

Annual Report 2019-21





MAYORAL REVIEW



It was an honour and a privilege to be the Town Mayor of Godalming 2019/20, and at the end of that Civic year I expected to present the annual report and hand over the Chains of Office to my successor. But COVID-19 and lockdown in March 2020 changed all that preventing the Annual Town Meeting and cancelling all public events. Godalming Town Council had to quickly adapt to a new way of working with one main priority, supporting our community.

I thank my fellow Councillors for electing me Mayor in May 2019 and for extending this term of office to support the Town Council through these unprecedented and challenging times. So, having had to cancel the 2020 Annual Town Meeting of Electors, I now have the honour to present this report of the Council for the two-year period May 2019 to April 2021.

In May 2019, without the benefit of prior preparation afforded to most mayors, it was indeed a standing start,

and the 2019 Mayoral year began at a dash. The Godalming Run, expertly arranged by Sport Godalming, Waverley Harriers, The Charterhouse Club and Godalming Town Council and run by very many hundreds including councillors past and present and the Headmaster of Charterhouse. The Park Run during Staycation, too, was a safe, happy family event and one that I am delighted Godalming Town Council supported, resulting in Waverley giving permission for the Park Run to become a permanent fixture post lockdown, hopefully starting in September 2021. We are fortunate to have so many sporting opportunities in Godalming – football, hockey, and bowls to mention just three, but like so many other activities all have been severely curtailed over the last 14 months and will need all our support to re-establish themselves.

Many will recall the 2019 Annual Town Show on that hot, hot day – perfect for a colourful carnival. Copious thanks must go to our very own Knights of the Round Table dressed on that occasion in pretty pink shirts. Unfortunately, the 2020 show had to be cancelled and the 2021 show postponed, but let us look forward to its resumption on the 18 September 2021.

Godalming Staycation too is firmly established as a summer event with its vast cornucopia of delights to try – dance, drums, football, swimming, canoes, ballet and bingo. In the Bandstand – the venue for many fine performances, our very own Godalming Town Band gave children the chance to try out an instrument. And what can I say about the awesome Staycation Live? Who needs Glastonbury when we can party in our own park? Due to celebrate its 10th anniversary, Staycation Live has had to put off its celebrations and will bounce back bigger and better than before in 2022.

In late summer 2019 I chaired a public meeting giving residents a chance to speak about their concerns over anti-social behaviour and to offer some answers. We must recognise that the vast majority of our younger residents are law-abiding, good citizens. The lockdown having deprived so many of our young people of some of their most important developmental time, both socially and educationally, has made the work of the Council's Youth Provision Working Group potentially now more important than ever. I take this opportunity to thank them, Andy Poulsom and the Trinity Trust and the Farncombe Community Team for working safely for young residents throughout this time.

Before the pandemic it was a pleasure to visit local schools and meet the students and see their work. We were blown away by the amazingly high standards of the drama and musical performances on display as well as the amazing art and craft skills shown by so many young people. It was especially uplifting to be invited by Broadwater School on 20 August for its outdoor GCSE Results day and to share the joy!

Normally, Godalming is blessed with so many great musical opportunities be it the Godalming Performing Arts Festival, Summer Bandstand Concerts, A Touch of Musicality, the Jazz Choir, the Godalming Community Gospel Choir, the Rock Choir, Godalming Choral Society, Godalming Operatic Society, Godalming Town Band, and the Tilford Bach Society. And not forgetting the Film Society and Godalming Theatre Group – I would like to especially thank the Godalming Theatre Group whose online performances brightened our lives and raised much appreciated funds for the Community Store. We look forward to the restoration of art and culture.



Godalming Town always marks Remembrance in a most respectful manner and in 2019 the community gathered in its hundreds for the solemn Act of Remembrance. In 2020 COVID-19 could not stop this annual event though the Silence was marked by just a few on behalf of the many. Godalming Town Council arranged a live outside broadcast of the ceremony to allow residents to be part of the virtual congregation. This was viewed 4,400 times. VE75 and VJ75 were also marked respectfully and safely.

Christmas is a season of light and we now have Christmas lights in Godalming and Farncombe



and the season is further blessed by the "In Memory" tree in Crown Court. In December 2019 it was an absolute delight to

stand at The Pepperpot and look out at the sea of happy faces watching the lights being switched on, as it was to be with Rev James Rattue for the Switch-on of the village lights at Farncombe Day Centre. Determined that the challenges were not going to stop the prettiest Christmas lights in all



of Surrey being switched on, in December 2020 the children of Moss Lane School and Farncombe Infants School assisted in conducting a socially distanced virtual countdown. So secret was the date that even I didn't know when the lights would go on! But go on they did and over 14,000 people watched the event on video.

The residents of The Meath are close to my heart and I highly recommend a visit to Changing Perceptions in the High Street. The coffee, cake and craftwork are all exceptional and a warm welcome awaits when it is safe to fully reopen. An absolute highlight of Christmas 2019 was to attend and read for the service in aid of The Meath at St Clement Danes' Church in London.

The volunteers of Godalming do not stop – even on Christmas Day there is a lunch at Queen Street Baptist Church for those who would otherwise be on their own, organised by Churches Together, sponsored by Waitrose. It was good to be there on 25 December 2019 to chat with the guests and to say The Grace. In 2020 volunteers from Churches Together very carefully and in a distanced way delivered cards and gifts to those on their own.

Working together is what transforms a Town into a Community and it is right and proper to thank those who go the extra mile and the Volunteer's Award I started in 2005 continues to recognise such generous works of kindness.



2020 - The year darkened by the COVID-19 pandemic but lightened by people working together – neighbour helping neighbour and stepping up and helping those in need of assistance and support. In 2020 rainbows were everywhere as a sign of Hope – our community stood on doorsteps to clap for carers and key workers, our schoolchildren made face visors, teams of volunteers sewed face masks, Farncombe Day Centre delivered thousands of meals to the elderly, and volunteers with the help of Godalming Town Council set up and continue to run the Godalming & Villages Community Store. This magnificent service for others is supported by individuals and businesses across our Town and local villages, many of whom facing their own challenges, but continue to give generously. Opened on 20

April 2020, the Community Store working with the St Mark's Food Bank has provided in excess of 34,000 days' worth of food and other essentials to members of our community, many of whom may never have thought that they would find themselves in the situation of having to use a foodbank.

On behalf of the Town Council, it is an honour to thank all those who have worked tirelessly for others – they are rainbows of hope!

Rainbows galore and I am pleased, too, to show that we have flown the rainbow flag of Pride. In 2019, alongside former Mayor of Waverley, Cllr Mary Foryszewski, we raised the rainbow flag in support of our LGBT+community.

