

# The Bridge

December 2025

monthly magazine for the villages  
of Corsley and Chapmanslade

Wishing all our readers a  
very merry Christmas!



Chapel carols by candlelight, carol concert in Corsley, carol singing in Chapmanslade and Bath Abbey, live it up at the Lite Bites Xmas Lunch, get crafty in the afternoon, coffee mornings galore, there's lots to do in December...



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# The Bridge

monthly magazine for the villages of Corsley and Chapmanslade

## Articles

Please submit articles either by email to [paradisefound86@icloud.com](mailto:paradisefound86@icloud.com) or by hand (legible handwriting please!) and take them to the drop-off locations at Barters Plant Centre, Chapmanslade, or Acres Supply Garden Centre, Corsley by the deadline – and with the fee!

News, reports, updates, thank you's, etc, from individuals or local organisations are free – the more the merrier – keep 'em coming!

## File types

Save your files as .doc – please don't send .docx files – I can't always open them successfully.

## Advertising:

**Small ads** are £1 for each item whether 'For Sale' or 'Wanted'.

## Events/local organisation ads

(churches, clubs, playgroups, etc) are £2.50 per month for a boxed advert.

**Full page ads** cost £8, are subject to space availability and cannot be guaranteed,

If you are advertising, don't forget to take the fee – cash or cheque in a sealed envelope please, to either of the drop-off points (Barters Plant Centre or Acres Supply). We can also take BACS transfers – please email the Editor for all the info.

**Please note: no cash, no advert!**

## Trade advertising

Please see information on the last page.

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a rollercoaster of a walk!

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from over the net

**Deadline**  
**Deadline for articles**  
**or adverts for the next**  
**issue of The Bridge is**  
**4pm 13th December**

**Please note that no**  
**items will be accepted**  
**after this date**

# Diary Dates



## December

### Wednesday 3rd

Coffee Morning (run by the Lite Bites team) – 10.30 am to 12 noon, Corsley Reading Room

### Saturday 6th

Rural Police Community Drop-In – 3 to 5 pm, Chapmanslade Church

Dolce Singers - A Ceremony of Carols with the Royal Harpist – 7.30 pm, St Margaret's Church, Corsley

### Tuesday 9th

Whitbourne Chapel Coffee Morning – 10 am to 12 noon, Temple, BA12 7QN

### Wednesday 10th

Lite Bites Christmas Lunch – 1 pm, Corsley Reading Room

Crafternoon – 3 to 5 pm, The Three Horseshoes, Chapmanslade

Corsley Reading Room AGM – 7 for 7.30 pm, Corsley Reading Room

### Thursday 11th

Chapmanslade Parish Council meeting – 7.30 pm, Chapmanslade Village Hall – all welcome

Carols in the Abbey – 7.30 pm (doors 6.30 pm), Bath Abbey

### Saturday 13th

Deadline for submissions for the January edition of The Bridge

### Monday 15th

Carol Singing in Chapmanslade – 6 pm, meeting at the Old Post Office

Corsley Tennis Club Annual General Meeting – 7 for 7.30 pm, Corsley Reading Room

### Thursday 18th

Community Church Coffee Morning – 10 am to 12 noon, Three Horseshoes, Chapmanslade

### Sunday 21st

Carols by Candlelight – 5pm, Whitbourne Chapel, Temple, Corsley

## January 2026

### Wednesday 8th

Coffee Morning (run by the Lite Bites team) – 10.30 am to 12 noon, Corsley Reading Room

### Tuesday 13th

Whitbourne Chapel Coffee Morning – 10 am to 12 noon, Temple, BA12 7QN

### Thursday 15th

Community Church Coffee Morning – 10 am to 12 noon, Three Horseshoes, Chapmanslade

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Lite Bites

# Christmas Lunch

**1 pm**

**Wednesday 10th December**  
**Corsley Reading Room**

If you'd like to join us for this special village event, please contact Maureen Willcox on 01373 832171 or any other member of the Lite Bites Team

*There's no charge for the lunch but all donations to the two children's charities we will be supporting would be very gratefully received*



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Wednesday 18th February

Wednesday 4th March

Wednesday 18th March

Wednesday 1st April

**Corsley Reading Room**

# Your 'village hall'

Secretary, Liz Garrett, reports on the latest happenings at the hall

Thank you to those of you who attended the Festive Fair on Thursday 6th November. This event raised over £500 which will help us with the costs of some redecorating. We sold out early for tickets for the talk by Ned Boultong on Wednesday 19th November, an event hugely enjoyed by all who attended!

In October we were granted £500 by the Warminster Area Board to allow us to install three more infra-red heaters in the main hall. We are grateful for this help from the Area Board. We will be seeking feedback from our users on how well these heaters work, before moving to remove the old electric heaters.

