



## **Give us a town we can be proud of**

LETTERS to the Editor

1 February 2008

I agree entirely with Mrs Balcon's recent comments regarding the demise of Tunbridge Wells town centre.

How could the council allow the old cinema site to remain such a dreadful, derelict condition for so long? This eyesore should have been redeveloped long ago as befits a prime position in the centre of a Royal Spa town. Less affluent towns have taken better care of their buildings, ensuring they don't become rat-infested white elephants.

I firmly believe that large former retail and leisure sites in the town shouldn't be converted into flats. I'm sure most residents will agree that developers have provided more than enough characterless blocks of luxury flats in this town.

The High Street used to have some interesting shops and galleries, but has now become a street of estate agents and the Royal Victoria shopping centre has lost a lot of its sparkle. I only hope the Pantiles become more attractive to visitors now it has been sold as it has great potential.

My friends were amazed that we have only one major supermarket which is quite a way out of town. The small Tesco in the town is inadequate for such a large town and the old Morrisons site, which is well situated, has become another of those grungy old white elephants.

I usually shop in Brighton and enjoy the atmosphere and good combination of old and new which the town provides, a great pity as I would love to support my local shops.

Come on Tunbridge Wells council, help us create a town centre we can show off and be proud of.

Mrs R Benson-Hill  
Broadwater Down  
Tunbridge Wells

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## **Town core is rotten and we're in a mess**

LETTERS to the Editor

18 January 2008

On Saturday, in bright sunlight, I walked across Tunbridge Wells Common, now sold to the Target Follow group of companies. This sale was finalised in spite of all the Civic and Friends' groups requesting the council to put in a bid. This they did but it was an unrealistic offer so Target Follow has The Pantiles and Tunbridge Wells and Rusthall Commons. - Target Follow is a "development company".

I walked past Trinity Arts, which seems to have lost its Arts council grant, past the rotting cinema and its adjacent empty shops – empty for the past five years, if not longer.

I walked past my beloved post office in St John's closed this week regardless of a great deal of protest not only from many customers but spiritedly by our MP.

Both our hospitals are full of bugs and, so far, there is no real progress at the Pembury site, only a little apathetic clearing.

I thought: *"Tunbridge Wells is a mess and it is only January 12"*.

Sarah P Balcon  
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Tunbridge Wells