



Godalming

Town Council

**Annual Report
2023-24**

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MAYORAL REVIEW



'Aren't you young to be a mayor?!' is an utterance that I've heard at nearly every mayoral event I've had the pleasure of attending this civic year. And it is true: I am Godalming's youngest mayor.

I have proudly represented a younger demographic in this role, and I am pleased that I have made the position more accessible to many who wouldn't have thought it possible to hold down a full-time job as well as being the local civic leader. It is not the case that the mayor has to be the oldest or longest-serving councillor and, indeed, there is huge value in getting to know your community as mayor to become a better representative for residents. I certainly feel I have done so!

As well as being the youngest mayor, I've also been able to represent the LGBT+ community alongside my wonderful partner and consort, Daniel Banks. We have been welcomed warmly at all events we have attended, and this illustrates how inclusive a

town Godalming is to ensure that we have continued representation of different groups, not only as councillors but also as mayor.

The office of mayor has been an interesting venture for me and allowed me to get to know so many wonderful volunteers and organisations who do so much for the town. It is a role that allows the postholder to experience things one would never usually because of the many and varied functions that a mayor attends. As such, it facilitates an insight into and a resulting appreciation of the pursuits of so many community groups.

I have particularly enjoyed attending all events focussed on young people, a fundamental reason for running as a councillor back in 2019 and the focus of my day job. In particular, it is this interest that led me to choosing The Dan Eley Foundation as my charity for my mayoral year. It has been a pleasure to provide opportunities for fundraising this year including the mayoral quiz back in October, fundraising at Christmas time at the Lights Switch-on and in the Council Chamber, as well as monies raised through the collaboration with Surrey & Hants Property Agents, and I look forward to attending The Dan Eley Foundation's Spring Benefit Concert later this month. It has been a privilege working alongside Dan and Carolyn to ensure much-needed contributions go towards services and resources for young people locally.

Reflecting on my mayoral year, I so enjoyed my Civic Service last June and want to thank Suzie, Lynne and Andy for all their support in making it happen including the fantastic performances from the Rock Choir and A Touch of Musicality, readings from friends and family and wonderfully compered by Emily Rawlinson. It was a really memorable occasion.



Godalming Fire Station Open Day

Key highlights for me include the Town Show, the judging of gardens for Godalming in Bloom, ChoirBlast, the many wonderful Conservatoire Concert performances, school visits, Music in the Park afternoons, the range of Staycation events, Heritage Weekend, Godalming Theatre Group events, Remembrance Day, Interfaith events, many carol concerts, the formation of Godalming Minster and the recent reflection events for different members of our community.



Godalming Town Show & Carnival

This year it was exciting to introduce the first Day of Peace event for the town as a conscious opportunity to promote peace as well as remembrance. Heartfelt thanks go to Rhiannon, our Museum Curator, who was so amazing in helping to organise the event including partnerships with King’s College, the creation of the exhibition and assisting with the craft workshop and the poetry evening. The poetry readings enabled time for reflection, inspiration and contemplation and were performed from a range of different ages and backgrounds.



With Rhiannon Jones, Godalming Museum Curator at the Day of Peace Event



Ukrainian Day in Godalming – 24 February 2024

At the beginning of Full Council meetings this year, I have enjoyed asking key members of Godalming to talk through what community means to them and we have had a number of different speakers including our Youth Officer, Tom Manning, Sgt Phil Bayman the Neighbourhood

Sergeant, Carolyn Eley from DEF and our Museum Curator, Rhiannon Jones. It’s so important, I think, to get the perspectives of different individuals who do so much to make Godalming a great place to live, work and visit.

A special thanks has to go to Lynne and Rita for helping me with the mayoral diary of engagements. It has been quite a juggle at times but I've always turned up on time with the chain around my neck and I have tried to attend every event that I've been able to. Thank you to Cllr Paul Rivers as my Deputy Mayor for filling in where I have been unable to attend and your consort, Cllr Penny Rivers. In Penny and Paul's other hats as Mayor and Consort of Waverley, Daniel and I have also enjoyed your company alongside us at many mutual events with your wealth of civic knowledge.

I would also like to thank the rest of the staff team at Godalming Town Council, including Karen who I hope is now enjoying retirement, my fellow councillors (it has been a pleasure leading Full Council meetings) and, of course, to local residents and volunteers for their support. I look forward to handing out the Mayor's Awards to recognise this contribution to the community and I want to thank councillors for their work as volunteers. In particular, it is so pleasing to see the continued growth of the Godalming Youth Service and to recognise the amazing work that is done to support young people in the town.

I wish my fellow Councillors well for the civic year ahead and to my successor!

Adam Duce

Councillor Adam Duce
Mayor of Godalming 2023/24



Mayor of Godalming Cllr Adam Duce and Mayor of Waverley Cllr Penny Rivers at a Music in the Park concert

Godalming Town Council

This Annual Report provides a flavour of the many activities, events, work and actions organised or undertaken by Godalming Town Council during the 2023 civic year, full details of the Town Council's services, its meetings, policies, procedures and financial arrangements can be found at www.godalming-tc.gov.uk

Godalming Town Council was established in 1974 and is now one of the largest town councils in the county, and nationally is in the upper quartile of Local Councils and is a member of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) network for super councils.

Following the outcomes of the Local Government Boundary Review and the Waverley Governance Review the elected body of the council was reduced at the 2023 local elections from 20 to 18 councillors covering five Town Wards.

Ward	Councillors Per Ward
Binscombe	3
Charterhouse	3
Farncombe & Catteshall	4
Holloway	4
Central & Ockford	4
Total No Cllrs	18

Godalming Town Councillors represent the community on a voluntary basis. Members are not paid a salary, nor do they receive a basic parish allowance for being a councillor or for the work they undertake.

The Town Council is completely independent of both Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council and is responsible for delivering a range of quality-of-life services and community activities that include its town centre venue the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, Broadwater Youth & Community Centre and the town's iconic Pepperpot. The Town Council also funds the Godalming Youth Service, Godalming Museum, public toilets in Godalming and Farncombe, two cemeteries, sixteen acres of allotment sites, Floral Godalming flower displays, Christmas Lights in Farncombe and Godalming retail centres and a range of festivals and markets held in the town.

The Council runs the Staycation holiday programme, the town's annual Remembrance Parade and assists in the management of the Markets held both in Godalming and Farncombe. The Town Council supports several events run by community organisations such as Sport Godalming's Community Run and the Round Table's Town Show, all of which help make Godalming such a vibrant community.

2023 saw the Council negotiate new 4-year Service Level Agreements (see Grants section for further details). A total of 23 individual grants were awarded to various community groups and the Council administered £437,000 of funding awarded as part of the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy scheme to benefit community projects. (see CIL Awarded in 2023/2awards section).



The Local Elections took place on Thursday, 4 May 2023, and unusually, the election count for the Town Council was delayed until the Sunday because Saturday, 6 May 2023 saw the coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla. Godalming put up flags and bunting, with community groups and neighbours organising street parties, many of which unfortunately had to be hastily re-arranged from outdoor to indoor celebrations to avoid the rain.

Over the course of the coronation weekend, the church bells rang out in celebration and the crowds braved the weather for the Town’s Coronation Concert held on The Burys Field.

Following the 2023 elections Godalming Town Council is operating on a collaborative basis between the Liberal Democrats (9), Green Party (4), Labour (3) making up an administrative group of 16 and 2 Conservative Members.

Cllr Paul Follows (LibDem) is the Leader of the Council and Chair of the Policy & Management Committee (P&M) with Cllr Clare Weightman (Green Party) elected as Deputy Chair of P&M. The full list of Members elected as Chair/Vice Chair of Council Committees is shown below:

Policy & Management:			
Chair: Cllr Follows (LD)		Vice Chair: Cllr Weightman (G)	
Environment & Planning:			
Chair: Cllr Kiehl (LD)		Vice Chair: Cllr Clayton (G)	
Staffing:			
Chair: Cllr Heagin (LD)		Vice Chair: Cllr S Downey (L)	
Audit:			
Chair: Cllr Crooks (G)		Vice Chair: Cllr Thomson (LD)	

Full Council

Much of the work of the council is undertaken in committees, which either make a report to the Full Council on activities managed under delegated authority of the Full Council or they make recommendations to the Full Council where a decision must be made by the Council as a whole.

The Full Council is responsible for authorising the use of Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding and 2023 saw a number of the projects supported by CIL funding come to fruition (See CIL Awarded in 2023/2awards section). Further CIL funding awards were also made to Farncombe Community Garden, Farncombe Cricket Club, Broadwater Youth & Community Centre and to Godalming Town Council to support the refurbishment of the Crown Court Public Toilets.

May 2023 saw the Annual Meeting of the Council, often called 'Mayor Making' when Cllr Adam Duce was elected as the Town Mayor for 2023/24 and Cllr Paul Rivers was elected as the Deputy Mayor.

After 128 years of operating the Godalming cemeteries as a joint venture, initially between Godalming, Shackleford, and Busbridge councils and then for the last 46 years between Godalming and Busbridge councils, new arrangements agreed in December 2022 came into force on 1 April 2023 with the ownership and management of Nightingale and Eashing cemeteries becoming the sole responsibility of Godalming Town Council.

The July meeting of the Full Council saw the Council receive a presentation from Citizens Advice South-West Surrey regarding the merger of the Waverley, Guildford, and Ash Citizens Advice services into a new single service. The presentation also helped to inform the debate and future negotiations around a Service Level Agreement between Godalming Town Council and Citizens Advice South-West Surrey.

