

Godalming Town Council



**Annual Report
2008-09**

This version of the report is published by Godalming Town Council for the Annual Town Meeting
16 April 2009



FACTS

Godalming Town Council.....

- Continues a Mayoral tradition dating back to 1575
- Has 20 elected Members
- Controls assets of £8.5 million
- Holds around 50 Council or Committee meetings a year; all of which are open to the public
- Employs/retains a Town Clerk, Personal Assistant to the Town Clerk & Mayor, Facilities & Cemeteries Manager, Responsible Finance Officer, Sergeant-at-Mace and two Community Centre Managers (that is just over four full-time equivalent staff)
- Provides £70,000 a year funding to local organisations
- Manages three community buildings; the Old Town Hall (Pepperpot), the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, and Broadwater Park Community Centre
- Provides the land for over 200 allotments
- Together with Busbridge Parish Council owns and runs two cemeteries
- Provides Christmas Lights for the Godalming Town Centre
- Is one of a diminishing number of councils in the UK still to require its councillors and staff to wear robes and regalia at Council meetings and Civic occasions
- Organises the Town's annual Remembrance Sunday Parade
- Nominates representatives to serve on about 20 local voluntary, public and community organisations
- Comments on around 300 planning applications each year

FACTS



The Pepperpot with Christmas Lights



The Burys Allotments



INTRODUCTION

Hello – and welcome to Godalming Town Council's 2008-09 Annual Report.

Godalming Town Council has been around in one form or another for a long time, since 1575 in fact. The organisation of Local Government has changed over the years. Today Godalming Town Council is the third in three tiers of local government for the town. The other two being Surrey County Council and Waverley Borough Council.



Godalming Town Council has 20 Councillors representing the five wards within the town – you can find Councillors' contact details at the back of this report. The Town Council has a number of roles, one of the most important of which is to foster and encourage a sense of community in the Town and to act as advocate for the town when dealing with other local authorities, the health service and so on. The Town Mayor is elected annually from amongst the Town Councillors and it has been my pleasure and privilege to have been Town Mayor for the past year.

In common with all Mayors, and on your behalf, I have opened shops, fairs, gardens, bonfires, watched plays and dance, opera, classical music, children's choirs. And I have spoken with many people and spoken for Godalming Town Council to many people.

It was a particular privilege to visit Mayen in Germany to celebrate 25 years of twinning and friendship. It was especially poignant to sit with our host, Herr Schaeffer, for the Civic dinner in the slate mine under the castle, called by him, "the bunker", and to be shown by him the exact spot in which he sheltered on the night that the Allies rained down bombs onto Mayen which all but destroyed the town. Abraham Lincoln said, "How do I change my enemy? By making him my friend!" It is good that Godalming can boast of so many years of friendship with both Mayen and Joigny.

The Civic Year in Godalming is a full year. My year has been somewhat unusual in that I work full-time and despite promises made before May 2008, my employer has not been generous in allowing time to be taken for Mayoral duties. Consequently, I have had to lean heavily on the good services of the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Joy Poulter. She has graciously stood in on many day-time occasions and I am very grateful and hope that she has valued the rehearsal for the real thing.

During my acceptance speech, I said that I would support the Godalming Transition Town movement, and I am delighted to see the first painted shop window be featured on the front page of a recent Surrey Advertiser. The artists are young people from local schools and this work strengthens their sense of belonging and involvement in our community.

It is also due to perseverance and dedication from a group of folk from our local churches that Godalming is now a Fairtrade Town.



INTRODUCTION

It has been an honour to represent this Council as Town Mayor, and a pleasure to witness so much of the colour and flavour of our collective life in Godalming. If a magic wand were to remove all the volunteers' hours of effort we would have no Red Cross, no Music Festival, no Theatre Group, Operatic or Choral society, no Day Centres, no trips for our older citizens to Worthing, no bonfire nor fireworks nor cubs, scouts and guides - we would all be the poorer. Our volunteers enrich our life.

As the Godalming Health Check proves, Godalming is a great place to live, and an honour for me to have been its Mayor.

Councillor Paul Rivers
Mayor of Godalming 2008/09



REVIEW

For 2008/09 Godalming Town Council agreed that it had three priorities for the town:

- to support the development of services for young people;
- to enable all residents to share in the advantages of living here; and
- to preserve the town's heritage.

