



Godalming
Town Council

Supporting Our Community

GODALMING TOWN CENTRE AREA

Preserving the Past, Protecting the Present, Planning the Future

Adopted by Full Council – April 2021

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Built Environment - encompasses all forms of building (housing, industrial, commercial, hospitals, schools etc.), and civil engineering infrastructure both above and below ground and includes the managed landscapes between and around buildings.

Community Wellbeing - the combination of social, economic, environmental, cultural, and political conditions identified by individuals and their communities as essential for them to flourish and fulfil their potential.

Socio-economic Strata - refers to the condition within a society where social classes are separated, or stratified, along economic lines.

Urban Life - Urban life refers to the life of the people living in towns and cities.

Place-shaping - a term coined in the Lyons Inquiry (2004-7) into the form, function and funding of local government in England. Lyons suggested that local government should act as the voice of a whole community and as "an agent of place"

Walkability - Walkability is a measure of how friendly an area is to walking. Walkability has health, environmental, and economic benefits.

Bikeability - Bikeability is (in line with its sibling term 'walkability') an indication of the ability of the urban infrastructure to support and foster cycling as a mode of transport and mobility.

Green environment - the natural environment within an urban area such as parks, verges, sports fields and other unbuilt areas.

Staycation – a collection of activities held during the first week of August to provide 'a holiday at home' for local residents.

Staycation Live – a music festival held over the first weekend of Staycation.

On-Line Retail – consumer retail purchases made via the internet.

Off-line Retail – consumer retail purchases made in a physical retail outlet such as a shop or market stall.

Public Works Loan Board - a lending facility operated on behalf of HM Treasury to provide loans to local authorities, and other specified bodies. Loans are made mainly for capital projects.

Social Return [on investments] - a principles-based method for measuring extra-financial value such as environmental or social value.

Permitted Development Rights - The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (the "GPDO 2015") is a Statutory Instrument, that grants planning permission for certain types of development such as change of use of offices to residential dwellings. Development undertaken in this way is referred to as permitted development.

Article 4 Direction Order - An Article 4 direction is made by a local planning authority to restrict the use of permitted development rights. An Article 4 Direction does not in itself prohibit any action but means that a landowner is required to seek planning consent whereas without the direction this would not be necessary.

Community Infrastructure Levy - The Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge levied by local authorities on new development in their area. It is an important tool to help deliver the infrastructure needed to support development.

Catch 22 Situation– a dilemma or difficult circumstance from which there is no escape because of mutually conflicting or dependent condition.

20 is Plenty - a campaign for a default speed of 20mph on residential streets and in town and village centres, without the need for physical calming.

Performing Rights Society – a partner organisation of PRS for Music, a British music copyright collective, which undertakes rights management for musical works on behalf of its members. This includes licencing venues for live musical performances.

SCC Members Community Allocation – a fund provided to each Surrey County Councillor to help residents, voluntary and community organisations deliver activities that benefitted local people in their neighbourhoods.

Business Improvement District - business led partnerships which are created through a ballot process to deliver additional services to local businesses. They can be a powerful tool to allow the business community and local authorities to work together to improve the local trading environment.

PART ONE

1. Preamble

This report aims to:

- Provide the context and raise awareness of some of the issues affecting the Town Centre area and how the Town Centre relates to Community well-being.
- Identify current activity being delivered by Godalming Town Council (GTC) to support the general well-being of residents and economic viability of the Town Centre area.
- Identify ways in which GTC can provide direct action, influence or support further improvements within the Town Centre area.

2. Introduction¹

The built environment has a significant impact on people's general feeling of well-being. In considering how the built environment or 'place' can impact on those whose lives it touches, decision makers would do well to consider that the very large majority of research evidence points in the same broad direction; better place quality adds value economically, socially and with regard to health and environmental outcomes. The impacts of place are profound, contribute benefits to society over short, medium and long-term time horizons, and reverberate throughout the lives of citizens across all socio-economic strata.

Place quality is not an aspiration only to be considered when things are good or only for the wealthy. Instead, as the research evidence indicates, it is a basic necessity of urban life with profound and far-reaching impacts on the lives of citizens today and tomorrow. It is so important to basic well-being that it should be the expectation of all. This knowledge can be used to advance the case for quality when place-shaping policy, project or investment decisions are being made.

A *VERY strong positive* association between place derived value of all types (health, social, economic and environmental) and six qualities: greenness in the built environment (notably the presence of trees, grass, water, and open space – the latter if of good quality); a mix of uses (notably the diversity of land uses within a neighbourhood); low levels of traffic; the walkability and bike ability of places (derived from their strategic street-based connectivity and the quality of the local public realm); the use of more compact (less sprawling and fragmented) patterns of development; and ready, convenient connection to a good public transport network.

In considering these very strong positive associations, the Godalming Town Centre area could potentially be described as the ideal location to represent all these qualities. However, there is a body of evidence that suggests car dependence and poor maintenance/dilapidation (including of green spaces) has an equally strong negative association as qualities to be avoided when shaping the built environment.

3. Godalming Town Centre Conservation Area

Godalming central retail area lies within the Godalming Town Centre Conservation Area (CA). The character of the CA relies on the many listed buildings in the compact historic core and contains a mix of uses, including retail, office and residential. There are 125 listed buildings, 15 heritage features and 2 buildings of local merit within the CA.

Overall, the CA appears to be in a good condition, but there are some buildings and locations which, due to condition, materials, street furniture and other factors currently detract from the CA. Whilst not all the remedies for these issues lie with GTC, there are areas, such as advocacy for good design and planning, the maintenance of street furniture and acting as the 'local eyes' for the reporting of

¹ Matthew Carmona (2019) Place value: place quality and its impact on health, social, economic and environmental outcomes, Journal of Urban Design, 24:1, 1-48, DOI: [10.1080/13574809.2018.1472523](https://doi.org/10.1080/13574809.2018.1472523)

issues to the relevant authorities, that GTC can play a significant role in maintaining the character of the CA. Indeed, it could be argued that, if not GTC than who?

Connectivity to the open green spaces: the Phillips Memorial Park, the allotments and the churchyard, is also an important aspect of the CA, in particular the relationship with the River Wey and the Lammas Lands beyond, and should be considered in any review or plans for enhancing the public realm within the CA. This connectivity should play an important role in any consideration for projects that seek to link the main retail areas towards the green spaces, in particular the Wiggins Yard and Crown Court Environmental Improvement Projects.

