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Leisure Centre  
Chipping Norton




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- The Mill, a fully equipped Health & Fitness Studio
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  - Children's Parties • Crèche

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Wycombe Leisure Limited working with West Oxfordshire District Council



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**"Get your Laughing Gear around our Beers!"**

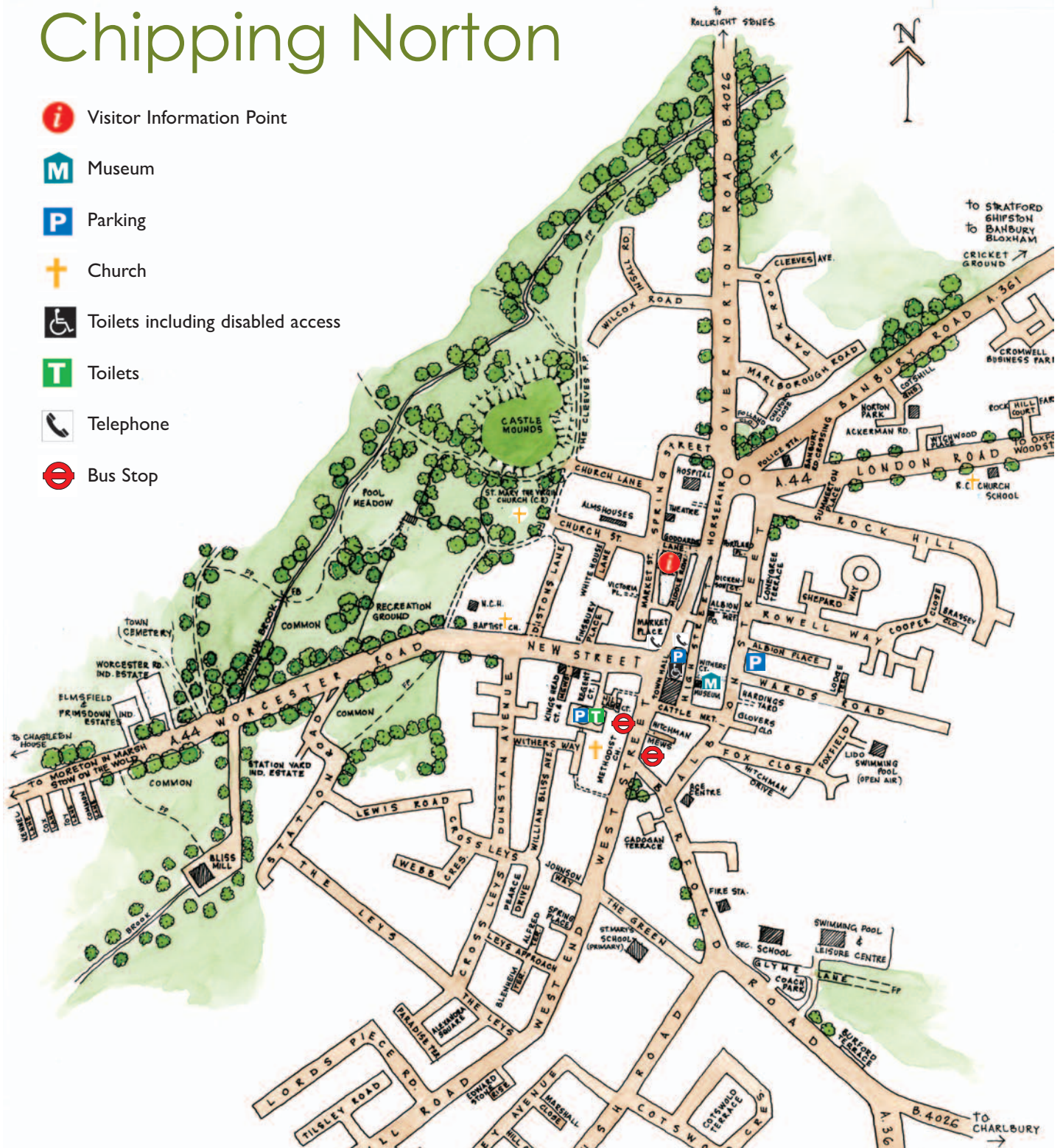


## Useful Information for Visitors

<b>Visitor Information Point:</b>	The Guildhall	01608 8861326
	Open only Mon - Fri	Mar-Oct 9.30-5.30
		Nov-Dec 10.00-3.00
<b>Chipping Norton Town Council:</b>	Town Clerk, The Guildhall	01608 642341
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council:</b>	Area Office, The Guildhall	01608 643244
<b>Police Station:</b>	London Road	0845 850 5505
<b>War Memorial Hospital:</b>	Over Norton Road (Minor Injuries unit)	01608 628000
<b>Doctors:</b>	White House Surgery	01608 628000
	West Street Surgery	01608 642529
<b>Library:</b>	Goddard's Lane	
	Closed Thursdays and Tues. am & Sat. pm	
<b>Museum:</b>	High Street (above Co-op)	01608 641712
	Open Easter to end October	
	Tues-Sat & BHol Mon 2.00-4.00	
<b>The Theatre:</b>	Spring Street	01608 642350
<b>Churches:</b>	CofE, St Mary's, Church Street	
	RC, Holy Trinity, London Road	
	Methodist, West Street	
	Baptist, New Street	
	Community, Chipping Norton School	
<b>Schools:</b>	Chipping Norton School, Burford Road	
	St Mary's CE Primary, The Green	
	Holy Trinity RC Primary, London Road	
<b>Market Day:</b>	Wednesday, W1 MARKET Friday am	
	Farmers Market second Saturday of the month	
<b>Leisure Centre:</b>	Mon-Fri 6.30am-10.00pm	01993 861 951
	Sat & Sun 8.00am-8.00pm	
<b>Outdoor Swimming Pool:</b>	Lido	01608 643188
	April-September	
<b>Buses:</b>	Stagecoach - Buses to Oxford,	01865 772250