In summer 2020 the Surrey Pride roadshow stopped at The Pepperpot from which rainbow bunting was flying. Godalming Town Council represents everyone in our community. The Godalming motto is, "Libera deinde fidelis - Faithful because free" – free to be who we are



and free to love those we love. We welcome diversity and I am glad that Godalming Town Council voted to support Black Lives Matter. In October 2020 I visited every school in the town to present Black and British by David Olusoga to mark Black History Month.

The Civic Year allows Mayors to lend additional support to their chosen good causes. There are so many good causes and choosing is always a challenge. The charities I supported are The Meath, Skillway and the Trinity Trust Team.

- The Meath supports, cares for and protects the physical and mental health of those who live with epilepsy and associated learning and physical disabilities.
- Skillway motivates and instils confidence in disadvantaged and disengaged young people by teaching practical workshop skills.
- The Trinity Trust Team works with young people in schools and the community helping them to realise their potential.

Our civic links extend beyond our Town. We are part of Waverley Borough and Surrey County, but our links of friendship are also in Europe with our twin Towns Joigny and Mayen which we visited in February 2019 and with whom we remain in close contact.

Our shops and businesses have been challenged by COVID-19 but despite the difficulties I opened 3 shops – Cut Thru - the new barber in Crown Court, Nightingale Flowers and Grub at Ritual both in Farncombe. May I urge you all to shop local?

And it is a very great pleasure and privilege to be able to open the new Town Council Office opposite The Pepperpot. An office which is accessible for residents and from which the valuable work of the Council will continue.

So, we arrive at the point of announcing those who are recognised for Volunteer Awards for the years 2019-20 and 2020-21.

In 2019 those recognised with the Mayor's Award for Volunteers were:

- Denise Hodgkiss for her dedication to Godalming Theatre Group
- Suzanne Cacciottolo for Concerto music concerts free for all
- Ian Coult for services to Rotary
- Mary Mutton for collecting for the Royal British Legion for decades
- Pat Mercer for her community service with the police, Godalming's Cancer Research shop and neighbourhood shopping/visits
- Maureen Jones for her dedication to cooking for others in particular many, many Christmas Day lunches at Queen Street Baptist Church organised by Churches Together.

2020 is a different kind of year so instead of recognising individuals I am giving the Volunteer Award to groups who have stepped up exceptionally:

- Broadwater School in recognition of the staff and pupils who gave their time to manufacturing face visors for PPE for many, many local care homes and organisations
- The Rotary Sewing for Good group they have sewn thousands of face masks and have sold them in Godalming High street making funds for local good causes.
- Farncombe Day Centre have made and delivered over 10,000 meals to the elderly residents of our community
- The volunteers of the Godalming Community Store who set up and have run the shop with no till for those living with food insecurity.

Heroes all!

We are living in uncertain and challenging times – Brexit, austerity, climate change and Coronavirus but we face these times together and we are indeed better when we work together.

Ours is a real community made up of many and of much and I hope that this review of the 2019-2021 mayoral years shows that there is plenty to celebrate and enjoy in our Town. Our volunteers and organisations, churches and shops connect us one to each other. That is community – that is Team Godalming.

I hope you join us and help us continue to make it better. ©

Councillor Penny Rivers Mayor of Godalming 2019/21

Penny Kine



Introduction

In a 'normal' year such as 2019 Godalming Town Council provides a range of services to the town's residents including its flagship town centre venue the Wilfrid Noyce Centre, Broadwater Park Community Centre in Farncombe and the town's iconic Pepperpot. It also funds the Godalming Museum, public toilets in Godalming and Farncombe, two cemeteries, sixteen acres of allotment sites, Floral Godalming flower displays in the town centre, Christmas Lights in Farncombe and Godalming retail centres and a range of festivals and markets. The Council also runs the Staycation holiday programme, the town's annual Remembrance Parade and assists in the management of the monthly Farmers' Markets. As well as supporting the Godalming Dementia Action Alliance, the Town Council also supports a number of events run by community organisations such as Sport Godalming's Community Run, the Round Table's Town Show and Churches Together's Christmas events, all of which help make Godalming such a vibrant community. However, March 2020 saw a significant shift in focus for Godalming Town Council as it adapted to meet the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2019

The May 2019 local elections saw a significant change for Godalming Town Council, with four existing councillors being re-elected and five former councillors returning to the chamber along with 11 first time councillors making up the elected representatives of our community. The political make-up of the Council is now 10 Liberal Democrats, 4 Green Party, 3 Conservative Party, 2 Labour Party and 1 Independent Member, meaning that no one group has overall control. However, the Council is operating on a collaborative basis with Cllr Follows (LibDem) Chair of the Policy & Management Committee (P&M) elected as the Leader of the Council and Cllr Williams (Green Party) elected as Deputy Chair of P&M.

Members elected as a Chair/Vice Chair of Council Committees are:

Policy & Management:

Chair: Cllr Paul Follows (LD)



Vice Chair: Cllr Williams (Grn)



Environment & Planning:

Chair: Cllr Paul Rivers (LD)



Vice Chair: Cllr Crooks (Grn)



Staffing:

Chair: Cllr Hullah (LD)



Vice Chair: Cllr Duce (LD)



Mayoralty:

Chair: Cllr Cosser (Con)



Vice Chair: Cllr Rosoman (LD)



Audit:

Chair: Cllr Heagin (LD)



Vice Chair: Cllr Crooks (Grn)



Joint Burial Committee:

Chair: Cllr Steel (LD)



Vice Chair: Cllr Purvis (Grn)



With the exception of the Fireworks Display, throughout 2019/20 Godalming Town Council continued to deliver its previously existing programme of community events and activities, whilst also working to develop new opportunities and facilities for the town.

2020

On the 16 March 2020, as the country awaited the announcement that it would enter a period of 'Lockdown' as had been witnessed in a number of European countries, Godalming Town Council dusted down its Business Continuity Plan in preparation for what turned out to be the first of three lockdowns experienced during 2020/21. The Business Continuity Plan had been designed for other situations such as loss of premises through fire or flood, but they proved robust enough to adapt to the unprecedented challenges faced from 23 March 2020.

Initial actions included the dispersal of staff and the start of home working, the closure of Godalming Museum and the cancellation of previously planned events up until July 2020, which subsequently had to be extended.

The introduction of the Coronavirus Act 2020 meant the closure of community buildings with the exception of the Undercroft of the Pepperpot which, as a food market continued to operate throughout.

The Council had to cancel scheduled Council meetings and started to operate under the Council's published Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders. As part of this process, weekly virtual meetings with Political Group Leaders were set up to provide cross party assurance and guidance for staff required to utilize delegated powers on a scale not previously required.

Financial governance and oversight continued albeit in an amended format. However, the adopted process continued to be subject to oversight by the elected Members. In adopting new governance arrangements, GTC was able to make faster payments to suppliers than would otherwise be the case, many of whom are small local business and tradespeople who were immensely grateful that GTC was not adding to their cash flow worries.

