

Spring Newsletter 2016

THE GODALMING TRUST



View of the town from Frith Hill

*Working
to maintain
our heritage
and quality
of life*

The Godalming Trust is an independent body, not funded by the Councils, and all activities are organised and staffed by volunteers. Its campaigning role needs the financial support and interest of all those who care for the Godalming of today and tomorrow.

info@thegodalmingtrust.org.uk www.thegodalmingtrust.org.uk



Registered Charity No. 263033

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Officers and Committees

President	Christopher Robinson
Vice Presidents	Alan Brown Ron Musk
Executive Committee	Angus Palmer - Chairman Pam Talbot – ViceChairman Valerie Venton – Secretary Colin Venton – Treasurer Caroline Hopkins Gareth Munro Jacqui Springsguth Colin Swait
Planning Committee	Colin Swait - Chairman Gareth Munro Jacqui Springsguth Keith Powell – co-opted
Civic Design Awards Committee	Gareth Munro – Chairman Colin Swait David Else – co-opted
Heritage Open Days Committee	Angus Palmer - Chairman Caroline Hopkins Jeni Goddard – co-opted

Chairman's report

At the end of last year committee member Dr James Anderson resigned from the Executive Committee of The Godalming Trust. In his resignation letter he referred to the reduced effectiveness of planning reviews by The Godalming Trust. He said

“In practice, the body of planning recommendation built up over the years has been abolished and replaced with a short, somewhat ill-considered planning guideline which devolves more control to central government. The Waverley local plan was returned for thorough revision and the emphasis is now on virtually automatic approval of proposals for housing development, particularly when on brown field sites”.

The Godalming Trust regrets the loss of Dr Anderson from its Executive as much as it regrets that its views, along with those of other local people, are much less likely to be able to influence local planning decisions than they were in the past. However the Chairmanship of our Planning Sub-committee has been taken over by local property expert Colin Swait and we will continue to make our views known to Waverley planners, particularly where historic buildings are likely to be affected.

At the Annual General Meeting of the Trust in September we asked you, the members, for your views on the direction the Trust should now take and in particular whether we could and should do more to oppose residential development. We also proposed to spend some of the Trust's funds on a traffic survey in Catteshall Lane, one of the roads most affected by the growing housing developments in the town. It was clear from your responses that you did not want the Trust to undertake a traffic survey and that, generally, you are happy with the activities the Trust undertakes and in the way the Trust carries them out.

One of the most successful activities of The Godalming Trust is the organization of Heritage Open Days in the town. As usual a wide range of historic buildings was opened to the public on 12th and 13th of September 2015. One of the buildings opened to the public on the first Heritage Open Days twenty-five years ago was the house “Westbrook”.

The current owner of the house has recently greatly improved the garden and a ticketed group, including the Mayoress of Godalming, Councillor Anne Bott, was able to admire it. The Mayoress also honoured St John the Evangelist Church Farncombe with a visit. The church had laid on an interesting exhibition of various events in the life of St John's.

A feature of Heritage Open Days in the last couple of years has been requests by churches and other building owners to be included in the successful Godalming programme. So we were pleased to welcome for the first time St Mary's Chiddingfold. This Grade I listed building put on an exhibition of Church and Village treasures and was rewarded with a very substantial visitor attendance on the day. Similarly the principal building of Barrow Hills School, Witley, together with its Gertrude Jekyll garden was on our programme for the first time and welcomed a large number of visitors. We have already been approached by another local church with a request to be included in the 2016 programme.

The cost of the printed programme for Heritage Open Days and the cost of its distribution continues to rise. So we were very grateful to Munro Studios of Wharf Street Godalming for their £250 sponsorship of the programme and to Godalming Town Council for their grant of £1000 meeting the balance of the cost.

Meetings have recently been held with amenity societies similar to ours based in Haslemere Farnham and Guildford. These meetings, arranged by our Vice-Chairman, Pam Talbot, have proved most informative and may enable us in future to make a joint approach to Waverley or Guildford Borough Councils if it is felt to be in our joint interest to do so.

Walks in the town organized by Pam have continued successfully. We are most grateful to Hugh Turrall-Clarke without whose help we could not run the walks. A French organization has approached us with a view to guiding French groups around the town. We were also pleased to help prepare a translation into French of a guide to the history of the town.