	Banbury & Stratford upon Avon	
	<a href="http://www.stagecoachbus.com/oxfordshire">www.stagecoachbus.com/oxfordshire</a>	
	Worths - Buses to Charlbury	01608 677322
	& Witney also buses to Banbury twice a week	

# Chipping Norton

-  Visitor Information Point
-  Museum
-  Parking
-  Church
-  Toilets including disabled access
-  Toilets
-  Telephone
-  Bus Stop



welcome to

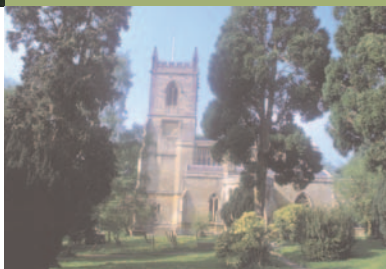
# Chipping Norton






## St Mary the Virgin Church

This has been the parish church of Chipping Norton for almost a thousand years. It has been altered and enlarged many times, most notably in the 15th century when wool merchants paid for the rebuilding of the nave in the new "perpendicular" style. Some of their memorial brasses can be seen in the north aisle. (A guide book is available at the church.)



## Bliss Mill

Once a woollen mill specialising in the manufacture of high quality tweed. William Bliss built it to replace his earlier mill which had burnt down in 1872 and the building was completed in one year. Its impressive architecture has made it a landmark in the area ever since. The mill closed in 1980 and been skilfully converted into private apartments.



## Diston's Lane

Originally a lane beside William Diston's farm, this quiet side street leading to the churchyard had both a tannery and the town's first gasworks located here built by William Bliss for workers at his mill, and some have a uniform design of bargeboards and matching porches. On the lefthand side is a cottage converted from one of the original farm buildings.

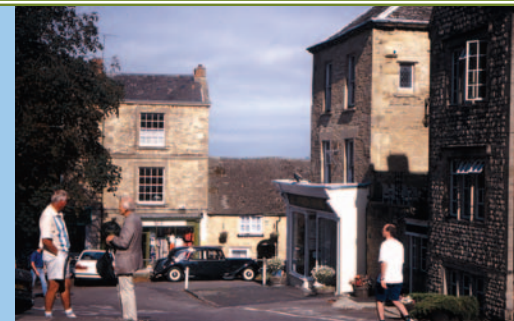


## The Theatre, Spring Street

Originally a Salvation Army Citadel, now a lively professional theatre and cinema. You can still see the foundation stones near the doorway. Spring Street takes its name from Springs along the hillside at this level which were once the town's main water supply.

