



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

Meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** to be held on
Monday 14 April 2025 at 7.00pm
in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

AGENDA

Under The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public are able to film or record during a committee meeting.

1.0. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda. Should any Member consider that they require a dispensation in relation to any prejudicial interest that they may have, they are asked to make a written application to the Clerk well in advance of the meeting.

Notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration. The nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

2.0. STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4.0. MINUTES

- 4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on 3 March 2025
- 4.2. Action list – for information only
- 4.3. Project monitoring list – for information only
- 4.4. Forward plan – for information only

5.0. FINANCE

- 5.1. To note bills paid
- 5.2. To note the income & expenditure report ending 28 February 2025
- 5.3. To confirm the Fees and Charges for our Sports Facilities in 2025-26

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 To note the tender process for Victoria Play Area and Public Consultation on Saturday 31 May 2025

7.0. ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates
- 7.2 To further consider the consecration of cemetery land in the new Y-section to accommodate all faiths within our community

- 7.3 To receive an update on the litter campaign to address dog fouling in public spaces

8.0. LEISURE

- 8.1 To note plans for the VE Day 80th Anniversary

9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- 9.1 To receive an update from the Climate Change Working Group
9.2 To receive an update from the Allotment Working Group

10.0. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 10.1 All Weather Pitch Operational Group
10.2 Conservators of Ashdown Forest and 'Weald to Waves' initiative
10.3 Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group
10.4 Luxford Centre Management Committee
10.5 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee
10.6 Uckfield Youth Club Board
10.8 Wealden Food Partnership Advisory Group

11.0. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

12.0. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

To consider whether to **RESOLVE** to exclude the press and public (pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) during consideration of the following confidential business to be conducted: -

- 12.1 To consider a report on the Marketing programme



Town Clerk

8 April 2025



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 3rd March 2025 at 7.00pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT:

Cllr. Angie Smith (Chair)
Cllr. Karen Bedwell
Cllr. Donna French
Cllr. Chris Macve

Cllr. Bernadette Reed (Vice Chair)
Cllr. Duncan Bennett
Cllr. Michael McClafferty
Cllr. Spike Mayhew

IN ATTENDANCE:

Three members of the public
Councillor Peter Selby
Tom Woollard - Ranger

Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer
Minutes taken by Rachel Newton

1.0. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. No declarations of interest were provided at this stage in the meeting.

2.0. STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE CHAIR'S DISCRETION

Standing orders were suspended in order to enable two local residents who both lived in New Road, to speak in relation to item 7.3 on the agenda.

Resident 1 wished to address her concerns about dog fouling in this area. She had observed some dog walkers in the evenings on New Road who did not pick up dog faeces or were leaving dog poo bags on the pavement. She wanted to record her dissatisfaction about this kind of behaviour and on behalf of other residents who felt the same. Some dogs were not being kept on a lead and their owners were not paying attention to what their dogs were doing.

Resident 2 expressed her concerns that as these were terraced houses, if the gates were left open dog faeces was often found on front pathways, which was thoroughly unpleasant. She had contacted an officer at Wealden District Council who advised her that this matter would be referred to a Dog Warden, although she had not received any further feedback. She was informed that this happened more in winter months.

The resident asked if more visual signage could be used to raise awareness and to target dog walkers who also used the allotments, as this was unhealthy for growing food.

Cllr. P. Selby thanked the Chair for their support and to the residents for providing their concerns about the increased evidence of unattended dog excrement in town,

which he stressed was plaguing our town. It was evident that this was becoming a serious problem and one that could lead to dangerous consequences to health.

Members resolved to reinstate standing orders and this item was discussed in further detail at item 7.3.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

4.0. MINUTES

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 20 January 2025

An apology was given to Cllr. M. McClafferty and a minor amendment was made to the minutes from the meeting on 20 January, as he had in fact sent an apology prior to the meeting for not being able to attend due to feeling unwell.

EL.40.03.25 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 20 January 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2. Action list

Members considered the action list previously circulated and noted that all the items were either ongoing or were due to be considered at the meeting.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only

Members noted the report and agreed to remove the following action on:
FC.91.01.24 – Tree for a tree planting programme. This project was at completion.

The Ranger stated that since he started his role in September 2023, for this period alone they had planted an estimated six hundred and fifty trees for the Tree for tree scheme, which was amazing.

4.4. Forward plan – for information only

Members noted the report.

5.0. FINANCE

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the report. The Ranger confirmed that there were five new lecterns and four interpretation boards installed at the local nature reserves.

5.2. To note the Income & Expenditure report ending 31 December 2024

The Chair asked to seek clarity on whether savings had been offset from one budget to another to help pay for new equipment and hire. This was double checked and found to be the case. Members noted the remaining items in the report.