4. Important Features and Vistas

The “Pepperpot” or Old Town Hall, owned by GTC, is an important landmark, which is represented as the “symbol of the town’s independence” and used as the Town Council’s logo. The Pepperpot is the historic and present-day focal point for public announcements and events. Included in the heritage features located within the CA is the tall iron hand lever pump at The Pepperpot, which provided a communal water supply before mains water was laid on. This hand pump, like the exterior of The Pepperpot was last painted and preserved over 10 years ago and is now in need of repainting. It is suggested that The Pepperpot, whether overtly acknowledged or not, is seen as a symbol of civic pride by many residents who will consider any lack of upkeep or maintenance as a dereliction of public responsibility by GTC.

Church Street has arguably the most character in Godalming with many 17th century timber framed buildings. This street also meanders to reveal the 12th century Grade 1 listed Church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul. The street furniture in the area around the church and iron stone pavement was replaced approx. 6 years ago and an additional public bench, which is well used, was installed.

Crown Court is a gateway location within the town centre and is used for public events such as markets, community activities and also houses the town centre’s public toilets. It is surrounded by listed buildings with a walk-through arch constructed in the early 1950s from the original materials of earlier buildings and flagstone paving. This area is owned by Waverley Borough Council (WBC) with an agreement in place for GTC to manage its use for community events. Along with its historical character, its position adjacent to the town’s main car park makes this an ideal location for small ‘markets’ and community events. It is suggested that this area is under-utilised and that options for enhancing the area and making it more inviting and relevant should be explored. Likewise, in considering the positive benefits of linking the urban environment to the green environment of The Burys, Phillips Memorial Park and river side, any improvements in this area should aim to achieve a sense of flow between the two.

One of the key characteristics of the CA is the “yards” located behind the main streets. Many of these “yards” would have housed workshops in the past. The “yards” are mainly in private ownership, one exception being Wiggins Yard where the maintenance responsibilities are undefined, resulting in the historic cobbles needing substantial works to make the passage between Bridge Street and The Burys useable by pedestrians, including wheelchair users.

5. Open Space and Landscape

This section is concerned not just with the ‘fixed’ built environment but also the influences on the landscape through interventions such as ‘Floral Godalming’ and ‘In Bloom’. Colourful flower planters, window boxes and hanging baskets within a built environment can create a stronger sense of pride of place, contributing to a cleaner and greener place to live and visit, with higher environmental awareness.²

² <https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/britain-in-bloom/why>

If parks and green spaces are well managed, research has shown that communities use their local spaces more, have better relationships with their local councils and take some pride in the area where they live.³

Parks and green spaces contribute to all aspects of health and well-being including increasing levels of physical activity which could alleviate pressures on the NHS. Simply being outside in a green space can promote mental wellbeing, relieve stress, overcome isolation, improve social cohesion and alleviate physical problems.⁴

Parks provide spaces where people can get some fresh air, go for a walk, play, exercise or just enjoy the surroundings. Research by Keep Britain Tidy found that: "Visits to green spaces with friends and extended family groups were highly valued for enabling social bonding in largely natural and frequently picturesque surroundings."⁵

Parks and green space can provide schools with a living, breathing, fully interactive and continually changing outdoor classroom; a wonderful resource with which to support curriculum activities. Access is easy and because they exist locally, visits can be frequent allowing longer-term projects to be undertaken. The Local Park or green space has become an increasingly popular destination for study of the natural environment as well as social and urban development.⁶ In this context, GTC has supported Moss Lane School in accessing outside space. A final thought in support of the importance of the town centre area green spaces comes from the Urban Parks Forum which contends that green spaces support childhood and provide a freedom so often denied in congested traffic-strewn streets. They can help counter the negative effects of urban growth on the public environment and encourage children to become better stewards of the environment in the future.⁷

The Phillips Memorial Park (which includes The Burys Field) is the only open green space in the CA. The Phillips Memorial Cloister itself is a quieter space but unfortunately has been subject to vandalism in the past. This might be because the structure is less open and has limited natural surveillance. On the whole the park is well maintained by WBC and in the summertime many people use the park and enjoy events such as the Sunday 'Music in the Park' concerts and the Staycation Live Music Festival. There are additional structures/buildings such as the bandstand, the bowls green and hut, the church and the children's playground which also add to the ambience of the area. The allotments also add variety to this area. As well as the traditional use of the bandstand for concerts, residents take advantage of the covered structure of the bandstand for a variety of exercise activities. The bandstand and Phillips Memorial Park are used on average for less than 100 hours per year for organised public events (including Concerts, Staycation, Town Show etc.). Greater use of these public realm assets should be explored.

Most of the CA, including the "yards", is accessible to the public with the CA being reasonably permeable for pedestrians. The key gateways by foot into the centre include Crown Court car park, Wiggins Yard, Lower South Street, Oglethorpe Court Passageway, Queens Street, Wharf Street, Station Approach, Mill Lane, Pound Lane and Church Street. Of these Wiggins Yard and Oglethorpe Court Passageway are the least accessibility friendly routes, Oglethorpe Court Passageway because of a flight of steps with no adjacent ramp and Wiggins Yard by lack of maintenance.

The main footpaths on the High Street were subject to an improvement scheme in the early 1990s. They have red brick paving, granite setts in certain parts and traditional kerbstones. There is a mixture of signage including traditional finger posts. On the High Street there are traditional style guard rails and bollards, which are also utilised by GTC to support Floral Godalming planters.

³ CABE Space. (2010). Urban Green Nation: Building the Evidence Base
https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/urban-green-nation_0_0.pdf

⁴ CABE. (2009). Future Health: Sustainable places for health and well-being

⁵ Keep Britain Tidy. (2010). People Places and their Green Spaces

⁶ Urban Parks Forum. (2002). Your Parks: the benefits of parks and green space

⁷ Urban Parks Forum. (2002). Your Parks: the benefits of parks and green space

The ownership of the street furniture and public realm infrastructure such as bells, bollards and rails has been the focus of much dispute, resulting in GTC becoming custodians by default. The red brick paving is no longer produced resulting in an increasingly patchwork look to the pavements. The granite kerbs in the High Street and Bridge Street are generally in good condition. However, due to the size and frequency of delivery vehicles driving on and off of the loading bay areas which necessitate 'bumping' over the kerbs, an increasing number of the kerb stones are becoming displaced. The mounting of the pavement area also causes damage to the crossover drains. Whilst the buildings along Godalming High Street and Bridge Street have historic character, the 1990's design of the pavements and carriageway have not stood the test of time, are dated and increasingly challenging to maintain. Although beyond GTC's ability to fund, the Town Council does have a role in lobbying the Highways Authority and Principal Authorities for more than 'make do and mend' patchwork repairs to the Godalming CA and should be seeking wholesale regeneration of the low-level street scene of Godalming High Street, Queen Street, Wharf Street and Bridge Street, including the provision of 'shared space' and pedestrianisation as a means of traffic control and reduction.

