



# THE UCKFIELD VOICE

December 2023

EDITION 250

thevoice

## MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

We are quickly heading towards the time of year when we come together with our families, friends and neighbours to celebrate Christmas in our chosen traditions.

### Bringing sparkle to the town

The Christmas lights are up in town, the tree stands tall in the High Street, and the shops are decorated and working hard to ensure all of our Christmas stockings have the perfect gifts that may warm our hearts or make us chuckle!



Those that provide the food we eat are also working hard; preparing our orders and filling the shelves, with menus being printed and staff at the ready! As a town we have pretty much everything covered, especially with our Late Night Shopping event - which you will have enjoyed by the time you read this - bringing even more joy to the town.

### Supporting each other

Being wonderful and kind townspeople, I know that you will, as ever, come together



to ensure that those needing extra support over Christmas will not miss out. Last year, we all supported the Uckfield Foodbank with extra donations to provide the inclusion of that extra Christmas sparkle. We had groups cooking and supplying Christmas meals, the Church collecting gifts for children, and many others doing so much to help out.

### Christmas wishes

I hope everyone has a wonderful time this festive period, and I wish you to all please keep safe and help others where you can. If you feel someone needs a little extra help, always ask as I'm sure someone, somewhere in Uckfield will know the answer or will point you in the right direction.

Much love and Christmas wishes to you all,  
*The Town Mayor, Cllr Jackie Love.*

Contact us through:

[admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)



[@uckfieldtowncouncil](https://www.facebook.com/uckfieldtowncouncil)

## WHAT'S INSIDE

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## SNOW WHITE PANTOMIME

Mirror, mirror, on the wall, don't miss the fairest panto of them all!

The annual Uckfield pantomime is here! Join us to watch the fairytale unfold in true Uckfield Theatre Guild style.

### Wonderful festive tradition

Get ready to sing, dance or clap along, boo the baddies and cheer the goodies. With Snow White escaping the Wicked Queen, the Prince trying to find her and Dame Chelsea Bun looking to find love, it will be a show packed full of drama and laughs!

### Book tickets now

Performances are on Friday 8 December at 6pm and Saturday 9 December at 12pm and 5pm, with tickets for all ages priced at £13.50.

Book now in person at The Civic Centre, or by calling the ticket office between 9am-5pm at 01825 762774.



## PLANNING

BY CLLR KAREN BEDWELL

### Land at Bird in Eye Farm

A 290-house development south of Bird in Eye Hill, Framfield, TN22 5HA, was dismissed and planning permission refused by the Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. They cited the following grounds: "The harms identified in respect of ancient woodland, highway safety, flood risk, and heritage are individually significant and cumulatively carry substantial weight which is not outweighed by the development proposal." Appeal Ref: APP/C1435/W/22/3307820.

### Downlands Farm

An appeal for a 424-house development is being heard by the Planning Inspector and is expected to conclude at the end of November. Decision expected in early 2024. Appeal Ref: WD/2022/1637/MEA.

### Mockbeggars Farm

The appeal enquiry for a 60-house development will be heard from 06/02/2024. Appeal Ref: WD/2022/0648/MAO.

Uckfield Town Council have submitted written and verbal reports for all the above planning appeal inquiries and are supporting Wealden District Council in their objection to developments on these sites.

### Ridgewood Place

Consultations are currently taking place with Redrow Homes for the reserved matters planning application for Seghers Place, a 750-house development at Ridgewood Place. The planning application for outline planning permission - WD/2015/0209/MEA Ridgewood Farm - was originally granted in 2016.



## UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL GRANTS 2024/2025

**Applications now open!**

**Are you a community group or charity  
that needs financial help with a future  
project?**

**Will that project contribute to the  
welfare of the community by improving  
or supporting facilities and activities in  
the Uckfield Parish?**

**If so, why not apply for a grant to help  
your project. See the website below for  
guidelines and application form.**

**Closing date: midnight on Sunday 14  
January 2024.**

**[https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.  
uk/community/town-council-  
grants-2024-25/](https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/community/town-council-grants-2024-25/)**

# SETTING OUR PRIORITIES AND BUDGET FOR 2024-25

We are in the process of setting our priorities and budget for the next financial year, which will run from 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025. The Town Council is required to let Wealden District Council know what precept level is required by mid-January.

## Budgeting for 2024-25

Currently, one-third of the Town Council's income is generated through its own means; not through your council tax (precept). We want to ensure we can continue to do this, and explore ways to increase this proportion into the future, whilst finding savings.

It has not been an easy couple of years, with increases in utility costs, staffing, building/grounds materials and stock, and it is likely this will continue in 2024. The meeting of full Council on 11 December will see members review the first draft of the strategic priorities and budget papers for the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

The key documents will then be placed on the Town Council's website until Sunday 7 January 2024 for feedback. We will finalise and adopt the strategic plan, annual budget and annual plan for the Town Council on 15 January 2024.

## Christmas Opening Hours

The Civic Centre and Luxford Restaurant will close after service on Saturday 23 December 2023. The Civic Centre and Luxfords Restaurant will then open on Wednesday 27, Thursday 28 and Friday 29 December before fully reopening on Tuesday 2 January 2024.

Grounds staff will be working on a rota system to ensure litter collections continue over the Christmas break and any urgent matters are addressed. The Town Council offices will close at 4.00pm on Friday 22 December and reopen on Tuesday 2 January at 9.00am.

## Keeping in touch

The main email account (admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk) will be monitored over the Christmas break, should any urgent issues arise.

Any issues relating to crime and anti-social behaviour should be reported to Sussex Police (999 in an emergency, non-emergency to 101, or online at <https://www.sussex.police.uk/ro/report/>) and if you or a family member find yourself homeless over Christmas, please contact 0330 123 3517.

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

Agendas and minutes can be viewed on the Town Council website at <https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>. 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](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)

MON 4 DEC	- GENERAL PURPOSES
MON 11 DEC	- FULL COUNCIL (DRAFT BUDGET)
MON 18 DEC	- PLANS

## COMING NEXT MONTH

- Town assets
- Councillor Soapbox
- Our Parks