Thanks also to the Parish Council for a grant to cover our fixed costs. Despite this help from grant sources, we must raise monies for other costs such as cleaning, routine maintenance, advertising and repairs.

One thing we have done this year is to lodge the committee minute books and booking diaries for the period 1890 to 2010 with the Wiltshire and Swindon History centre in Chippenham. By doing this we ensure the documents are stored safely. The history centre can allow access to the documents for education purposes, but they will seek our permission before doing so.

## **Notice of Annual General Meeting**

The Reading Room AGM will be held on **Wednesday 10th December, 7 for 7.30 pm**

Please come along to help us review the past year and look forward to the coming one. We do need more people to get involved in the committee. This is a great way to be in touch with the community, help to provide a space for meetings, celebrations and events which bring people together. If you want to know more, please contact one of the trustees below or just come along to the AGM.

## **Booking the hall:**

Please use the website form or email [crrbookings@gmail.com](mailto:crrbookings@gmail.com). Corsley residents get a discount on our published prices! So please do use the hall; Dee Crossland is keen to help with your booking.

While we do not have a Chairman at the moment, emails to [chairman@corsleyreadingroom.org.uk](mailto:chairman@corsleyreadingroom.org.uk) go to the secretary, Liz Garrett.

See website  
[www.corsleyreadingroom.org.uk](http://www.corsleyreadingroom.org.uk)  
for up-to-date information and more.

## **Trustees**

Chris de Groot, Claire Firman-Ford, Liz Garrett,  
Jackie Jasper, Mark Richards, David Sharrocks  
Also on Committee: Dee Crossland, Mary King

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# Bob's bafflers

- 1 Who wrote the novella “A Christmas Carol”?
- 2 What is the first line of the song Winter Wonderland? (6 words)
- 3 Which of Santa’s reindeer is last alphabetically?
- 4 What is the name of the Italian sweet bread/fruit cake traditionally eaten at Christmas and New Year?
- 5 Which choirmaster achieved a Christmas number 1 single with the Military Wives in 2011?
- 6 How is viscum album better known?
- 7 In which pantomime does Buttons appear?
- 8 In the song, “I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus”, where and when is Mommy found kissing him?
- 9 In which author’s novel was it initially ‘always winter but never Christmas’?
- 10 Who wrote the song “White Christmas”?
- 11 Which famous scientist was born on Christmas Day 1642?
- 12 If there are 365 days in a year, what number day is Christmas Day?

*Answers on page 40*

*Happy Christmas to all who have been ‘baffled’ this year and to our editor who has worked so hard to ensure we get our Bridge every month – you’re very much appreciated Viv.*

## Rural Police Community Drop-In Come along and have a chat!

**3 to 5 pm, 6th December, Chapmanlade church**

We’d love you to pop by for a cuppa and a chat about what matters most in your area. This is a great opportunity to:

- ✓ Meet your local officers
- ✓ Share any concerns or information about rural crime or community issues
- ✓ Get advice on farm and property security
- ✓ Learn more about what we’re doing to keep our countryside safe.

There’s no need to book – just drop in when you can. Whether you want to raise a concern, get some advice, or simply say hello, we’d be delighted to see you.



# Lite Bites report

Maureen Willcox reports on the lunches enjoyed by lots of villagers

## October, November, December and into the New Year!

Our soup lunch in October was well attended and we raised £143 for MIND

At the November lunch we saw all our regulars and some new faces who helped us raise money for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance (in the new year I will let you know how much we collected).

The Christmas lunch that we hold in December (on Wednesday 10th this year) is always special as we aim to raise as much money as possible in support of two children's charities; Children's Hospice South West and Julia's House. We have now closed our "bookings" and are preparing to serve nearly 50 villagers and friends on what we hope will be a very jolly occasion in a fully decorated, Christmassy looking Reading Room! Last year we were able to donate £115 to each charity and we hope to beat that in 2025. As our lunch is earlier this year, I hope to be able to reveal how much we raised in January's edition of The Bridge.

## And so to the New Year 2026!

Lite Bites dates and charities are as follows:

22nd January	Dorothy House
25th February	Place 2Be
25th March	Age UK
22nd April	Macmillan Cancer Support

*Please note that we may change our charity if there is a national or world crisis that we feel deserves our support.*

## Don't forget our Coffee Mornings!

In conjunction with the Reading Room, these take place on the first Wednesday of every month.

HOWEVER, in 2026, New Year's Day is a Wednesday so we have decided to postpone our coffee morning until the following Wednesday, the 8th of January. We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. Please come and tell us your Christmas tales. We promise there won't be any leftovers to eat just a cup of coffee, or tea, a biscuit or two, and lots of chat!