Traffic is one way on the main roads: Bridge Street, Wharf Street, the High Street and Church Street. This, in addition to Flambard Way, has helped reduce traffic through the CA. Traffic calming, in the form of speed bumps and pedestrianisation of the High Street on Saturdays, has been implemented. Additionally, since May 2020 an 18-month Temporary Road Order (TRO) has been available for use to aid social distancing requirements. During periods of operation the TRO has significantly reduced the vehicular obstructions along the main section of the High Street and on the whole was well received by residents. As indicated by the research evidence mentioned in the introduction, low levels of traffic along with improved walkability and bikeability are positive associates of wellbeing in place-shaping and consideration should be given to options for improving the pedestrian experience within the central retail area of the Town Centre.

6. Community Use of the Town Centre Built Environment

The Town Centre's built and green environment is used by residents and visitors to Godalming to access day-to-day facilities, but it is also used to provide a focal point for a variety of organised activities as well as less formal and more ad-hoc events.

For a number of years, Godalming has had a programme of annual events held on the High Street & Church Street and associated areas, The Burys or the Phillips Memorial Park. Additionally, in more recent times GTC has also organised or managed events that have been based within the Crown Court pedestrian area.

The majority of these events are either totally free at the point of entry or at worse seek a donation to help cover the organiser's fixed costs (Town Show and Staycation Live), the only current community event that has an entry fee, is the Godalming Community Run. 2020 saw the cancellation of all the 'traditional' community events and it is likely that the majority will also be either cancelled or rescheduled for 2021. With a two-year hiatus, a possibility exists that some events will not continue or if they do so, the organisers may take the opportunity provided by the enforced break to 're-brand' or alter the delivery model of their event.

7. Street Furniture and Decluttering

It is important to reinforce the distinctiveness of Godalming through a clear and consolidated approach to street furniture, including bollards, lamp posts, benches and litter bins. In order to ensure consistency throughout the CA, as far as reasonably practicable, coordinated street furniture has been implemented throughout the town by GTC and WBC. However, improving the CA does not just mean the installation of new coordinated street furniture, it also means rationalising what is already there and removing or repositioning signage and street furniture that is no longer required or used.

With the exception of litter bins which have been replaced by both GTC and WBC, the maintenance of the public realm within the CA has predominately fallen to GTC to manage. Prior to 2019, this was undertaken by out-sourcing repairs. Following the appointment of GTC direct maintenance staff, the repair and refurbishment of the public realm street furniture will now be, wherever possible and safe to do so, undertaken by the GTC maintenance team.

In relation to highways infrastructure, GTC remains actively engaged with SCC Highways for the identification and reporting of highway defects as well as working with Surrey Members to identify areas in need of improvement or intervention by SCC Highways.

8. Public Art

There is a notable absence of physical street art within Godalming. However, there are a number of places where art could add to the street scene, such as Crown Court, the public realm next to The Red Lion pub or the entrance to Wharf Street from Flambard Way, where the circular 'plinth' on the west side of the street was, when the town centre scheme was originally envisaged, intended to be a location for public art.

A number of organisations, including the Centre for Active Design, set out that a vibrant public art programme offers a range of benefits and opportunities for enhancing the urban environment, increasing the use and enjoyment of public space and building social cohesion. Public Art provides a means of celebrating culture, diverse communities and shared history. It contributes to civic pride and help forge a positive identity for the town. Through art the town can project its collective identity and vision, while individuals and community groups are also empowered to express their unique identities.

Public art supports the creative industries, creating opportunities for artists and designers. Public art can also:

- energise public spaces;
- expand thinking;
- transform the places where we live, work and play;
- create places of interaction; and
- lead to a sense of civic pride.

However, in the 21st century, public art does not need to be considered as statues and monuments whose meanings fade into obscurity. In this context public art is not just art displayed within the street scene, it can be any art form, from physical art such as sculpture, paintings or drawings to performance art such as drama, dance and speech. It can be permanently displayed as part of the street scene or it could be transient such as performance art on the bandstand or any form of art displayed or provided in a publicly accessible building such as the Museum, shops, cafes, restaurants and pubs etc.

9. Economic Profile and Potential Forces for Change

Waverley in general is an affluent area with a buoyant local economy and low level of unemployment. Godalming town centre is a mix of retail, office and residential. The majority of homes in this part of the Ward are privately or social rented. Despite the economic shock experienced by the retail sector during the Coronavirus pandemic, the level of unoccupied retail units remains relatively low (8% Feb 2021). There remains a strong presence of shops and residents continue to be served by independent butchers, bakers, greengrocers, delicatessens, clothing stores, hardware stores and cafes. However, whilst not having been impacted by the closure of major multinational fashion retailers as deeply as larger regional centres, changes to retail banking and other business closures have resulted in a number of retail units becoming vacant.

Although high streets and town centres have continuously evolved over the last 100+ years, the rate of change over the last decade has significantly increased due to the speed of changing consumer habits. As with many other town centres, Godalming retailers are facing the challenge of changing purchasing habits, which quickly accelerated during 2020 and the first quarter of 2021. Online sales penetration has continued to reach new heights, and according to the Office for National Statistics they accounted for a 31.9% share of total UK retail sales in the last quarter of 2020. However, although some retailers saw online sales rise enough to counteract losses from in-store transactions, for many, this placed a further squeeze on margins due to the incurred costs of delivery/returns. As would be expected, fashion and footwear retailers were disproportionately impacted by Covid

restrictions. This impact has been seen in Godalming with the closure of a number of national clothing retailers. Of the various sectors, homeware retailers continued to report promising growth figures mainly due to a very strong residential sales market and homeworking triggering additional home improvements. Ongoing growth has cemented objectives regarding store expansion for some, including B&M, who opened 16 new stores in the period, with an additional 18 expected in the current quarter. The challenge for Godalming and WBC economic development strategy, is attracting expanding sectors to replace those whose retail model is no longer viable. Questions that need to be asked are what attracts companies such as B&M to a location and is there anything that GTC can do to improve the attractiveness for companies to locate to Godalming?

Historically Godalming has had a relatively low rate of change of shops which has provided a fairly stable retail offering. Indicators such as lease lengths dropping to record lows could be seen as part of the changing pattern and uncertainty surrounding the future direction of off-line retail. For new high street deals, leases averaged 7.6 years in 2020, down -7.1% on the 2019 average. It is interesting to note that although local authorities might not be as active investors as they once were in the commercial property sector due to the changes in the Public Works Loan Board criteria for loans, this does not seem to have affected their appetite for the retail sector. This is because much activity centres on buying within their locality, and thus it can be justified as a regeneration focused decision rather than a purely income focused one. However, while the rationale amongst local authorities has definitely swung towards “social return” being more important than income return, such assets also need to be good income generators to service the borrowing while the council focuses on supporting the continued viability of its town or high street’s retail offer.