Initially activities at 107-109 High Street, now home to the new administrative offices of Godalming Town Council, were reduced to a single trade activity at any one time. However the project was subject to a number of site closures due to supply issues.

As with the rest of the public sector, at the start of the pandemic sourcing PPE was a challenge, with PPE being prioritised for the cemetery and maintenance staff.

In adapting to the new circumstances Godalming Town Council focused its resources on the wellbeing of the community and delivery of bereavement services.

In support of the bereavement services to the wider community and in keeping with the Council's commitment of respect for the diversity of our community, plans to set out an area within Eashing Cemetery specifically designated for members of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, whose world headquarters is based in Waverley, were fast tracked. This decision enabled Godalming to support the Ahmadiyya community as the impact of the pandemic took hold.

With the community centres closed GTC took the opportunity to carry out maintenance which would normally require blocking out periods of use. The main hall at Broadwater Park Community Centre was redecorated and a new kitchen fitted, The Council would like to thank The Peter Caudle Memorial Trust for its generous support of this project. The redecoration of The Caudle Hall at the Wilfrid Noyce Centre was also undertaken during the first lockdown.

Strategically GTC had initially taken a position of information provider and sign poster to other service providers. GTC's information campaign was well received, as were the Council's initiatives such as the Stay in Place Directory, which staff started on the Friday evening the lockdown was announced and published by the Monday. This directory formed a model for other local towns, with WBC bringing individual area directories together as a borough wide initiative. Likewise GTC's early 'Keep in Touch, Pick up the Phone' campaign was taken up by an array of community groups who kept in contact with each other during the lockdowns.

That is not to say GTC was not involved in direct intervention. As the pandemic continued, GTC undertook a greater level of direct action. Initially supporting the Food Bank at St Marks, within a few weeks of the start of the lockdown as the economic effects of the pandemic began to take effect, GTC, in partnership with the Godalming & Farncombe Coronavirus Support Group, set up the Godalming & Villages Community Store to supplement the work of the Food Bank at St Marks. As well as the food banks, GTC also supported the Farncombe Day Centre's community meal service.

As the year evolved, GTC moved to virtual meetings that allowed a widening of the business able to be conducted. Whilst the effects of the pandemic remained the focal point of GTC's activities throughout 2020, the Council also continued to deliver its services, including working towards meeting its environmental commitments.

As the vaccination program and the Government's roadmap to unlocking society developed, so did GTC's focus on the town's post pandemic needs. The adoption of the Godalming Town Centre Area strategic document and action plan, the Community Events programme and the resumption of the Council's commitment to its younger citizens have set a future focus for Council activities.

Quality Council Award

Godalming Town Council, First Local Council in Surrey to Win the Quality Award Accreditation



A pleasant early Christmas present for the Town Council arrived on Thursday, 19 December 2019, when Mrs Susan Lochner, Deputy Lieutenant of Surrey presented Godalming Town Council with the Award of Quality Council, which recognises the very best of Local Councils. In receiving the award on

behalf of the Council, the Mayor expressed her delighted that Godalming had become the first Local Council in Surrey to be accredited with the Quality Award Level under the Local Council Award Scheme and congratulated everyone who had worked so hard over the last 18 months to achieve the award, the Council staff and current and former Members of the Council.

In presenting the award, Mrs Lochner said "In earning this Award, Godalming Town Council has demonstrated the importance of good governance, with strong financial control, excellent documentation and administration, coupled with a determination not only to embrace, but to take the lead in best practice. More crucially, this Award recognises that the Council, while setting such high standards in the conduct of its business, has succeeded in engaging and working with the community at all levels and encouraging it to flourish"

Efficient Delivery of Services

Having welcomed two new members to the staff team in 2019 to create a buildings maintenance and grounds maintenance workforce, Godalming Town Council continued to deliver services as efficiently and effectively as possible within its available resource. In order to help focus service delivery, the Council quickly established it aims and objectives and set them out as a delivery programme to cover the administration period 2019-2023. The objectives set out in the programme are shown below, the full document can be found at https://godalming-tc.gov.uk/council-policies-procedures/

Godalming & Villages Community Store

One of the more worrying local aspects of the lockdown was the number of residents who suddenly found themselves redundant, furloughed or waiting for Universal Credit. An established Food Bank was in place but it was clear that with the rising number of people facing food anxiety and insecurity 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.

When the Godalming & Farncombe Coronavirus Assistance Group, a Facebook community group, approached the Council for support for the Food Bank, no one could have imagined that just four days later Godalming would be establishing a Community Food Store or how vital the store would become.

The Wilfrid Noyce Centre was hastily redeployed and reinvented as the Godalming & Villages Community Store, becoming a repository for donations of food items, fresh produce and personal care and hygiene products. Council staff and volunteers transformed the centre to create a 'shop' with social distancing protocols to enable safe shopping. With volunteers recruited and a booking system implemented, the Godalming & Villages

Community Store was ready for business and opened its doors on 20 April 2020.



The Community Store is about the community supporting its friends and neighbours during these unprecedented and difficult times. By providing a shopping trolley and allowing users to determine their own needs, as opposed to a set food parcel, the Community Store is more like a local convenience shop than food bank, but with no till at the checkout. Using social media to seek donations from the community

along with weekly updates of needed items placed on the Council's website, donations, including monetary gifts have poured in.

Waitrose offered the use of shopping trolleys and *Trolley Tuesday* was born. Every Tuesday between 8.00-11.30am shopping trolleys are placed at locations around Godalming and the surrounding villages, these make it easy for residents to drop off their donations and support their community. As the weeks have turned into months, Trolley Tuesday has evolved to include Community Street Champions - householders or businesses who 'host' a donation box. Whole streets have even collections on behalf of the Community Store. As the months turn in to a year plus, the volunteers of the Community Store are looking to the future and have sought fixed donation points in the main supermarkets and are looking at a longer term plan to help provide food security within our community.

As the Community Store has developed new initiatives have been born, including a grand Christmas draw which raised £10,000 to help support households and enable them to have as normal a Christmas as possible in the difficult circumstances they faced. Vouchers to provide fresh fruit and vegetables from local greengrocers have been introduced that are aimed at ensuring a nutritious balanced diet is available to households.

There have been many heart-warming stories about the Godalming & Villages Community Store, one visitor said "Can I just say how much spirits were lifted today in our house after I brought back my food and household items from the Community Store. The kids were excited to see some treats in there too so a huge thanks from us here. You guys are cheering people up during this time."

Another letter received said

"Dear Team of lovely people at the store, I have found myself and my family needing to seek assistance from the store through the COVID pandemic, I was just about to start a new job in two schools then lockdown happened. I was between jobs and my husband was furloughed and we had a 4 year old son. I was told about the community store via St Marks and All Saints School, it has truly been a life saver.

I start at my new job next week and my husband has returned to work, it will be tricky for the first month but hopefully life can seem a little bit more normal!!!