The same meeting also saw the Full Council endorse the Environment & Planning Committee's Climate & Ecological Emergency motion, thereby affirming Godalming Town Council's climate commitment.

In September the Full Council was delighted to receive the second annual report of the Godalming Youth Services. The Town Council is fully committed to supporting the young people of our town and is extremely pleased with the huge amount of progress that has been achieved by the Youth Services in such a short space of time [more details can be found within the Godalming Youth Service Section]. One of the keys to the success of the Youth Service is its staff and the time and effort they put into the planning and delivery of activities. As the delivery of activities has increased the need for the youth workers to have the space to operate has also increased. To support the Youth Services Team, the Council agreed funding from the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy for an extension to the existing youth centre.

Although Godalming Town Council receives no funding at all from the Business Rates generated within the Town, it strongly believes that a vibrant and sustainable business community within the town is vital for the town and residents' well-being. The Town Council supports the business community in a number of ways, but one of the most important areas which the Council has been supporting is the development of a Business Improvement District (BID) for the town centre area. Having provided funding to develop the BID, the Town Council was delighted at the outcome of the business referendum, which will see up to £850,000 generated over the next 5 years to improve the business environment within the town.

November saw an extraordinary meeting of the Full Council being called to be able to meet the deadline to agree to the terms of a grant awarded from the Community Ownership Fund of £194,486 towards the estimated £236,000 required to renovate the public toilets in Crown Court. In agreeing to the terms of the award, the Council agreed to allocated £41,500 from the Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund as the community's matched funding contribution to the project. As CIL is money paid by developers to the Council to support community infrastructure projects, this means that the refurbishment of the Crown Court Public Toilets is not costing a penny from Godalming's council tax.

November also saw the adoption of the Council's Corporate Plan 2023/27 [*see Annex*] which sets out the aims and objectives of Godalming Town Council for the period 2023-2027.

The approval of the Council's budget and setting the Parish Precept (the amount of money it raises from council taxpayers living within the parish of Godalming) was agreed by the Full Council at its December meeting. The Council approved a Parish Precept of £1,147,744 for 2024/25.

At the same meeting, The Council also approved three Service Level Agreements with local organisations:

Citizens Advice South-West Surrey – For Godalming Town Council to provide £35,000 of funding per annum for four years to this vital support service for our community, with Citizens Advice agreeing to retain a 5-day a week in-person service operating in Godalming, a level of service not available in any other location in Waverley.

The Wharf Nursery – For Godalming Town Council to provide £3,000 of funding per annum for four years, with The Wharf Nursery agreeing to provide "Stay & Play" sessions during normal term time with sessions provided free of charge to participating families.

Farncombe Day Centre – For Godalming Town Council to provide £7,500 of funding per annum for four years, with Farncombe Day Centre agreeing to provide a minibus service for Godalming residents to allow access to the day centre 5 days per week, excluding Bank Holidays and the Centre's annual Christmas and New Year closure.

Following the success of the 2023 event, Full Council agreed to continue its partnership with Guildford Rugby Club to provide an annual bonfire and firework display, with this year's event to be held on Friday, 1 November. At the same meeting, Full Council considered a report on the Christmas Festival Market and Christmas Lights Switch-On Event.

In organising or supporting any events, the Council's ultimate duty and concern is the safety of those attending an event and those working at the events. The Christmas Festival Market & Lights Switch-On event is undoubtedly an immensely popular event. However, the success and popularity of the Lights Switch-On part of the day has reached such a level, that the Council no longer feels it is able to safely deliver it in the same way as it has done so in the past. It was for that reason the Council agreed to separate these two elements and hold them on different days. In 2024 the Christmas Lights will be switched-on on Sunday, 24 November and the Godalming Christmas Market will be held on Saturday, 30 November. This will be followed by the Farncombe Christmas Lights Switch-On on Friday, 6 December and the Farncombe Christmas Market on Saturday, 7 December.

The Parish Precept element of your Council Tax supports the work of Godalming Town Council, who provide services that support residents of Godalming and Farncombe.

WHAT YOUR PARISH PRECEPT SUPPORTS

Supporting Young People **Community Buildings**
Youth Centre **Christmas Lights** **Community Store**
Public Realm **Farmers Markets** **Climate Emergency** **Pandemic Business Improvement**
Staycation **Allotments** **Cemeteries** **Museum** **Supporting the Elderly** **Carbon Reduction**
Floral Godalming **Remembrance Day** **Grants**

Godalming Town Council provides a range of services to support residents, some of which are shown on this page. Each year the Council publishes an Annual Report that details the work of the Council, the 2023/24 report can be found at godalming-tc.gov.uk/annual-reports. Information about the 2024 Godalming Parish Precept is shown on overleaf.

THIS YEAR THE GODALMING SHARE OF THE COUNCIL TAX INCREASES BY 2.2p PER DAY*

*for a Band D council tax payer



The increase to the Godalming precept is needed not only to cover rises in inflation, but also to support organisations such as Farncombe Day Centre & Citizen's Advice who are increasingly having to fill the gaps created by reductions in other support services.

Godalming Town Council is committed to delivering services as efficiently and effectively as possible and making every penny count.

Since 2020 the Town Council has attracted an additional £512,000 through making evidence based cases to the government on behalf of the community. This additional funding will not only see the public toilets in Crown Court fully refurbished to provide modern, hygienic facilities, it has also provided the foundation of the Council's outreach youth work, which it will continue to build upon in 2024. The widening of the youth service will allow engagement with more of the town's young citizens, helping them to grow and prosper.

Through its stewardship of the neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy, the Town Council has also been able to provide £437,000 to community projects at no cost to the council tax payer.

Inflation continues to affect the Council's budget, which is why the council's policy of invest-to-save is not only vital in decarbonising the council's assets and estate, but also in achieving significant future cost savings.

- Community Grants
- Town Promotion, Events, Festivals & Decorations
- Demographic & Civic Costs
- Youth Services
- Amenities & Maintenance (Wilfrid Noyce Centre, Bandstand, Peppercot, Public Toilets, Public Realm)
- Cemeteries, Open Spaces & Allotments
- Support & Central Services (Staffing & Office Costs)
- Governance (Insurance, Professional Fees & Audit)
- IT and Communications
- Museum Service
- Capital Financing Costs
- Capital Projects & Climate Change Initiatives
- Reserves for Future Use

Godalming Town Council - Supporting Our Community

For further information visit: godalming-tc.gov.uk

Environment & Planning Committee

The role of the Environment & Planning Committee is to address and, where appropriate, formulate policy for consideration by the Council and to discharge the Council's functions relating to the local environment and infrastructure. This includes identifying key environment and planning issues whilst considering the natural and built environment. The Environment & Planning Committee also considers issues relating to local and regional plans or other planning and highway matters brought to the Town Council's attention.

The Environment & Planning Committee also scrutinises applications made to the Council by local organisations for funding from the

Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund.

The regulations that govern how CIL is spent require that Godalming Town Council utilises the Neighbourhood CIL allocated towards either:

- the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure, or
- anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places upon Godalming.

These definitions allow GTC and the local community to consider quite broadly what is needed to help to mitigate the impacts of development in Godalming. The definition of infrastructure is broad and includes roads and other transport infrastructure, schools and other educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities and open spaces.

If satisfied that an application meets the required eligibility, benefits residents of Godalming and is considered value for money, the Environment & Planning Committee make appropriate recommendations to the Full Council for the final decision on the level of any award.

Since April 2023 the Environment & Planning Committee has considered 261 planning applications, listed building consent applications, Tree Preservation Orders, Permitted Development Prior Notification Notices and Certificates of Lawfulness. When considering planning applications, the Committee seeks to ensure compliance with policies set out in the Godalming & Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan.

Climate Emergency

From the 2018/2019 datum, as of 31 March 2023 Godalming Town Council has reduced its carbon footprint by 53.6% this reduction continues to show the Council's commitment towards becoming a net zero energy consumer.

However, despite its progress so far Godalming Town Council remains acutely aware of the Climate Emergency faced by us all. It was for this reason that the first motion considered by the Council following the local elections was to renew its commitment to the climate and ecological emergency by unanimously agreeing to:

- continue its previous commitment to becoming a carbon-neutral organisation by 2030, to cover scope 1, 2 and 3 emissions¹, including an earlier target of 2025 for all scope 1 and 2 emissions;
- continue to provide an annual carbon audit report to include the Council's carbon footprint;
- continue to support ways to facilitate and encourage our community to reduce direct and indirect CO² emissions and conserve and enhance biodiversity in order to become resilient to changes caused by the changing climate.