At a macro level, there was a slight resurgence in investment activity in high street shops in the final quarter of 2020. However, 55% of the transactions were on food stores which are seen as a low-risk, Covid- defensive segment of the market. The overall volume of shop assets traded in the second half of 2020 does indicate that there is some confidence amongst investors. Therefore, it is important that Godalming is seen to be a positive investment opportunity and one that has resisted a spiral of decline.

It is expected that that shop unit freehold purchasing and leasing activity will be biased towards the second half of the year, once social distancing measures have reduced, and non-essential retail has reopened. Sizeable questions remain around retailer viability and how rent levels etc are priced in, but where there are supportable income streams in the right locations it is expected that there will be an increasing level of private investor interest. That said property companies will continue to be more focused on assets where there is an opportunity for conversion, typically to residential uses.⁸

This latter aspect has already been experienced in parts of Godalming. However, the ability to bypass local accountability and decision making to re-purpose existing retail and office space is, thanks to the existence of the Conservation Area (CA), not available to developers via the Permitted Development Rights route and therefore planning applications must be submitted for any Change of Use within the bounds of the Godalming Town Centre CA. Likewise, the Article 4 Direction, which was made in May 2020, removes Permitted Development Rights for the conversion of office buildings to residential dwellings in the Article 4 Directive area around Godalming Railway Station.

⁸ <https://pdf.euro.savills.co.uk/uk/commercial-retail-uk/shopping-centre-and-high-street---q4-2020.pdf>

PART TWO

10. GTC's Role for the Town Centre Area Built and Green Environment

GTC is involved in a number of activities in relation to the town centre area built and green environment including the use of the town centre's open spaces.

10.1. Planning

GTC reversed a previous decision to disband its planning committee by the establishment in January 2020 of the Environment & Planning Committee (E&P). The E&P is responsible for providing advocacy on behalf of local residents to ensure that the character of the Town Centre CA is not adversely impacted by developments. – **Action 1.**

10.2. Article 4 Directive

An Article 4 Direction restricts the scope of permitted development rights in relation to a particular area or site. Where an article 4 direction is in effect, a planning application may be required for development that would otherwise have been permitted development. Within the Borough of Waverley, there are currently only two areas subject to an Article 4 Direction. The first area was established for Beacon Hill and was set up as a pilot scheme, with the Godalming Railway Station area being the first location outwith of the pilot scheme to be subject to an Article 4 Direction order.

Although the making of an Article 4 Direction is the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority, the Godalming Article 4 Direction resulted from direct lobbying by GTC, who provided evidence-based data in support of the Article 4 Directive. <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/Services/Planning-and-building/Planning-strategies-and-policies/Article-4-directions> The E&P has a responsibility to challenge any Prior Notification Notices for development within the Godalming Article 4 Direction area. – **Action 2.**

10.3. Wiggins Yard Environmental Improvement Scheme

The Wiggins Yard Environmental Improvement Scheme is an aspiration for a joint venture between WBC and GTC. The project's main priority is to improve the pedestrian link between Bridge Street and The Burys Field, which is safe to use by all within our community, including wheelchair users and those using buggies and mobility scooters. The project is predicated on the preservation of the historic setting of Wiggins Yard and the reuse of the existing cobbles and setts.

The outcome of this project will contribute to improved connectivity between the built and green environment within the Town Centre area. To date WBC has led on this project in relation to legal issues, the commissioning of viability studies and securing funding to be used toward this infrastructure project via an S106 financial contribution. Whilst a number of issues are still to be resolved, it is expected that if all pre-conditions are resolved, GTC will take on responsibility for the delivery of the works and future upkeep of the 'Wiggins Yard' passageway. – **Action 3**

An aside of this project will be to provide a pedestrian link into Bridge Street for cyclists who have made use of the cross-town cycle link to come into town and have 'parked' their bike in the shelter located outside of WBC offices.

10.4. Guildford to Godalming Greenway – Cross Godalming Section

The Guildford to Godalming Greenway is potentially an important step towards providing a practical alternative option for travel between the two towns, but equally important is the opportunity to provide a safe route for local residents into the town centre.

The Greenway aims to provide a route suitable for day-to-day activities such as getting to school, going shopping, commuting to work or simply enjoying time out in the fresh air⁹.

The Greenway project is not only supported by GTC but by both Waverley and Guildford Borough Councils. In July 2018 GTC agreed that Officers should work with the Godalming Cycle Campaign to explore options to enable consideration of the project for Community Infrastructure Funding. Whilst the opportunities for funding have experienced a number of setbacks, the project continues to resonate and find traction amongst both decision makers and the wider public.

In October 2020, GTC agreed to fund a Design and Feasibility Study for the 'Cross Godalming' section of the route, which passes through the Town Centre area green environment. In providing the grant for the Design & Feasibility Study, GTC requested that the study considers what route could link the Greenway from the Phillips Memorial Park to the High Street. Such a link could help reduce private vehicle traffic with the Town Centre, thus making it a more pleasant experience for pedestrians within the Town Centre built environment. – **Action 4**

10.5. **Current Pedestrianisation**

Since 2001 Godalming High Street, between its junction with Queen Street and its junction with Church Street has been subject to a Permanent Road Traffic Order. The effect of the order is to restrict traffic on a Saturday between 10am and 4pm from entering the controlled area. There are a number of exemptions including public transport buses and vehicles belonging to residents or workers who have a designated parking place within the controlled area.

Access to the restricted area is controlled by a rising bollard, which for safety reasons must be manually operated on each first occasion of daily operation. On a Saturday this operation is carried out by the On-Street Parking Enforcement Officer. Subsequent lowering of the bollard is achieved by use of an access control card. In accordance with the terms of the Permanent Road Traffic Order, GTC acts as an agent for SCC for the issuing of the access cards.

In May 2020 an additional Temporary Road Traffic Order was issued to support Social Distancing measures that permitted traffic restrictions within the same area between 10.30am and 3.30pm Mon-Sat. The main differences being that the exemptions were widened to permit delivery vehicles access and that GTC staff carried out the daily activation of the bollard between Mon-Fri. In extending the operation between Mon-Fri a greater number of access cards are required in order to accommodate business requirements that had not been required just for the Saturday operations.