**HAPPY CHRISTMAS!**  
from the Lite Bites team

Maureen Willcox



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## Chapmanslade Parish Council

# Parish Council Briefing

Councillor Colin Bell reports on the key points from the meeting on Thursday 6th November

Before reporting on the meeting, the Parish Council would like to wish all readers, parishioners and residents of Chapmanslade, Corsley and the surrounding areas a healthy, happy and enjoyable Christmas and New Year. We hope the festive season brings you peace, joy and time well spent with family, friends and neighbours.

The Chapmanslade Parish Council (PC) met at Chapmanslade Village Hall. Councillor Phil Holihead chaired the meeting, with five Parish Councillors present, along with the Clerk, Mrs M House. Three members of the public attended and were warmly welcomed. As per protocol, councillors were invited to declare any conflicts of interest. None were recorded.

Key points from the meeting were as follows:

The meeting opened with an opportunity for members of the public to speak or raise questions linked to the published agenda. No points were raised, and the open session was closed.

Before approving the minutes of the previous meeting (16th October), the Chair addressed correspondence received relating to a query previously raised about a building at 2 The Grange. The Chair confirmed that the minutes accurately reflected the discussion held and that the PC had asked a question of the Wiltshire County Council Planning Officer and that the PC had not made a statement of fact. Councillors noted the new

information provided by the correspondent but agreed the minutes should remain unchanged. The PC's recorded response of 'no objection' also remained unchanged. The minutes were approved and are available on the PC's website.

### **Matters arising**

#### **• Short Street junction**

No further updates were available. It was noted that following an accident, a vehicle had recently been found off the road on the perimeter of Thoulstone Park land. No further information about this incident was known.

#### **• Village pavements**

Major pavement works in the centre of the village were completed on 28th October, including those outside the Three Horseshoes pub and the school entrance. Remaining agreed works are scheduled, although dates are yet to be confirmed. Markings are already in place for the next phase. A large pothole near the Village Hall entrance (A3098) was reported and will be passed to the Parish Steward.

#### **• Resilience and Focus Group**

A member of the PC is planning to attend the next tabletop exercise meeting, the date of which is to be confirmed.

#### **• Policy review**

Councillors continue to work through the update of Council policies and plan to finalise these ahead of the next meeting.

## **Finance**

The November finance and budget report was reviewed, including expected year-end spending. Payments noted included expenditure for extended warranty cover for the Speed Indicator Devices (SID) positioned at either end of the village. Budget planning for 2026/27 has begun, although at the time of the meeting precept guidance from Wiltshire Council had not yet been received.

A donation request from the South Western Ambulance Charity (SWAC) was discussed. Whilst it was agreed that this is a much respected and valued charity, the PC decided not to donate and that it was down to individual parishioners to decide which charity they support.

No new Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) requests had been received. Progress on the Village Hall project continues, with the reminder that works must be completed by March 2026.

## **Correspondence and updates**

### **• Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) signage**

Two fly-tipping signs have been requested. A potential additional location for fly-tipping signage was discussed. At this time, it was not considered necessary to request signage for other ASB categories.

### **• Police presence**

The Police Van will visit the village on Saturday 6th December outside the Three Horseshoes pub. Members of the community are encouraged to drop by, say hello and talk through any relevant matters of concern and/or opportunity.

### **• Wiltshire Council Gypsies & Travellers Development Plan Document**

Councillors noted Wiltshire Council's update and call for sites.

### **• Planning**

An amendment to application PL/2025/07387 (55 High Street, single-storey extension) was reviewed. Councillors

agreed no further comments were required beyond the original submission.

## **Next PC meeting**

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 11th December at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall. As always, we warmly encourage all members of the Chapmanslade community to join us at future PC meetings. Your voice is important, valued and very much welcomed, and your participation helps ensure the PC continues to represent the 'voice of the village' in all matters affecting our community.

PC meeting minutes, notices and further information can be found on the PC website:

[www.chapmansladeparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.chapmansladeparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Plus, if you are interested in becoming a councillor, please visit the website and follow the link below to look at the Councillor Vacancy Notice and consider putting your name forward as a prospective Councillor.  
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and am bound by their code of practice and ethics

## Corsley Parish Council

# Call for volunteers

Join Corsley's Community Emergency Response Team

Corsley Parish Council is strengthening its Community Emergency & Resilience Plan, and we are seeking local volunteers to help ensure our village is prepared for anything – from flooding and storms to power outages, road blockages, and major incidents.

### **Emergency Wardens needed across Corsley**

We are looking for volunteer Emergency Wardens to represent the following areas:

- Sturford, Temple and Chapel Barton
- Whitbourne Springs and Longhedge
- Deep Lane to Chapman's Lane
- Lane End
- Dertford
- Corsley Heath
- Cross Keys Area
- Lyes Green.