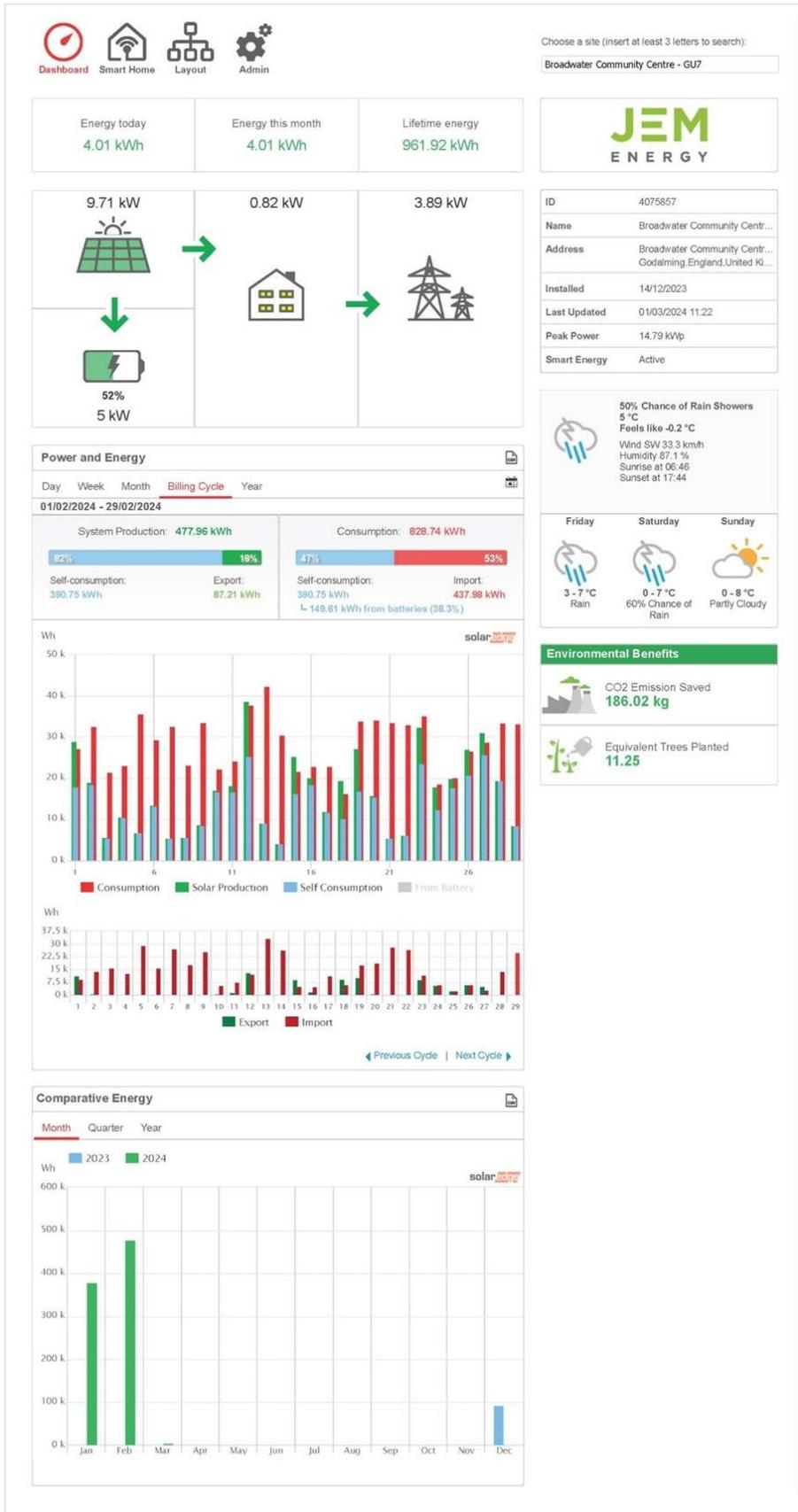
Godalming Town Council also agreed to support active steps where possible to encourage:

- increased use of sustainable transport and co-operate with organisations promoting active and sustainable transport methods that seek to minimise carbon emissions;
- reductions in energy use in homes, shops, businesses and elsewhere and a public education campaign in order to facilitate this;
- co-operation with organisations seeking to build sustainable developments that minimise carbon emissions;
- development and use of renewable energy sources;
- production, sale and consumption of locally sourced and sustainably produced food;
- any other methods of achieving the aims above; and
- adoption of wildlife friendly land and water management practices.

Decarbonisation and sustainability lie at the heart of the Council's work to achieve its net zero goals. As part of its invest-to-save capital works programme, on the 15 December 2023, solar panels were installed on the roof of Broadwater Youth & Community Centre. Although early days it is pleasing to see that the majority of the energy generated is being self-consumed by the centre, which is by far the most cost-efficient way to power the building. The graphic below shows the energy generated and used by the system along with the environmental benefits.

¹ "Scope 1 and 2 cover direct emissions sources (e.g., fuel used in company vehicles and purchased electricity), scope 3 emissions cover all indirect emissions due to the activities of an organization."
www.carbontrust.com/resources/faqs/services/scope-3-indirect-carbon-emissions/

Solar Power Generation and Consumption in February at Broadwater Youth Centre



Farncombe Boots the Chemist

The unwelcome news that Boots the Chemist had announced the closure of 300 branches, including Farncombe, was received in August 2023. Alongside many in our community Godalming Town Council was determined to do all it could to change Boots' decision.

Starting from the premise that Godalming Town Council believed that not only was Boots the Chemist at Farncombe Street vitally important for residents as a community pharmacy, but also essential to the economic wellbeing of the Farncombe retail centre, the Council provided information that allowed Boots to review the business case for closure (see letter it was a great day for our community when Boots rescinded its original decision. Godalming Town Council wishes to thank every member of the community who signed a petition, wrote to, or contacted Boots in support of our pharmacy.

GODALMING TOWN COUNCIL

Town Clerk: Andy Jeffery MSc MCGI
Tel: 01483 523575
E-Mail: office@godalming-tc.gov.uk

10 August 2023

Mr [REDACTED]
President and Managing Director of Boots UK & ROI
Boots UK Ltd
Nottingham
NG2 3AA

Dear [REDACTED]

I am writing to you on behalf of Godalming Town Council, which represents the residents of Godalming, which includes the communities of Farncombe and surrounding areas who are served by the Boots community pharmacy at 2-3 Station Place, Farncombe Street, Farncombe, GU7 3AZ.

Located within the administrative areas of Waverley Borough and Godalming Town, this branch of Boots the Chemist serves the Farncombe population of 13,251 people, of which 38% (and rising) are aged 50+. Farncombe has a population density rate of 2,932 people per km², which is the highest within Godalming and the second highest within the wider Waverley area.

Although a well-established and stable community, within Farncombe lies the area 37th highest of the 186 Lower-layer Super Output Areas within Surrey on the Index of Multiple Deprivation. This makes it the second most deprived area within Waverley, including also being the second most deprived area for health deprivation and disability. This means there are several specific challenges for the area in terms of the need and ability to access services, including pharmacy services.

Whilst across Waverley the average for households without access to a vehicle is 11.2% and 11.85% in the rest of Godalming, within Farncombe the average is 18.1%, rising to 30.9% in some parts of Farncombe. The lack of independent travel afforded by car ownership, coupled with the existing health and disability deprivation and an inadequate, 2-hourly bus service to the nearest alternative retail centre, highlights the importance of the Farncombe local retail area, from which the Boots pharmacy provides a vital service to the local community.

It is within the context of the area's characteristics and Boots' recent announcement for plans to close 300 stores that Godalming Town Council wishes to express, not only its own concerns regarding the possibility that the Farncombe branch of Boots the Chemist might be selected for closure, but also the very real and deep concern expressed by the local community. Alongside the residents of Farncombe, the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP, and many others from the neighbouring communities and villages that are served by the Farncombe retail centre, Godalming Town Council not only wishes to highlight the importance of the Farncombe branch of Boots the Chemist to the community, but also its position as a critical anchor to the Farncombe retail and village centre. As such, Godalming Town Council sincerely requests that Boots UK and WBA recognise the value of the Farncombe branch of Boots the Chemist to the Farncombe community and are able to confirm that it forms no part of the company's considerations regarding store closures.

I would like to thank you for your time in considering this letter and look forward to hearing of a positive outcome for the residents and community of Farncombe.

Yours sincerely

Andy Jeffery

Andy Jeffery
Town Clerk

Web: www.godalming-tc.gov.uk



107-109 High Street
Godalming
Surrey
GU7 1AQ

Email: [REDACTED]

Letters/BootsUKLtd10Aug23

In seeking support for the campaign to keep the Farncombe branch of Boots open, and in light of his stated support for community pharmacies, on the 15 August the Council wrote to the Prime Minister to highlight the effect that the loss of the Godalming Sainsbury's pharmacy and the potential loss of the Farncombe Boots' pharmacy would have on our community. Unfortunately, the Council has not received a response.

Loss of Water Supply

Following the loss of water supply to the majority of the town and surrounding area caused by the failure of the Thames Water Treatment Works, Godalming Town Council wished to register its concern that residents, and in particular those who are vulnerable, experienced unacceptable delays in accessing alternative supplies of water during the period of disruption. The Town Council also wished to discover why the loss occurred, why the response to the situation was so poor and what actions are being taken to prevent a recurrence. In particular, the council expressed concern regarding the poor communication and Thames Water's limited actions to ensure the vulnerable or those unable to queue for water, were provided with or were able to access drinking water.

Godalming Town Council wrote to Thames Water to request a detailed report of the cause of the disruption to supply and the steps taken to resolve the matter and:

- to seek assurances that residents and businesses will receive timely and full compensation for the disruption to water supply;
- that communications are improved for informing the local Godalming community should a similar disruption to water supply occur again; and
- for Thames Water to reassess its processes, procedures, and criteria for ensuring the vulnerable or those unable to queue are able to access alternative supplies of water in the event of a disruption.

Godalming Town Council was disappointed in the stock response it received which provided little confidence that lessons had been learnt or that improvements would be made. As such, Godalming Town Council resolved to work with Waverley Borough Council to determine what responsive plans can be put in place to try to alleviate the impact of this type of event on the most vulnerable residents in our community.

20 is Plenty

In October 2023, Godalming Town Council confirmed its belief that the implementation of a blanket 20mph speed limit in Godalming (which includes Binscombe, Farncombe, Busbridge (Holloway), combined with a public information campaign, would have immediate beneficial impacts on road safety, air quality, active transport and community well-being and would support the Council's climate emergency objectives.