It is not only residents who have supported the store but local businesses too, donating everything from eggs, fresh fruit, and bread, to toothbrushes and personal hygiene products. Local farms and retailers such as *Hall Hunter* and *Cook* make weekly donations of fresh fruit and frozen meals. Godalming Community Fridge has stepped up to help too and has collected food donations from far and wide for the store. Local restauranteurs *Acorn Restaurant*, who had to close during lockdown, prepare meals from donated produce, which are then made available at the store. Even when *Acorn* reopened after the first lockdown it continued providing cooked meals for the store. A weekly shop at the local wholesalers tops up fresh diary and frozen foods so as to provide as nutritious and heathy range of food as possible, as well as some special items that are needed such as nappies in the correct size.



The store has become well known locally attracting support from The Lord Lieutenant of Surrey and HRH Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex who spent a morning helping the volunteers in the store on a Trolley Tuesday in June. A more regular visitor to the store has been the Countess



of Wessex who has volunteered on a number of occasions. The support of the Earl and Countess provides a real boost to the magnificent volunteers who make the store what it is and without whom could not exist.

The Town Council has agreed to continue to support the Community Store for at least two months after the end of the Government Furlough Scheme and is actively exploring future options to support the alleviation of food poverty in Godalming. Since it opened its doors the Godalming & Villages Community Store has provide in excess of 34,000 days-worth of food and hygiene products to the community.

Climate Emergency Motion

On Thursday, 25 July 2019, local residents in the Council Chamber's Public Gallery clapped and cheered as Godalming Town Council passed a Motion declaring a Climate Change Emergency.

In recognising the climate change emergency, the Council resolved to work to reduce carbon emissions and become a carbon neutral organisation by 2030 with an earlier target for carbon neutrality in scope 1 and scope 2 emissions by 2025. The Council agreed to audit its carbon emissions to enable it to monitor progress.

In supporting the motion, Members agreed on an action plan to ensure that the Council transfers to green energy providers, reduces its reliance on gas heating, has carbon offsetting arrangements in place and will ensure that its vehicles are electric powered by 2030. The Council's action plan aims to achieve carbon neutral status without incurring extra operating costs or financial penalties.

In September 2020 the Council reported its first carbon emissions audit since adopting its climate motion commitments. The Council achieved a 21% year on year reduction of CO2e.

The Council calculated its carbon footprint using the Carbon Trust Carbon Footprint Calculator, https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/sme-carbon-footprint-calculator designed for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME's). The reductions achieved resulted from simple, but effective changes including the replacement of old light fittings to modern LED lighting and also replacing the old hot water and heating system in The Pepperpot as well as more efficient hand dryers in the public toilets.

In keeping with its commitment, GTC had the gas supply removed and designed its new office heating requirements based on 100% renewable electricity provision.



Carbon Reduction & Biodiversity Projects Fund

In acknowledging its commitment to recognising the climate emergency the Council agreed to create a fund specifically aimed at projects which help to reduce direct carbon emissions or conserve and enhance the bio-diversity in our community.

This fund opened for applications in May 2020 with the Town Council welcoming applications towards projects whose a primary aim is to reduce CO^2 emissions in Godalming and to promote biodiversity. Supporting activities such as practical work, feasibility studies/research projects, awareness raising or training, in 2020/21 the Council supported £8,400 worth of projects as diverse as a feasibility study for the across Godalming section of the Guildford to Godalming Greenway (this £3,000 grant enabled the Godalming cycle Forum to secure £200,000 of Community Infrastructure Levy Funding for the implementation of the project), Godalming Nappy Library and Roots for the Future & Loseley Field School tree planting project.

Grants

The Town Council provided grants to a variety of community organisations and projects with the main beneficiaries, Citizens' Advice Waverley, The Hoppa Community Transport and the Farncombe Day Centre receiving between them £33,000. Although Godalming Town Council has supported these organisations for many years, the level of grants was decided on an annual basis. Whilst always appreciative of the support provided by the Council, the year by year nature of the funding made financial planning by these organisations challenging.

In order to allow for much needed financial security, Councillors were delighted to approve the terms for funding agreements totalling £158,000 for these three organisations who provide much needed local services that benefit the Godalming community. The Service Level Agreements (SLA) agreed by the Town Council guarantee financial support over a four year period (2020–2024). Such arrangements allow the service provider the financial security to invest in the service and provides the Council with measurable outcomes for the support provided.

The Council's funding of £20,000 over the four year period, will ensure that the Hospital Hoppa Service continues to provide an accessible, door-to-door, non-emergency patient transport service to the Royal Surrey County Hospital, as well as all other health facilities between Haslemere and Guildford, for the residents of Godalming and surrounding villages who do not qualify for free NHS transport.

Over the same period, Citizens' Advice Waverley (CAW) will receive £112,000. The Town Council has supported the Citizens' Advice service for many years, but moving from yearly grants to a 4-year agreement means that CAW has much more certainty in providing a 5-day a week, locally available, independent, high quality advice service to Godalming residents. The GTC funding agreement was especially important in 2020 as the CAW adapted to new ways of working required to continue to provide support whilst working within the restrictions imposed by national guidance and social distancing requirements.



The final organisation to be supported with a funding agreement was the Farncombe Day Centre which will receive £20,000 of assistance over the four years of the SLA to operate a minibus to provide a vital transport service from a client's home to the day centre and return. During the pandemic the minibus has still been in service but instead of collecting clients to come to the day centre, the day centre staff have been delivering hot meals to clients' homes.

At a lower, but equally important level, the Council also awarded grants to many other

local organisations including a £500 grant to assist with running the Surrey Fire & Rescue Service - Safe Drive Stay Alive performances. Safe Drive Stay Alive is a road safety initiative that aims to highlight to all young people their responsibilities whilst being in a car, as a driver or passenger, as well as the consequences should these responsibilities not be taken seriously. Godalming sends more young people to this event than any other town in the County. In 2020 this event was delivered online.

Please see pages 26/27 for the full list of organisations and groups supported by the Council's Grant budget.



New Council Offices



After 30 years of trading in the town at 107-109 High Street, The Racquet Shop decided to move on to pastures new. Therefore, the first item of non-procedural business considered by the newly formed council in May 2019 was to decide whether or not to buy out the lease so that the Town Council could move from its existing cramped offices. A key deciding factor was the ability to ensure that the Council has an equality compliant office into which all members of the community, including those with mobility issues could be welcomed. The location alongside the Godalming Museum and opposite The Pepperpot also creates a civic hub which will improve the Town Council's visibility.

After a year of stop/start work on Friday, 7 May 2021, the Mayor of Godalming formally opened the offices and handed over the keys of the building to the Town Clerk

Godalming Town Council self-managed the project using local companies for all the specialist trades. Town Council's services remain unaffected by the move and the Council's telephone number remains the same 01483 523575.