Bearing these priorities in mind here are some of things that Godalming Town Council has achieved in the past year:

- The Trinity Café (a youth café run after school every Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoons) outgrew its existing accommodation. The Town Council provided a new, free home for the café at the Wilfrid Noyce Centre thereby honouring the "Wilfie's" heritage as the town centre's Youth Centre.
- The Wilfrid Noyce Centre has itself been redecorated and a number of small improvements made to the centre's facilities and ambience.
- Recognising that the economic downturn means challenging times ahead for local businesses we have extended our support to those businesses by adding a Business Directory to the Town Council's website. Businesses with premises anywhere in Godalming can have a free listing in the Business Directory. We have also developed a Town Map showing the location of all businesses on Godalming High Street and surrounding roads. To increase footfall in the town centre we have facilitated the popular French and Italian Markets and expanded the initiative to include an occasional Craft Market.
- We have supported numerous voluntary organisations in the town with grant aid totalling more than £70,000 (see the section on grants below) and to give organisations the opportunity to apply for grant we have developed a new grants system for 2009/10.
- Working with Busbridge Parish Council as Godalming Joint Burial Committee we have made significant improvements in the maintenance of our cemeteries and most importantly have developed a Natural Burials site to serve the whole region.
- In September 2008 we celebrated the 100th anniversary of the opening of our offices – the Municipal Buildings on Bridge Street by inviting the public into the offices, the Council Chamber and the Borough Hall on the Heritage Open Days. This was only possible with the support of Waverley Borough Council for which we are grateful.
- As allotments prove popular again and waiting lists get longer we have been looking to identify more potential allotment sites in the town. We have provided a water supply at the two allotment sites that the Town Council manages directly – though there has been no shortage of rainfall since.



COMMITTEES

Policy & Management Committee

What is it?

A Committee of 19 Councillors that deals with most of the Council's business, discusses Council policy and manages all the Council's assets – its finances, staff and properties.



Councillor Steve Cosser
Committee Chairman 2008/09

What has it done?

- Met 18 times (every 3 weeks)
- Considered 28 grant applications and awarded £70,000 in grants to local organisations see page 10 of this report
- Developed a new grants system for 2009/10
- Provided a new home for Café Trinity
- Redecorated the Wilfrid Noyce Centre
- Agreed to undertake a full survey of the Pepperpot
- Considered options for the implementation of the Godalming Healthcheck

Planning & Environment Committee

What is it?

A Committee of 19 Councillors that looks at and makes comments on all Godalming planning applications. This Committee also considers issues relating to the local environment and infrastructure.



Councillor Stefan Reynolds
Committee Chairman 2008/09

What has it done?

- Met 17 times (every 3 weeks)
- Made comments to the Planning Authority (Waverley Borough Council) on 286 planning applications
- Made representation to the Planning Inspector about the Godalming Key Site
- Supported the Waverley Cycle Forum's work to improve the Marshall Road cycle route



COMMITTEES

Mayoralty Committee



What is it?

A Committee of six Councillors that considers and makes recommendations to the Full Council on the selection and appointment of the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Peter Martin
Committee Chairman 2008/09

What has it done?

- Met once
- Agreed a new Handbook for all incoming Mayors
- Nominated Councillor Joy Poulter as Mayor and Councillor Jane Thomson as Deputy Mayor for 2009/10

Staffing Sub-Committee



What is it?

A Committee comprising of five Councillors that considers all matters relating to the appointment and management of Council staff and makes recommendations to the Policy & Management Committee.

Councillor Jane Thomson
Sub-Committee Chairman 2008/09

What has it done?

- Met five times
- Commissioned a review of the Town Council's staffing
- Developed new employment policies for Town Council staff

Audit Sub-Committee



What is it?

A Committee of five Councillors that considers the adequacy of the Council's risk management framework and the associated control environment, and oversees the financial reporting process. This Committee makes recommendations to the Policy & Management Committee.

Councillor Tom Martin
Sub-Committee Chairman 2008/09

What has it done?

- Met three times
- Recommended the appointment of a new Internal Auditor
- Set out arrangements for the review of Internal Audit



GODALMING JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Godalming Joint Burial Committee



What is it?

A committee with six Councillors from Godalming Town Council and two from Busbridge Parish Council charged with managing Godalming's two cemeteries – Nightingale Cemetery in Farncombe and Eashing Cemetery at Ockford Ridge.

Councillor Jane Thomson
Committee Chairman 2008/09

What has it done?

The committee met formally on 5 occasions during the year.

Following a business planning exercise, three main issues have dominated the Committee's proceedings during 2008/09 – the refurbishment of the Lodge House at Eashing Cemetery (due for completion June 2009), the introduction of Natural Burials (commenced September 2008) and the improvement of grounds maintenance at both cemeteries.