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

6.1. To note the draft minutes from the Strengthening Local Relations (SLR) meeting held on 13 January 2025

Members noted the report and the Chair asked if members had any comments. Cllr. K. Bedwell was disappointed there had been no direct notification about a road closure on New Road recently and the entrance to Ridgewood Village Hall had been blocked off for almost two weeks. This kind of issue was raised at the meeting, with discussions on how to find more effective and consistent ways in which to communicate directly to the Town Council, and to find a way to access their services better without having to go through District Councillors. However, it was felt that nothing had changed in this regard and that our town was not a priority for them.

7.0 ENVIRONMENT

7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates

The Chair had noticed the slide had been fenced off at Hempstead Recreation Ground, although this was only a temporary measure.

The Ranger was thanked for his enthusiasm on the successful bulb planting day. A stage one ecology survey was due for Boothland Wood and Hempstead Meadows LNR and a dormouse survey would be included in that. The bat survey would be more costly at this stage.

Councillors were impressed with the new vehicles and substantial discounts due to the delays.

7.2 To consider the consecration of a section of land at Snatts Road Cemetery to be named the new Y-section.

A query was raised in relation to the ecological aspects and root protection of trees following the mapping. This would be investigated further. The Ranger pointed out that the trees had been surveyed towards the north west with works for removal due to oak decline. The tree surveys were recorded for perusal.

Members asked to look into having both natural and consecrated land for burials and asked to consider how much space would be intended for non-consecrated burials and different faiths.

As the town was becoming more diverse it would also be useful to understand any alternative procedures of burials for different faiths and if we could accommodate this.

A proposal was also seconded for staff to approach the Head of Planning at Wealden District Council to request more cemetery space in the Local Plan and to make them aware of little cemetery land we had left compared with new developments coming into the town. Staff were also asked to actively talk to local residents about this for their views.

EL.41.03.25 Members **RESOLVED to note the report before requesting, that officers:**

- (i) look into those points raised before deciding on the consecration of the new Y-section, and bring these points to the next meeting, and;
- (ii) seek advice from the Town Clerk in relation to writing a letter to the Head of Planning with a request for additional cemetery land in line with the amount of housing opportunities coming our way.

7.3 To note a new litter campaign to address dog fouling in public spaces

This item was brought forward ahead of item 5.1, so that the residents did not have to sit through the whole meeting.

Lots of ideas were discussed with the aim of tackling dog fouling in our town and raising an awareness of this anti-social behaviour. Over the last few months, it was clear that local residents were becoming increasingly fed up of irresponsible dog owners.

Members reiterated that this issue was happening in our parks and pavements, including ancient woodlands such as Boothland Wood, which caused problems with birds nesting and contaminating the nutrients in the soil.

A concern was raised in relation to the growth of our town over the next decade, and that this would almost certainly necessitate the employment of Dog Wardens in the future.

On the Harlands Farm Estate, one councillor reported having to pick up discarded dog poo bags left on pavements and tree branches on a daily basis.

Staff working for the toddler group at Ridgewood Village Hall were having to carry out a complete check of the Ridgewood Recreation Ground before letting the children play outside.

This problem also posed a serious threat to public health as some diseases were transmitted through dog faeces, which was an issue for pregnant women, and the general public.

Further action to be taken:

The residents had been asked if they were able to provide any evidence from ring doorbells, although we would need to find out how that could be evidenced, and for any photographic evidence of dog faeces which we could use to display on social media.

Members requested:

(i) a poster campaign where roads and pavements were worst affected, and for staff to ensure that these were a substantial size and quite emphatic about the consequences of letting dogs foul on our pavements.

(ii) An advertising campaign on social media to educate people about the diseases that dog faeces carried.

(iii) To look into reinstating a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.

(iv) Wealden DC had extended their Public Protection Spaces for Dog Fouling in 2023, so staff were asked to find out if there were any figures they could share in respect of any anyone receiving a fine. This may also provide some insight into the most popular dog walking areas in the town.

(v) Members were keen to find out exactly how to get this problem under control since our town was increasing and to ask about the role of the Dog Warden, and maybe inviting them to a council meeting to discuss this matter with them. This could include a clause in planning applications for developers to help with this.

(vi) The Ranger suggested looking into combination locks on all of the allotment access gates. This had been done before and the cost was minimal so may help in the short term to deter dog walkers onto the allotments.

The Ranger was looking at fencing in Boothland Wood due to anti-social social behaviour and to regenerate the area, which could also help prevent dog walkers.

In Spain, all dogs had to be registered with the council and any dog faeces left on pavements was a criminal offence and would be DNA tested.

Waste collection costs were under review.

The provision of Dog poo bag dispensers with Eco Green Communities was now in progress.

On a separate issue not relating to dog fouling, one member had noticed staff smoking outside a retail business at the top end of Belmont Lane and that a large amount of cigarette ends had accumulated on the ground outside the office building. This was adjacent to Holy Cross Church and was very unsightly, especially for people attending wedding ceremonies at the church. Staff were asked if they could

contact the business owner and to find out if they could install a cigarette box on the wall.

EL.42.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to note the report and to investigate all those ideas raised for further investigation to address dog fouling in public spaces.