Godalming & Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan (GoFarNP)

Following many years of hard work and detailed discussions by an army of dedicated volunteers, The Godalming and Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan won a 91.5% majority when put to the electorate on Tuesday 9 July 2019. The plan was subsequently 'made' (adopted) by Waverley on 13 August 2019 and has become part of the statutory development plan for Godalming and Farncombe.

Godalming Town Council as the qualifying body prepared the neighbourhood development plan with the help of the local community. The plan covers the period from 2017 to 2032 and sets out a vision for the future of the parish and planning policies that will be used to determine planning applications locally.

The aim of the Godalming & Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan is to:

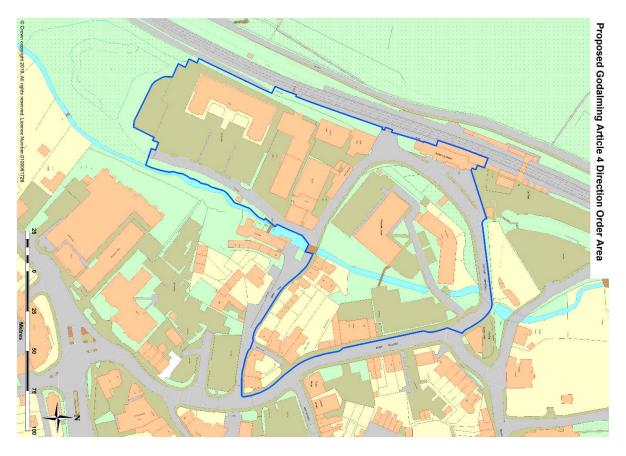
- protect our environment;
- support our local shops and businesses;
- provide housing needed for a sustainable community;
- provide safe pedestrian and cycle links;
- safeguard air quality;
- improve play facilities; and
- ensure more CIL funds are available for local infrastructure.

The adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan has given the local community a greater say over the future of the area in which they live and has already influenced planning observations made by Godalming Town Council and importantly planning decisions made by the Local Planning Authority.

The Town Council would like to record its thanks to the many dedicated volunteers who worked on the Neighbourhood Plan.

Article 4 Direction

Godalming Town Council has consistently raised concerns about the changes in Permitted Development Rights that have allowed the conversion of office space to residential dwellings without the need to have it considered by the Local Planning Authority. Following continued lobbying by the Town Council, the Local Planning Authority have made an Article 4 Direction Order covering the area surrounding the Godalming Railway Station which removes this automatic right. This order means that any developer wishing to convert an office space to residential within the designated area would have to make a planning application, which could then be considered by the local community and the Planning Authority.



Environment & Planning Committee

The Council agreed to the formation of a new Environment & Planning Committee to drive forward initiatives to meet the goal of carbon neutrality by 2030, which is at the heart of the Climate Emergency & Biodiversity Motion. The Committee met for the first time on 23 January 2020.

The purpose 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. The Committee's functions include identifying key environment and planning issues whilst taking into account the natural and built environment. The Environment & Planning Committee will also consider issues relating to local and regional plans or other planning and highway matters bought to the Town Council's attention.

Members make decisions on applications made to the Council by local organisations for funding from the Council's new Carbon-Reduction & Mitigation Grant Scheme, which it is hoped will encourage and enable carbon reduction within Godalming.

When considering planning applications the Committee will seek to ensure compliance with policies set out in the Godalming & Farncombe Neighbourhood Plan.

Plastic Free Godalming



At the Council's Environment & Planning Committee meeting held on 13 February 2020, Members resolved to recommend that Godalming Town Council support the Plastic Free Godalming Campaign, which is part of the Surfers Against Sewage – Plastic Free Communities Initiative. In showing its support, Godalming Town Council joins with over 718 other local councils and communities who are committed to reducing the amount of single use plastic used in our society, much of which ends up polluting our oceans and waterways.

Becoming a Plastic Free Community needs the support of both residents and the business community. In resolving to support the Plastic Free Godalming Campaign, Councillors agreed to appoint a representative to the Campaign, encourage plastic free initiatives and importantly lead by example. In collaboration with event partners, the Town Council has already taken steps to reduce single use plastic at town events, including discontinuing single use plastic water bottles at the water stations at the annual Godalming Community Run. Introduction of a drink container deposit scheme at the Staycation Live Music Festival in 2019 drastically reduced the waste generated from the event and will be repeated at the 2022 festival.

Godalming Climate Forum



Although it was only its second meeting, on 13 February the Environment & Planning Committee agreed to establish a Godalming Climate Forum (GCF). The Climate Forum is in keeping with the Council's aims and objectives as well as its declaration of a Climate Emergency. The GCF aims to seek ways to facilitate and encourage our community to reduce direct and indirect CO² emissions as well as the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity. The GCF seeks to protect natural habitats, promote strategies to reduce, reuse and recycle waste, and to provide information to promote understanding of our individual and community impacts on climate change.

The Council nominated Cllr Jo Purvis and Cllr Shirley Faraday as group co-ordinators.

Councillors' Robes

Whilst the Council is always looking to add value and benefit for the community, it also sometimes has to make difficult decisions on how its limited resources are used. On 25 July 2019 the Council received recommendations from the Mayoralty Committee regarding the replacement and repair of Councillors' robes, which traditionally have been worn by all Members of the Council at council meetings and civic events. With the cost of replacement robes in excess of £10,000, Members agreed that in future only the Mayor of the Town would indicate their office by the wearing of robes. Members acknowledged that the cessation of the wearing of civic robes by Councillors would be missed by many within the community,

but also expressed the belief that others would not consider the cost of replacing Councillors' robes a priority for a forward thinking Council.

In making this decision the Council recognised that the position of the Mayor needed to be considered separately from other councillors, which is why the Mayor will continue to wear the traditional red mayoral robe.

Community Events

The Council organises and supports a range of community events throughout the year and whilst the level of support and resource provided varies between events, the Council believes that its support or involvement is a positive factor. The Council believes that events



in the town play an important part of community life, however, it is equally important that the resource provided by the Town Council is proportionate to the community benefit. In response to resident's comments and suggestions, 2019 saw Godalming Town Council introduce some new events as well as update others. Community events and community support form a significant part of the services provided by the Council for its residents, businesses and visitors alike. In October 2019 the Council set

up a working group to look at all aspects of the Councils involvement in community events and activities and also to explore adding to the range of events currently provided.

Subsequent to the working group's report, Godalming Town Council adopted its Community Events Support Policy, which provided the framework for the Councils Community Events Programme 2021/22 that was approved on 17 December 2020.

