



THE UCKFIELD VOICE

November 2022

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MIKE SKINNER

BY CLLR JACKIE LOVE

As a town, we are blessed by so many people that care. We are a community that stands together and we help each other and support so much that happens. This is something so very special and it's to be celebrated.

On Tuesday 4 October we all received some devastating news; our dear Mike Skinner had passed away unexpectedly. We were shocked, heartbroken but most of all we came together and our love flooded social media for Christine and Mike's family. He was a husband, father and grandfather.

Mike was a man who always stood up to support anything and everything in the town. From the beginnings in the store room at the Picture House he, Paddy and Gary created Uckfield FM which bought our community together with music, news, event details and so much more. After the radio he still took an interest in everything. He MC'd at events, organised classic car shows, supported AFC Uckfield, the Theatre Guild, Bonfire, charities and Sheffield Park Gardens to name but a few.

He was a fanatical supporter of Brighton and Hove Albion Football Club together with local grass roots sports. At heart we all knew Mike was a family man. Christine and his family were his most treasured people in life, yet he always found time to help others.

When we lost Ron Hill, Mike (despite losing one of his best pals) took on some of the press liaison on events and sports.



On Saturday 8 October, at the birthday celebration of the Uckfield Community fridge we took the opportunity to say thank you to Mike and Christine. It was incredibly moving and full of respect and love when everyone clapped in appreciation of everything he did for this town.

We will miss him so very much, we will miss the hugs, smiles, enthusiasm, care and his lovely personality. Our memories of him will be treasured and held close. Rest in peace Mike. As someone said the other day, a little bit of sparkle in Uckfield has been lost. Oh and the ice cream sales may dip!

Contact us through:

admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk



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WHAT'S INSIDE

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ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

BY CLLR SPIKE MAYHEW

I am very privileged to chair the Environment and Leisure Committee for Uckfield Town Council. The committee has a wide range of responsibilities and covers things from our sports facilities and green open spaces to Snatts Road Cemetery and the allotments.

Woodland Management Plan

We are working to a 10 year woodland management plan to ensure ongoing maintenance of our woodlands and dealing with diseased or dying trees. Since 2020, ash dieback has played a big part in our plans and there are an additional two or three years of work required for this. We will carry out our third survey of the town's stock of ash trees this winter 2022/2023.

Tree for a Tree Scheme

The Town Council has implemented a tree planting scheme so that for every tree that has to be removed on Town Council land (due to decay or diseases etc), another tree will be planted. Over the past two winter seasons (2020/21 and 2021/22), the council has been planting trees on a large scale across the town to reduce our impact on the environment and better manage land for nature. A total of 630 trees have been planted over the past two winters, in areas such as Ridgewood Recreation Ground, the Hempstead Meadows and West Park Nature Reserves.

Green Spaces Project

We are continuing to work with Sussex Local Nature Partnership as part of their Green Spaces Project to understand the ecological benefits of green spaces as well as the social and



health/wellbeing benefits, in order to develop a longer term vision and set of objectives for our open spaces. We are working on the repair and improvement to a number of them including installing news signage, repairing equipment, investigating drainage issues and making enhancements identified by the project.

Play areas

The Town Council has a rolling programme to upgrade equipment and fencing at our play areas. The Environment and Leisure Committee ensures that the play areas are safe and offer facilities for as many people as possible.

Allotments

Our five allotments sites remain extremely popular with waiting lists for most sites. We oversee the annual allotment competition each year - kindly sponsored by Staverton's Nursery - and review the entry categories on an annual basis to ensure it is inclusive for all our allotment holders.

We also review the charges and rent applied to our allotments to make sure they are fair and representative.

ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE (CONT.)

Snatts Road Cemetery

Uckfield Town Council is the burial authority for the town of Uckfield, and the cemetery is situated in Snatts Road. We review the fees and charges for this on a regular basis. We ensure our grounds staff maintain and enhance the cemetery grounds in keeping with the nature of the site.

Climate Change

We have been investigating ways in which we can reduce our impact on climate change by reviewing the equipment we purchase, managing our green spaces for nature and minimising waste.

ALLOTMENT COMPETITION WINNERS



At the Allotment Conference the winners of the Allotment Competition 2022 were awarded with their certificates and vouchers. the winners were as follows:

Best Kept Allotment Winners

(£25 voucher each)

Framfield Road East

Gareth & Zoe Sherry

Framfield Road West

Andrew & Mary Ford

Bell Lane

Vic Oliver

Bell Lane Runner Up

Leon Stephen Davies (£10 voucher)

Overall Winner - Shield

(1 x £25 voucher and names engraved on the allotment shield held and displayed at the Civic Centre)

Andrew & Mary Ford

Ecological Award

(£25 voucher)

Andrew & Mary Ford

Children's Award

(£25 voucher)

Maya Kala

Congratulations to all our winners and all those who took part in this.

ALLOTMENT CONFERENCE 2022

On Wednesday 12 October over 30 residents attended the Annual Allotment Conference. Councillors Karen Bedwell and Ben Cox chaired the meeting which started with the announcement of winners of the Allotment Competition and the presentation of prizes (see previous page for details). Thanks were given to Staverton's Nursery for their support with the judging and prizes.

Health benefits

The conference saw tenant Geoff Knight give an uplifting talk on the benefits of having an allotment. Growing your own fruit and vegetables provides wonderful tasting fresh produce. He also talked of the four dimensions of wellness, and how the fresh air and physical activity improved mental, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing. Geoff spoke of the wider benefits to young families, community groups, those living with dementia, and how this activity would boost social interaction for those more isolated.

Community Fridge

Uckfield Community Fridge were welcoming surplus produce from the

allotments to reduce food waste.

Uckfield Green Partnership

Roger Isaacson spoke of how the partnership were encouraging families and businesses to be more green - saving money and reducing pollution and waste. Working within three themes: Energy and Transport, Green Environment and Sustainable Living, tenants were welcomed to get involved and provide their input into their work.

Recent changes

CIr Bedwell advised that a representative had now been identified for each site, and tenants were encouraged to raise issues with the site rep in the first instance. This would help to channel communication through to the Town Council. Tenants were reminded of the advantages of joining the Allotment Association which offered regular discounts and updates. The new fee structure would commence from 1 April 2023. An interim six-month bill for plot rental only, would be issued in Oct/Nov for the period October 2022 to March 2023. Allotment checks were proving to be successful and ensuring good maintenance and cultivation.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

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

MON 7 NOV	– ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE
MON 14 NOV	– PLANS
MON 21 NOV	– GENERAL PURPOSES
MON 5 DEC	– PLANS
MON 12 DEC	– FULL COUNCIL (DRAFT BUDGET)
MON 19 DEC	– PLANS (PROVISIONAL IF REQUIRED)

All questions should be directed to the Town Clerk at:
admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

COMING NEXT MONTH

- The Mayors Christmas message
- Staff Vacancies