(the residents left the meeting at 19:33pm)

8.0 LEISURE

8.1 To note an update on the 'Our Parks' Fitness sessions

The move to Ridgewood was noted to be a success and there were ten attendees at the sessions last week. Residents were encouraged to give this a try!

9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

9.1 To note an update from the Climate Emergency Steering Group

Members noted the report with thanks to those who helped with the Green Shoots Upcycled Fashion Show and the bulb planting day at Harlands pond.

10.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

10.1 All Weather Pitch Operational Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.2 Conservators of Ashdown Forest

Members noted the report and thanked Councillor B. Reed.

10.3 Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.4 Luxford Centre Management Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

10.5 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee

Nothing to report at this time.

10.6 Uckfield Youth Club Board

Nothing to report at this time.

10.7 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link

Nothing to report at this time.

10.8 Wealden Food Partnership Advisory Group

Nothing to report at this time.

11.0 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

EL.43.03.25 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to the revision of a minor tweak to the Cemetery Rules and Regulations, which would be shared with local Funeral Directors.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.44.03.25 It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

12.1 To consider a report on the Marketing programme

Members noted the report and provided some feedback on the recent ticketing system to look at.

The meeting finished at 20:12pm.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ACTION LIST - FOR INFORMATION ONLY Environment and Leisure Committee

Please note no resolutions can be made from the action list. It is for information only.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL.28.09.16</u>	<u>To consider revised byelaws for the Town Council's Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)</u> Members reviewed the amendments to the byelaws which still require Natural England and DEFRA's approval. It was RESOLVED to accept the revised byelaws.	05.09.16	HG	In progress.
<u>EL.26.01.19</u>	It was RESOLVED that the Supporter Groups for both reserves be consulted with a view to shorten the byelaws in accordance with DEFRA's comments and report back to the Environment & Leisure committee.	28.01.19		
<u>EL73.05.22</u>	<u>To consider a number of improvements to direct tourism to Uckfield</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) introduce the following ideas for improvements to direct tourism to Uckfield at the next infrastructure working group meeting: better parking facilities for motorhomes in town and improved signage, and to; (ii) consider if there was anything additional that should be explored to be discussed at that next meeting, and; (iii) for the E&F Manager to explore those initiatives put forward already with the various responsible agencies, including any leverage through ES Highways for proper signage from developers.	16.05.22	RN/ HG	In progress.
<u>EL28.10.23</u>	<u>7.3 To consider the installation of a gate to restrict access to the Grounds work area next to Victoria Pavilion</u> (i) install a gate on the main drive (with a pedestrian gate and closer) estimated at £300 to £400, and; (ii) defer the decision to bring the path around the edge of the fencing up to the car park to the next E&L Committee in November 2023, after seeking further details on accessibility and funding options.	09.10.23	HG/JH	This work will be carried out early Summer, if not before.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL55.04.24</u>	<u>To consider actions to reduce litter in the vicinity of new food outlets and retail businesses in Uckfield</u> Members resolved to agree for Uckfield Town Council staff to: (i) contact the new Co-op store off Highlands roundabout, to ask them if they would consider contributing to a litter bin in the town, and; (ii) look into other ideas mentioned above, and; (iii) continue to work with Brighter Uckfield on this matter.	15.04.24	RN	Update on litter campaign to address dog fouling in public spaces submitted to E&L meeting on 14 April 2025
<u>EL42.03.25</u>	Members resolved to note the report and to investigate all those ideas raised for further investigation to address dog fouling in public spaces.	03.03.25		
<u>EL.11.07.24</u>	<u>Climate Change working Group Update</u> Members resolved to agree to request staff to instruct the Town Council's solicitors in relation to the potential purchase of land adjacent to the River Uck and abutting the lane leading to the Sussex Horse Rescue site.	08.07.24	HG	In progress
<u>EL.18.09.24</u>	<u>To initially consider the proposed re-routing of the Public Right of Way from Ridgewood Farm into Boothland Wood as part of the development of this site</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to initially agree to the proposal from Redrow, to re-route the Public Right of Way from Ridgewood Farm away from Boothland Wood as part of the development of this site but if further consideration of routes needed to be explored.	02.09.24	HG	In progress
<u>EL.35.01.25</u>	<u>To revisit the Cemetery working group and review options available for cemetery provision</u> Members resolved to agree to revisit the Cemetery working group, and to ask all Councillors (not just on this committee), to compare costs and facilities in comparison with other local service providers, and to share ideas for future cemetery provision.	20.01.25	RN	The consecration of the new Y-section has taken precedence. A contractor has been assigned to undertake maintenance of the cemetery, and provide more resource for this sensitive area. Await year-end figures before review is undertaken.
<u>EL.37.01.25</u>	<u>To consider the commemoration of the VE Day 80th Anniversary</u> Members resolved to agree to take part in the commemoration and celebration of the VE Day 80 th Anniversary on 8 th May 2025, and felt that it was only fair to open this up to all Councillors.	20.01.25	RN	An update report has been submitted to E&L on 14 April on preparations being made for this anniversary. NFA.