Whilst the bollard was not operated Mon-Fri during periods of national lockdown when non-essential shops were closed, it remained operational on a Saturday in accordance with the Permanent Order. With reopening of non-essential shops expected on the 12 April, GTC will recommence the weekday operation of the bollard through to 21 June when, unless social distancing requirements remain extant, the bollard operation will revert to Saturday's only as the purpose of the Temporary Order will no longer exist. However, if social distancing requirements of some description remain in force, GTC will seek further guidance on whether the Temporary Road Traffic Order should remain in operation. – **Action 5**

10.6. **Future Pedestrianisation**

Once the Temporary Road Traffic Order falls away, either through its purpose no longer existing, or through time expiry of its maximum period of operation, the limit of traffic

⁹ <http://www.guildfordgodalminggreenway.com>

restrictions within Godalming High Street will fall back onto those permitted by the Permanent Order.

During the period of operation of the Temporary Road Traffic Order the overwhelming consensus of nearly 2000 users of the High Street surveyed by GTC found the extended restrictions to be a positive benefit. This is in keeping with the evidence highlighted at paragraph 1 regarding the positive association of low levels of traffic, walkability and bikeability. The Temporary Road Traffic Order put into practice actions that had been discussed for many years but not implemented due to a classic Catch 22 situation. Without evidence further restrictions could not be justified, without implementing the restrictions evidence could not be attained!

However, it should be noted that the operation of the extended restrictions was not without issue. With the increased residential population of the Town Centre area and reliance by businesses on just in time deliveries, the logistic challenges and potential disruption to residents and businesses are significantly greater than when the Permanent Order was granted in 2001. That said, it could also be argued that the benefits that could be derived are also significantly greater than in 2001.

The 'pedestrianisation' or more correctly the Road Traffic Restriction Order required to make permanent amendments to the current traffic arrangements lies with Surrey County Council. However, it could be argued that if GTC considers that extending the Road Traffic Restrictions granted in 2001 would be beneficial to the well-being of residents and businesses then it has a responsibility to advocate those benefits to SCC and take a lead on promoting traffic reduction measures within the town centre.

Whilst the physical restriction of some traffic would help to improve the environment, so could the control of traffic speed within the Town Centre area. Speed control for all traffic within the whole of the Town Centre area could be achieved through the implementation of an area wide speed restriction such as advocated by the "20 is Plenty" campaign. – **Action 6**

10.7. **Crown Court Pedestrian Area**

As stated earlier, Crown Court pedestrian area is a gateway location which has the potential to become a focal point for community activity, be it increased market style events, as a showcase location for the performing arts, or indeed just as a simple but pleasant resting point to sit and talk with friends. However, it also has the potential to become a linkway to provide flow from the built environment to the green environment.

GTC does have a stake in Crown Court in that it has the leases of, and manages, the Crown Court public toilets. GTC also organises, manages or is a partner organisation for the majority of the community events that are held within the town centre, including the Friday pop-up markets, the Farmers' Markets, Spring, Summer and Christmas Festivals, all of which utilise Crown Court. However, GTC does not have ownership of Crown Court pedestrian area, and therefore can only act as an advocate for improvements to this area. Such advocacy may, if the Council felt it would benefit residents, extend to financial support to the owners for improvements through the use of Neighbourhood CIL funding.

In recognition of its position to provide advocacy for environmental improvements to this key location, in September 2020, GTC agreed to establish a working group to explore ideas and options relating to the Crown Court area. – **Action 7**

10.8. **Community Events – The Green Environment**

Crown Court pedestrian area and the High Street are not the only locations within the town Centre area used to host community events. The three main festivals plus the annual town show all utilise Church Street as well as Crown Court and the High Street. The annual Remembrance Parade also uses the High Street and Church Street but also gathers at the War Memorial in the Phillips Memorial Park.

The Phillips Memorial Park hosts a number of events throughout the summer months, most notable of which are the Music in the Park concerts held each Sunday, 3pm to 5pm between May & September at the Godalming Bandstand, The Rotary Club's Duck Race, The Godalming Community Run and the Staycation Live Music Festival held over two days in August. Whilst GTC supports all these events, all except the Godalming Run utilise the Godalming Bandstand.

Godalming Bandstand is owned by GTC, although the land it sits upon is leased at a peppercorn rent from WBC. The Bandstand is licensed for regulated entertainment. However, whilst GTC may give permission for the use of the bandstand, permission is required from WBC for any associated activities within the Phillips Memorial Park. This is a protective arrangement to safeguard the park. Whilst GTC does not pay for the use of the Park (including The Burys Field) for each occasion of use, it does pay an annual fee to cover administrative costs incurred by WBC to process land use permits for GTC and other community organised events.

The Bandstand is used by a wide cross section of the community, be it people using it for early morning yoga, exercise routines, family picnics or just as a sheltered meeting place. Although the Bandstand does have a schedule of charges set against its use, apart from the Music in the Park concerts who pay for approx. 52 hours of use per annum, the reality is that no other fees are collected for the use of the Bandstand. It could be argued that the one organisation that is charged provides the greatest community benefit from the use of the bandstand, with many hundreds if not thousands of residents and visitors each year enjoying the Sunday afternoon concerts. Additionally, GTC also recovers the cost of the Performing Rights Society licence fee from the concert organisers. In arranging the concerts, the organisers not only need to find sponsors for the bands, they also need to raise funds to pay the hire charges and the performing rights fee. In considering the community benefits derived from the provision of these free to attend public concerts, GTC may wish to review the application of a hire fee for community use of the Bandstand, and whether such fee should be limited to the recovery of the cost of the Performing Rights Society licence fee. The cost of the electricity is paid by the concert organisers. – **Action 8**

The Burys Field forms part of The Phillips Memorial Park. The main activities taking place at the field are skateboarding and youth football. Although WBC owns, maintains and manages the field, including sports bookings, the flood lights are powered from the Wilfrid Noyce Centre (WNC). The current floodlights were provided by grants from SCC Member's Communication Allocation and a grant from WBC with GTC arranging for the installation works. Whilst the lights are adequate for training, they would be improved by the repair of a defective light column (requiring the replacement of the underground power supply cable). – **Action 9**

When required, water and power is also provided from the WNC for community events, such as the Town Show and St John's Spring Fair, held on The Burys Field. GTC makes no charge for this provision. However, where a community event also requires the use of the WNC, that is provided via grant aid in kind.

With the combined organised community usage of The Phillips Memorial Park and Burys Field, excluding football training and matches, being less than 100 hours per annum, it could be argued that these are underutilised community assets and that it should be possible to hold a greater number of community events at these locations. Such events could include the Godalming Green Gala, to be held for the first time in August 2021. There are also opportunities for WBC to permit more commercial events such as, amongst other activities, outdoor cinema, which was successfully arranged in 2019, funfairs and circus. - **Action 10**

10.9. **Community Events – Town Centre Built Environment**

GTC recognises the importance of events within the community and stated its commitment to their delivery, both directly and indirectly by adopting a clear policy position to support community events.

Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, it was not possible to deliver upon this commitment in 2020. However, GTC hopes to be able to resume community events in 2021 starting with the Farmers' Markets in April when non-essential retail is to be allowed. If the recovery maintains the trajectory outlined by the Government, it is anticipated that the Music in the Park concerts will resume on 27 June, and that the first major GTC community event will be the Green Gala in August 2021. The Round Table's Town Show is expected to be held on Saturday, 19 September and the Christmas Festival is expected to be held on the 27 November. Whilst not quite the full slate of annual events, it is hoped that they will provide a launchpad to the continuance of Godalming's collective community spirit.

Looking forward to 2022 and beyond, GTC is seeking to hold a number of new events including the Godalming Gig and the Godalming Fringe. Additionally, GTC will be looking to work with other community groups and organisations to join in the national celebrations of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee, 2-5 June 2022. – **Action 11**

10.10. **Floral Godalming**

Floral Godalming softens the built environment within the town centre built up environs, provides colour and interest, helps support pollinating insects and provides a sense of civic pride and well-being, especially when the effort involved in Floral Godalming is recognised by external organisations such as South East in Bloom.

The troughs, baskets and planters are installed on rails and bollards with the town centre, as well as a number of public buildings and complements those businesses and property owners who also strive to brighten up the area with floral displays. The flower troughs etc are planted up, installed, watered and maintained by GTC staff in as economical and sustainable way as possible. However, whilst GTC does seek to attract sponsorship of the floral displays, in terms of staff time, infrastructure and the cost of the plants etc, the majority of the costs lie with GTC. It is the aspiration of GTC to expand Floral Godalming to cover a wider area, in particular the town centre approach roundabouts at the Inn on the Lake and Meadow/Bridge Road/Chalk Road. The Town Council also wishes to see the pedestrian approaches to the town benefit from Floral Godalming through the installation of flower troughs on the pedestrian safety barriers around the pedestrian refuges located by the Chalk Road roundabout and the pedestrian crossing points located along Flambard Way. – **Action 12**

As the scheme expands, the supporting infrastructure and staff time will also need to expand. This could be in the form of a community greenhouse located in the rear garden of Broadwater Park Community Centre that could support community growers 'Godalming Growers' to produce plants from seed. Whilst there would be costs in setting up such a structure to support this type of community involvement, and there would still be a need for GTC staff resource for oversight and support, these should be balanced against the longer-term benefits from greater community involvement in Floral Godalming. – **Action 13**

10.11. **Signage, Rails, Bollards, Bells & Benches**

Following the refurbishment of the High Street in the late 1990's by SCC, the maintenance of the installed infrastructure, signage, rails, bollards, bells and benches has been an issue of much debate between a number of authorities. Whilst the maintenance of the footpaths and carriageway clearly lies with SCC highways, the maintenance and repair of the street furniture has been less clear, resulting in its deterioration.

In 2013/14 GTC worked with SCC to implement some of the outcomes from the Town Centre CA appraisal, which included the removal of redundant street furniture, the installation of new,

or the relocation of some existing furniture to where it would provide a greater benefit, the repair and replacement of damaged items and the repainting of all remaining items.

Since that time, GTC has been the custodian of the town centre area street furniture, especially since the introduction of Floral Godalming, which relies upon this infrastructure. It is now approaching 7 years since the last full audit and targeted maintenance program. With GTC now having the benefit of a directly employed maintenance capability, during 2021 it is planned to conduct a full audit, repair and repaint of the existing street furniture and to establish a future maintenance cycle.

The fingerpost signage within the CA was audited in 2012 with some redundant signs being removed and others 'repointed' and additional fingers added where necessary. The town centre fingerposts and signage should be considered in the round with the fingerposts installed by WBC along the riverside walk and the Phillips Memorial Park as well as directional and info-signage and maps located at the railway station and WBC car parks. Any audit of GTC signage should incorporate all signage, irrespective of installer, and look to ensure accuracy of information. – **Action 14**

10.12. The Pepperpot

As indicated at paragraph 4, The Pepperpot as an iconic building in the ownership of GTC should be well maintained, although the interior has recently been renovated, the exterior is beginning to show signs of age and is in need of repainting. Additionally, the bell stick needs repairing which can only be carried out if scaffolding is erected to gain access to the cupola – **Action 15**

GTC should investigate the possibility of installing 'fixed' tables and benches in the area around The Pepperpot for use by town centre visitors. Public seating with tables in this area could add vibrancy to the immediate area and provide an outside seating area for patrons of a number of small café's and food outlets who do not have outside space. – **Action 16**

Buildings of Local Merit

Godalming has many beautiful buildings which contribute greatly to the individual appeal of the town. While many of Godalming's buildings are already protected by listed building status, there are others that do not meet the Department of National Heritage's listing criteria but could be recognised as being of importance to Godalming.

There are only 2 buildings of local merit (BLMs) within the CA, at 96 and 117 High Street [96 is currently occupied by Arthouse Unlimited and 117 by McAllister Thomas Fine Arts]. Both are Georgian, 2 storey, red brick or rendered with original windows. They have retail/restaurant use on the ground floor. They are well preserved and maintained and fit in well in the street scene. Under the National Planning Policy Framework, BLMs are considered to be designated heritage assets.¹⁰

There are no additional planning controls for BLMs but, the identification does mean it is a material consideration in planning applications. Although BLMs are adopted by WBC acting as the local planning authority, it is for the responsibility of the local town or parish council for going through the process to identify BLMs.¹¹

Godalming Town Council could, as exemplified by Cranleigh and Farnham, take a local lead in the identification of BLMs. If the Council were to put forward a scheme to identify potential BLMs, it is suggested that it does so in collaboration with the Godalming Trust and Godalming Museum. Any such scheme should not be limited to the town centre area but should cover the civic parish of Godalming. – **Action 17**

¹⁰ WBC – Godalming Town Centre Conservation Area Appraisal September 2013, para 3.6

¹¹ <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/Services/Planning-and-building/Heritage-trees-and-design/Buildings-of-Local-Merit>

10.13. **Public Art**

Godalming has a thriving arts community, be it art group collectives where individual artists collaborate to create exhibitions, commercial galleries, artisan craft makers, drama groups or artistic performers. However, whilst their individual contributions are greatly appreciated and admired by those who are fortunate enough to know about them, as a collective their impact upon the town could be so much greater.

