

THE GODALMING TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26 and Notice of the Annual General Meeting



Winkworth Arboretum 2026

*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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The Godalming Trust

Notice of 2026 Annual General Meeting

The 2026 Annual General Meeting of The Godalming Trust will be held on
Wednesday 8th July at The Masonic Hall, Ockford Road, Godalming at 7.30pm
(doors open at 7.15pm)

Agenda

- 1) Apologies for Absence
- 2) Approval of Minutes of 2025 Annual General Meeting
- 3) Chairman's Introduction
- 4) Adoption of the Annual Report 2025/2026
- 5) Adoption of Statement of Income and Expenditure for the year to 31st March 2026
- 6) Election of members of the Executive Committee for 2026/2027
All members of the Executive Committee retire by rotation and being eligible are standing for re-election
- 7) Any Other Business

After the business meeting, wine and soft drinks will be served and they will be followed by a talk on Arts and Crafts architects in Surrey by Carolyn Smith (see more details on page 16).

Any tickets remaining or returned for the Westbrook visit on 24th July will be made available to those attending the AGM.

A member wishing to propose another for membership of the Executive Committee should send notice to the Honorary Secretary 14 days before the meeting.

If you have any questions on the Agenda or wish to raise any other business please contact the Honorary Secretary:

David Else, Honorary Secretary, Winter Cottage, Milford Road, Elstead, Godalming, GU8 6HY; dkelse@btopenworld.com

Introduction to Annual Report and Newsletter 2026

This report consists of papers for the AGM, followed by some news items. The Chairman's Annual Report for the year appears on page 9.

Andy Jeffrey has written a short article (see pages 13-15) on the Pepperpot showing the scale of the work that has had to be undertaken and why it is still partially shrouded in scaffolding.

The Treasurer's Report and Statement of Income and Expenditure are on pages 10-11.

Unfortunately, we have not had enough nominations for our Civic Design Awards to take place this year (see Planning Report pages 12-13).

We would welcome additional members of our Executive Committee so please let me or our Secretary know if you want to know more about what this involves.

Members have enjoyed revisiting Norney Grange and Munstead Wood this spring. Our next event for members is a visit to Westbrook on 24th July, more details and how to apply for places are on page 16.

Please support the Trust and come along to our AGM to hear a particularly relevant talk on Arts and Crafts Architects in Surrey by Carolyn Smith. We hope to see members who have joined recently, please make yourselves known to me or any member of the Executive Committee.

Heritage Open Days are 19th and 20th September 2026, I will be looking for stewards to help over the weekend.

Pam Talbot, Chairman

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held Wednesday 9th July 2025 at the Masonic Hall, Ockford Road, Godalming

Present

There were 30 members and 1 guest speaker present, names were recorded.

The Chairman welcomed all present

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Selwyn Aickin, Valerie Anderson, Alan Barnes, Mr & Mrs Brodin, Graham Sopp, Alison & Tar Gisvold, Phillip & Sally Gorton, Roger Humphrey, Barry & Sara Kilburn, Tony Luscombe (proxy vote invested in chair), Charles & Mrs Martin, Hammy Sparks

2. Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Meeting

Were approved and signed by the Chairman

Proposed Tony Godron-Smith, seconded Colin Swait - carried unanimously

3. Chairman's Introduction and Report

Welcome to our 60th Anniversary AGM. We shall take the business of the AGM which I expect to last for 15-20 minutes, but will, of course, allow any time for any discussion of items on the agenda. Following the close of the AGM there will be a short break for wine and soft drinks and an opportunity to look at some information on Henry Woodyer and then Robin Stannard will tell us more about him.

I do not propose to go over what is printed in the Annual Report in any detail, but will answer any questions.

Although I will reiterate my thanks to Christopher and Barbara Robinson who have been a great support during my Chairmanship. I am sorry that Christopher has had to stand down but we hope to see them at meetings and events from time to time. As you will have seen from the Agenda, the Committee invited Angus Palmer to take over as our President and he has accepted his rapid promotion and we will value his support and advice.

We are sorry to hear of the deaths of some of our long-standing members during the year but particularly of Ron Musk, our Vice President. Ron was a former

Planning Inspector whose knowledge and interest was so valuable in opposing the proposed high-rise development in Flambard Way.

The guided town history walks started in May and continue to be popular. We have also undertaken some additional walks for other groups.

We had an enjoyable visit to Norney Grange and I would like to thank Stefan Reynolds for suggesting and arranging this. The gardener there suggested we make a visit to the garden at another time of the year and we hope this will be possible. The visit to Munstead Wood will take place on 19th July and there are just a few tickets remaining for the 10.30am tour. We will investigate other possible places for future visits.