In the event of a local emergency, Wardens may be contacted by the Parish Incident Management Team to:

- Check on neighbours – especially vulnerable residents
- Pass messages and share official updates
- Assist with local incident management and recovery
- Participate in one annual community emergency exercise
- Join the Corsley Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) WhatsApp Group.

No previous experience is required – just a willingness to support your community.

### **Specialists also needed**

The Parish is also building a confidential Skills Register of residents who could assist in a crisis. We are especially seeking:

- Farmers
- Doctors, nurses, first aiders, physiotherapists
- Builders
- Electricians
- Plumbers
- 4x4 or transport providers
- Tree surgeons/tree wardens
- Anyone with relevant equipment or practical skills.

### **Interested in helping?**

The success of Corsley's emergency planning relies heavily on the goodwill and generosity of volunteers within our community. If you would like to volunteer as an Emergency Warden or register as a Specialist, please contact the Corsley Parish Preparedness & Response Coordinator at

**CPCMT65@gmail.com**

Please provide your name, preferred role (Warden, Specialist, or both), address and telephone numbers (mobile and landline (if available)). Please also indicate consent to join the to join the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) WhatsApp Group.

Your support could help protect homes, speed up recovery – and may even save lives.

Thank you for helping to keep Corsley safe, resilient, and ready.

# 2025 Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

Many thanks to everyone who gave so generously to this year's Poppy Appeal. Corsley and Chapmanslade raised £1865.16. This amount does not include donations raised through the QR code or Gift Aid.

This fabulous amount was thanks to donations from the churches, collection boxes in the village pubs, Chapmanslade School, Acres Supply and the house-to-house collections.

I wanted to give particular thanks to the house-to-house collectors who go out in all weathers and walk for miles around both villages.

Every penny we raise goes to help provide our serving men and women, veterans and their families with lifelong care.

Many thanks again and if anyone would like to get involved in next year's appeal please do contact me.

*Jackie Jasper  
Area Poppy Appeal Organiser*

## Share your views on weight loss support and help the NHS improve services

Are you currently trying to lose weight or have you used weight management support in the past? If so, local NHS teams and health service providers across BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire (BSW) want to hear from you.

Whether you've accessed support through your GP, hospital programmes, online resources, group sessions, or through weight loss medications like Wegovy or Mounjaro – your feedback matters. We also want to hear from you if you have tried unsuccessfully to access these services or are waiting to do so.

The Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board is reviewing how weight management services are delivered locally. Take our short survey today and you will help improve services, shape future support and ensure services meet the needs of others in your community.

<https://forms.office.com/e/xKQ59PVi0n>

## Whitbourne Baptist Chapel

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# Six Open Doors

Dear Friends in Corsley and Chapmanslade,  
Happy Christmas!

I wonder if this is one of the first Christmas greetings you will have received this year. Unless, of course, that inevitable first, early Christmas card from that frustratingly highly organised friend has already, somewhat prematurely, arrived. Bringing, if you are like me, that brief moment of panic too. Help, how will I get ready in time?

But getting ready of course is what the season of Advent, the run up to Christmas, is all about. The Latin root of the word Advent means Coming or Arrival. It is when we prepare for the Coming. That of course means different things now to different people. For Christians it is a time when we prepare to celebrate the coming, the arrival of Jesus, into our world. God incarnate. For others is it a time to prepare to welcome the mid-winter festival, the coming of the longer days, as the season begins to turn.

For us all, however, Advent is a busy time. Too easily the meaning, and the amazing wonder of the season can become lost amidst the fun happenings and all the preparations. We need sometimes to be reminded that a good Christmas is not about perfection. I love how Gervaise Phinn captures that in his stories of nativity plays when he taught in Yorkshire. As Mary tells Joseph 'I'm having a baby and it's not yours'. Or Joseph unexpectedly exclaims loudly 'Mary has got nits.' It is good to be brought down to earth!

And of course, it is coming down to earth, to the nitty gritty and often messy reality of our world that is, for me, at the heart of the Christmas story and our traditions. Love and light coming into our world. A joyous and profound celebration of God choosing to come and dwell among us. A reminder of that divine loves that just breaks into the ordinary. Despite it all. As Bishop Sarah Mullally, soon to be our next archbishop, said recently "Hope doesn't skip over grief, pain and the messiness of life but enters into it and tenderly tells us that God is with us."

And so, I end with a poem, *The Coming*, by R S Thomas.

And God held in his hand a small globe. Look he said. The son looked

Far off as through water, he saw a scorched land of fierce colour.

The light burned there; crusted buildings cast their shadows: a bright Serpent, a river uncoiled itself, radiant with slime.

On a bare hill a bare tree saddened the sky.

Many people held out their thin arms to it, as though waiting for a vanished April to return to its crossed boughs.