	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL38.01.25</u>	<p><u>To establish a working group to organise a showcase event to promote the various Community groups and activities in uckfield</u></p> <p>Members resolved to agree to:</p> <p>(i) ask other Councillors if they wished to assist with this showcase event to promote the various Community groups and activities in Uckfield (<i>this could be a self-promotional idea, whereby we could assist with this but our input would need to focus on facilitating their needs</i>), and;</p> <p>(ii) ask Wealden Volunteering and support them with this idea raised, so that they could run this event themselves, offering use of the Weald Hall and Luxford Field.</p>	20.01.25	RN	In progress. An Events Working Group meeting was held on 6 March 2025. This could potentially merge with a Wellbeing event held in the autumn of 2025.
<u>EL41.03.25</u>	<p><u>To consider the consecration of a section of land at Snatts Road Cemetery to be named the new Y section</u></p> <p>Members resolved to note the report before requesting, that officers:</p> <p>(i) look into those points raised at the meeting before deciding on the consecration of the new Y-section, and bring these points to the next meeting;</p> <p>(ii) seek advice from the Town Clerk in relation to writing a letter to the Head of Planning with a request for additional cemetery land in line with the amount of housing opportunities coming our way.</p>	03.03.25	RN	A report has been submitted to E&L on 14 April to decide on consecration of cemetery land.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2025-26

Projects in 2022/23 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Speed reduction initiative (already have £3,199.64 in earmarked reserves)		Project Number	69
<u>FC.82.01.22</u>	Plus £2,000 placed into budget in 2022/23	17.01.22	Will be utilised when further research has been undertaken into the various roadside initiatives available.	

Projects in 2024/25 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Tree for a tree planting programme		Project Number	81
<u>FC.91.01.24</u>	£1,000 plus carry forward from 2023-24 (£1,466.35)	10.04.24	The Town Council was successful with its bid for grant funding through Wealden DC for Community Orchards. All trees associated with that project have been planned (New Barn, Ridgewood Recreation Ground and West Park), as well as additional planting as part of the restocking notice. The planned work has therefore been completed for 2024/25. The additional gifted black poplars have now also been planted in Hempstead Meadows LNR. NFA for 2024/25.	

Project Name	Roofed compound area for Grounds storage		Project Number	83
<u>FC.91.01.24</u>	£500	10.04.24	This work is not urgent, and will be progressed in due course.	

Project Name	Harlands Pond Management Plan Works		Project Number	85
<u>FC.91.01.24</u>	£950 minus £178.33	19.11.24	The funds were set aside to cover the cost of siltex treatment and nesting tubes for Mallards. The siltex has been ordered and delivered, ready for action in the coming weeks. Siltex is a natural and inexpensive way to reduce organic silt and improve water quality. It is environmentally friendly and harmless to plants and animals, and	

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2025-26

	(siltex) = £771.67.		because it recycles organic material, it is a great benefit to the aquatic ecosystem. Works were completed, and further work will continue with hopes of obtaining grant funding, to support biodiversity in this environment. NFA for 2024/25.
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Projects in 2025/26 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Artificial Cricket Wicket Resurfacing/Replacement		Project Number	86
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£7,000	08.04.25	This work is scheduled in for wk beg 22 April 2025.	

Project Name	Football Pitch Manoeuvrable posts		Project Number	87
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£10,500	08.04.25	These will be purchased in time for the new season July/Aug 2025.	

Project Name	Full football pitch renovations		Project Number	88
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£29,000	08.04.25	These works commence Monday 19 May 2025.	

Project Name	Permanent welfare facilities for Harlands Playing Fields		Project Number	89
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£12,000	08.04.25	To be progressed in due course.	

Project Name	D-Day Anniversary activities		Project Number	90
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£1,420 to be added to £830 ER	08.04.25	Event scheduled for Bank Holiday Monday 5 May 2025.	

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ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2025-26

Project Name	Conservation and wildlife monitoring (longer-term project)			Project Number	91
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£8,000	08.04.25	Wildlife appraisals have been commissioned, alongside arrangement for a dormouse survey of Boothland Wood. Enquiries are also being made for a bat survey in Boothland Wood.		