## Castle Mounds

Only the earthworks remain of what was once a sizeable castle, erected by Ernaulf d'Hesdin, a supporter of William the Conqueror, and rebuilt by the Fitzalans in the 12th century. It would have dominated the lives of local people, most of whom were the tenants and serfs of the lord of the manor. Nearby is Pool Meadow, an artificial pond for supplying the castle with fresh fish.



## Kinds Head Court

This was one of several coaching inns serving travellers passing through Chipping Norton. It still has the high archway through which stage coaches could enter the courtyard behind. The former stables are now attractive cottages and the inn itself is divided into flats.

## Market Place

This large rectangular space was first laid out in about 1205 to provide room for markets and fairs, and Chipping Norton got its name (meaning a market) from this. It has always been the commercial and social centre of the community.

## The Almshouses

Provided by Henry Cornish in 1664 as a charity for eight poor widows of the town "of godly behaviour and conservation". Cornish was a leading citizen but was prosecuted by the Royalists during the Civil War for his



Puritan beliefs. The original eight tiny cottages were converted to four in the 1950s without spoiling the appearance of the building. (Why does it have nine chimneys?)

## Middle Row

This attractive street probably began as market stalls left up from week to week. Traders found it worth paying a fine to leave them up and gradually they were replaced with permanent buildings and the fine became a rent. You step down into some of these shops today because the street level has been raised by centuries of resurfacing.



## Town Hall

Built in 1842 as a demonstration of civic pride. It was designed by George Repton in classical style,

but had open arches at the lower level like a traditional market hall. These were later filled in with windows to provide a lower hall. This fine building is still the focus for the civic life of the community.

## High Street

Sometimes called "Topside" because of its position overlooking the market place, most of the houses and shops in the High Street were given fashionable "Georgian" fronts by their prosperous owners in the 18th century. These buildings stand on much earlier foundations dating from the early 13th century when the market place was first laid out. Behind each one is a narrow strip of land providing space for gardens and outbuildings.

## The Guildhall

A much altered building, but notice some 15th century windows and a doorway. This was once the headquarters of a guild of merchants founded about 1450. From their guildhall they controlled the market. Later it belonged to the corporation of Chipping Norton, set up by royal charter in 1607. Now it houses the Town Clerk, Visitor Information Centre and a District Council Office.

# An Introduction to Chipping Norton

"Chipping" means a market and in the middle ages people came to buy and sell at the markets and fairs that gave Chipping Norton its name. There is still a weekly market every Wednesday and the "Mop Fair" (once a hiring fair for servants) in September, but today there is also a wide range of shops, businesses, hotels, restaurants, a theatre, schools and many other services both for residents and visitors in this small Cotswold town.

It began as a few houses with a church and a castle at the bottom of the hill. Only the earthworks of the castle still remain but the church is now a fine example of a "wool church", enlarged by local merchants who grew rich on the profits of the Cotswold wool trade. To promote increased trade, a new market place was laid out in about 1205 surrounded by the houses and shops of the wealthier inhabitants, and this formed a new town centre higher up the hillside - where it still is today.

In later centuries sheep farming was largely replaced by arable, but agriculture remained important in this part of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds. Around the market place many of the original houses were rebuilt in the 18th century with fashionable "Georgian" fronts, which are still an impressive sight when you look along the High Street above the modern shops. Earlier styles remain in New Street - which is actually very old! Travellers have always stopped in Chipping Norton and there were plenty of hotels and inns for cater for them. In Victorian times William Bliss built his spectacular tweed mill, there was a brewery, a glove making factory, a tannery and an iron foundry, and the town grew in size. Today this old Cotswold stone town is a flourishing centre with a strong sense of community, proud of its past but not living in it.