The son watched them. Let me go there, he said.

Once again, a happy and blessed Christmas to you all. We'd love you to join us and to celebrate with us at any of our services in Chapmanslade or Corsley,

Marian

(Reverend Marian Curtis)

## December Church Diary

### Sunday 7th December: 2nd Sunday in Advent

10 am Eucharist, St Margaret's Corsley

8 am BCP Holy Communion, Kingston Deverill

10 am Morning Worship, Longbridge Deverill



### Sunday 14th December: 3rd Sunday in Advent

10 am Eucharist, Chapmanslade, taken by Bishop Andrew

10 am Holy Communion, Kingston Deverill



### Sunday 21st December: 4th Sunday in Advent

6 pm Carol Service, St Margaret's Corsley

10 am Holy Communion, Brixton Deverill

6 pm Village Carol Service, Kingston Deverill



### Wednesday 24th December: Christmas Eve

3 pm Crib Service, Chapmanslade

4 pm Crib Service, Longbridge Deverill



### Thursday 25th December: Christmas Day

10 am Eucharist, Chapmanslade

9.30 am Holy Communion, Kingston Deverill



### Sunday 28th December

10 am Holy Communion, Brixton Deverill

# Church and Community Events in December

## Corsley Coffee Morning

Wednesday 3rd December – 10 am to 12 noon. Corsley Reading Rooms

## Crafternoon

Wednesday 10th December – 3 to 5 pm, The Three Horseshoes

## Community Coffee Morning

Thursday 18th December – 10 am to 12 noon The Three Horseshoes

## Carol Singing in Chapmanslade

Monday 15th December, meeting at The Old Post Office at 6 pm

## Pastoral Visiting

If anyone would like to receive a visit or Home Communion,  
please contact Rev Gay Maynard 01373 832490

## Church and Community Coffee Mornings

Third Thursday of each month  
10am to 12pm  
The Three Horseshoes  
Chapmanslade

## Parish Contacts for Corsley and Chapmanslade

First contact for anything related to Corsley and Chapmanslade please contact Sue Fear at [suefearpcc@gmail.com](mailto:suefearpcc@gmail.com)

Lay Pastoral Assistants	Claire Tanner	01985 218099
Pastoral Visitor	Barbara Hughes	01373 832273
<b>Churchwardens:</b>		
St Margaret's	Vacant	
St Philip & St James	Ian Buick	01373 832318
<b>Deputy Churchwardens:</b>		
St Margaret's	Amy Holley	
St Philip & St James'	Janet Aylesbury	07808565878
PCC Secretary	Sue Fear	01373 832074
PCC Treasurer	Ian and Janet Buick	01373 832318
Tower Captain	Mike Attenborough	01373 832777
Electoral Roll	Vacant	
50/50 Club	Sue Fear	01373 832074
Time to Think	Trudi Hopkinson	01373 832393
Lite Bites Lunches	Maureen Willcox	01373 832171
Benefice Administrator	Vacant	
Benefice Webmaster	Mike Palmer	<a href="mailto:mjp.mikepalmer@gmail.com">mjp.mikepalmer@gmail.com</a>
Safeguarding Officer	Sarah Humberstone	<a href="mailto:cleyhillbeneficeoffice@gmail.com">cleyhillbeneficeoffice@gmail.com</a>

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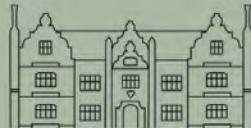
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**Corsley WI**

# November news

Maureen Willcox rounds up the November meeting



**At this month's meeting, members and guests were treated to an interesting and lively talk by Caroline Robinson from Champagne Glass in Warminster.**



Caroline gave us an insight into how she came to set up her business in a special studio at her home in Warminster. Having previously been Head of the music department at Warminster School, Caroline had trained as a music teacher at Nottingham University and worked for 18 years in Warminster, starting as a Prep School music teacher and rising to become Director of Music for the whole school. In this role she had directed West End style shows including well known titles such as Grease and Mary Poppins. Caroline also lead orchestra tours to Europe, BUT despite this successful career she began to wonder if she could keep

working at this level until retirement!

The story of how she got into Glass Fusing began in lockdown when she was furloughed and went on a family trip to Devizes where she spotted and attended a Glass Fusing lesson (socially distanced of course). She was instantly hooked! The rest may become history. She attended as many Glass Fusing classes as she could find until lockdown returned. However, her supportive husband suggested she "buy your own kiln". Little did he realise this would mean their home would quickly be filled with glass creations! Her early work sold on Etsy but, at the same time, she was holding down a full time job and she questioned whether this would be possible for another 20 years.

In answer to her question, Caroline left her full time job, bought a gazebo and started running her own workshops which she advertised on a website she'd built herself. Her first workshops reinforced her desire to find a way to develop her workshops but also to keep music in her life. This she has done through her voluntary work with the Music Teachers' Association where she is now Head of Operations overseeing conferences and publications.