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN – 2025

STANDING ITEMS FOR GENERAL PURPOSES AGENDA	REPORT LEAD
Minutes from the last meeting	Senior Admin
Action list	Mgt Team
Project list	Mgt Team
Bills paid	Senior Admin
Income and expenditure reports	TClerk / Asst TC
Estates Update	E&F Manager
Reports from working groups	Cllr representatives
Reports from outside bodies	Cllr representatives
Marketing report (confidential business)	Marketing & Comms Assistant

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	
14 APRIL 2025	Update on Mapping & Consecration of new Y-section	
	Update on Litter Campaign/Dog fouling in public spaces	
	To confirm Sports fees and charges 2025/26	
	Report from Allotment Working Group (Joint WG 17/3) incl. upcoming Plant Fest 24 th May	
	Tender process for proposals/designs from Play Area Companies for Victoria Play Area	
	Update on VE Day 80 th Anniversary plans	
	Update from Climate Change Working Group	
CONFIDENTIAL		
DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	
27 MAY 2025	Update on Snatts Road Cemetery projects	
	Allotment Working Group update	
	Update on Victoria Play Area Upgrade	
	Plans for Sports Facility Improvements	
	Request for items for July SLR Meeting	
CONFIDENTIAL		

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN – 2025

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	
7 JULY 2025	Litter bin policy review and waste collection costs for next year	
	SLR Mins from meeting on 1 July 2025	
	Joint Allotment Working Group update (meeting 30/5)	
CONFIDENTIAL		

Additions:

