

15^A Almshouses

Opposite, on the corner of Lacock Road and the Melksham Road are the seventeenth century Corsham Schoolroom and Almshouses founded by Lady Margaret Hungerford, who lived with her husband Sir Edward Hungerford in nearby Corsham House (now Corsham Court). It was originally provided housing for 6 poor people and education for 10 poor children. Volunteers now guide visitors around on open days.



The South Avenue



Almshouses

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15^B

War Memorial

Opposite the Almshouses is the First World War (1914-1918) War Memorial built by Osborne and Sons stonemasons of Corsham. Lady Methuen unveiled the memorial on 28 January 1921. The memorial is mounted on three steps of Atworth Stone, the War Memorial is made of Box quarried stone and the panels are Forest of Dean stone.

- ▶ *Continue past the War Memorial towards the Town Centre passing Lady Methuen's School on your left.*

Lady Methuen's School

Paul Cobb Methuen (1752-1816) funded the three-roomed Lady Methuen's School, for the education of 'poor children'. It was founded in 1816. The building is used today by Wiltshire College for arts and crafts courses.

- ▶ *At the Methuen Arms take a detour to the right to visit the High Street and Martingate Shopping Centre where you will find independent shops, cafes and restaurants.*



Lady Methuen's School



War Memorial

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16 Methuen Arms

In the early 1800s, the very first Corsham Post Office was established in the Methuen Arms and was called the 'Commercial Inn and Posting House'. On the lintel of the roadside window, you can still see the words, 'Post Office'.

▶ *From the Methuen Arms, continue along Pickwick Road and over the zebra crossing to the Mansion House.*

17 Mansion House

Built c1721-23 and altered in 1897 by H. Brakspear it was the first 'mansion house' to be built in Corsham (built by Robert Neale). On the stone surround of the front door there are some interesting graffiti scratched into the stone, recording the heights of the growing children of the Neale dynasty. Mansion House is now a digital innovation and business hub.

▶ *Continue up Pickwick Road past the mini roundabout until you reach Beechfield Road. Turn left back to the Springfield Campus.*



Methuen Arms



Mansion House with new main entrance building

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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
- Martingate Centre

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 judgement regarding personal safety before proceeding along any of the routes on the Corsham Blue Heritage Trail.

A separate section in this leaflet refers to extracts from the Countryside Code that 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 Corsham Park.

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 Red Heritage Trail*
- *Biddestone Heritage Trail*
- *Peacock Heritage Trails*
- *Colerne Heritage Trail*

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