So why does she love Glass Fusing? Caroline finds it relaxing, creative and rewarding and thinks that it is something in which even those of us who consider ourselves non-artistic can create attractive glassware to be proud of.

What exactly is Glass Fusing? It's decorating

pieces of glass with other pieces of glass! Once decorated, the glass has to go into a kiln at 765° to be fused. Despite trouble with the Reading Room's wifi, Caroline very kindly demonstrated some simple techniques to make a small, attractive floral glass picture. She used both Frit and Murrini glass with what are known as "stringers" for the stems of the flowers. Not having a kiln at the Reading Room, she produced "one I made earlier" in true Blue Peter fashion!



## *Carols in the Abbey*

Bath Abbey, Bath, BA1 1LT

7.30 pm (doors 6.30 pm), Thursday 11th December

Wiltshire and Bath Air Ambulance will be hosting a special Carols in the Abbey event leading up to Christmas.

The stunning Bath Abbey is the venue for the festivities, which will include carols sung by the celebrated City of Bath Male Choir and the brilliant Chloe Jordan. We will also have some festive readings from our critical care paramedics and ambassadors.

This year, the carol service will be hosted by our ambassador and star of BBC's 'Flog It', Paul Martin.



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# A rollercoaster Christmas walk!



If you're hoping for snow scenes on this year's Christmas Walk, you'll be sadly disappointed! We're heading for northern Italy, to picturesque verdant Tuscany, with its vast acreage of flat land given over to crops, its signature pine trees and with most communities built on hilltops. Fabrizio's our coach driver and he's taking us to Siena, once we're comfortable and we've said 'Buon Giorno' to him. Away we go!

Siena's coach park uses the grounds of its hilltop Medieval fortress, built for the Medici family from Florence. Our first 'site' is here, a local church named for Saint Domenico; it's where Saint Catherine of Siena, the Catholic Church's only female Doctor, worshipped as a child. Almost single-handedly, she persuaded the Popes to return to Rome in 1379, after



seventy years at Avignon in France. Her body's buried in Rome, though her head is preserved here. Have a quick look round before we head downhill, via Siena's dark and narrow lanes.

"Look out, everyone!" Sorry, I forgot traffic's using the same lanes as us. "Cars coming – keep in!" Can you see, attached to the stone wall we're passing, a large photo frame? It means we're in the

'Contrada' (district) of the Dragon. We'll pass through several Contradas as we explore the town. Siena has seventeen such areas today, when it once had eighty, each with its own identity. You'll see there's a huge standard in the Victorian monochrome image here, as well as a

strangely-dressed man. The standard is the 'Palio', so our hero once won the Palio horse race, which takes place in the town centre. I wonder if the Contradas named 'Swan', 'Tortoise' and 'Snail' have ever been successful?!

Ahead of us now is the Piazza del Campo, the 'Square of the Field', where Siena's three hills meet – hence the title of our walk! The building straight ahead is the Town Hall, with its 300-feet-high campanile (bell tower), the Torre del Mangia (Mangia's Tower), named after its first bellringer. At the foot of the tower is a grey stone chapel, built to thank God when the plague ended in 1348. We'll circumnavigate the 'square', which is shaped like a scallop shell, and study its construction. Now we've reached the far side of the shell from the Town Hall, you can appreciate the downhill beauty of this piazza better. It dates from 1347, with the surface's red bricks laid in herringbone pattern and divided into nine sections, the number of town councillors then. To gain control of the Palio for a year, our Dragon hero was one of ten Contrada men racing on horseback round the paved outer walkway we're using today, while spectators crowded behind barriers in the red-brick area, to watch. Spectators still watch from the centre today, or from the buildings behind us, once palazzos (palaces) with tall towers.

Let's climb uphill from our earlier entrance and head for the Duomo, or Cathedral, next, which crowns the second of the three hills. Whatever you think of 'religious' buildings, don't miss this one, though it's quite a climb – and an adventure, thanks to the traffic! The Duomo took over 150 years to complete, while the façade took 15 years to do and only covers the lower layer, because there were plans to extend the building; rising costs and the plague put paid to that. Enter the building next, admiring the 'pavement' of mosaics, both outdoors and in. These mosaics are



*Siena's Town Hall and Mangia's Tower*

either 'graffito' or 'inlaid', 'graffito' being the older, more precious ones, constructed with large slabs of engraved marble, set into and outlined with black stucco. Later mosaics are 'inlaid' in clever, more colourful designs and often geometric; all are cordoned off or covered to prevent damage. When you've had enough of floors, find the central apse and cupola (dome) and study the striking black-and-white striped pillars; they, too, are amazing!