The HOD programme has gone to press, it will be published in the August issue of Vantage Point and as free-standing brochures which will be available shortly after. A new ticketing system is being trialled this year with help from Godalming Town Council.

We shall be looking for members to help with stewarding over the weekend of 13th-14th September 2025 although it is uncertain whether we will be able to open the Pepperpot.

I would like to thank the Executive Committee for their unwavering support and advice during the year and without which I could not manage. I am pleased that they have all agreed to stand for re-election for another year.

I also thank the Masonic Centre for letting us hold our AGM here.

4. Adoption of Annual Report

The Chairman called for comments on the Annual Report, there were none so the Report was adopted.

Proposed John Talbot, seconded Ian Coult - carried unanimously

5. Adoption of Statement of Income & Expenditure for the year to 31st March 2024

The Chairman called for comments on the Annual Report, there were none so these were adopted.

Proposed Angus Palmer, seconded Stefan Reynolds - carried unanimously

6. Election of members of the Executive Committee

The following existing Committee members were re-elected, Pam Talbot, Graham Kimber, Richard Gidlow, David Else, Colin Swait, Stefan Reynolds

Proposed Tony Gordon-Smith, seconded Ian Coult - carried unanimously

7. Any Other Business

The Executive Committee had invited Angus Palmer to become our President. Angus had accepted and thanked the Trust for the honour.

*After a short break for drinks, nibbles and general chat, **Robin Stannard**, a local conservation architect gave a very interesting and informative talk on the local architect, **Henry Woodyer**.*

Chairman's Annual Report 1st April 2025-31st March 2026

2025 was our 60th Anniversary and we were pleased to organise members visits to Munstead Wood and Norney Grange. These were much enjoyed and both places invited us back for another visit at a different time of year. These visits will have happened by the time of the AGM. We are also pleased to be able to add a visit Westbrook on 24th July 2026. Thanks to Stefan Reynolds for arranging the last two.

Our guided town history walks continue to be popular. In August about 40 people turned up so Graham Kimber and I quickly decided to put on two walks. There was a fair in the High Street that afternoon so space was limited. We added a walk in October in 2025.

After our AGM we had a very interesting talk on Henry Woodyer by Robin Stannard and members were encouraged to visit Hascombe Church to see one of his local commissions.

Heritage Open days ticketing continued to cause some chaos, despite the valuable help from Godalming Town Council. People booked overlapping tours, multiple applications and then there was a failure to turn up at venues with the exception of Munstead Wood. This was unfortunate for the venues where people are giving up their time to show people round. In 2026 there will be a mix of ticketing options for applications. The Town Council will help with the online and physical issue of tickets for which we are most grateful. We are hoping that the Pepperpot will be available this year as it is useful to have a base in the centre of town to answer questions and offer suggestions for visits.

The autumn and winter tend to be quiet for Trust events but we issued a Winter Newsletter and a Spring update to keep members informed of plans for 2026. We were pleased to welcome a number of new members during the year but sad to learn of the passing of some long time members.

I am most grateful to the continuing support of the Executive Committee without whose work the Trust wouldn't exist. Also, a thank you to Helen and Alan Barnes for maintaining our Facebook page and to Selwyn Aickin for keeping the website up to date. Our Planning Report and Treasurer's Report cover other activities during the year.

Pam Talbot, Chairman

Treasurer's Report

In the accounts you will see that there was a deficit this year of £168. In 2025 there was a deficit of £488. Our running costs remain at a consistent level as does our Income each year. As mentioned in my last report, we have now benefitted from having no Website Maintenance costs thanks once again to one of our members now looking after the site.

Each year we consider making some Donations to worthy local causes. This year we gave £500 to Munstead Wood as a way of thanking them for allowing us to have a tour just for Godalming Trust members. We have again benefitted from this generosity just last month, May 2026.

We also gave £500 to the Godalming Museum as a contribution towards the reprinting and updating of the John Janaway book on the *A Short History of Godalming* which will be published this summer.

Our Income and running costs remain similar each year and that enables us to be able to make these donations to other worthy causes that might arise each year and for that, I must thank members for their continued support of the Godalming Trust.

LLOYDS BANK Plc and FUTURE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Our local Lloyds Bank branch closed last year, but we were not too inconvenienced because we were able to bank cheques received at the Post Office. But that facility was withdrawn in January this year, thus now making it very difficult to deal with the banking of cheques. I do not have an App on my phone to have details of my bank accounts let alone somebody else's money. So if you give a cheque to pay your subscriptions, one of the Committee has to get to Guildford to pay the money in. And considering the small amount of Subscription we ask for, it is hardly worth banking a cheque once you take into account the parking costs in Guildford let alone the time and petrol costs incurred. So please, those few of you who still pay in this manner, please reconsider using some form of bank transfer/ standing order arrangement. Do, get in touch so that I can send you our bank details.

