



## Corsham Chamber of Commerce

Pentagon House  
52 Castle Street  
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Wiltshire BA14 8AU

Corsham Area Board

11 October 2010

### **Chamber of Commerce report**

1. The Chamber wishes to congratulate Corsham Town Council and its staff on achieving the Silver-Gilt award in the South West in Bloom contest. The floral displays added considerably to the charm of the town.
2. We have contributed to the Wiltshire Council consultation on car parking charges. The Chamber remains opposed to the charge for the first hour and does not accept the premise that the money has to be used by the Council to subsidise free bus travel which encourages shoppers to travel out of the town, e.g. to Bath, to conduct their retail shopping.  
There are anecdotal reports that shoppers travel, by car, to Corsham to shop because the parking cost is considerably cheaper than in Chippenham or Bath. However, the main competition is where retail shopping is encouraged by means of free parking such as exists in Sainsburys, Morrisons, and Waitrose on the edge of Chippenham and in Melksham.  
The issue of long-term parking for town centre workers will continue to be raised and it is considered unreasonable for workers at or just above the minimum wage rate to be expected to work for free for at least one hour per day.  
The Chamber's view is parking charges have to be considered as part of the economic strategy for the smaller market towns in the County.  
This strategy, if it exists, appears not to take this into account.  
The proposal to charge on Sundays is totally rejected.
3. The incidence of unauthorised street selling and entertainment seems to be on the increase both in the High Street and in the Martingate Centre. Our members report that shoppers find this intimidating and largely unwanted. The frequent offenders are known not to be homeless and come from Bath because they do not qualify for a legitimate 'pitch' in that location. (Source: The Big Issue Office).  
Begging is an emotive issue as there are some people who have serious personal and financial problems.  
We urge people not to give to beggars in Corsham. People who wish to help the homeless can help by giving to local charities or buying the Big Issue only from legitimate sellers. There are no legitimate street entertainers or sellers of the Big Issue authorised to operate in Corsham, either in the High Street or the shopping centre.

Ian Storey  
President, Corsham Chamber of Commerce