

PRESS RELEASE

THE EARL OF WESSEX VOLUNTEERS FOR 'TROLLEY TUESDAY' AT THE GODALMING COMMUNITY STORE

The Godalming & Villages Community Store welcomed a new volunteer to its ranks when HRH Prince Edward, The Earl of Wessex, visited the Wilfrid Noyce Centre on 16 June to help with the 'Trolley Tuesday' donations.

The Earl was welcomed to the store by Vicki Connor and Patrick Andrea from the Godalming & Farncombe Coronavirus Assistance Group and joined the volunteers to see first-hand why the Store has been, and remains so important in providing support to families and individuals. The Earl heard of the difficulties faced by many people who may have never thought they would have needed to use a food bank but had faced sudden changes to their circumstance during the pandemic.

The Community Store is about the community supporting its friends and neighbours during these unprecedented and difficult times and receives generous donations on a daily basis, but "Trolley Tuesday" is the main donation day when shopping trollies full of donations from collection points around the town and surrounding villages are delivered to the store. When the trollies started to arrive The Earl rolled up his sleeves and got to work at a sorting station to assist with checking and sorting the newly donated items. Having cleared his station, The Earl then helped Bruce Westsmith and Nuria Palacios from the *Acorn Restaurant* in Godalming to pack and label meals made from donated items which were then put in the store's fridge for customers to collect. After serving up a "Socially Distanced" tea break for the volunteers, The Earl helped to restock the store with items from the storage and sorting area so it was ready for opening the following morning. On finishing his shift, The Earl thanked the volunteers for the work they are doing and wished them every continued success with the community store.

Vicki Connor said "the volunteers, who are the lifeblood of the Community Store, were absolutely amazed and surprised when The Earl of Wessex joined them and were delighted that he got stuck in to help on Trolley Tuesday, which is the busiest day of the week for the Community Store. It was really pleasing that the hard work and dedication of all the volunteers and the Town Council was recognised in this way."

Ends.....

Editors' Notes:

The Community Store is a run by Godalming Town Council and volunteers from the Godalming & Farncombe Coronavirus Assistance Group. The Community Store first opened its doors on 20 April and since then has provided over 7,500* days'-worth of food support to those who have found themselves in difficult circumstances during the pandemic. The Community Store can assist with free basic food items, including fresh and frozen produce, personal hygiene, sanitary and domestic cleaning items. The Community Store is supported by Godalming Town Council, the Godalming Community Fridge, *Cook* frozen foods, *Waitrose & Partners* Godalming, *Hall Hunter Partnership* [Tuesley Farm] and the *Acorn Restaurant* located in Wharf Street Godalming who, using donated items, produce 'ready meals' and other goods such as pizza for the store. Assistance has also been provided by the Godalming Youth Canoe Club, SI Capital, Godalming Round Table, BL Vision in Farncombe and of course the many people who kindly and generously donate goods and money to the Community Store, without which it could not survive.

Trolley Tuesday, organised by Godalming Town Council, is the main donation day for the Community Store. Shopping trolleys loaned by *Waitrose* Godalming, are placed at locations throughout Godalming, Farncombe, Milford, Compton and Bramley every Tuesday morning and later collected and taken to the Wilfrid Noyce Centre where volunteers sort the donations for use in the Community Store.

<https://godalming-tc.gov.uk/community-store/>

* Correct as of 12 June 2020

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