Richard Gidlow, Honorary Treasurer

THE GODALMING TRUST

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

<u>INCOME</u>	<u>2026</u> £	<u>2025</u> £
Subscriptions	1,109	1,177
Gifts and Donations	95	122
Bank Interest	753	910
HMRC Gift Aid	294	354
	<u>2,251</u>	<u>2,563</u>
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>		
Insurance	214	213
Postage and Stationery	178	105
Publicity	306	280
Subscriptions	162	149
Website Service Provider	160	131
Website maintenance	-	216
Newsletter	65	125
AGM and other Events and costs	132	155
Meeting costs	97	147
Heritage Open Day costs	105	60
Donations		
George Mallory Blue Plaque	-	470
Rural Life Museum	-	1,000
Munstead Wood	500	
Godalming Museum	500	
	<u>2,419</u>	<u>3,051</u>
DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR	- 168	- 488
OTHER RECEIPT - LEGACY	-	-
Bank balances brought forward	26,324	26,812
	<u>£ 26,156</u>	<u>£ 26,324</u>
Lloyds Bank - Current Account	801.81	472.21
Lloyds Bank - Deposit Account	1,329.31	2,563.62
NatWest - Deposit Account	24,025.37	23,287.91
	<u>£ 26,156.49</u>	<u>£ 26,323.74</u>

Planning Committee Report

As always, Godalming Trust continues to keep a close eye on Planning Applications in the Godalming area and comment to Waverley Borough Council when we feel it is necessary. The majority of planning applications are for minor 'household' extensions and alterations and we rarely get involved in these unless they affect a building or area of historic note.

This past year we have objected to the proposed extension to the recent development at Aarons Hill / Eashing Lane. This is complicated by the site actually being in the Guildford Borough Council area, but we felt we needed to draw the Planners attention to the damage this development could cause to Eashing Bridge, a Grade I Listed National Monument and Westbrook, a Grade II* Listed Building with Grade II Listed Parks and Gardens. We were also concerned with the traffic and infrastructure implications as well as the development of Green Belt Land and AGLV. The number of inaccuracies in the Planning Documents that did not appear to have been noticed by the Authority, were also worrying.

We have also looked carefully at all applications for any buildings that are Listed or in our Conservation Areas. Most were fairly minor alterations or repairs that we considered acceptable, but the committee were shocked by the extent of the demolition at the empty M&Co shop premises (Woolworths to those with longer memories) which resulted in only the front wall facade to the High Street left standing.

Major areas of concern for the future are two-fold. First is the 'Grey Belt' planning policy, which was meant to encourage development on derelict land. Instead, it would appear to be threatening unspoilt countryside. Developers are getting 'grey belt' housing developments approved on farmland instead of disused urban land as intended. Godalming Trust continues to be closely allied to the Surrey Campaign to Protect Rural England.

The other concern is the new sub division of Surrey into two 'unitary authorities' - West Surrey (including Waverley) and East Surrey, for which the May Election was held. The full effect of the Planning procedure and structure for these authorities will not be really known until this time next year, following 11 months of re-organisation with the two new authorities running side by side with the current network of County, Borough and District Councils, which will cease to operate on 1st April 2027. It is also intended that Surrey (the whole County) will also have a 'Strategic Authority' responsible for major strategic planning

decisions, but this is still in the planning (pardon the pun) stage. How all this will effect or reflect the local views of residents, Town and Parish Councils we do not yet know.

Sadly, we have, once again, postponed the Civic Design Awards due to the lack of submissions. We have one or two really interesting projects that have already been highlighted, but not enough to make a competition, so these will be carried forward to 2027, when we, hopefully, will have more nominations to consider.

David Else



The Pepperpot: Small Building, Big Personality

If buildings could talk, Godalming’s Pepperpot would almost certainly have plenty to say — probably with a raised eyebrow and a dry sense of humour. Standing proudly in the middle of the High Street since 1814, The Pepperpot was built as Godalming’s new Town Hall for the princely sum of £865.6s.8d. Even by Georgian standards, that was something of a bargain. Yet for more than 200 years this small but determined building has stood as the symbol of the town’s independence and civic spirit. And what a working life it has had.

Over the years, The Pepperpot has been a council chamber, courtroom, prison lock-up, public toilet, florist and even the first home of Godalming Museum. It has hosted markets beneath its arches, arguments upstairs, and no doubt a fair amount of gossip everywhere in between.

