



THE UCKFIELD VOICE

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thevoice

ANNUAL MEETING - 13 APRIL 2022

BY CLLR JACKIE LOVE

On Wednesday 13 April at 7.00pm we will be holding our Annual Town Meeting at the Civic Centre. We welcome residents of the town to attend and invite you to join me and the other councillors for a coffee from 6.30pm.

This is an opportunity for you to discuss with us - your councillors - any points you would like to raise about living in Uckfield.

Annual Plan and Strategic Plan

We have recently published our approved Annual Plan and Strategic Plan alongside other documentation. You can view these documents on our website at:-

www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/key-documents/?

Do you have any further points you would like to make for the future?

All aspects of living in Uckfield

As a Town Council we are working with other agencies to ensure all aspects of living in Uckfield are covered and understood from a local point of view.



Do you have some more questions for us? They could be about Policing, Highways, Planning, Health and Well-being, Dementia Care or any other topic. Please let us know so we can discuss your points and ideas in the various committee meetings.

Uckfield Events

Also, do you enjoy the events that we put on as a Town Council - Weald on the Field, Classic Car show and this year we will have the ECO Expo Event?

Come and talk to us

We are here to listen and let you know how things are progressing. I am very much looking forward to seeing you.

Contact us through:

admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk



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WHAT'S INSIDE

- Mark Francis, Estates and Facilities Manager
- Date for the diary

MARK FRANCIS - ESTATES AND FACILITIES

Mark Francis is the Estates and Facilities Manager for Uckfield Town Council. He joined us in the summer of 2018 to look after the council's buildings. A year later his role was expanded to oversee the management of our estates.

In his early career, Mark joined the Royal Navy. His time in the forces included being deployed to Iraq, which saw him receive a medal for his services and he undertook regular anti-piracy patrols in the Indian Ocean to protect merchant vessels from Somalian piracy. His passion for all things maritime continued with his operational management of marinas along the South Coast and London, and in his more recent role outside of work as an HM Coastguard. His ability to juggle the management of numerous projects, and remain calm under pressure, made him an ideal fit for this position.

The Town Council has a large asset portfolio with 10 buildings, including the conference and events venue of the Civic Centre. We have seven recreation grounds, 16 open spaces, two nature reserves, eight play areas, four ancient



Mark with the Christmas tree that he helped organise to be lit for the first time last December following a suggestion from an Uckfield resident's son

woodlands, six allotment sites, and the cemetery. He is also responsible for the repairs and replacement of street furniture owned by the Town Council, the floral displays and festive lights in the town centre and more! A very varied job which can bring a number of challenges week on week whilst having a due regard for health and safety.



MARK FRANCIS - ESTATES AND FACILITIES

One of the areas that occupies much of Mark's time and energy is the upkeep and care of our buildings; whether leased to tenants or directly managed. In recent years this has included re-roofing the cemetery building, replacing the heating system in Foresters Hall and the Signal Box, renewing the staircase at the Signal Box, improving the Civic Centre's heating system and repairing the leaking roof dormer. His most treasured project would be the upgrade of the Luxfords Play Area, which he saw through from the initial concept and consultation through to installation. This was a fantastic achievement and includes a sensory pathway and inclusive seating for the swings.

Going forward Mark is concentrating on numerous improvements to our

open spaces and energy efficiency in our buildings to reduce our carbon emissions. Congratulations on the birth of your baby daughter Mark and thank you for bringing Christmas to Uckfield!



Dates for the Diary

Lots of events to look forward to so get the dates in your diary to make sure you don't miss anything!

Annual Town Meeting

Wednesday 13 April - 7.00pm. Join the councillors for tea or coffee at 6.30pm

ECO Expo

Saturday 30 April - 10.00am - 5.00pm. Come along to the Weald Hall in the Civic Centre for our inaugural Eco Expo

Platinum Jubilee Weekend

Thursday 2 June - 6.00pm leading up to the lighting the Beacon at Victoria Pleasure Ground

Uckfield Festival Classic Revival

Sunday 10 July - Luxford Field - (this year incorporating Uckfield Revival usually held in October)

Weald on the Field

Saturday 13 August - Luxford Field - food, drink, family fun and live music

LAST MONTH IN YOUR COUNCIL

These past few weeks have seen the Town Council prepare letters to send to key agencies, and lobby on important nationwide issues that are likely to impact on the Town's future health and wellbeing.

Food poverty

The Town Council has supported the opening and set up of the Uckfield Community Fridge (located adjacent to Luxford Field) which has been a valuable resource for local residents. Open on Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays they aim to reduce food waste, and receive regular donations from farm shops, local supermarkets and members of the public to share with the town's population. Despite Wealden District being considered an affluent part of the South East, with the cost of living increasing, the gap in affordability is growing wider, which results in many householders putting their bills first, and food second. The Town Council supported a motion at Full Council to reach out to schools to fully understand and review current levels of youth food poverty in this area, to lobby for free school meal vouchers

in school holidays and to work with local authorities and key agencies to address the outcomes of our review.

Opposed to housing numbers

In support of a number of local parishes who have written to the Secretary of State, members of the UTC's Plans Committee sent a letter to the Rt Hon Michael Gove MP with their concerns about development and the pressure being placed on Wealden District to deliver overwhelming housing numbers. This is mainly to meet the UK Government's standard algorithm and to pick up additional numbers for neighbouring districts who are perhaps restricted by the coastline or South Downs. Right now the numbers being imposed on the area provide cause for concern with limited infrastructure and the area's ability to support this level of growth. The market rates for many of the properties being built are also far above the affordability levels of Wealden's residents. We therefore await a response and will be joining up with neighbouring parishes to continue to lobby for change.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Agendas and minutes can be seen at Uckfield Library and on the town

MON 4 APR	– ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE
MON 11 APR	– FULL COUNCIL
WED 13 APR	– ANNUAL MEETING
TUES 19 APR	– PLANS
MON 25 APR	– GENERAL PURPOSES
MON 9 MAY	– PLANS
MON 16 MAY	– ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE
MON 23 MAY	– FULL COUNCIL (ANNUAL STATUTORY)
MON 30 MAY	– PLANS

council website. Meetings will now be held in person either in the Weald Hall or Council Chamber at the Civic Centre. All meetings start at 7pm.

All questions should be directed to the Town Clerk at:

admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

COMING NEXT MONTH

- **T**he Platinum Jubilee
- **C**ommunity Grants
- **R**eport on the Annual Meeting