This year we will be making Civic Design awards again. Usually we do this every alternate year but in 2014 we felt that there were not sufficient suitable candidates, so no awards were made. However it is clear that there are, in 2016, several buildings suitable for awards. May we encourage members who are aware of recently built or refurbished buildings that are of architectural merit to let Gareth Munro, the

Chairman of the Civic Design Awards Sub-Committee know about them. We are pleased to welcome Waverley Councillor and architect David Else to this Sub-Committee as a co-opted member. His expertise in making awards will be invaluable.

Our film showing Godalming and in particular its Pepperpot, is still in preparation. Part of the delay in producing it has been due to an opportunity we have been offered to include shots of Godalming taken by drone. Hopefully it will be finished very shortly.

We are looking forward to another busy and successful year in 2016 and would like to thank you, the members, for your continued support.

Angus Palmer - Chairman

Membership Report

Our membership continues to remain fairly stable. We currently have 83 single members, 196 family members, 2 corporate members and 114 life members which is a slight drop on last year.

We are pleased to welcome Stephen and Jeni Goddard to our membership. They have been made honorary members in recognition of all their hard work that they put into the Heritage Open Days.

If anyone knows of any members who have recently passed away please could they let the secretary know or leave an e-mail on The Godalming Trust's website at info@thegodalmingtrust.org.uk. If a family member passes away please could the partner inform us and we can ensure that we address communications correctly. Incorrectly addressed communications can often be upsetting at these difficult times.

We are very keen to have members' e-mail addresses as it is a very cost effective way in which to communicate with them. We have used e-mails to inform members of various events and we e-mail newsletters and AGM reports to people who are happy to receive them this way.

Currently about a quarter of our members have e-mail addresses. If you think we do not have your e-mail address please could you e-mail our secretary at val.venton@gmail.com.

Colin Venton

Membership Secretary

Treasurer's Report

Our finances continue to remain in a very healthy state. Our finances have remained very stable due to the fact that we have not had any expensive or unusual outlays. Fortunately there has not been any further drop to the interest rate on our deposit account and we have been able to slightly enlarge this fund.

Despite the financial constraints which councils find themselves subject to Godalming Town Council have continued with their generous financial support of the Heritage Open Days. We have responded by decreasing our financial ask by a small amount.

I would encourage our members to check whether they Gift Aid their membership fees to us as it provides a sizeable income. We get 25% more when membership fees are Gift Aided.

The vast majority of our members pay their fees through standing order and this is a very cost effective and time efficient way of paying. I would encourage those members who don't pay by this method to please consider it. If, however, you prefer not to, then please consider paying in advance for some years. We already have one member who has done this and I am happy to consider this arrangement for others.

Finally I must thank our members who continue to support the work of The Godalming Trust through their fees and an extra special thank you to all those members who pay over and above that which is due.

Colin Venton

Honorary Treasurer

Design Awards 2016

The Godalming Trust Design Awards Committee is currently reviewing possible nominations for the biennial Civic Design awards due to be presented this September. A new development or the refurbishment of an existing building which you admire could be a potential candidate for an award. To help us draw up a shortlist, we invite you to nominate any building or feature you think worthy of consideration, in the following categories:

- New building
- Refurbishment
- Environmental improvement
- Shop front
- Extension(s)
- Special award, for something which does not quite fit any of the above

If possible, a photograph supporting your nomination would be appreciated.

Please submit suggestions to Gareth Munro gareth@munrostudios.com before 15th May 2016. Tel: 01483 422788

Gareth Munro

Chairman, Godalming Trust Design Awards Committee

Planning Committee Report

Members of the committee are myself, Keith Powell, Jacqui Springsguth, and Gareth Munro. We continue to meet regularly, usually every three weeks, and review planning applications submitted to Waverley Borough Council.

Having taken over the chairmanship of this committee in December, I now appreciate even more, how much time Dr James Anderson put into carefully looking at all the applications before the 3 weekly review by the rest of the committee.

For the most part, this comprises the majority being extensions to existing houses in residential roads, with less people moving. This obviously affects neighbours with the disruption building brings. We are constantly looking at Office blocks which have been standing empty and are now able to be converted into apartments. The loss of local employment is sad to see and we continue to be concerned on the lack of planning for traffic management, which is the responsibility of Surrey County Council.

In the town centre, we have looked at changes to listed buildings, to use the space above shops which have been left empty, now being converted to residential flats, with very little effect to the “street scene”.

The conversion of the former offices of Penningtons on the corner of Brighton Road and Croft road are now well advanced, as is Prime Place and we look forward to seeing the scaffolding coming down in due course.

Where appropriate we make comments to Waverley which so far this year has been 5 times.