This allows staff to work towards the delivery of GTC led events as well as provide support for other town events in accordance with custom, practice and the Council's Community Events Support Policy. Although some of the planned events had to be cancelled or postponed due to Coronavirus restrictions remaining in force, the programme will be picked up as the prevailing conditions permit. Included within the agreed program is the authorisation for GTC staff to engage with community organisations and partners to bring forward a separate event programme for Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee to be held in June 2022

Community Event policy can be found using the link below. https://godalming-tc.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Community-Events-Support-Policy-30-April-2020.pdf

Godalming Pop-Up Events and Farmers' Markets

Over the summer of 2019 Godalming Town Council took over the management of the pedestrianised area of Crown Court in central Godalming. This allowed the Council to add to the vibrancy of the town centre by offering additional street market events without the need to close the High Street.



The Town Council has worked with the South West Surrey Farmers Market Co-operative for over 6 years to offer a monthly Farmers' Market within the Town Centre. The Farmers' Markets offer residents and visitors the opportunity to shop sustainably by supporting local businesses, growers and producers. By making use of the Crown Court area, the Council has been able to increase the monthly Farmers' Markets from 8 to 10 times a year and to bring all the stalls together into one area.



The Council knows that it is not just the Farmers'

Markets that residents enjoy, but that a lot of the community wanted the Friday Market to come back to the town. With the old marketplace no



longer available, the Town Council looked at how it could facilitate a new Friday Market, and whilst not the same as before, the new weekly Godalming Friday Pop-Up allows traders to operate in Crown Court and the Council is delighted that 'Phil the Flower' with his plants and shrubs and Household Heaven are the 'anchors' of the Friday Pop-up.

Godalming Park Run

In July 2019, Godalming Town Council passed a resolution in support of the idea of a Park Run in the town and wrote to the Head of Commercial Services at Waverley Borough Council, who has responsibility for Leisure and Parks & Countryside, to express GTC's support for a Godalming Park Run and to



identify where the Town Council might be able to provide assistance or support. Working with the



Godalming Park Run Steering Group, during Staycation week the Council held a successful 'Park Fun Run' at Broadwater Park on a route proposed by the Park Run Steering Group. It

is therefore especially pleasing to hear from WBC that permission has been granted for a permanent Park Run to be held at Broadwater Park, whilst no firm start date had been announced by the time of publishing the 2019-21 Annual Report, it is hoped that the run will begin in September 2021

Staycation

Although the pandemic forced the cancellation of Staycation 2020, it is hoped that it will be back and as active as ever for 2021. Godalming Town Council is one of the few local councils in the UK to organise such an extensive Staycation programme for its residents. However, one of the 'hidden' benefits of Staycation is the introduction of new people to established clubs, organisations and groups. In 2021, this may be more important than ever as clubs etc., start to re-establish themselves following the long lockdown. Most groups who take part in Staycation report having recruited new members as a result.

If you would like be part of Staycation and offer an event or activity please contact our Community Officer, Suzie Gortler, email community@godalming-tc.gov.uk



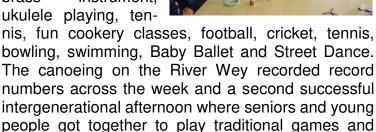
To provide a flavour of summers past and a memory of Staycation activities, residents of Godalming were kept busy at Staycation 2019. Throughout Staycation week there were many new activities as well as old favourites for residents to enjoy. Guildford Escape Rooms bought the "Osiris Chest" to Godalming and intrepid explorers were kept busy trying to discover the hidden "gold". A day of drumming workshops was introduced, a photographic workshop helped people to make the

most of mobile phone cameras and a parent and baby choir sang rock, pop and musical theatre songs. Several new types of dance classes were introduced including Silver Swans ballet for the more mature and Acro-Dance where younger participants did gym tricks, flicks, twirls and more. Residents could be found enjoying and making new things including how to use a sewing

machine and a variety of craft workshops.

Staycation favourites returned including learning to play a

instrument, brass ukulele playing, ten-



enjoy each other's company was held at Broadwater

Park Community Centre.



Localism – Working with Surrey County Council

Godalming Town Council continues to work with the Waverley area Surrey Highways team 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.

One of the more prominent areas where Godalming Town Council has worked in collaboration with Surrey County Council was in the rejuvenation of the footpath running between Church Street and Moss Lane which passes alongside The Burvs allotments. This was achieved using part of Councillor Rivers' Local Fund Allocation from SCC, enabling them to re-lay this path, which is used by hundreds of people including children travelling to and from Moss Lane School. Godalming Town Council took the opportunity to incorporate environmental enhancements to open up the



area and install new attractive fencing at the allotments. The Town Council also set about clearing decades of accumulated detritus from the allotment site, which resulted in a much safer environment and has allowed further scope for local schools to use it for outdoor learning. Working together the two Councils have transformed an area which previously had a potholed path which was covered in overhanging vegetation.

Dementia Friendly Relaxed Screenings



A visit to the cinema for those living with dementia or other conditions which cause anxiety and stress can be a challenging experience. People affected often have to give up the things they love due to inaccessible and unsupportive environments, which can include visiting the cinema. By allowing people living with dementia to continue to see films, cinemas have an important part to play in tackling the social impact of dementia.

As part of Godalming Town Council's commitment to achieving a dementia friendly community, the Council partnered with the Godalming Film Society and Godalming Dementia Action Alliance to host four screenings, which have proved to be extremely popular and well received. This led to an agreement between the partner organisations to commit to holding regular screenings throughout 2020. Unfortunately like mainstream cinema all the planned showings had to be cancelled, but it is hoped to be able to re-introduce screenings as the coronavirus restrictions are lifted.

Christmas Festival & Lights Switch-On

Godalming's Christmas Festival & Lights Switch-On is always special, in 2019 the icicle lights theme was enhanced by the addition of traditional Christmas trees as replacements

for the Antari decorations on the buildings along the High Street and the 'Floating Stars' between The Pepperpot and the Museum building. In keeping with the 'Reuse' theme, the Antari decorations were upcycled to be hung in trees along the High Street. 2019 also saw the introduction of two traditional Christmas Trees in the Town. The first was located by the Richmond Arms as a 'Welcome to our Town' symbol with the larger of the two trees at just short of 30ft being placed at the High Street entrance to This tree, provided by the Town Crown Court. Council acted as an 'In Memory Tree' allowing those who wished to place a memory label on the tree an opportunity to do so. Over 300 residents placed a 'Memory' on the tree.



2020 saw a very different Christmas Lights Switch-on, with no Christmas Market and mass gatherings not allowed, GTC arranged for the Mayor and the Children of Moss Lane and Farncombe Infants School to hold a virtual Countdown to the lights switch-on. The virtual

countdown was posted on the Council's Facebook page and YouTube channel with more than 14,000 watching the event.

Community Buildings – Broadwater Park

With the restrictions imposed by the Coronavirus Act 2020, Broadwater Park Community Centre was forced to close its doors to its normal users. However, the Council was able to continue to use this facility to support the community by making it available for use as a rehabilitation facility for the Royal Surrey County Hospital.

Council Staff will be working with previous and potential new users of Broadwater Park Community Centre to open up the facility for community use as the restrictions allow.

