

Comments received from the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation (Community and Infrastructure Group) (63) Godalming Christmas Festival and light switch-on, 29 November 2014

- No bus service up Charterhouse Road
- Too many Charity shops and Estate Agents
- New houses - concerned about traffic, Tuesley Rd is a nightmare
- Need Doctors Surgery, cafe, local craft shops (like Dorking?)
- Charity Shops an issue.
- Cranleigh and Farnham have more buzz
- Big problem is landlords/rents. Waverley , talk to Chamber of Commerce
- My family have lived in Godalming for the last 300 years and my son cannot afford a house or flat in Godalming, despite he and his wife both being in full time employment in good jobs (criminal lawyer and electrician). Who is going to look after us in our old age as I have looked after my grandparents and parents, saving the Council thousands of pounds?
- Concerned about balancing the need for new housing particularly affordable and social housing, with concern for the rural landscape which is one of the assets of the area.
- Would like to see more independent shops and cafes, but business rate makes it very difficult. If we want the large chains we can go elsewhere. Make Godalming different!
- Lack of car parking is frustrating
- Like the countryside and beautiful town centre
- I would like to see an overall plan to improve the town centre retailing
- Get rid of charity shops and replace them with real local businesses
- Encourage start-ups
- Put craft/start-up/tea shop etc into the old listed doctor's surgery at The Square
- Market the town with the film industry
- Stop the building of new huge housing estates without the proper infrastructure - roads, schools, doctors, shops
- Haslemere, Farnham and Cranleigh seem much more vibrant - why is this?
- We've lived in Busbridge for 16 years and have loved the semi-rural feel of the town. However, with the amount of new housing we fear that the whole feel will change.
- The roads cannot cope with the extra traffic and schools are already full
- Extra traffic from the Milford Hospital site will impact on us - there is no way Tuesley Lane can cope with the extra traffic
- Encourage new shops rather than every empty shop being taken over by a charity. This will in turn encourage more people to shop in the town
- It appears that , as members of the community, we don't get enough of a say in how our lovely town is evolving
- Elderly people want a bungalow! (resident, aged 90)
- Top field, between Charterhouse and Binscombe, is an excellent public amenity; so valuable to the local community, dog walkers, children and perfect for tobogganing!
- Please keep the Green Belt protected!
- Part-time employed and self-employed need studio/hot desk spaces, cluster style small business/creative industry/tech/art spaces

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- More and more houses are being built but where are the expansion in doctors appointments, school places and additional parking?
- Business rates make it really hard to self organise - time pressure, not wanting to take on leases to sublet. A central organisation to manage this and release under-used Council property would be a massive shift
- Like variety - (young, families,) coffee shops are good
- Think carefully about new housing developments: are these affordable and for whom?
- What is the impact on already busy traffic?
- No space at GP's for an appointment - already 2.5 week waiting list
- Nowhere to park on residential roads
- Standing room mainly on commuter trains
- Heritage/culture/creative industries: more start-up business space
- Lower rents for independent shops
- Traffic control/think of ways in which Dutch/German towns manage and promote cycling, bus, walking
- An Art Gallery/contemporary space
- Live in Farncombe and concerned about the growing lack of school places for children in the local area.
- Local people I have spoken to are also concerned about doctor's surgeries especially in light of building more houses in the area
- Parking permits imposed on us but the only problems down Town End Street occur after 6pm when the permits are not in operation
- Concerns: parking of vehicles in the Godalming/farncombe areas - enforcement of restrictions
- Street cleaning and litter in general
- Acknowledge need for housing as long as infrastructure looked into to accommodate
- I have two children aged 20 and 24, both grown up in Binscombe and are concerned about where they live and have their families. They cannot afford to buy and renting takes all their money
- Want the 'copse' protected as when we bought our house in Copse Rd we were not overlooked and this is why we chose that end of the estate.
- We started off with a house buying scheme with Waverley years ago and this helped us. I would like something like this to help our children - they are both on low incomes

End.

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- **About this information:**

Where has it come from?

Members of the public in Godalming during the Christmas Festival and light switch-on, Saturday, 29 November 2014.

How was it gathered?