Godalming Town Council has requested that Surrey County Council prioritises the establishment of a blanket 20mph speed limit in Godalming, tasking SCC Officers to work with this Council to draw up detailed plans on the scope, funding and implementation timetable of these schemes; and has requested Waverley Borough Council to task its Officers to work in partnership with Godalming Town Council and Surrey County Council in progressing a blanket 20mph speed limit in Godalming through commissioning a feasibility study.

Policy & Management Committee

The Policy & Management Committee is the main business and scrutiny committee of the Council, chaired by the Leader of the Council.

During 2024 it:

- agreed funding to the *Godalming Youth Services* to allow an increase in available staff hours to continue to deliver the youth service in a sustainable manner;
- took on sole responsibility for the management of Nightingale and Eashing Cemeteries;
- supported the Staffing Committee's recommendation and agreed funding for the recruitment of an Operations & Compliance Officer, additional maintenance staff and enhancements to support staff functions;
- led on Godalming Town Council's submission to the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Community Ownership Fund, which saw the awarding of £194,486 to support the refurbishment of the Crown Court Public Toilets;
- in partnership with Guildford Rugby Club, oversaw the successful re-introduction of a town bonfire and firework celebration;
- awarded grants to support local organisations and community groups (see *Grants*);
- scrutinised accounts paid and schedule of payments and monitored the approved budget throughout the year;
- reviewed Council documents, *policies and procedures*;
- identified the Council's priorities for the next four years and set out the Council's *Corporate Plan 2023-2027*;
- worked with Citizens Advice South-West Surrey, Farncombe Day Centre and The Wharf Nursery to establish Service Level Agreements between those organisations to support residents;
- continued to fund the development of the Godalming Business Improvement District towards the successful referendum for its creation in April 2024;
- approved funding for the installation of solar panels at Broadwater Youth & Community Centre;
- approved the submission of a planning application for the installation of air source heat pumps at Broadwater Youth & Community Centre, which will allow for further decarbonisation of the Council's properties;
- supported Staycation Live 2023;
- agreed for the Council's maintenance team to look after flower and shrubbery beds previously cared for by the Farncombe Initiative;
- worked with Waverley's Economic Development Team and agreed funding to help improve the look of empty retail units in the High Street; and
- agreed to work towards being able to expand burial provision through the digitising of records to be able to provide accurate data to support a future application for the re-use of land at Nightingale Cemetery.

Staffing Committee & Audit Committee

The roles of these committees are an important part of good governance and instrumental in Godalming Town Council being a "Quality Council".

The work of the Staffing Committee ensures that Godalming Town Council remains a good employer, which meets its obligations to staff, whilst also ensuring that the correct policies and procedures are in place for staff to provide the best service they can for the Council and the community. The Staffing Committee also works to ensure that the staffing structure of the Council is as efficient and effective as possible for the delivery of services.

The Audit Committee ensures that good financial governance and risk management are always to the fore of the council's work.

The work of both committees can be seen through their agenda and minute papers, which can be found on the [Town Council's website](#).

Godalming Youth Services

[Godalming Youth Services](#) exists to provide high-quality youth work for the young people of Godalming. The Town Council's Youth Services is a universal service – any young person can join; the only criterion is that they are in the correct age bracket. The Youth Team seeks to respond to young people's interests and passions, supporting them to discover and achieve their potential.

This year, the Youth Service has continued to provide a wide range of activities and services for young people in Godalming, including:

- After-School Drop-In, with themes and activities that are co-developed with young people
- Girls' Group that provides issued-based youth programmes for young women
- Music and Virtual Reality night that seeks to involve young people in digital creativity
- Our Juniors' group that provides young people with support in transitioning into secondary school
- Boys' Group providing issued-based work with young men
- Fri-Yays Youth Café, our Friday night programme that provides activities and a cooked meal

Additionally, the Youth Service has also delivered substantial school holiday provision, primarily through delivering the Club4 (Surrey's implementation of the Holiday Activity Fund) and undertook some work in partnership with local schools.

The team prides itself on being able to offer support to young people facing challenging situations and backgrounds. Several young people with special educational needs, emotional needs such as anxiety and behavioural issues attend projects at the youth centre. These issues have had significant impacts on their outcomes, and the team has been able to play a key role by providing them with positive activities that have boosted their confidence and enabled them to enact change in other parts of their lives.

During term-time, there are two sessions per day. An after-school drop-in between 3:00-5:00pm with a different theme each day such as creative arts, music, board games and others, followed by focused group-work between 6:30-8:30pm, such as a Girls' Night, Boys' Night, and several themed evenings.

A range of activities are also provided throughout the school holidays. The Godalming Youth Services partners with Active Surrey to deliver the Club4 Scheme for young people in Godalming, a scheme that primarily supports young people in receipt of Free School Meals but can also be used to support other young people that are deemed to need school holiday support.

In all the team's work, they seek to be led by the young people as the main stakeholders, developing opportunities that are aligned to their interests and bringing them enrichment in all areas. [The Town Council's Youth Services](#) seeks to inspire young people to make a difference and bring change by providing high-quality youth work.

BROADWATER YOUTH CENTRE

NEW YEAR PROGRAMME

8TH JAN - 28TH MARCH

MON	Culturally Creative <i>3:00 - 5:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>	Girls Night <i>6:30 - 8:30 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>
TUE	Chewsday Challenges <i>3:00 - 5:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>	Music and Virtual Reality <i>6:00 - 8:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>
WED	World Wednesdays <i>3:00 - 5:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>	Juniors (invite only) <i>5:45 - 8:15 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>
THUR	Gameshow Adventures <i>3:00 - 5:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>	Enable YOUth (invite only) <i>6:00 - 8:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>
FRI	Fri-Yay Chill Zone <i>3:00 - 5:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>	Fri-Yay's Youth Cafe <i>6:00 - 8:00 Broadwater Youth Centre</i>



Free for young people of secondary school age living in Godalming and surrounding villages.

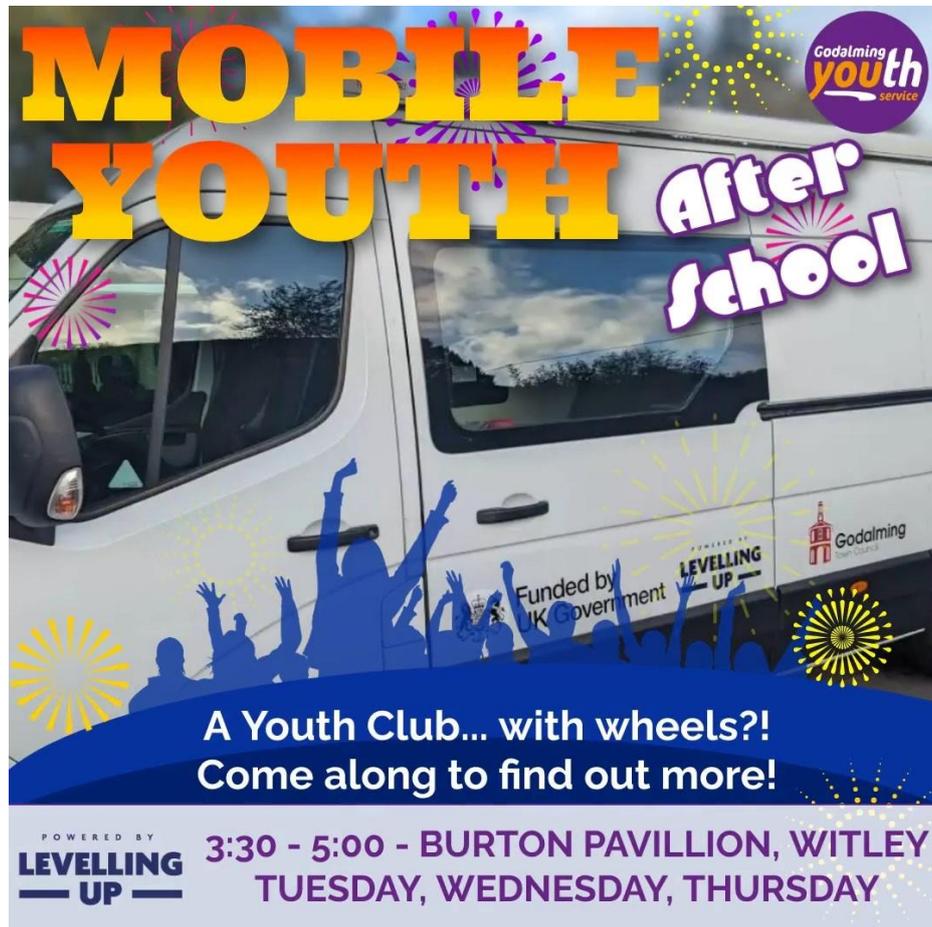
Register here: www.godalmingyouth.uk



Above: An Example of a Term-Time Programme for Broadwater Youth Centre

United Kingdom Share Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Having been successful in its application to the UKSPF or Levelling Up Fund as it is more commonly known, the Godalming Youth Services has expanded its service to include a mobile youth service provision. The UKSPF has allowed the Youth Services to purchase a minibus and an activity vehicle that they are able to use in different areas around Godalming. Additionally, as the funding is provided by central government via Waverley Borough Council, the mobile youth service has also been able to engage with young people from other areas around Godalming, including Milford & Witley and Elstead.



Community Support for the Youth Service

The Youth Centre would not be the success it is without the support of the community, the young people who use the centre, their parents and carers and the many local community groups who work so hard to support the centre to make a difference.

