



Godalming Town Council NEWS

- Summer 2015 -

Annual Report 2014/2015

Hello – and welcome to Godalming Town Council’s 2014/15 Annual Report. Godalming Town Council has been around in one form or another since 1575. The organisation of Local Government has changed over the years and 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 on the Town Council’s website at www.godalming-tc.gov.uk. 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.

I was elected by my fellow Town Councillors to serve as Mayor for the year to May 21 2015, and like all my predecessors I have been immensely privileged to have been granted this honour and been aware of the corresponding responsibilities.

Undoubtedly the most important event of the last year, transcending all others, was the commemoration of the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. On 4 August 2014 this event was marked by two services, the first held in the afternoon at St John’s in Farncombe and the second in the evening at Ss Peter & Paul Godalming – Remembrance Sunday 2014 had an especial poignancy. It should never be forgotten how much anguish that conflict caused Godalming with 281 young men known to have died as a result of the war. Visits this year to the Army Benevolent Fund and British Legion events had great meaning for me, particularly



Cllr Andrew Wilson
Town Mayor 2014/15

at one when the difficulties in treating injured soldiers in Afghanistan and getting them to safety was described in some detail by a George Cross recipient.

On a lighter note, it is difficult to assess, but surely some of the ambience and the pleasure of living in Godalming comes from the surrounding countryside to which people can go to commune a little with nature and we can only hope that these green spaces can be held in respect and preserved in perpetuity. In the

town itself, we have the Godalming Trust which does invaluable work in helping preserve our heritage, often in association with the Museum and its dedicated and innovative staff and volunteers. The Town Council is indebted to the Trust for continuing the management of the popular Heritage Days in September when buildings normally closed are open to the public. I have been very surprised and impressed by the strength and depth of the voluntary movement in the town and what this promises for the future well-being of the community which owes the participants a huge debt of thanks. There are organisations of which I had been previously totally unaware. Some do sterling work often unsung, providing friendliness and comfort to the less advantaged throughout the year with almost awesome dedication and frequently at personal inconvenience and cost. A few of these volunteers seem to work almost full time in helping others, devoting themselves to separate activities – the more they become involved, the more cheerful they seem to be. One very enjoyable visit was on Christmas Day to the Baptist Church, meeting many of those looking forward to the now very traditional lunch provided by Churches Together and renewing some old acquaintances.

Photos by Phil Kemp. www.theshutterbox.co.uk.



Conspicuous in the town is the Go-Godalming Association under whose umbrella many activities flourish. These include Sport Godalming which has drive and impetus and GoLo, the inspirational Godalming Lottery, which has given around £30,000 to local good causes. The Association also nurtures Godalming in Bloom whose annual competition presents a particular challenge to any Mayor as judging very different gardens and commercial floral displays is a difficult task and sometimes one wants to give prizes to all of them. Window displays also present similar problems. Music in the Park was a particular pleasure and deservedly the audiences increase because of the growing reputation, variety and quality of the performances at the Bandstand in its lovely setting.

The Town Council's hugely popular Staycation was yet again a success and in 2014 it was extended for the first time to Canon Bowring's Field in Farncombe where the Family Fete will become an annual attraction. Some of the year's most enjoyable events included the opening of school fairs with the children all happy and excited. Others were musical competitions with standards rising year by year – the biggest being the long established Godalming Music Festival with well over 3000 participants.

Godalming can take particular pride in three of its major cultural bodies – the Choral Society, the Operatic Society and the Theatre Group. They all perform exceptionally well as far as I am concerned; surely at professional standard. The ever popular Round Table Town Show in June was as lively as ever and, happily, the Godalming & Villages Lions Club bonfire was not vandalised this year. The recent Spring Festival, last summer's Food Festival and the Christmas Lights switch-on all attracted many newcomers – is the last-mentioned the best in Surrey?

Perhaps the strangest visit was to Waverley Abbey one evening just before dusk to find out about dowsing. How loosely holding a couple of sticks and telling them to find underground pillars was beyond me but it seemed to work.

In conclusion, I have had the remarkable opportunity to find out how Godalming lives and increasingly thrives. This would not have been possible without the tremendous help from my wife Jocelyn, the Mayoress, and from the Town Council staff and I am confident that my successor will in turn also be grateful to them.

Cllr Andrew Wilson
Mayor of Godalming 2014/15

Review

For 2014/15 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 the things that Godalming Town Council has achieved in the past year. We have:

- Made plans and secured the funding for a major refurbishment of the Wilfrid Noyce Centre to take place over the summer of 2015;
- Led and financed the Farncombe Initiative, with support from Surrey County Council, facilitating the installation of the Farncombe Village sign, new litter bins and other street scene enhancements;

- Supported numerous voluntary organisations in the town with grant aid totalling £55,000 (see next page);
- Led the town's commemorations for the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War; researching and documenting all the town's known losses;
- Supported more than 60 volunteers in the ongoing process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for Godalming & Farncombe;
- Held the first Staycation Family Fete on Canon Bowring's Field in Farncombe;
- Facilitated flood prevention works and early warning systems along Hell's Ditch, worked with Waverley Borough Council to improve the water flow of Hell's Ditch and with Thames Water to provide land for sewerage control systems that protect properties in Catteshall Road.