The Committee also met informally on one occasion to consider future development issues for the cemeteries.



Nightingale Cemetery



GRANTS

As already stated, in the past year Godalming Town Council has supported numerous organisations in the town with grant aid totalling more than £70,000. 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. In recent years the Council has increased the amount of money available for grants.

In 2008/09 the largest of these grants was to the Waverley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to ensure the continued provision of a CAB service in Godalming and this Council has provided a significant grant to the CAB for more than a decade.

Substantial sums have been used to support the development or improvement of many of Godalming's community spaces including a new children's play area at Northbourne, a Multi Use Games Area at Broadwater Park, a roof on the Godalming Bandstand, and improved facilities and a lift at Godalming United Church hall.

Below is a full list of all grants made by Godalming Town Council in the financial year 2008/09.

Summary of Grants Awarded 2008/09

	£
Churches Together in Godalming & District	300.00
DisCASS	1,000.00
DisCASS (<i>Grant aid in the form of reduced rent</i>)	1,080.00
Go Godalming Association (Godalming Bandstand)	5,000.00
Godalming & Villages Lions Club	1,000.00
Godalming Community Responders	800.00
Godalming District Scout Canoe Club	780.00
Godalming Museum	4,000.00
Godalming Trust	400.00
Godalming United Church	5,000.00
Hospital Hoppa Service	5,000.00
Meadrow Unitarian Chapel	500.00
Multi Use Games Area – Broadwater Park	3,500.00
Nightingales Pre-School (<i>Grant aid in the form of reduced rent</i>)	3,380.00
Northbourne Action Group	8,000.00
Rodborough Technology College	200.00
Senior Citizens' Outing	1,171.00
Sport Godalming	500.00
SS Peter & Paul Scout Group	300.00
The Cellar Café	750.00
The Safer Waverley Partnership	500.00
Trinity Trust Team (<i>Grant aid in the form of free use of premises</i>)	2,795.00
Vitalise	794.30
Waverley Citizens Advice Bureau	24,456.00
	<hr/>
	71,206.30

Two users of the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, DisCASS and Nightingales Pre-School continued to receive support from the Council in the form of a reduction to the rent, or hire charges,



GRANTS

that they would otherwise pay. Also, during the year, the Trinity Trust Team was granted free use of the building to support the valuable work of the Trinity Café with the town's young people.

In order to widen the range of organisations applying to the Town Council for grant support the Policy & Management Committee has reviewed the Council's procedures for considering grants. Full details of the Council's grants scheme can be found on the Town Council's website – www.godalming-tc.gov.uk or may be obtained from the Town Clerk (contact details at the back of this report).