Special thanks must go to The Dan Eley Foundation, Rotary in Godalming, Godalming Round Table and Angus Secrett of Secrett Garden Landscapes, RHS Wisley and the many volunteers who support the staff and young people.



**The Dan Eley
Foundation**
Transforming young lives



Youth Service Annual Report

The Youth Service produces an annual report that highlights its work over the previous 12-months. The latest report is available on the [Town Council's website](#).

Community Events

Report from Godalming Town Council's Community & Communications Officer

Godalming Spring Festival 2023

The Spring Festival marks the start of the Town's annual events calendar and gives visitors a chance to stroll amongst stalls in the retail centre enjoying an array of food, drink and craft stalls and a Cider Festival. Entertainment from local artistes is centered around The Pepperpot and children enjoyed free Punch & Judy Shows.

Morris dancing is an important ingredient of the Spring Festival and visitors enjoyed performances during the day from Godalming's Fleur De Lys Dancers.

Thank you to Seymours Estate Agents and Surrey & Hants Property Agents for sponsoring the events advertising boards which benefit local charities.



Fleur De Lys Dancers

Spring Festival 2024 takes place on Saturday, 6 April

King's Coronation Concert



A concert to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III took place on a rainy Saturday 6 May, on The Bury's Field. A variety of per-



Braving the Rain at the Coronation Concert

formances took place from Godalming Rock Choir, Stolen Thieves, Just a Jester, The Beached Boys and a Pink Floyd Tribute Band. Endless Floyd. Food stalls and a beer tent helped make the celebration an event to remember.

Godalming Staycation 2023

Godalming Town Council is one of the few local councils in the UK to organise an extensive Staycation programme for residents to enjoy during the first week in August helping residents to 'holiday at home'. Staycation events and activities are suitable for individuals, families, and groups of all ages to enjoy who live in Godalming and its villages. With the notable exception of 2020, there has been a Staycation programme every year since it was launched in 2010. The week started with the popular TST Staycation Live Music Festival, with a variety of bands, music, festival vibes and food, and drink stalls at the Phillips Memorial Park.

The Staycation Programme 2023 saw the return of some old favourites and some new things for residents to try; tennis, bowls, a special morning of football coaching at Godalming Town Football Club's Bill Kyte Stadium, the Park Run, swimming at the Charterhouse Club and

Godalming Leisure Centre, a range of canoeing and kayaking activities, drumming workshops and handbell ringing were but a few. Ladywell Convent welcomed visitors back for a tour followed by a delicious afternoon tea. Residents also had the opportunity to try fishing, a brass instrument, play board games, card games and special sessions of Dungeon's & Dragons were held for both beginners and seasoned players. Residents could try several dance and fitness classes and Godalming Museum held some under-the-sea themed activities throughout the week. Bowls, a family film "Oddball and the Penguins, crafts, singing, a visit to Godalming Fire Station, an evening mountain bike ride, crafts activities at the library, walks, and more were on offer as part of the week-long programme.

Another of the many highlights was a morning of Fun & Games at Broadwater Lodge and Farm where visitors enjoyed a morning of fun and crafts with the residents and visiting the animals at the "Old Codger's Farm". There was a Travel with Confidence Day trip to the Isle of Wight, a complementary day trip opportunity for 4 families with young children to travel with confidence by SWR train and Hoverspeed from Portsmouth across to the Island. Another highlight was from the Escape Room experts Paradox Parlours Escape Rooms who bought a bespoke Secret Escapes Activity to Godalming, "The Case of the Nibbled Cake Puzzle Trail" where over one hundred participants followed a map to find clues to discover 6 locked boxes to crack the puzzle.



An Escape Room Lock Box

The wide range of activities for people to stay at home in August and to enjoy a Staycation would not be possible without the generous support of the many organisations and individuals who provide these activities.

Staycation 2024 takes place from 3-10 August

Godalming Green Gala



Cycle safety check by the 'Bike doctor'

The Green Gala took place on Saturday, 12 August and offered visitors the opportunity to engage and learn about living sustainably and protecting the environment. A variety of stalls provided advice on how to make switches to help reduce carbon footprint. Traders offered sustainably sourced products including jewellery, clothing, food, beauty products. How to 'grow your own' experts were on hand, visitors found out about sustainable travel, were able to get their bike's checked by Dr Bike and how to use a seedbank. The Yard Market bought their refill station for shampoos, laundry detergents and other household products.

There were activities for children on how to make environmentally friendly toys using leaves, clay and twigs and the What Next team's Rubbish Puppet Theatre performed a puppet show. Music and entertainment plus vegan and veggie savoury food and sweet treats were on offer.

Having held the Godalming Green Gala for three years, the Town Council is now supporting a Plant-Based & Artisan market in the High Street.



Hoppa's new electric minibus

The next Plant-Based & Artisan Market will be Saturday, 4 May.

Remembrance in Godalming



Remembrance Sunday 2023 was held on Sunday, 12 November and is one of the most important events in the civic year organised by Godalming Town Council.

A service of Remembrance was held at the Godalming Parish Church of St Peter & St Paul attended by the Mayor of Godalming's civic party and representatives from community groups and organisations. Following the service in the Parish Church, an Act of Remembrance including a two-minute silence took place at the War Memorial in the Phillips Memorial Ground. Wreaths were laid at the War Memorial by representatives from the town's civic and political leaders, service organisations, youth groups, faith groups and other community organisations. As always, service personnel and service veterans from the armed forces along with the emergency services, as well as the town's youth organisations were invited to parade at the event and were led by the Godalming Band. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Godalming were joined by the Mayor of Waverley to take the salute in the high street.



Remembrance Sunday 2024 is on 10 November

Godalming Fireworks

Godalming Town Council partnered with the Rugby Club saw the return of Godalming's Fireworks. The event took place at the Rugby Club on Friday, 3 November with a torch parade, food concessions and warm hospitality offered by the Club.

The 2024 Godalming Firework Display will be held on Friday, 1 November



Godalming Christmas Festival and Lights Switch-On



Santa's Helpers at the Grotto at Godalming Museum.

The Town Council's Christmas Festival took place on Saturday, 25 November 2023. Festive stalls with artisan food and drink, crafts and gifts were situated in the High Street, Church Street and Crown Court. The Pepperpot played host to a packed programme of seasonal entertainment including Godalming's Rock Choir led by Tom George, Moss Lane School and Wharf Nursery children, who delighted the crowd with their festive singing, and the Milford & Brook School of dance who, once again, gave sterling performances in extremely cold weather. Special guest, Bluey delighted young children at meet and greet sessions.

The Town Council's Santa's grotto was held at Godalming Museum and visiting families were able to say hello to Santa and

encouraged to write letters that were then posted to the North Pole. Santa's Sleigh, courtesy of Godalming Round Table, was parked outside of the Museum.



Christmas Lights in Crown Court Credit: Matthew Gordon Photography

The Godalming Band played during the build-up to the countdown of the Town's dazzling lights, which were switched on at 5pm with assistance from the Town Mayor, Godalming Theatre Group's Prince and Princess from their panto Aladdin, Bluey and Father Christmas. After some rousing Christmas songs led by the Godalming Band, residents were also invited to place a tag for their loved ones on the Memory Tree situated in Crown Court.

Thank you to Surrey & Hants Property Agents for supporting Bluey's visit. Thank you too, to Priory Antiques and The Peter Caudle Memorial Trust for providing the selection boxes children received at Santa's Grotto.

Christmas in Godalming 2024 starts on Sunday, 24 November with a light-parade. Godalming Christmas Market takes place on Saturday 30 November Farncombe Christmas Lights Switch-on Friday 6 December and Farncombe Christmas Market on Saturday 7 December

Farncombe Christmas Lights Switch-on

Farncombe Christmas Lights switch-on, organised by the Town Council and hosted by Farncombe Day Centre, takes place on the first Friday in December. This year the crowd were again delighted by a performance from Farncombe Infant School who sang some Christmas songs, a rousing performance from You Uke's singing their own brand of Christmas songs and Godalming's Round Table bought Santa on his illuminated sleigh to say hello. Reverend James Rattue was in attendance and together with the Mayor of Godalming, Councillor Adam Duce, led everyone in some rousing carols after the lights were switched-on at 5pm. The wonderful staff at Farncombe Day Centre provided mulled wine and refreshments for everyone.



The Round Table's Christmas Sleigh

Farncombe Christmas Lights Switch-on 2024 will take place on Friday 6 December.

Godalming Pop-Up Events and Markets

Friday Market, Pepperpot Undercroft, and the newly introduced Plant-Based & Artisan Market.



Friday's weekly market continues to flourish and allows traders to operate in Crown Court. Anchors of the Friday pop-up are 'Phil the Flower' with his plants and shrubs and Household Heaven who have been joined throughout the year by MKS Foods with Baklava, olives and Turkish Delight, the Watch Stall, Wrap Up In Style clothing, Moldova Cheese, pates and patisserie and other ad- hoc traders.

Crown Court has also played host to charities wanting to raise their profiles. The Pepperpot Undercroft continues to be used for Danny's fruit and veg market plus other sellers throughout the year.

A new Plant-Based & Artisan Market was trialled on 28 October and included vegan food, drinks, and crafts. There are plans to hold 4 markets throughout the year in Godalming High Street

The next Plant-Based & Artisan Market takes place on Saturday, 4 May

Farncombe Station Market

Working with South Western Railway, as part of Godalming Town Council's involvement with the Hills to Harbour Community Rail Partnership, the Council was able to introduce a new market at Farncombe Station Car Park; the first of which took place on Saturday, 23 September. A variety of stalls participated including fresh bread, eggs, flowers, local honey, crafts, cakes and chutneys and jams. A Christmas market was also held there on Saturday, 2 December.