Grants

In the past year Godalming Town Council has supported numerous organisations in the town with grant aid totalling close to £55,000. 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 2014/15 the largest of these grants was to the Waverley Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) to ensure the continued provision of a CAB service in Godalming; this Council has provided a significant grant to the CAB for more than a decade. The Council has also continued to provide on-going support to Godalming Museum and Hospital Hoppa. A number of organisa-

tions were also given grant aid in the form of free use of one of the Town Council's buildings for meetings or to facilitate an event (those grants are included below and a cash value put on the grant so that the support is properly accounted for).

One-off grants in 2014/15 included payments to help repair the Farncombe Youth Football Club's floodlights, to provide a Scrapstore Playpod at Loseley Fields Primary Schools and to repair St Peter & St Paul Scout Hut.

Below is a full list of all grants made by Godalming Town Council in the financial year 2014/15.

Summary of Grants Awarded 2014/15

	£
Churches Together in Godalming & District	600.00
Citizens Advice Waverley	28,000.00
Community Street Team	5,000.00
Farncombe Youth Football Team	4,000.00
Friends of Broadwater Park (Grant aid in the form of free use of premises)	93.00
Friends of Broadwater School	545.00
Godalming & District Community First Responders (Grant aid in the form of free use of premises)	126.00
Godalming Museum Trust	5,000.00
Godalming Round Table (Grant aid in the form of free use of premises)	110.00
Godalming Together CIC (Grant aid in the form of free use of premises)	210.00
Godalming Trust	1,000.00
Godalming Trust (Grant aid in the form of free use of premises)	208.00
Go Godalming Association (Grant aid in the form of free use of premises)	84.00
Go Godalming Association (Godalming in Bloom)	500.00
Loseley Fields Primary School	1,200.00
Sport Godalming	1,000.00
St Johns Spring Fair (Grant aid in the form of free use of premises)	110.00
St Peter & St Paul Scout Group	1,300.00
The Cellar Café	800.00
Waverley Hoppa Community Transport (Hospital Hoppa)	5,000.00
	54,886.00

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 overleaf).



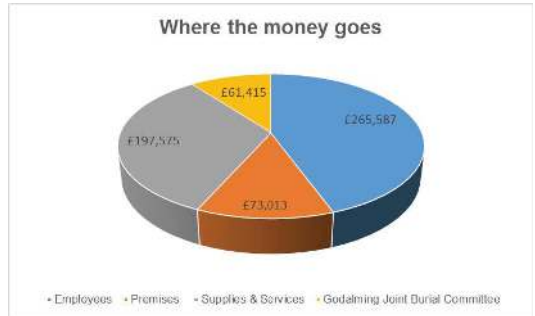
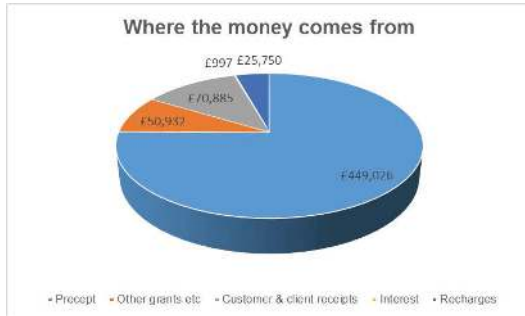
Annual Accounts

The Council's accounts are prepared in accordance with the Account & Audit Regulations 2011. 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 finan-

cial records and 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 2014/15. Note that these figures are based on the latest estimates of expenditure, not actual figures because, at the time of writing, the 2014/15 accounts had not yet been finalised.



A Neighbourhood Plan for Godalming & Farncombe

It's your opportunity to have your say on the future development of Godalming and Farncombe by responding to our questionnaire. If you live in the GU7 postcode area look out for an envelope with the GOFARNP logo (see right) which should be dropping through your letterbox sometime during June.

Please don't throw it away, take the time to think about your hopes and aspirations for our community and answer our questions, returning the questionnaire to us in the reply paid envelope that will be provided.

It's more than a year since we first reported on the launch of a Neighbourhood Plan for Godalming & Farncombe which was held on 23 January 2014. The

Neighbourhood Plan will help define local planning policy for Godalming & Farncombe and sit alongside Waverley Borough Council's Local Plan.

Waverley will need to give legal weight to the Neighbourhood Plan when it determines planning applications and therefore the plan represents an unparalleled opportunity to influence the future development of our town.

This is a community-led process and dozens of volunteers have spent the last year identifying issues and gathering evidence and are starting to draw things together towards a draft plan. A key piece of evidence will be the wider views of the community and that's why we've decided to give all residents the opportunity to have a say – please use that opportunity and complete and return the questionnaire to us.



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