South East in Bloom

2019 was the first time ever that Godalming Town Council entered the South & South East in Bloom (SSEIB) competition. We were excited in early July, to welcome the competition judges when they toured the town and looked at the town centre Floral Godalming displays, the Godalming Museum garden and the approaches to the Boarden Bridge planting area as well as Nightingale Cemetery.

As first time entrants, expectations were not high, which is why, at the SSEIB awards ceremony held on Friday, 13 September 2019, Mayor of Godalming Cllr Penny Rivers was so delighted when she was presented with a Silver Gilt Award in the small cemeteries category for Nightingale Cemetery.



The cemetery, which is managed by the Town Council on behalf of the Godalming Joint Burial Committee, scored near maximum points for 'Pride of Place' in the local environmental quality of the cemetery, with the judges being especially impressed with the areas that had been allowed to grow to encourage native species, wildflowers and bees. The judges also commended the Memorial Garden designed by Michele Clackson to commemorate the 281 men who died in the Great War. The judges praised the high standard of maintenance and judged that a lovely area had

been created to sit in quiet contemplation and for visitors to enjoy the colour and interest it had added to the cemetery.

The Council picked up a second award, this time a Silver Award for the town centre. The judges said they enjoyed walking through the town centre on judging day and noted that Floral Godalming's displays were well planted and maintained and "made the area more inviting". They were also encouraged by the level of support from local businesses who have this year sponsored the troughs, planters and hanging baskets as well as the businesses and outlets who participated in helping to create some extremely good displays around the centre. Of particular



note were the displays at The Sun Public House.

The Godalming Museum garden received commendable comments and the judges were impressed with the sustainable planting and high standard of maintenance in the garden. The new planting at the approach to the Boarden Bridge also received favourable comments from the judges who were pleased to note the planting had been well executed and was thriving despite shady conditions. Godalming Town Council is grateful to the many volunteers who helped to achieve this much appreciated award for the town centre.

Special thanks and congratulations to The Peter Caudle Memorial Trust for its support in initiating this project in 2018 and to the sponsors and the many volunteers who have helped sustain it in 2019.

2020 saw the In Bloom competition cancelled and Floral Godalming was curtailed during the lockdown. However, Godalming Town Council would like to thank members of Godalming in Bloom for looking after the Nightingale Memorial Garden and look forward to re-introducing Floral Godalming in May 2021.



JOINT BURIAL COMMITTEE

Godalming Joint Burial Committee

Although Godalming's public cemeteries date back to 1857, the Godalming Joint Burial Committee is committed to developing its cemeteries to meet the needs of a 21st century town. The ability for the residents of Godalming to select from a choice of burial options is key to the Committee's development plans. Significant developments for the future of burials in Godalming have been the creation of a Natural Burial site at Eashing Cemetery, the research and planning works to allow for the renewal of Grave spaces within Nightingale Cemetery and the allocation of a dedicated area of 500 plots for the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community whose world headquarters is based in Waverley

Natural Burials are designed to speed up the process of returning the body and its nutrients

to the soil and to reduce the amount of artificial and toxic materials introduced into the ground. With views across the Surrey Hills, Eashing Cemetery already has a rural feel, which makes it an ideal location for a natural burial ground. Eashing Cemetery has 172 plots in a half an acre of land bounded on two sides by agricultural land and located in the furthest reaches of the cemetery. As part of the design, burial plots are arranged in clusters located off of a meandering grass path. Each grave may have an associated tree sapling (of native plants like hawthorn, birch, hazel, mountain ash) planted within the burial area.



For many years there were no plots available for purchase at Nightingale Cemetery; although burials continued in grave spaces that had been previously purchased. However, following alterations to the grounds completed in 2010, a limited number of new grave spaces were made available for burials. These spaces have now all been used or reserved. In order to continue to provide Nightingale Cemetery as an option for residents of Godalming and Busbridge civic parishes, an additional 20 spaces have been identified, which will meet three years' requirement. This time will allow the Committee to continue with the project it began in 2018/19 to work towards the renewal of nearly 200 grave spaces within the cemetery which should meet a 25-year requirement.

In October 2019, Godalming Town Council introduced a direct Grounds Maintenance Team, which as well as maintaining GTC's open grounds and buildings also supports the Joint Burial Committee in the maintenance and development of Godalming's cemeteries.



Currently, an area of sward runs around three sides of Eashing Cemetery, beyond the formal graves' area. It is proposed to return some of this area to wildflower meadows. Trials on different methods for introducing and sustaining a wider range of wildflowers at Eashing Cemetery were conducted during 2020 and it is hoped, over the next few years, to expand the areas of wildflowers within the cemetery.

This work will be undertaken by Godalming Town Council's Grounds Maintenance Team supported by Waverley Borough Council.

THANK YOU



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.

















































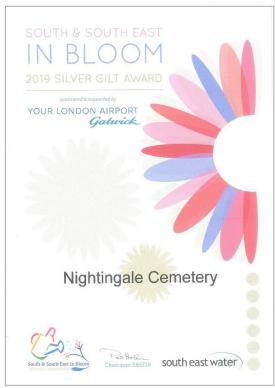






Awards







MONEY



Money

As stated earlier in the report, Godalming Town Council has supported a wide range of organisations in the town with a grant aid totalling £58,162 in 2019/20 and £63,774 in 2020/21. 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 both years the largest of these grants was to the Citizens Advice Waverley (CAW) to ensure the continued provision of a CAW service in Godalming. This Council has provided a significant grant to the CAW for more than decade.

As well as monetary grants, a number of organisations 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).

Other grants included payments to Farncombe Day Centre to assist with the running of its minibus, which is a vital lifeline for the many elderly residents who use it. Loseley Field Primary School was supported with a grant of $\pounds4,000.00$ towards the provision of outdoor education facilities for the pupils and the community. Working with Surrey Wildlife Trust, the school plans to provide a wildlife outdoor training area, a pond area and a wildlife meadow which also meets the Council's biodiversity aims and objectives. The Council grants $\pounds500.00$ to Waverley Rotary to assist local residents impacted by COVID-19 and gave a further $\pounds4,000.00$ to the Godalming Museum Trust to help meet the costs in marking the Museum's centenary year.

Below is a full list of all grants awarded by Godalming Town Council in the financial year 2019/20 and the collective total of Grant Aid in Kind* (use of venues).