Showcase Comms Groups (Spring time 2026) – to ask Wealden Volunteers

Environment and Leisure Committee at 28 Feb 2025

	Apr 24 Actuals £	May 24 Actuals £	Jun 24 Actuals £	Jul 24 Actuals £	Aug 24 Actuals £	Sept 24 Actuals £	Oct 24 Actuals £	Nov 24 Actuals £	Dec 24 Actuals £	Jan 25 Actuals £	Feb 25 Actuals £	Actuals at 28 Feb 25 £	Budgeted 28 Feb 25 £	Mar 25 Budget £	Totals	Budget 2024/25
Sales																
Contribution to Town Centre Security (4040)	0	0	0	645	0	0	613	0	0	0	0	1,258	450	0	1,258	450
Weald Hall Events (4050)	1,655	583	1,888	1,168	949	671	1,462	5,623	4,725	2,578	1,244	22,544	18,750	6,250	28,794	25,000
Allotments (4100)	3,578	2,743	46	88	63	51	63	11	30	129	0	6,801	6,000	2,000	8,801	8,000
Allotment Admin Charge (4102)	2,160	1,440	135	75	45	30	45	15	15	15	0	3,975	3,000	0	3,975	3,000
Allotment Deposits (4101)	104	312	262	208	156	104	156	52	52	260	0	1,666	917	83	1,749	1,000
Playing Fields & Pitches, Sport Income (4110)	44	159	372	99	0	120	377	0	0	3,553	0	4,724	3,500	10,000	14,724	16,000
Playing Fields & Pitches, Event Income (4120)	0	1,455	16	483	4,397	754	(250)	0	0	0	0	6,855	6,500	0	6,855	6,500
WDC- WPark Culverts Agreement (4123)	0	0	0	0	400	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	400	0	400	400
Cemetery - Interments (4180)	1,107	3,107	0	1,737	3,986	8,794	1,245	5,125	1,351	1,764	2,809	31,025	33,000	3,000	34,025	36,000
Cemetery - Memorials (4181)	236	629	682	516	1,151	1,336	368	0	172	642	828	6,561	6,233	567	7,128	6,800
Cemetery - Sundry income (4182)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	200	200	200	400	200
Cemetery Maintenance Charge (4183)	212	424	0	318	318	742	212	318	106	106	318	3,075	3,850	350	3,425	4,200
Memorial bench income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,133	0	0	1,133	0	0	1,133	0
Farmers Market Income (4270)	0	0	180	60	0	105	75	90	60	0	75	645	0	0	645	0
Env Sundry Income (4275)	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	200	209	200
Sundry Income (4276)	0	78	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	78	0	0	78	0
Litter/bus station (4295)	0	0	398	0	398	0	0	265	0	0	398	1,458	1,590	0	1,458	1,590
Road Safety Week/Eco EXPO (4370)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100	100	100
Weald on the Field (4387)	0	0	0	1,500	250	1,655	0	0	0	0	0	3,405	5,000	0	3,405	5,000
Roundabout income (4350)	0	0	0	864	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	864	864	0	864	864
Grounds vehicle disposal (4124)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300	140	440	0	0	440	0
Total Sales	9,095	10,929	3,979	7,760	12,122	14,362	4,365	11,500	7,644	9,347	6,011	97,116	90,254	22,750	119,866	115,304
Grant funding income																
Wealden DC (step improvements followed by Community Orchards)	0	0	960	0	2,318	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,278	0			
Police & Crime Commissioner (Pillar lighting)	0	0	0	0	2,500	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,500	0	£2k was set aside in reserves in 2024-25 for the purchase of new brushcutters, which covers a proportion of the overspend. The		
Safer Wealden Partnership (Pillar lighting)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,500	0	0	0	0	2,500	0			
Due to the backlog of repairs in 2023, many of the repairs identified in 2023 and 2024 have been addressed in this financial year. We have £30,647 allocated in reserves for these repairs, so any overspend at financial year end will be allocated accordingly - at present, £24,872.																
Boxes highlighted are to be funded or part funded by earmarked reserves/new initiative spending																
Purchases																
Playing fields and pitches (5120)	18	475	9	3,143	1,655	1,208	19	722	2,045	1,787	0	11,081	17,000	4,000	15,081	19,000
Playing fields electricity (5122)	0	23	162	168	35	221	297	99	28	86	0	1,119	2,154	1,996	3,114	2,350
Play Areas (5176)	0	2,328	42	35	0	0	762	0	1,407	0	0	4,573	4,000	0	4,573	4,000
Ground Maintenance General (5204)	959	1,122	568	799	314	194	280	341	58	0	324	4,959	4,583	417	5,375	5,000
General equipment repairs (5201)	0	0	179	325	1,285	536	158	658	103	489	155	3,886	6,417	583	4,470	7,000
New Equipment and hire (5202)	90	0	2,644	2,749	200	1,925	480	0	229	0	204	8,521	5,000	0	8,521	5,000
Transit (5269)	84	0	983	141	0	431	0	86	89	0	0	1,815	2,000	0	1,815	2,000
Movana Vehicle (5279)	930	85	89	192	86	177	576	87	262	0	584	3,069	2,000	0	3,069	2,000
Tractor maintenance & running costs (5275)	104	301	635	226	271	145	134	157	68	0	316	2,357	2,000	0	2,357	2,000
Ford Ranger (5271)	74	73	407	142	579	126	99	133	0	72	0	1,704	1,750	250	1,954	2,000
Rainwater Harvester Maintenance (5283)	107	1,150	0	0	0	0	0	0	995	0	0	2,252	1,200	0	2,252	1,200
Grass cutting mower (5276)	105	0	0	357	97	0	0	0	0	0	0	559	1,000	500	1,059	1,500
Allotments (5100)	140	(1,199)	246	80	338	(520)	366	173	352	242	449	667	2,333	1,167	1,834	3,500
LNRS & Sites of Interest (Working budget) (523)	545	236	813	156	251	158	0	24	9	38	48	2,278	2,000	1,000	3,278	3,000
Litter bins (5295)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	1,000	1,000
Litter collection, open spaces (5296)	1,232	1,007	1,147	1,093	1,064	892	1,018	1,059	1,232	881	588	11,211	11,000	1,000	12,211	12,000
Repair and replace street furniture (5375)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	750	750	750	1,500
Corp dev- signage outside areas (5330)	217	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	217	750	250	467	1,000
Protective - Outdoor staff (5058)	43	46	242	729	0	132	87	528	223	0	0	2,029	1,000	0	2,029	1,000
Fencing (5280)	646	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	0	914	500	500	1,414	1,000
Horticulture (5299)	0	0	0	0	0	0	258	0	0	0	31	290	300	0	290	300
Trees (5285)	1,050	1,950	600	1,200	3,390	1,055	1,800	900	968	900	900	14,713	12,000	0	14,713	12,000
HMLNR & WPLNR (5033)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	250	250	500
Weald Hall Events (5300)	0	2,113	33	437	0	868	0	2,350	2,923	5,500	350	14,574	15,000	0	14,574	15,000
Performing rights (5301)	0	0	0	0	0	569	0	0	0	492	0	1,061	1,000	1,000	2,061	2,000
Event Advertising Marketing (5302)	349	125	130	80	157	890	280	120	80	404	120	2,735	3,000	0	2,735	3,000
Weald on the Field (5078)	675	0	39	5,277	4,645	684	0	100	0	0	0	11,420	10,000	0	11,420	10,000
Town Security/CCTV (5370)	1,161	(1,100)	0	0	1,702	0	0	0	1,899	0	0	3,662	2,650	0	3,662	2,650
Floral displays (5373)	0	0	1,960	537	537	537	0	0	0	0	0	3,572	3,600	0	3,572	3,600
Cemetery, grave digging (5181)	320	0	640	320	320	640	640	960	0	320	640	4,800	3,750	1,250	6,050	5,000
Cemetery, rates & water (5180)	156	115	115	112	115	115	140	115	115	153	0	1,251	1,500	0	1,251	1,500
Cemetery (5182)	343	245	245	245	196	163	276	163	228	204	204	2,511	2,500	250	2,761	3,000
Cemetery, maintenance (5186)	186	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	190	200	0	190	200