Opening of new play area at Northbourne 15 April 2009

Photograph courtesy of James Butcher Housing Association



MONEY

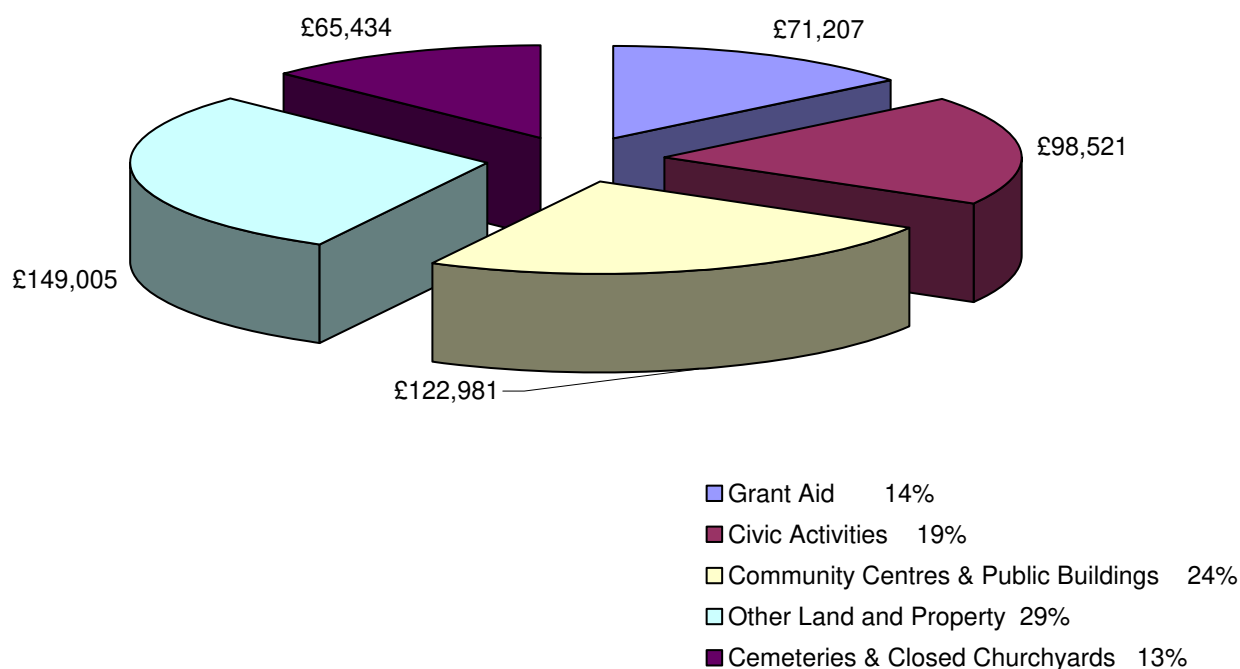
ANNUAL ACCOUNTS 2008/09

The Council's accounts are prepared in accordance with the Account & Audit Regulations 2006. They are subject to internal audit (by an independent auditor appointed by the Town Council) and to external audit (by an independent auditor appointed by the Audit Commission). Every year local government electors are given an opportunity to examine the Council's accounts and financial records. The 2008/09 accounts and records will be available for public inspection from 8 June to 3 July 2009. The accounts will be published on the Town Council's website.

Below is a summary of how the Council's budget (including overheads) was spent in 2008/09. Note that these figures are based on the latest estimates of expenditure, not actual figures because at the time of writing the 2008/09 accounts had not yet been finalised.

The Council's Responsible Finance Officer is Janet Crossman.

SUMMARY OF TOWN COUNCIL'S EXPENDITURE 2008/09





CONTACTS

Godalming Town Council
Municipal Buildings
Bridge Street
Godalming
Surrey GU7 1HR
Tel: 01483 523575
Fax: 01483 523077
E-Mail: office@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Web: www.godalming-tc.gov.uk

Town Clerk: Louise Goodfellow

Your Town Councillors

BINSCOMBE WARD

Cllr J Barnes, 95 Green Lane, Godalming, GU7 3TB	01483 860112
Cllr ML Peacock, 13 Binscombe Lane, Godalming, GU7 3PN	01483 415644
*Cllr L Wheatley, 1 Sol-Y-Vista, Frith Hill Road, Godalming, GU7 2EF	01483 423492
*Cllr A Wilson, 8 Dean Road, Godalming GU7 2PJ	01483 417607

CENTRAL & OCKFORD WARD

*Cllr JP Hubble, 40 High Ridge, Godalming, GU7 1YF	01483 424268
Cllr N Pinches, 24 Phillips Close, Bargate Wood, Godalming, GU7 1XZ	01483 424085
*Cllr JR Thomson, The Garden Flat, Rowberry House, 9 Shadyhanger, Godalming, GU7 2HR	01483 428266
Cllr JE Woodham, 5 Twycross Road, Godalming, GU7 2HH	01483 420310

CHARTERHOUSE WARD

Cllr S Cosser, 3 Hillside Way, Godalming, GU7 2HN	01483 414035
*Cllr RA Gordon-Smith, Hill Point, Mark Way, Godalming, GU7 2BA	01483 424483
Cllr JM Poulter, 27 Nightingale Road, Godalming, GU7 2HP	01483 417051
*Cllr SN Reynolds, Lynam House, 49 Peperharow Road, Godalming, GU7 2PL	01483 861287

FARNCOMBE & CATTESHALL WARD

*Cllr S Connolly, 29 Windy Wood, Godalming, GU7 1XX	01483 429904
Cllr AK Lister, 13 Woodmancourt, Mark Way, Godalming, GU7 2BT	01483 419574
Cllr PMA Rivers, Amity, Station Road, Farncombe, Godalming, GU7 3NF	01483 420747
Cllr PS Rivers, Amity, Station Road, Farncombe, Godalming, GU7 3NF	01483 420747

HOLLOWAY WARD

Cllr C Gordon-Smith, Hill Point, Mark Way, Godalming, GU7 2BA	01483 424483
Cllr R Foxall, 16 Mill Lane, Godalming, GU7 1EY	01483 420653
⁰ *Cllr PJ Martin, 18 Windy Wood, Godalming, GU7 1XX	01483 425644
*Cllr TE Martin, 1C St Johns Court, Farncombe Street, Godalming, GU7 3BA	01483 411903

*Waverley Members

⁰Surrey County Council Members