2019/20	£
Citizens Advice Waverley	28,000.00
Waverley Hoppa Community Transport	5,000.00
Farncombe Day Centre	5,000.00
Godalming in Bloom	500.00
Godalming Town Football Club	3,000.00
Huckleberries Nurture Farm CIC	600.00
Surrey Association for Visual Impairment (Sight for Surrey)	500.00
Waverley Borough Council	500.00
The Brigitte Trust	500.00
The Godalming District Scout Council	500.00
The Cellar Café	850.00
Godalming Branch of Extinction Rebellion	500.00
Godalming Scouts & Guides HQ, The Burys	500.00
Safe Drive, Stay Alive	500.00
Surrey Hills to South Downs Community Rail Partnership	500.00
Kids Out	500.00
Trinity Trust Team	500.00
2 nd Godalming Scout Group	2,570.00
Godalming Baptist Church	1,500.00
Loseley Fields Primary School	4,000.00
Go Godalming Youth Canoe Club	500.00
Waverley Borough Council	500.00
Godalming District Scout Canoe Club	500.00
Grant Aid in Kind	642.00
	57,470.00

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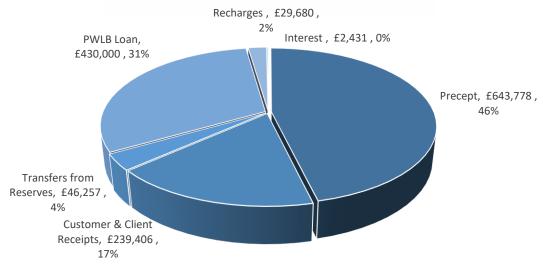
2020/21	3
Broadwater School	500.00
Citizens' Advice Waverley	28,000.00
Farncombe Day Centre	5,000.00
Waverley Hoppa Community Transport	5,000.00
1254 (Godalming) Air Training Corps	2,970.00
St Peter & St Paul Scout Group	1,850.00
St Mark's Community Centre	450.00
Farncombe & District Allotment Association (GAiK)	28.00
Godalming & District Community First Responders (GAiK)	126.00
Go Godalming Association (GAiK)	42.00
Go Godalming Association (GAiK)	90.00
Godalming Run (GAiK)	80.00
Godalming Round Table (GAiK)	80.00
Godalming Cycle Campaign (GAiK)	168.00
Farncombe Cricket Club	350.00
Roots For The Future CIC	640.00
Rotary's Waverley COVID-19 Support Fund	5,000.00
Godalming Museum Trust	4,000.00
Godalming Climate Forum	500.00
Surrey Hills to South Downs Community Rail Partnership	500.00
	55,374.00
Carbon Reduction & Biodiversity Fund	3
Godalming Cycle Forum	3,000.00
Roots For The Future & Loseley Fields Primary School	4,200.00
Godalming Nappy Library	1,200.00
	8,400.00

Annual Accounts 2019/20

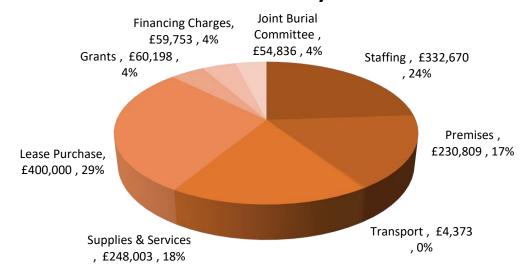
The Council's accounts are prepared in accordance with the Account & Audit Regulations 2015. They are subject to internal audit (by an independent auditor appointed by the Town Council) and to external audit (by a different auditor appointed by the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments Ltd). Every 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 of how the Council's budget (including overheads) was spent in 2019/20.





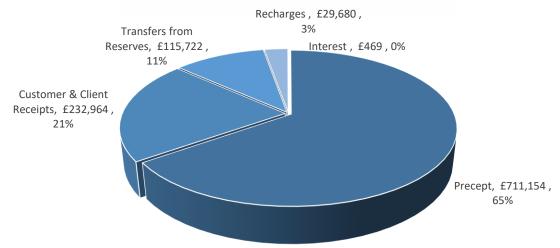
Where the Money Went



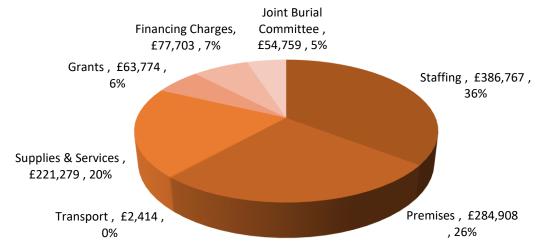
Annual Accounts 2020/21

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Where the Money Went



CONTACTS



Godalming Town Council 107-109 High Street

107-109 High Street Tel: **01483 523575**Godalming E-Mail: **office@godalming-tc.gov.uk**Surrey GU7 1AQ Web: **www.godalming-tc.gov.uk**

BINSCOMBE WARD

Cllr G Boyle gerry.boyle@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Cllr H Hullah heather.hullah@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Cllr Jo Purvis jo.purvis@godalming-tc.gov.uk
*Cllr PS Rivers paul.rivers@godalming-tc.gov.uk

CENTRAL & OCKFORD WARD

Cllr RP Ashworth

Cllr AW Duce

*Cllr PD Follows

*Cllr AM Rosoman

richard.ashworth@godalming-tc.gov.uk

adam.duce@godalming-tc.gov.uk

paul.follows@godalming-tc.gov.uk

anne-marie.rosoman@godalming-tc.gov.uk

CHARTERHOUSE WARD

*Cllr SW Cosser steve.cosser@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Cllr C Neill chris.neill@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Cllr ML Steel michael.steel@godalming-tc.gov.uk
*Cllr S Williams steve.williams@godalming-tc.gov.uk

FARNCOMBE & CATTESHALL WARD

Cllr A Adam alex.adam@godalming-tc.gov.uk
0*Cllr PMA Rivers penny.rivers@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Cllr SA Faraday shirley.faraday@godalming-tc.gov.uk
Cllr RA Welland ross.welland@godalming-tc.gov.uk

HOLLOWAY WARD

Cllr B Crooks

*Cllr JC Heagin

0*Cllr PJ Martin

Cllr MJ Stubbs

bob.crooks@godalming-tc.gov.uk

joan.heagin@godalming-tc.gov.uk

peter.martin@godalming-tc.gov.uk

michael.stubbs@godalming-tc.gov.uk

*Waverley Members

⁰Surrey County Council Members

Town Council Staff:

Weekend Caretaker

Andv Jefferv Town Clerk townclerk@godalming-tc.gov.uk Rita Tong Responsible Finance Officer finance@godalming-tc.gov.uk Lvnne Purnell Support Services Executive office@godalming-tc.gov.uk Suzie Gortler Community & Communications Officer community@godalming-tc.gov.uk Karen Warner **Facilities Supervisor** operations@godalming-tc.gov.uk museum.curator@godalming-tc.gov.uk Alison Pattison Godalming Museum Curator Angela Terelak Museum Volunteer Co-ordinator museum.volunteers@godalming-tc.gov.uk Darren Jones maintenance@godalming-tc.gov.uk **Buildings Maintenance** Jason Hunter Grounds Maintenance grounds@godalming-tc.gov.uk Holly Harvey Maintenance Assistant

Vacant