Thank you to South Western Railway for allowing permission to bring the markets to Farncombe.

Next Market at Farncombe Station Car Park will be on Saturday, 16 March



Farncombe Station Market

Maintenance

Through the seasons with the Maintenance Team

As always seems to be the case for the Maintenance Team, 2023 was an extremely busy year. Not only did the team ensure that the council's buildings and open spaces were maintained to a high standard, it also supported over 80 burials at Eashing and Nightingale Cemeteries.

Work over the winter and spring included conducting safety inspections of memorials in Godalming's cemeteries as well as undertaking memorial inspections at Milford Cemetery. The Maintenance Team also set out new flower beds at Eashing Cemetery and, for the first time started to propagate plants from seed for use in flower beds around the town.



Floral Godalming High Street Planters

As spring approached the team replaced a number of the older flower troughs and started preparing them for the Floral Godalming displays. The flower troughs were installed in May after the last frost, alongside some new freestanding flower tubs around the town centre.

The sustainability of the annual flower displays remains an important consideration for the Council. Whilst the majority of the plant stock is currently sourced from local, independent nurseries who grow from seed, the Maintenance Team is delighted to include some of the plants it had propagated and hopes that the proportion

grown by GTC will increase over time, which will continue to reduce the carbon footprint of Floral Godalming.

As in previous years, the grass cutting schedule is managed to reflect not only the growing conditions, but also to prolong the availability of wildflowers as much as possible. Several areas are now being left to grow undisturbed to allow feeding insects to capitalise on any available flowers.

The end of the nesting season saw the team busy with hedge trimming and clearing vegetation from pathways.

Unfortunately, the team has to continue to manage invasive weeds and plants which includes bracken crushing and mowing at Eashing Cemetery, Himalayan Balsam trashing along Hell Ditch and Mares Tail control along the Nightingale fence line. This work involves a lot of manual labour but necessarily so, to negate the use of pesticides or herbicides.



As has happened at Eashing Cemetery for over 100 years, as the summer came to an end, we 'brought in our harvest' by mowing the long meadow swards and wildflower meadows.

One unavoidable aspect of grounds maintenance is green waste. The green waste generated by GTC is stored at Eashing Cemetery and recycled into a growing medium for amenity planting by a local contractor.

The Maintenance Team also undertook several grounds maintenance tasks on behalf of Surrey County Council. These were mainly overgrown pathways and clearance of unsafe steps around the town and repairing of broken railings at Grove Road. Staff also continue to clean road and direction signs around the town as well as cutting back shrubbery to maintain sight lines at junctions and for road signs.



November saw the third phase of planting for the Community Orchard Project South East's (COPSE) fruit tree planting as well as work on the Eashing Community Garden.

Litter picking on all GTC-managed land and on Surrey County Council reactive works projects took place throughout the year and on average a bin bag full of litter was collected every week.

South & South-East in Bloom

South & South-East in Bloom is part of Britain in Bloom and runs annual competitions across the counties of Kent, Surrey, East & West Sussex, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, East & North Dorset and East Wiltshire. The award system recognises entrants' efforts in improving their local environment and awards are based on the standard achieved.

Each year entries participate from villages, parishes, towns, cities, coastal towns, town & city centres, urban communities and business improvement districts. Judges/assessors visit communities and awards are presented to recognise the entries' achievements. Bloom judges visited Godalming in July. The Town Council entered three Categories:

Town Centre – The In-Bloom Judges awarded a Silver Gilt, “Very Good”



Just missing out by 3 points on achieving a Gold award, the Silver-Gilt award is nonetheless a great achievement for the town. The judges specifically noted the wildflower (XR) garden that includes perennial shrub and grasses planting providing year-round interest at a busy road junction, and that it is well maintained, uses locally sourced mulch and is 'bee kind'. The High Street, Church Street, Pepperpot and Bridge Street were noted for their excellent seasonal displays, some of which are all year round. The judges commented that gardeners care and maintenance of these is

to be commended and that the additional use of perennials shows appropriate selection and additional use of sustainable longer-term plants. The Council's gardener's excellent attention to detail and knowledge of the plants was also commended as was their aspiration to increase use of planting celebrating the local and national garden designer, Jekyll.

The judges also visited the museum and found its garden to be a delight; cared for by a knowledgeable volunteer. The town's pubs were also praised for providing a welcome lift to their locations having made a real investment into attractive bedding displays in addition to the shops, businesses and town's floral planters.

Nightingale & Eashing Cemetery – The In-Bloom Judges awarded a Gold, “Excellent”

Once again Nightingale Cemetery was awarded Gold by the South and South-East in Bloom judges who said that “Nightingale had beautiful curb appeal as we approached Nightingale Cemetery, entering through the main gate your eye is taken to the very striking memorial garden, designed by Michelle Clarkson, showing the central bed of blue lavender and perennial geraniums making an eye catching feature, this bed has 281 sleepers constructed in an upright design honouring the 281 men from Godalming who lost their lives in the Great War. This garden has inbuilt seats for visitors' use while contemplating”.



Nightingale Cemetery Memorial Garden



The Judges went on to say “The cemetery, which opened for burials in 1857, has 2 chapels joined together; these listed buildings are now used by Skillway Workshops teaching practical skills to 14–16-year-olds. Patches of wildflower sowings show up very well against the beautifully kept grounds around the gravestones; there is a programme to replace some of the yew trees, not liked by birds, with native trees to encourage birds into the cemetery. The only hedging used by birds is on a bank behind the cemetery; this does not belong to the cemetery so tidying it up is very difficult. The drive up to the chapels used to come down the hill and exit through another gate; this roadway has been removed to make more space for burials. Improved signage installed at the entrance and outside the chapel gives a map and history of the cemetery including a holder for leaflets. I would like to see cleaning of the street furniture and perhaps a few more seats around this idyllic cemetery”.

Achieving the same result in 2023 as the previous year when Eashing Cemetery was judged to be the best Large Cemetery for the whole of the South & South-East region was always going to be a challenge. However, the Maintenance Team was able to present a cemetery that was judged to be ‘excellent’.



Eashing Cemetery Wildflower Trial Growing Area

As noted by the judges, a number of trees had to be removed from the cemetery due to disease and that new replacement trees will take time to be established to recreate the more intimate feel. The Town Council is working with the Community Orchard Project South-East (COPSE) as part of a 5-year plan to bring a variety of tree planting to the cemetery.

Godalming Cemeteries are not only places of peace and tranquillity for residents and visitors, but they are also havens for wildlife, flora, and pollinating insects.

Buildings & Public Realm

The nuts, bolts and unpleasant jobs of maintaining GTC-owned properties



As has been mentioned in previous annual reports, the maintenance of Crown Court Public Toilets, especially the drains, continues to be a significant challenge. It was therefore with great interest that Godalming Town Council read of changes that came into effect in April 2023 to the criteria for applying to the Government's Community Ownership Fund, which allowed town and parish councils to bid against this fund. Godalming Town Council made a strong, evidence-based funding application and became one of the first Town Council's to be awarded

funding from the fund. Having received an award of just under £195,000, Godalming Town Council has been able to submit a planning application to renovate the Crown Court Public Toilets to be able to provide modern, hygienic facilities fit for the 21st century. Work should begin in late June for completion by the end of September.

As well as conducting planned maintenance and repairs, a wide range of reactive repairs and maintenance were undertaken to the council's and other public properties.

The Maintenance Team also supports activities at the Wilfrid Noyce Centre by building the stage and setting out seating for concerts and other events as well as supporting community events including the Godalming Run, Fireworks, Remembrance and Christmas events.

Localism – Working with Surrey County Council

Godalming Town Council continues to work with Surrey Highways to identify issues relating to footpaths, alleyways, culverts, and land drainage, which have concerned local residents. Being more local and utilising its own workforce, Godalming Town Council has been able to undertake some of this work more effectively and at a lower cost, which, in turn, has meant that more areas of concern have been addressed.

Godalming & Villages Community Store

The *Community Store* was originally established in April 2020 by the Godalming & Farncombe Coronavirus Assistance Group, a Facebook community group, to support those from our community who, due to the Coronavirus restrictions suddenly found themselves redundant, furloughed or waiting for Universal Credit. However, as the Coronavirus restrictions eased, it was clear that with the rising number of people facing food anxiety and insecurity because of the 'Cost of Living Crisis' there would need to be a wider strategy to support the Food Bank and provide solutions for those facing, probably for the first time ever, food insecurity.



The Community Store is all about the community supporting its friends and neighbours during challenging and difficult times. As the store has evolved, the volunteers who operate it are always looking to the future and the store is now established as an independent registered charity (Charity Number 1199787).

Grants

As stated earlier in the report, Godalming Town Council has supported a wide range of organisations in the town with grant aid totalling £58,896 in 2023/24. This is an important part of the Town Council's work recognising the huge contribution that these organisations make to the quality of life in our community.

The largest of these grants was to Citizens Advice South-West Surrey to ensure the continued provision of a citizen's advice service in Godalming. Other organisations supported by Service Level Agreements (SLAs) in 2023/24, where funding is linked to the provision of a service that benefits residents of Godalming, were The Hoppa Community Transport, the Farncombe Day Centre and The Wharf Nursery receiving £13,000 between them per annum.

As the current SLAs were coming to an end on 31 March 2024, between September and December 2023, the Council reviewed each of the agreements, with new four-year agreements being awarded to the Citizens Advice South-West Surrey, Farncombe Day Centre and The Wharf Nursery.