The Neighbourhood Plan team manned an information stand in Crown Court. People were invited to first locate and mark where they live and place a sticker on the town map. They were then invited to complete the short Heritage and Design group questionnaire and write down their responses to the information board compiled by the Economy group. NP volunteers explained the reason for the Neighbourhood Plan and the need to plan for future housing development. People were asked if they had already participated in the Town Day consultation, to avoid duplication.

How many responses were gathered and where are they?

20 people posted their comments in the sealed box. The responses to the Heritage and Design questionnaire are reported elsewhere and are in addition to the responses in this document.

In all, 49 separate comments were made and they are typed out as written, above. All hand written slips submitted are on file for the group to check and refer back to as necessary.

How will this information be used?

The information is a 'snapshot' and gathered as part of a public awareness exercise. The sample is a random one of residents at that day's event. This information is therefore of use to the group(s) in 'giving a steer' towards areas worthy of further investigation.

Was it a representative cross-section of the community?

The Christmas festival is an established town event and was very well attended (see press release on page 4 for further information). NP volunteers asked people if they lived in the GU7 area and a significant number of people had come from the surrounding villages and towns for this event.

Are there particular concerns that emerged?

Resident's responses were more focussed on the questionnaire and the topics from the two groups, but there were concerns expressed about the transport and community infrastructure needed to cope with the increased housing.

Next Steps:

This information will be made available to all working groups to study.

Jane Thomson 02.12.2014

GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

GODALMING LIGHTS UP THE TOWN!

Godalming's Christmas Festival and Lights Switch-on took place on Saturday, 29 November on a clear and dry day. Thousands of people flocked into Godalming from early in the morning to enjoy the festive Christmas market, delicious street food and seasonal entertainment. There were sparkling performances from everyone who entertained at The Peppercot and a large variety of Christmassy stalls selling tempting goods. New to the Festival this year were a stilt walking elf and a ground-based balloon modelling elf who kept the children entertained; these and the adorable Christmas Ponies who were giving free rides for children at the bottom of Church Street meant there was something for everyone.

Reporting on the commercial impact of the event, John Taylor, President of Godalming's Chamber of Commerce said: "The early feedback from most retailers is that the Christmas Festival was a big success and many of them are reporting an increase of 20% in sales compared to an average Saturday. The weather helped tremendously but this year's festival was definitely full of variety and there was literally something for everyone. We are now looking forward to the Easter and Food Festivals to continue the success in Godalming that comes from partnership working and the great community support."

Ed Simpson from the Godalming Food Company, one of the delighted shop keepers, said the atmosphere was buzzing, customers were in festive spirits and we were really pleased to be able to fuel people's Christmas shopping with mulled wine and hot mince pies, it was an excellent day's trade and we were very happy to see lots of new and regular customers."

The Christmas Festival sponsors, Charterhouse Club and The Star public house, were thrilled too. Tim Ostle, Commercial Director at Charterhouse said: "The atmosphere in Godalming throughout the day was fantastic, culminating with literally thousands of people cramming the High Street to watch the lights being switched on by Snow White and Prince Charming from the Yvonne Arnaud Panto helped by Father Christmas. I am delighted that the Charterhouse Club, as the main sponsor, was able to be a part of such a great well-organised event to get the Christmas spirit going."

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Ian Thomson, landlord of The Star in Church Street said: “Another fantastic Christmas Market and light-up day in Godalming with an improved variety of market stalls, plus some great entertainment helped along by our Christmas Elves and some great weather.”

Godalming’s Mayor, Councillor Andrew Wilson said, “It was a wonderful day, enhanced by the lovely weather. Some said it was the best ever festival and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves. The organisation by the Town Council staff and the many others was superb and so helped make the day what it was”. Andrew officially opened proceedings in the morning and spent the day visiting the many stalls.

Santa’s magical grotto was organised by the Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce

and saw hundreds of children visiting Santa throughout the day, the Chamber also organised the large variety of activities at the Wilfrid Noyce Centre for the children to enjoy.

The festival organisers would like to thank everyone involved in helping on the day and behind the scenes. Thanks also to all the visitors that came from far and wide to enjoy their day in Godalming. Don’t forget the sparkling lights will be lighting up Godalming until twelfth night.

Ends

In case of query please contact:

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