There are a number of community forums who seek to represent and promote a shared interest e.g., Sports Godalming, the Godalming Green Forum, but at present there is no forum or collective representation of the arts community. – **Action 18**

10.14. **Regeneration and Supporting the Local Economy**

GTC, in common with all other Town & Parish Councils, has very few statutory duties. However, it does hold The General Power of Competence. The General Power of Competence (GPC) was introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and took effect in February 2012. In simple terms, it gives councils the power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation.

The GPC will allow GTC to support its community in difficult times to arrest and prevent a perception of decline within the town centre retail area, manage change and be a positive actor in building back the retail and business base and working for greater economic growth and resilience in the local communities. The GPC provides both a legal power on which to act and/or giving greater confidence to work in new and innovative ways.

The narrative set out in this paper and the action highlighted below are all within the power of GTC to enact. Whilst individually, each area is a laudable aim unto itself, combined they provide a strong message that Godalming is a resilient community, that is capable of adapting to economic and societal changes, thus avoiding an actual or perceived environment of decline.

The recovery from the economic impact of the Coronavirus pandemic within our community can only be achieved by working in partnership with others. The existing business community has a vital part to play in ensuring it provides a welcoming and supportive environment to customers and clients, that its offering meets their needs and the service provided is such that they feel the benefits of 'supporting local'.

GTC's role is, as far as possible, to ensure that Godalming town centre remains a visually attractive and vibrant location for business to operate. Godalming needs to be a location of first choice and not one of last resort. By doing so, GTC provides the tools for Business Waverley¹² to work to attract new businesses to Godalming. – **Action 19**

10.15. **Business Improvement District**

With a business turnover of over £4.9 billion, and the highest density of businesses in Surrey, Waverley punches above its weight when it comes to business.¹³ That is not to say that there is not more that could be done to support the business community or that the business community should not look at options to support themselves.

One option for the business community to develop resilience and to ensure that Godalming is a location of first choice for customers, clients and businesses looking for new opportunities, is to identify a programme of improvements that will enhance the business environment and then to seek to implement those improvement projects via a Business Improvement District (BID).

¹² <https://www.businesswaverley.co.uk/en-GB>

¹³ <https://www.businesswaverley.co.uk/en-GB/page/5d95c2ca0f0bdc187fdb7951>

Waverley Borough Council has supported the local Chambers of Commerce in conducting a feasibility and viability study for the creation of BID areas. As part of that study GTC, along with a number of other businesses and the Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce, identified a viable BID area. The next stage of the BID process is to establish the BID criteria, this would include the aims of the BID, i.e., what are the project objectives and costs. From the establishment of what businesses wish the BID to provide and the cost of doing so, it is possible to determine the required levy to be applied to local business rates and the minimum business rate threshold for paying the BID levy.

Although the establishment of a BID area was first mooted in 2018, the enforced closure of businesses during 2020 put its progress on hold. It is expected that WBC and the Chambers of Commerce within Waverley will recommence work on the BID in September 2021.

As a main provider of community events and infrastructure, as well as a potential payee of the BID Levy, GTC does have an interest in the BID process. However, it should be noted that although a BID can provide events and services to benefit a business area, such provision should not be a replacement for the events, activities or services already provided. That is not to say that the BID cannot contribute to improved or expand provision, or if successful commission the provision of additional services from GTC.

Whilst the details of how or whether the BID process is taken forward is yet to be determined, a consideration for its development is the cost of establishing the evidence base and BID prospectus to take to referendum. Whilst GTC, as a public body, cannot lead on the BID, it is able to support organisations in developing the BID. – **Action 20**

10.16. **Devolution of Public Assets**

The Government has stated “power should be exercised at the lowest practical level - close to the people who are affected by decisions, rather than distant from them. Local authorities can do their job best when they have genuine freedom to respond to what local people want, not what they are told to do by Central Government. In challenging financial times, this freedom is more important than ever, enabling local authorities to innovate and deliver better value for taxpayers’ money”.¹⁴

In providing the tools to enable words to become actions, the Government introduced the ability for a local council to obtain the General Power of Competence. As stated earlier, GTC holds this General Power. The granting of this power to GTC has allowed it to take over the ownership of the Godalming Museum building, and in partnership with the Godalming Museum Trust provides a Museum Service for the benefit of the town. Likewise, it also permitted the transfer of the public toilet facilities to GTC to ensure that such provision continues to be provided. These are examples of choices that can be made and outcomes that can be achieved when principal and local councils work together for the benefit of the local area.

There are a number of other areas where GTC believes the control of public assets from the principal authority to the local council would be to the benefit of the local community.

Although just outside the town centre area, two such assets, Charterhouse Green and The Lammas Land adjacent to Meadow allotments, are considered to be place shapers not only for the immediate locality but also for the general feeling of community that greater use of these assets could achieve. Requests for the transfer of both these land assets have been made to WBC. – **Action 21**

¹⁴ Communities and Local Government (2011) A Plain English Guide to the Localism Act https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5959/1896534.pdf

GTC would also wish to explore the transfer of a number of other local assets from larger authorities to the custodianship of the Town Council as representatives of the local community. These would include:

- the freehold of the public toilets – enabling long term investment;
- the Crown Court pedestrian area – providing a clearer line between community management, maintenance and future investment responsibilities;
- the freehold of the Wilfrid Noyce Centre – safeguarding the provision of this important Community asset; and
- the freehold of The Burys Scouts HQ – passing responsibility for the support and development of this important youth facility to the local community.

The future of principal authorities is under much debate and consideration, with each having to manage their statutory responsibilities in an ever-challenging financial environment.

It is suggested that whatever the future of larger authorities, any direction of travel will tend towards more remote and less local involvement, with an increasing number of discretionary, non-statutory provisions becoming the responsibility of local communities. It is argued that where a community is served by a local council, that council would be the logical conduit for local activity. GTC would wish to see this process managed in a proactive and collaborative manner for the benefit of the present and future local community. – **Action 22**

PART THREE

11. Action Plan

GTC's programme 2019-2023 informs many of the individual work strands being considered or actioned by the Council. However, whilst providing the generality of aims and objectives, the programme leaves the detail to be considered elsewhere.

This document has sought to consider in the round, a number of the aims and objectives contained within the programme as they pertain to the town centre area. Having looked at what GTC is either currently doing, planning to do or could do if it so wished, a table of current or potential actions is set out below.