The facility to inspect the files has now largely been replaced with all the information now online and we have coped well with this, as well as bringing more hardcopy to the meetings.

Elsewhere in the newsletter, Gareth Munro will be appealing to Members to put forward suggestions for the Design Awards and our committee already has a number of suggestions.

My thanks to the committee for their interest, enthusiasm and support.

Colin Swait

Chairman, Godalming Trust Planning Committee

Godalming Town Walks 2016

The popular walks will start again on Saturday May 14th. The first walk covering Mill Lane and the old industrial area of Godalming will look mainly at the town's industrial heritage through its buildings and end with a walk up Church Street which has many timber framed buildings. The walk in the June will take in the High Street and Bridge Street. We will then repeat the industrial walk in July and the High Street one in August. Walks in September will be part of the Heritage Open Days weekend and details will appear in the programme.

The dates are Saturday: June 4th, July 9th and August 13th. All walks start at the Pepperpot at 2.30pm and are free, just turn up. The walks

take between 1 and 1 ½ hours. For any additional information please contact pamtalbot@clara.co.uk.

Forthcoming Events

Summer lunch

The summer lunch of the Godalming Museum and The Godalming Trust will be held at St Catherine's School Bramley on Sunday 17th July. This lunch is by invitation only but all members of The Godalming Trust should receive invitations

Lecture Programme

The lecture programme for Autumn 2016 and Spring 2017 will be “Materials of Building” and will include talks on ‘Bricks and Tiles’, ‘Glass’, ‘Wood’ and ‘Iron’ each by an expert in his or her subject.

AGM

Wednesday 7th September. Annual General Meeting of The Godalming Trust 7:30 for 8:00 pm in the Octagon.

We hope to present this year's Civic Design Awards

Heritage Open Days

Saturday September 10th and Sunday September 11th. We always need stewards on the day

Advance Notice

As part of the RIBA ‘Love Architecture’ strand in Heritage Open Days in Surrey this year, one of their members, Robin Stannard, Historic Building Surveyor of ADAM Architecture, has offered to give a lecture about the work and influence of Hugh Thackeray Turner. This will take place on Friday 9th September at 8pm at the Masonic Centre in Ockford Road, Godalming. Tickets will be available as part of the Heritage Open Days weekend full details of when and how to get them will be in the Programme published in the summer. The event will be free of charge.

Joint Societies Meeting

Following a conversation with a representative of the Guildford Society at a course at the Guildford Institute and a serendipitous meeting with members of the Haslemere and Farnham societies it became apparent we were all experiencing similar problems and it would be useful to meet and to see what we could learn from each other. A group of us met in November 2015 at the Oxborough Room. It re-established The Godalming Trust links with the Farnham and Haslemere societies and forged a new one with the Guildford Society. The Godalming Trust and the Farnham and Haslemere societies had worked together some years ago to publish *West Surrey Architecture 1840-2000* and had, in the past, invited representatives to AGMs etc, and there had been reciprocal involvement in design awards, but somehow this had all faded.

We are all experiencing difficulty in attracting new members and committee members, and planning law has made it more difficult to object to development. We compared what each society did, how it communicated with members and its social and educational activities (see table below).

The meeting was deemed to be a useful forum and a decision was made to meet a couple of times a year to share experiences and also to circulate a named representative of each of the societies with each other's newsletters, annual reports and also invitations to events. The societies will take it in turns to organise and host the meeting.

List of Activities of local Civic Societies

Activity	Farnham	Haslemere	Guildford	Godalming
Lectures/talks	Y	Y	Y	Y*
Public meetings	Y	Y	Y	Not recently
Social events incl outings	Y	Y	Y	Y*
Design Awards	Y	Y	Y	Y
Heritage Open Days	Y	Not for 2 years	Y	Y
Planning reviewing and comment	Y	Y	Y	Y
Website	Y	Y	Y	Y
Facebook	N	Y	Y	Not functional ¹
Twitter	N	N	Y	N
Blogs	N	N	N	N
No of members	900	560	390	400

*Godalming Trust lectures joint venture with Godalming Museum as is summer lunch and any outings. AGM is a social event with drinks and nibbles

¹At the time of the meeting the Facebook page was not active

Should you wish to contact the Trust on any issue please write to Valerie Venton, Honorary Secretary, at val.venton@gmail.com or 1A Ockford Ridge, Godalming, Surrey GU7 2NP.

The Godalming Trust is a Registered Charity No. 263033 and the Website is www.thegodalmingtrust.org.uk