At a lower, but equally important level, the Council also awarded grants to many other local organisations through its General Grants and Community Grants Funds. As well as monetary grants, several organisations were also given grant aid in kind in the form of free use of Town Council's buildings for meetings or to facilitate an event (those grants have a cash value put on the grant so that the support is properly accounted for).

Below is a full list of all grants awarded by Godalming Town Council in the financial year 2023/24 including Grant Aid in Kind (GAiK) for use of venues.

2023/24	£
Service Level Agreements	
Citizens' Advice South-West Surrey	28,000.00
Farncombe Day Centre	5,000.00
Waverley Hoppa Community Transport	5,000.00
The Wharf Nursery Group	3,500.00
General & Community Grants	
Farncombe & District Allotment Association (GAiK)	36.00
Farncombe Cricket Club	250.00
What Next?	850.00
Godalming Round Table (GAiK)	192.00
Go Godalming Association (GAiK)	54.00
Go Godalming Association (GAiK)	112.00
Godalming Run (GAiK)	80.00
Godalming Film Society (GAiK)	400.00
Farncombe Youth Football Club/Milford Pumas	750.00
Farncombe Football Club	700.00
Farncombe CofE Infant School	7,500.00
Godalming in Bloom	500.00
ChoirBLAST	1,000.00
WBC Economic Development Team	1,000.00
1254 (Godalming) Squadron Air Training Corps	380.00
1254 (Godalming) Squadron Air Training Corps	1,000.00
Godalming Junior School	1,516.00
Godalming Junior School	376.00
Godalming Run	700.00
TOTAL GRANT FUNDING	£58,896.00

Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Fund

The Waverley Borough Council Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule was adopted on 31 October 2018 and the charge has been implemented since 1 March 2019.

The CIL allows Waverley Borough Council (WBC) to raise funds, from some forms of new development, to help fund the infrastructure needed to mitigate the impacts of new development. CIL funds are used for either infrastructure of wider strategic benefit to the Borough or local infrastructure.

The regulations that govern how CIL is spent require that Godalming Town Council utilises the Neighbourhood element of CIL allocated towards either:

- the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure, or
- anything else that is concerned with addressing the demands that development places on Godalming.

These definitions allow Godalming Town Council and the local community to consider quite broadly what is needed to help to mitigate the impacts of development in Godalming. The definition of infrastructure is broad and includes roads and other transport infrastructure,

schools and other educational facilities, medical facilities, sporting and recreational facilities and open spaces.

Godalming Town Council works closely with the local community and infrastructure providers to identify potential improvement schemes, encouraging and, if applicable, sponsoring applications put forward.

Godalming Town Council has a five-year period in which to spend CIL monies from the date received, thus funds may be accumulated to provide for major projects. The level of CIL receipts available for funding CIL projects is dependent upon the level of development and will not be a constant or continuous funding source.

Final decisions for the approval of CIL applications and disbursement of CIL payments must be made at a meeting of Godalming Town Council's Full Council.

CIL Awarded in 2023/24

£108,890 was awarded to Broadwater School to support the Broadwater School Outside Recreational Garden Project and specifically for the 'The Canopy Garden' which provides much needed additional seating for pupils at breaktimes and performance space, with planting and new trees creating a more relaxing environment.



Broadwater School Students performing on the new outdoor stage

£13,580, was awarded to the Farncombe Community Garden Project for the construction of accessible pathways throughout the garden, which will make the garden accessible and safe to the public and enable us to open the garden to everyone in the community.

£90,000 was awarded to Broadwater Youth & Community Centre for the construction of new offices at the Youth Centre to support Godalming's youth workers.

£41,500 was awarded to Godalming Town Council as the community's contribution to the Crown Court Public Toilets renovation project.

Completed CIL Projects

Busbridge Junior School's new Multi Games Activity Area which will be used by school and community groups. The school was awarded £125,000 from Neighbourhood CIL in December 2022.

Godalming Junior School's refurbishment of its existing all-weather play area. The school was awarded £23,000 from Neighbourhood CIL in August 2022

Farncombe Community Garden and Broadwater School, as mentioned above.



Mayor of Godalming Cllr Adam Duce Opening the Busbridge Junior School 'MUGA'

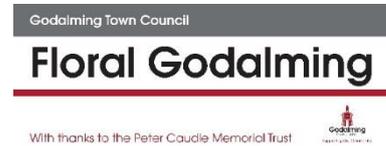
THANK YOU



Godalming Town Council wishes to thank the many wonderful organisations, individuals and volunteers who give freely of their resources to the Council and their community.



Music in the Park
Godalming

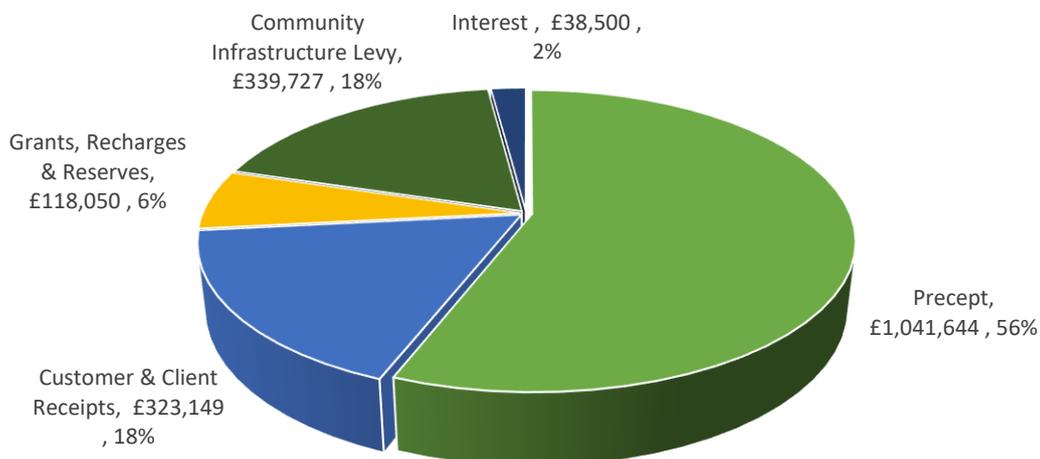


Annual Accounts 2023/24

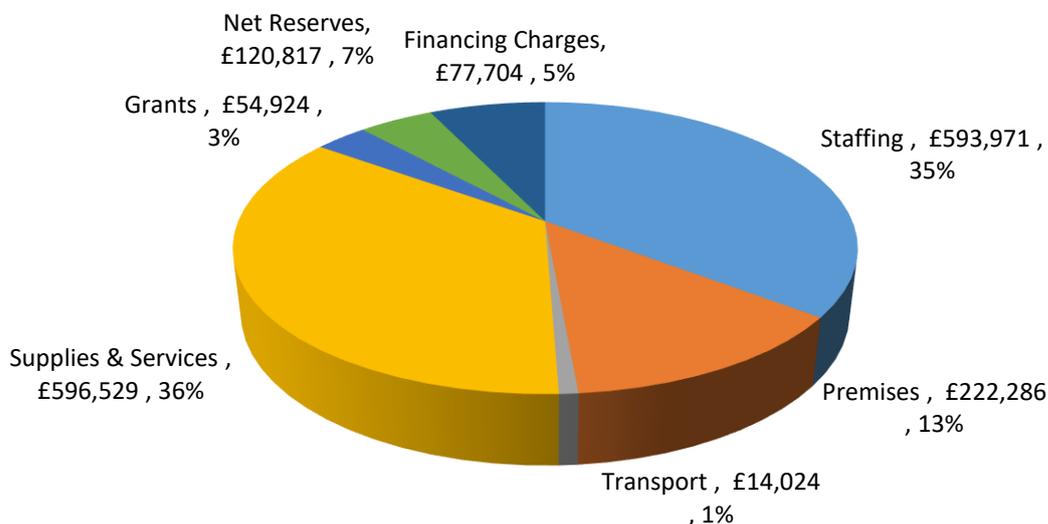
The Council's accounts are prepared in accordance with the Account & Audit Regulations 2015. They are subject to internal audit (by an independent auditor appointed by the Town Council) and to external audit (by a different auditor appointed by the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd). Every year local government electors are given an opportunity to examine the Council's accounts and financial records and the accounts will also be published on the Town Council's website.

Below is a summary (unaudited) of how the Council's budget (including overheads) was spent in 2023/24 up to February 2024.

Where the Money Came From



Where the Money Went



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Contact details for Godalming Town Council staff can be found on the [Council's website](http://www.godalming-tc.gov.uk).

CORPORATE PLAN 2023/27

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PART ONE – DEMOCRACY, ACCOUNTABILITY AND GOVERNANCE

Strategic Objective: Engage further with residents. Develop GTC as an organisation.

PART TWO – GREEN SPACES

Strategic Objective: Expand GTC green spaces. Develop and increase the team to manage them.

PART THREE – INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

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PART FOUR – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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PART SIX – WELLBEING, LEISURE & THE ARTS

Strategic Objective: Supporting cultural and leisure activities in our community.

PART SEVEN – CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Strategic Objective: Supporting children and young people through the Godalming Youth Service.