Environment and Leisure Committee at 28 Feb 2025																
	Apr 24 Actuals £	May 24 Actuals £	Jun 24 Actuals £	Jul 24 Actuals £	Aug 24 Actuals £	Sept 24 Actuals £	Oct 24 Actuals £	Nov 24 Actuals £	Dec 24 Actuals £	Jan 25 Actuals £	Feb 25 Actuals £	Actuals at 28 Feb 25 £	Budgeted 28 Feb 25 £	Mar 25 Budget £	Totals	Budget 2024/25
Memorial benches	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	866	0	866	0	0	866	0
Street lights, supply & maintenance (5080)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,000	11,000	11,000
Street light repairs (5081)	0	5,528	4,130	4,133	0	0	11,076	9,835	0	5,172	0	39,872	15,000	0	39,872	15,000
Bus shelters (5086)	0	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	54	250	250	304	500
Repairs to Holy Cross Churchyard (5051)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	0	0	400	0	0	400	0
Groundsmen - salaries (5360)	8,869	11,023	10,827	10,827	10,916	10,827	10,827	15,034	11,365	11,365	11,365	123,244	126,157	11,469	134,713	137,626
Groundsmen - National insurance (5361)	805	998	971	971	983	971	971	1,552	1,045	1,045	1,045	11,359	11,656	1,060	12,419	12,716
Groundsmen - Pension (5362)	2,256	2,689	2,650	2,650	2,703	2,650	2,650	3,668	2,780	2,800	2,780	30,276	28,112	2,811	33,087	33,734
LNRS & Sites of Interest (Ranger) (5230)	2,577	2,577	2,577	2,577	2,880	2,577	2,577	3,556	2,700	3,007	2,728	30,336	30,923	2,760	33,096	33,120
Total Purchases	24,041	31,980	33,082	39,699	34,718	28,173	35,771	42,421	31,608	36,072	22,830	360,395	330,285	45,512	405,907	379,496
So approx. £26.8k of the expenditure is already accounted for by ear																
New initiatives 2024/25																
ESCC Grass Verge cutting (5207)	5,686	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,686	5,686	0	5,686	5,686
Tree for a tree planting programme (5050)	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,039	0	0	462	417	2,917	0	0	2,917	1,000
Beacon Lighting events (5209)	421	1,141	790	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,352	2,000	0	2,352	2,000
Roofed compound for grounds storage	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Chainsaw for Ranger	0	0	0	0	0	900	0	0	0	0	0	900	650	0	900	650
Harlands Pond Mgt Plan	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	178	0	0	0	178	0	950	178	950
Total new initiatives 2024/25	6,107	1,141	790	0	0	900	2,039	178	0	462	417	12,034	8,336	950	12,034	10,786
Earmarked reserves expenditure covering above expenditure (in progress)																
Pitch improvement works (cricket or football)	2,095	0	2,435	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,530	N/A	0	0	0
New Holland Tractor	0	11,497	1,163	1,163	1,163	1,718	1,163	1,163	1,163	1,163	1,163	22,518	N/A	0	0	0
New Tractor Attachments	0	0	0	769	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	769	N/A	0	0	0
Wildflower planting	0	142	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	174	316	N/A	0	0	0
Gazebo and equipment for events	0	433	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	433	N/A	0	0	0
Ash dieback works	72	0	775	0	2,420	283	3,626	1,708	0	1,550	80	10,512	N/A	0	0	0
Hedgecutters	0	0	1,049	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,049	N/A	0	0	0
Grillo Brush Cutter (5272)	0	0	1,186	469	400	400	400	400	400	400	400	4,452	N/A	0	0	0
Renew interpretation boards (5073)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,265	2,265	N/A	0	0	0
Ridgewood Car Park Surface (5085)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,270	0	0	0	1,270	N/A	0	0	0
Vehicle replacement (5099)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	104	0	7,620	0	7,724	N/A	0	0	0
Streetlighting repairs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	24,872	N/A	0	0	0
												80,711				
Income for Cycle to Work Scheme	116	116	116	116	116	116	116	116	116	116	116	1,271	0	0	0	0
Pillar lighting project	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,197	1,632	558	0	8,387	5,000	0	0	5,000

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 5.3

TO CONFIRM THE FEES AND CHARGES FOR OUR SPORTS FACILITIES IN 2025/26

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 At the Environment and Leisure meeting on 15 April 2024, the committee had resolved to agree to increase the football seasonal fees by 25% each year for four years in 2024-25, ending in 2029. This was in light of the rising cost of living expenses and additional costs to maintain pitches, which had been increasing year on year.
- 1.2 Members also agreed to a 4% increase for the hire of community space and off pitch hire, as well as for cricket pitch maintenance.
- 1.3 This decision had been preceded by a review of the sports facilities and a survey being sent out to local football clubs, requesting any feedback in relation to sports fixtures and pitch hire, and a meeting was subsequently held with the group leaders to explain the reasons behind those findings and the effects of the pitches, and how we could work in partnership for the benefit of players.
- 1.4 For this year ahead, members have yet to revisit and approve the Sports fees and charges for 2025-26, and determine whether they agree to the same percentage increases. A copy of our current rates for our sports facilities is attached at Appendix A.
- 1.5 The fees and charges need to be set in time for the Cricket season commencing at the end of April 2025. The new football seasons begin in August 2025, excluding pre-season training which typically starts in July, so it is important to get these fees and charges established at this meeting.