Before we descend to the Piazza del Campo again, find the end wall of the Duomo's unfinished extension and climb to the top, admiring the views for miles around, before descending and walking downhill again – watching out for traffic, of course. Piazza cafes are never cheap, but rest here and admire this central area in its entirety. Most Italian cakes

are firmer than British sponges, but apple cake's usually a good choice. However, Dorset apple cake is far better, especially with a dollop of clotted cream! Happy Christmas, everyone – and stay active in 2026..!



*Piazza del Campo, (Square of the Field)*



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# Whitbourne Chapel

*'Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift'  
2 Corinthians, 9:15*

## What can I Give Him..?

To borrow a line from the TV advert for a High Street optician's – are you a '4am'er', a 'mid-morning'er', an 'after the King's Speech'er' or 'whenever you can fit it in'er'? If you haven't guessed it, the question is 'When on Christmas Day do you open your Christmas Presents?'

We all have different routines on Christmas Day, don't we? And, of course, those change depending on whether you have excited children in the house, or perhaps they're quieter these days?

We can all agree, though, that the giving and receiving of presents is an important part of our Christmas celebrations. But as we think about the act of the giving and exchanging of presents, what is it that we are doing? First, we receive a present, we don't reject the offer of something being given to us. Second, we open it, we want to know what it is and think what we are going to do with it. Third, we say "thank-you," either in person or we write to the giver. Lastly, we use it, and depending on what it is, we maybe wear it, use it or put it on display where we and others can see it. These are all things we must do if we are to enjoy our presents.

The central theme of the Christmas Story

is the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, coming to earth before he went to the Cross, giving His life as He died for us. The Apostle Paul writes, in 2 Corinthians 9 v15, "Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift."

That's what makes the gift of the Lord Jesus so special for us. Only because the Lord Jesus came and died for us can we be accepted by a Holy God. So in the same way as we do with our material presents, we too must reach out,

confess our faith in Him and receive Him, give thanks for Him and then let His love, His example, be visible in our lives every day, for the remainder of our days on earth, as we seek to follow His commands with the hope that, if we have truly accepted His gift of salvation, we will one day see Him and go to be with Him forever.

The well-known Christmas Carol "In the bleak mid-winter" ends with these words: "What can I give Him, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb. If I were a wise man, I would do my part. Yet what I can I give Him – give my heart."

*Chris Andrews  
Occasional Preacher at Whitbourne*

With best Wishes from all at Whitbourne Chapel for a Happy and Peaceful Christmas

### Please remember:

If you need help or simply someone to talk to, ring 07980 013685 and we'll do our best to help you. Otherwise, visit our website [www.whitbournechapel.org.uk](http://www.whitbournechapel.org.uk) or google 'Whitbourne Baptist Chapel'.



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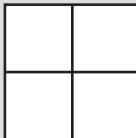
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# Corsley Tennis Club News

You might think it's too wet and windy for tennis, but we have had some fine days and it's a pleasure to be up on the courts at such times. As the leaves fall, clearing them from the courts before play is necessary or they become a hazard.

On November 26th we held our Annual Presentation Dinner at the Full Moon, Rudge. Cups and trophies had been collected and cleaned so they could be given to this year's winners. At this event we said a big 'thank you' to the five young people who had qualified as Tennis leaders and give invaluable help to coaches Martin and Imogen in the junior sessions.

On the 15th December, we have our AGM at the Reading Room – see details below.

This is also the time of year when we apply to renew our registration with the Lawn Tennis Association. We must show that we have proper documentation and policies in place. We also reported that we now have 106 members. That's 37 aged under 18, 29 aged 18 to 64 and 40 members over 65 – proving that all ages are welcome!

## Protecting our history

In October we deposited our minutes and correspondence for the period 1956 to 2016

with the Wiltshire and Swindon History centre in Chippenham. By doing this we ensure the documents are stored safely. The history centre can allow access to the documents for education purposes, but they will seek our permission before doing so.

Hope to see you on court!

*Liz Garrett  
Club Secretary*

<https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/CorsleyTennisClub>

## Corsley Tennis Club

### Annual General Meeting

**Monday 15th December**

**7 for 7.30pm**

**Corsley Reading Room**

All are welcome!

Hope you can come along and help us review the year and plan for the next. This is an opportunity for the committee to share news and update club members on a range of matters.

## Church and Community Coffee Mornings

**Third Thursday of each month**

**10 am to 12 noon**

**The Three Horseshoes, Chapmanslade**

## Public Path Diversion Order (Highways Act 1980, Section 119)

### Wiltshire Council Parish of Corsley, path number 7 (CORY7) and the Somerset Council Parish of Selwood, path number FR/14/24 (part) Diversion Order 2025.