APPENDIX – CONSOLIDATED ACTION PLAN

PART ONE – DEMOCRACY, ACCOUNTABILITY, GOVERNANCE & COMMUNICATIONS

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Build upon our democratic and participatory form of governance, by giving the public more opportunity to engage with Town Council business.
2. Empower young people in the town by developing a Godalming Youth Council.
3. Remain alert to opportunities to seek devolution of services from Waverley Borough Council and Surrey County Council, as appropriate to meet local needs.
4. Expand in-house service provision, where beneficial to do so, rather than contracted-out service delivery.
5. Seek designation as a Living Wage Employer.
6. Improve communication with residents regarding the work and activity of the Town Council.
7. Ensure the Godalming & Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan remains robust and based upon current information.
8. Support and promote Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

PART TWO – GREEN SPACES

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Protect open/green spaces for the community and to maximise community benefit.
2. Expand public land holdings within the boundary of Godalming Town Council to have control of and manage our local spaces.
3. Expand the grounds team accordingly to be able to manage land acquisitions.
4. Devise a coherent strategy for enhancing planting and biodiversity within areas of green spaces.
5. Consult and engage the public on our Green Spaces Strategy.

PART THREE – INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Act ethically and sustainably in our procurement and support local businesses where possible.
2. Encourage the development of local, sustainable businesses that meet local demand.
3. Lobby for local infrastructure to support residents and local businesses now and in the future including opportunities to improve communication infrastructure and provide for active travel.
4. Provide grants, support and promotion for local businesses that are actively working towards becoming carbon neutral.

5. Improve the recording and management of Town Council assets.
6. Continue support for community food security initiatives.
7. Lobby developers to offer Waverley affordable housing (65% or 70% of market rents) as part of their proposed developments with proper infrastructure such as charging points.
8. Support and encourage GTC contractors to provide training and apprenticeships.
9. Encourage and promote multi-agency approach to support community safety.

PART FOUR – ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Godalming Town Council reaffirms its declaration of a climate and ecological emergency.

A – Biodiversity and Ecology Management Measures

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Promote at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on private land and ensure it on land that we own.
2. Prohibit the use of pesticides and herbicides to the maximum extent possible on GTC land and encourage others to do likewise.
3. Promote the development of community gardens and natural wildlife corridors.
4. Protect and manage soils, planting, and landscape to lock in carbon and prevent soil degradation wherever possible.
5. Support measures to improve air quality and water quality across the Godalming Town Council area.

B – Carbon Reduction/Energy Management Measures

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Ensure that Godalming Town Council is carbon neutral across Scope 1 & 2 by 2025 and across all other areas of its own operations by 2030.
2. Ensure net zero scope 3 emissions by 2030.
3. Lobby for and where possible, deliver infrastructure for electric vehicles ahead of 2030.
4. Promote an understanding of the climate and ecological crisis amongst our community and work together on strategies for reduction of individual carbon footprint.
5. Support divestment in fossil fuels and oppose development of new sources for fossil fuels through 'fracking', 'acidisation', drilling and other unsustainable approaches.
6. Strive to be a net exporter of renewable energy to the grid by 2030.

C – Water Conservation / Water Management Measures

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Develop a cohesive water management strategy for GTC including a baseline of current consumption.
2. Continue to support cleaner rivers through ongoing support for Water Rangers, The River Wey Trust and strategies to promote cleaner rivers and hold water companies and polluters to account.

D – Waste Management and Other Environmental Management Issues

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Promote the concept of Godalming becoming a zero-waste town by encouraging repair, reuse, and re-fashioning in addition to recycling an increasingly wide range of items, diminishing the quantity of residual waste generated across the town.
2. Create a GTC Waste Reduction Plan and promote strategies for reducing, reusing, and recycling.
3. Encourage the reduction in the use of plastic packaging and single use plastic throughout Godalming.

PART FIVE – SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Promote opportunities for a balanced, pedestrian and cycle-friendly, sustainable, and affordable public transport system.
2. Support the Godalming/Guildford Greenway project.
3. Support and engage with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP).
4. Support Waverley Borough Council in the development of an integrated and sustainable local public transport in Godalming.
5. Pursue a pedestrian-priority zone within the High Street in Godalming whilst maintaining accessibility.
6. Continue to lobby for the implementation of a 20mph speed limit for the Godalming Town Council area and take action to promote active and sustainable travel.

PART SIX – WELLBEING, LEISURE & THE ARTS AND EVENTS

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Encourage and promote access to sports and leisure facilities and the arts for all.
2. Support Sport Godalming and Art Godalming in encouraging and enabling greater and wider participation in sports and the arts in Godalming.
3. Engage with Waverley Borough Council on the Broadwater Park Project. Continue to encourage public participation in shaping future leisure plans for the site.

4. Consider additional town events and to continuously review our existing events roster.
5. Refresh the relationship with Godalming Museum to expand the learning opportunities within our community on a sustainable financial basis and promote an understanding of the local area, sustainability and biodiversity, the arts and local history through the Godalming Museum and Godalming Town Council links with local schools.

PART SEVEN – CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Godalming Town Council will:

1. Support and encourage training and apprenticeship schemes for young people particularly in areas where there are local skill shortages, working with Waverley Training Services and other providers as appropriate.
2. Support the development of nursery provision and services for parents and families within the Godalming Town Council area.
3. Expand the scope and impact of the Youth Service in Godalming and the surrounding area so that every child of secondary school age in the town can access the service.
4. Engage with and support other stakeholders, including the Godalming & Villages Community Store, to tackle holiday hunger.

Calendar of Events in Godalming Jan 2024-Dec 2024

Calendar of Events in Godalming Jan 2024-Dec 2024					Key:	GTC Events	GTC Partnered Event	GTC Supported Event	Other Events						
Organiser	Event	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Benefit	
GTC	Weekly Friday Pop Up	5,12,19,26	2,9,16,23	1,8,15,22,29	6,12,19,26	3,10,17,24,31	7,14,21,28	5,12,19,26	2,9,16,23,30	6,13,20,27	4,11,18,25	1,8,15,22,29	6,13,20,27	Economic/ Place-making	
GTC	Spring Festival				Sat 6									Economic/ Place-making	
GTC	Godalming Museum Reminiscence Club	Mon 15	Mon 19	Mon 18	Mon 15	Mon 20	Mon 17	Mon 15	Mon 19	Mon 16	Mon 21	Mon 18	Mon 16	Well-being	
GTC	Floral Godalming Judging						w/c 24 tbc	w/c 8 tbc						Well-being / Place-making	
GTC	Staycation Holiday Programme								Sat 3 - Sun 11					Economic/ Place-making / well-being	
GTC	TST Staycation Live Music Festival								Fri 2, Sat 3,					Economic/ Place-making / well-being	
GTC	Shakespeare Walk								Sat 10					Well-being / Place-making	
GTC	Farncombe Market Station car park			Sat 16			Sat 15			Sat 21				Economic/ Place-making	
GTC	Remembrance Service and Parade											Sun 10		Civic	
GTC	Godalming Christmas Lights Parade											Sun24		Well-being / Place-making	
GTC	Godalming Christmas Festival Market											Sat 30		Well-being / Place-making	
GTC	Farncombe Christmas Lights												Fri 6	Well-being / Place-making	
GTC	Farncombe Christmas Market												Sat 7	Well-being / Place-making	

Calendar of Events in Godalming Jan 2024-Dec 2024

Organiser	Event	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Benefit
GTC/GDCOC	Food Festival/Classic Car Fest							Sun 7						Economic/ Place-making
Sport Godalming	Godalming Run					Sun 19								Economic/ Place-making / well-being
Godalming Rugby Club	Fireworks											Fri 1		Well-being / Place-making
GTC/EVE	Plant Based Artisan Market			Sat 2		Sat 4			Sat 3			Sat 2		Economic/ Place-making / well-being
GTC/Hills to Harbour/SWR	Walking Festiva				Thurs 11									Well-being
GTC/Hills to Harbour/SWR	Bike Dr Event/bike marking			Sat 16			Sat 15			Sat 21				Well-being
Churches Together in Godalming CTIG	Good Friday Event			Fri 29										Well-being
Churches Together in Godalming CTIG	Christmas Service												Sat14 Dec	Well-being
Rotary in Godalming	Godalming Repair Café	Sat 27	Sat 24	Sat 30	Sat 27	Sat 26	Sat 29	Sat 27	Sat 31	Sat 28	Sat 26	Sat 30	Sat 28	Economic
Rotary in Godalming	Duck Race									TBC				Well-being / Place-making
Rotary in Godalming	Spring Fayre (the Burys)					Sat 4								Economic/ Place-making / well-being
Godalming Film Society/GTC	Relaxed Screening (WNC)	Sat 20		Sat 16		Sat 20		Sat 20		Sat 16				Well-being
Go Godalming Association	Music in the Park Bandstand Concerts				Sun 28	Sun 6, 12, 19, 26	Sun 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	Sun 7, 14, 21, 28	Sun 4, 11, 18, 26	Sun 8, 15, 22				Economic/ Place-making / well-being

Calendar of Events in Godalming Jan 2024-Dec 2024

Organiser	Event	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Benefit
Godalming Round Table	Round Table Town Show & Carnival						Sat 1							Place-making / well-being
Choirblast	Choirblast Festival (Phillips Memorial Park)						Sat 8							Well-being
Godalming Trust	Surrey Heritage Open Weekend								14-15					Well-being
Sport Godalming	Go Godalming Association Sport for all Awards											Fri 22		Well-being
Tesla/Godalming Theatre Group	Autumn Pumpkin Trail										w/c 20			Well-being
Godalming Performing Arts Committee	Godalming Music Festival		14 Feb - 19 Mar											Place-making / well-being
Godalming Trust	Godalming Trust Guided Town Walks					tbc	tbc	tbc						Place-making / well-being
Surrey Beer Festival	Surrey Beer Festival (the Burys)						21/22							Economic/ Place-making
Sausage & Cider	Surrey Beer Festival (the Burys)										tbc			Economic/ Place-making