12. Table of Actions

Action 1	Planning
Continue to provide an opportunity for the public to express their views on planning matters and to provide advocacy for the protection of the character and historic setting of the town centre area. Utilise GTC's social media to promote knowledge of how residents can express concerns to Members at meeting of the council or its committees.	
Action 2	Article 4 Directive
Environment & Planning Committee to monitor planning schedules to ensure that any matter relating to Change of Use development within the Article 4 Direction Order area is subject to a planning application and to review all planning applications for development within the Article 4 Direction Order area.	
Action 3	Wiggins Yard Environmental Improvement Scheme
To continue to explore options with WBC for the environmental improvement works to Wiggins Yard, bring forward proposals that are within the available S106 funding agreement and also provide the maximum benefit for residents. GTC to consider proposals and if approved, formally accept responsibility for the delivery of the project.	
Due to delays caused by the Covid pandemic and legal complexities regarding ownership and liabilities, combined with increased costs against a fixed S106 provision, the delivery of the Wiggins Yard Improvement Scheme has become less viable. GTC has sought clarification on the use of the allocated funds and likely timescale for project delivery.	
Action 4	Guildford to Godalming Greenway – Cross Godalming Section
When available bring the outcomes of the Design and Feasibility report to the Environment & Planning Committee and, if appropriate, support a bid for Strategic CIL funding.	
The Cross Godalming section of the Godalming Green has been awarded £200,000 Strategic CIL funding in order to take the delivery of the scheme forward. Additionally Surrey County Council has held public engagement and consultation events to determine support and route preferences for the delivery of the wider Guildford to Godalming Greenway project.	
Action 5	Current Pedestrianisation
Continue to implement the road traffic restrictions upon Godalming High Street to meet the requirements of the Temporary Road Traffic Order. Continue to be informed by Government Covid-19 regulations and social distancing protocols for the operation of the Traffic Order post 21 June 2021. – <b style="color: red;">ACTION COMPLETE due to lifting of Covid restrictions and Government guidelines	

Action 6	Future Pedestrianisation
<p>Work with SCC Member for Godalming North to establish options for traffic reduction within the Godalming town centre area to improve walkability and bikeability, including traffic access and speed restrictions. To bring forward proposals for endorsement by GTC and subsequent submission to SCC.</p> <p>GTC has made a submission to SCC on potential options to improve walkability and bikeability, including traffic access and speed restrictions with the primary retail area. SCC require GTC to work up its proposals for further consideration, as such GTC is seeking costs for professional support for doing so.</p>	
Action 7	Crown Court Pedestrian Area
<p>Crown Court Working Group to consider options for improvements to the Crown Court pedestrian area and to seek the support of WBC for its implementation. To bring forward the preferred option for endorsement by GTC and, where required, Full Council approval for Neighbourhood CIL Funding.</p> <p>GTC awaiting the outcomes of the Godalming Central improvement options before taking this forward.</p>	
Action 8	Community Events – The Green Environment
<p>Seek GTC approval to waive hire fee for the bandstand for use by organisations or groups providing free community events. Action approved and implemented by GTC policy & Mananagement Committee</p>	
Action 9	Community Events – The Burys Flood Lights
<p>Obtain costings for the repair of the defective flood light column and bring to Policy & Management Committee for funding consideration.</p>	
Action 10	Community Events – The Green Environment
<p>Work with WBC to identify further opportunities for community and commercial events that provide a benefit, attraction or activity for residents.</p> <p>GTC held its first Green Gala on the Burys Field in August 2021, with the event scheduled to be repeated in August 2022. Godalming Beer Festival is to be held in September 2022 at the Burys and the Rotary Duckrace also scheduled for September 2022. An organisation has been identified for the potential delivery of an event in May 2023 to replace the St Johns Spring Fair which was last held on The Burys in 2019</p>	
Action 11	Community Events – Town Centre Built Environment
<p>Continue to support and organise community events in line with GTC Community Events Policy and decisions of the Council. GTC continues to support Community events in line with its community event policy, this is not limited to main town events, but also to supporting smaller local events and school events through the loaning of equipment</p>	
Action 12	Floral Godalming
<p>Continue to implement Floral Godalming, seeking opportunities for sponsorship and working with SCC for the expansion of the scheme to incorporate the main approach roundabouts and roadside barriers at the pedestrian refuges around the approaches to the town.</p> <p>2022 has seem an expansion of floral Godalming within the primary retail area, although logistics and safety issues have currently limited the opportunity to incorporated areas outside of the primary retail area.</p>	
Action 13	Floral Godalming
<p>Seek to develop options for community engagement and involvement with the future of Floral Godalming, including options for ‘Godalming Growers’.</p>	

Action 14	Signage, Rails, Bollards, Bells, Benches & Buildings
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a full audit of street furniture – Completed May 2021 • Implement a programme of repair and renovation during 2021 – A program of repair and refurbishment was started in 2021 and will be a continuous process. • Audit info-signage for accuracy • Work with other info-signage providers, including WBC, rail operators and the Community Rail Partnership to provide a co-ordinated approach to info-signage.
Action 15	The Pepperpot
	Bring forward plans for the exterior repair and repainting of The Pepperpot.
Action 16	The Pepperpot
	GTC to investigate the installation of 'fixed' public seating and tables in the area around The Pepperpot. – This was investigated and found to be inappropriate for the location
Action 17	Buildings of Local Merit
	GTC to champion a scheme for identification of Buildings of Local Merit and submit identified buildings for adoption by WBC.
Action 18	Public Art
	GTC to 'champion' the establishment of an Art Forum within Godalming to provide a collective voice to seek opportunities to promote, display or perform art, including art within the public realm. – In 2021, Art Godalming was setup as an umbrella organisation.
Action 19	Regeneration and Supporting the Local Economy
	<p>Work with WBC Economic Development Team (EDT) to promote Godalming as a positive business location, seek feedback from the EDT to identify negative issues that are within GTC powers and identify the role that Godalming Town Council and Waverley Borough Council can play in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encouraging small, locally based businesses in order to create a circular economy, keeping money in the local economy and promoting locally sourced and sustainable goods and services; - encouraging businesses which will make Godalming an attractive town for people to visit and in which to spend time."
Action 20	Business Improvement District
	<p>Support Godalming & District Chamber of Commerce with information or resource in preparing a BID plan. Requests for significant staff resource or any financial support to be brought to Policy & Management Committee for consideration.</p> <p>Godalming Town Council has provided financial support to enable the business community to take forward a BID proposal</p>
Action 21	Devolution of Public Assets
	<p>Report to Members on the progress of requested land transfers from WBC, Charterhouse Green and Lammas Land adjacent Meadow allotments.</p> <p>Action currently resides with WBC</p>
Action 22	Devolution of Public Assets
	GTC to agree which assets it wishes WBC to devolve to the Town Council and formally request WBC to transfer those assets of local community value to the Town Council.

WBC has supported GTC by leasing an area of former changing rooms to house the Community Store