This order is made by Wiltshire Council because it appears to the authority that in the interests of the owner (Longleat) and occupier of the land crossed by the path (High House Farm), it is expedient that the line of the path should be diverted.

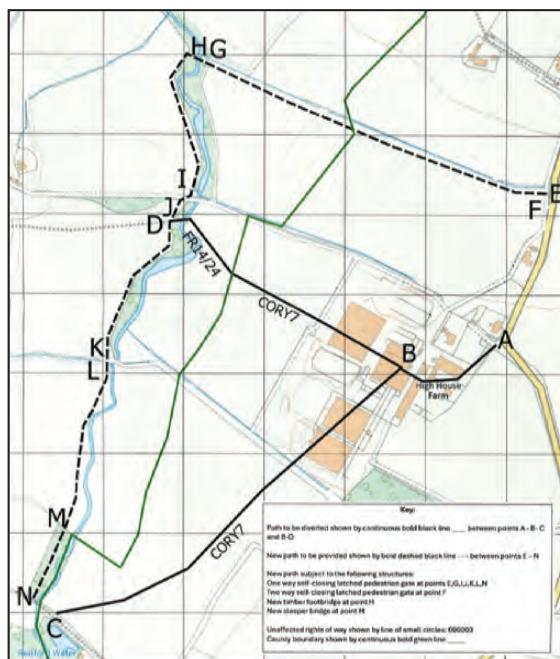
The tenant of the land has agreed to defray any compensation which becomes payable in consequence of the coming into the force of the order and any expenses that are incurred in bringing the new site of the path into a fit condition for use by the public. Both Selwood and Corsley Parish Councils were consulted and Somerset Council consented to the making of the order as required by section 120(2) of the 1980 Act.

#### Description of the existing path

The entire width and length of the public right of way known as CORY7, from point A (at the sharp corner on the road by High House Farm) in a broadly south-westerly and then westerly direction for approximately 140m to point B. Then, one spur of that public right of way leads south-westerly from point B for approximately 540m to point C where it meets CORY47. The other spur of that public right of way from point B leads broadly north-westerly to the Wiltshire/Somerset county boundary, continuing in Somerset along the public right of way known as FR/14/24, across the water course (Redford Water), to point D – the length of B to D being approximately 350m.

#### Description of the new path

The length of the footpath leading from point E via a new pedestrian gate from the road, crossing the cattle track and entering the field via a second pedestrian gate, then leading in a broadly west-north-westerly direction on the southern side of the field boundary and Redford Water, within a 3m fenced-in corridor, the width of the path being recorded as 2m, with a 1m buffer to the ditch/water course. The path then leads across the county boundary and across a cattle track via a new pedestrian gate at point G, crossing Redford Water via a new footbridge accessed via ramps (with a deck width of at least 1m) to point H, the path will then turn and lead in a broadly southerly direction along the field boundary crossing two cattle tracks via new pedestrian gates at point I, J, K and L, then through a small copse, over a new sleeper bridge with a minimum width of 1.1m at point M, to the junction with footpath FR/14/82 at point N via a new pedestrian gate. The footpath will have a recorded width of 2m throughout its length, subject to limitations. The order states that the pedestrian gates will be self-closing and to BS5709:18 (with some exceptions to that standard).



(Please note that the text has been edited from the original Order)

# Small ads

£1 for EACH item for sale or wanted (cash only please) - at one of the two drop-off locations

**Please note: no cash, no advert!**

## Answers to Bob's Bafflers

- 1 Charles Dickens
- 2 Sleigh bells ring, are you listening?
- 3 Vixen
- 4 Panettone
- 5 Gareth Malone with the song “Wherever you are”
- 6 Mistletoe
- 7 Cinderella
- 8 Underneath the mistletoe last night
- 9 C S Lewis – the White Witch had cast a spell  
(The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe)
- 10 Irving Berlin
- 11 Isaac Newton
- 12 359

## Local organisation adverts

£2.50 per month for a small boxed advert or £8 for a full page. Full page adverts are allocated depending on space available and cannot be guaranteed. All monies must be at one of the two drop-off locations (Barters Plant Centre or Acres Supply Garden Centre) by **4pm** on the **19th** of the month. Please note: no cash, no advert!

## Trade advertising

Annual trade advertisements (12 issues, when space is available)

1 space	(69mm wide x 33mm high)	£24
2 spaces	(69mm wide x 66mm high)	£47
3 spaces	(quarter page - 69mm wide x 100mm high)	£68
4 spaces	(138mm wide x 66mm high)	£85
6 spaces	(half page - 138mm wide x 100mm high)	£120

Trade advertisement material should be supplied in print-ready format,  
to the chosen standard size and correct shape.

For trade advertising enquiries, please contact David James (Trade advert coordinator/Treasurer)  
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