When electric street lighting arrived in Godalming in 1881, the newly illuminated Pepperpot impressed one journalist so much that he wrote it looked like a theatrical set where “fair damsels” might dance across the street while villains lurked in the shadows. Modern planning meetings rarely inspire such poetry.

The building has also survived several near-death experiences. It narrowly escaped demolition in 1897 during Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, and again in the early 1900s when traffic planners viewed it as an inconvenient obstacle in the middle of the road. Thankfully, local affection — and perhaps a little stubbornness — prevailed.

Even famed Godalming resident Gertrude Jekyll admitted that while The Pepperpot was “not exactly beautiful”, it possessed that invaluable quality: character. Few could argue with that.

Most recently, however, The Pepperpot has been revealing rather more character than anyone expected.

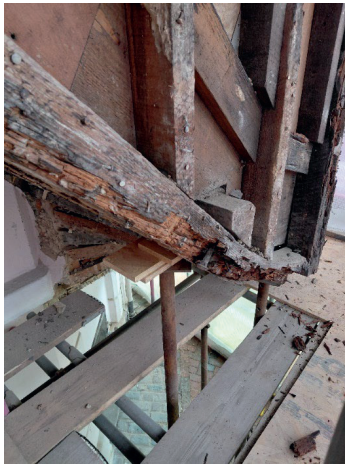
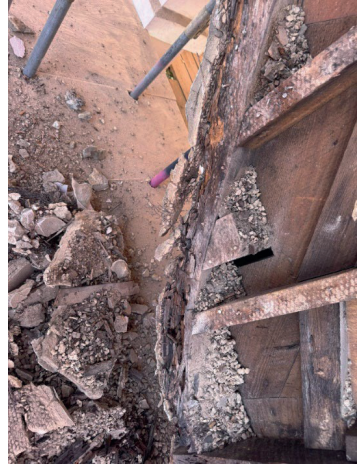
What began as a planned £60,000 repaint quickly turned into something far more dramatic once scaffolding allowed closer inspection. Rotten timber was discovered in the cupola — the elegant structure that forms the famous “pot” atop the building. Further investigations uncovered serious structural problems hidden beneath the surface. Suddenly, this modest makeover became a full-scale rescue mission.

The clock and bell mechanism were carefully restored by Smith of Derby, damaged brickwork and arches repaired, windows refurbished, and the copper dome painstakingly renovated. Hidden structural cracks were stabilised with specialist engineering work, while the undercroft ceiling was completely rebuilt. Then came the tourelle — the small stair turret at the rear. What first appeared to be a harmless crack in the plaster concealed extensive rot in the timber structure beneath. Builders reported that some of the wood simply crumbled into powder when touched. The entire tourelle had to be rebuilt.

For much of 2025, scaffolding wrapped around The Pepperpot like an enormous Christmas present nobody could open. But when it finally emerged, gleaming copper dome and all, there was collective relief that Godalming's most recognisable landmark had been saved for future generations.

The Pepperpot has survived changing fashions, royal jubilees, traffic schemes and two centuries of hard use. It may be small, slightly eccentric and permanently standing in the way — but then again, that is exactly why Godalming loves it.

Andy Jeffrey, Town Clerk



Some photos showing the state of the tourelle at the Pepperpot

Members visit to Westbrook 24 July 2026 at 11am

Westbrook Road, Godalming, GU7 2QH

A visit to the Grade II listed house and garden, the home of, and designed by, the architect Hugh Thackeray Turner. The garden, listed in its own right, was designed by Thackeray Turner with some input from Gertrude Jekyll. The visit will comprise of a tour of the garden and some rooms in the house with access to the archive of information. Tickets are limited. Please apply for tickets by 6th July, if oversubscribed a ballot will be held. You will receive confirmation if you have got a place after 5pm on 6th July. Any unallocated places will be available at the AGM on 8th July.

Arts and Crafts Architects in Surrey

The houses and gardens of the Arts and Crafts Movement are perhaps less well known than William Morris wallpapers and textiles. Properties such as Munstead Wood, built by Edwin Lutyens for Gertrude Jekyll, may be familiar. However, other Arts and Crafts architects including Baillie Scott, Voysey, Thackeray Turner and Charles Harrison Townsend also designed properties close to Godalming.

Carolyn will take us on a tour of some of these houses and gardens and show how traditional, local architecture influenced their design.

Carolyn Smith is Chairman of the Society of the Arts and Crafts Movement in Surrey. She read history at University College London, specializing in architectural history. She has a particular interest in garden history and was a member of Surrey Gardens Trust's recording committee for many years.

Should you wish to contact the Trust on any issue please write to **David Else, Honorary Secretary, Winter Cottage, Milford Road, Elstead, Godalming GU8 6HY** or info@thegodalmingtrust.org.uk

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