2.0 Looking ahead - Fixing costs and policy changes

- 2.1 Football pitches are being booked and the grass is being monitored by the Grounds team. We are going through a period of transition with various sports teams and still gathering evidence with a view to providing a breakdown of those findings later on.
- 2.2 The Terms and Conditions for Pitch and Pavilion Hire will also need to be reviewed in line with any future provisions for the growth of the junior cricket team as well as a licence agreement for the exclusive use of the West Park football pitches.
- 2.3 During years of bad weather such as this winter, we have sometimes incorporated pre-season training into the football club's seasonal fee, as they lose weeks of play. However, we recently received a useful suggestion by the auditor that it would be more efficient to request that sports clubs pay in advance for all future pitch bookings, particularly if there is a history of delayed payment.

3.0 Recommendation

3.1 Members are being asked to:

- (i) approve of the Sports fees and charges for 2025-26 and if they agree to the same percentage increases as set out last year (*25% for football seasonal hire – over four years, and 4% for cricket seasonal hire, and the hire of community space or off pitch hire*) (see attached);
- (ii) consider the recommendation of the Internal Auditor to charge sports clubs (particularly football) their seasonal hire, in quarterly instalments, with payment required upfront.

Appendices: Appendix A: Proposed fees and charges for sports facilities

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 6.1

TO NOTE THE TENDER PROCESS FOR VICTORIA PLAY AREA AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON SATURDAY 31 MAY 2025

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 As part of the formal tender process for Victoria Play Area, Uckfield Town Council has set out a timetable for designs to be submitted by play area companies. This will ensure the Town Council meets the necessary procurement regulations for expenditure over £30,000.
- 1.2 The Town Council will also invite the top three or four companies to attend a public consultation event on Saturday 31 May 2025. The Ashdown Room has been provisionally booked out. This is the same day that the Theatre Guild are holding their last Joseph performances at 1pm and 7pm, so this will hopefully assist with footfall.
- 1.3 An action plan has been devised by the Town Clerk to help with the smooth running of this process:

Date	Action
Wednesday 9 April	Invitation to tender online at 'Find a Tender'
Sunday 18 May	Deadline for play area companies to provide formal designs
Monday 19 May	Two members and Senior Management Team to open tenders prior to the Annual Statutory Meeting
Wk beg 19 May	Selected members of E&L Committee to review designs in detail with Senior Management Team. Identify the top 3 or 4 companies to be invited to Public Consultation on Saturday 31 May 2025
Tuesday 27 May	Members of E&L Committee to fully review designs and feedback from local residents. These will be laid out prior to the meeting.
Saturday 31 May	Public Consultation Drop-in – 10am – 1.30pm Ashdown Room, Civic Centre
Wk beg 2 June	Analysis of resident feedback, and feedback from members.
Wednesday 25 June	Present findings and analysis of feedback to Full Council
Thursday 26 June	Advise company awarded contract, of any finer details required.
Monday 7 July	Present final design and company response to finer details.
Tuesday 8 July	Give project go ahead.

- 1.4 Uckfield Town Council will also aim to co-ordinate a poster competition for St Philips Primary School within April/May which can feature as part of the public consultation day on Saturday 31 May.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 7.1

TO NOTE THE CURRENT POSITION WITH THE TOWN COUNCIL'S ESTATES

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the current position with the Council's Estates.

Victoria Pleasure Ground and skatepark

The formal tender process to seek contractors to upgrade the play area has commenced, and a separate update has been presented on this under agenda item 6.1.

A new memorial bench has been installed at Snatts Road Cemetery, as per the new bench policy.

New trees have been planted as part of the Community Orchard programme in an area between New Barn Football Pitch and the Skate Park.

Hempstead Lane Play Area and Hempstead Meadows LNR

The zip line will be replaced with new equipment at the same time as the upgrade of Victoria play area.

In the meantime, the safety fencing keeps getting pulled down at the top of the slide. This has now been replaced by the Grounds team.

We have recently had a report of bees near to the tunnel. We have been advised that they are mining bees and usually only settle for three weeks, but a further call out will be made, as play area users have seen evidence of them again.

West Park/Rocks Park Play Area

The play area equipment is coming to the end of its life. This will therefore be the next play area to upgrade following Victoria.

West Park Recreation Ground and West Park LNR

The area of Community Orchard has now been extended using grant funding received from Wealden District Council.

The Town Clerk met with a representative of the Uckfield Grasshoppers to understand the drainage issues at West Park recreation ground as part of an application for Sport and Infrastructure grant funding.

The new interpretation boards for West Park Local Nature Reserve have arrived and since been installed.

Snatts Road Cemetery

Staff are currently working on mapping the new burial section to be known as the Y-section and the process of consecration in the north west of the cemetery (report submitted to this meeting).

A new contractor has been appointed and commenced works on a part-time basis to tend to the cemetery's grounds and provide it with the sensitive and greater attention it needs. This has seen positive feedback already.

Ridgewood Recreation Ground

The planting of the Community Orchard has now been completed between the MUGA (Mixed Use Games Area) and Ridgewood allotments with the help from volunteers from Brighter Uckfield and Allotment holders.

East Sussex Highways have added two drains to New Road, and removed the existing berm, and altered the entrance into Ridgewood Village Hall Car Park from New Road, to try and alleviate the water entering the recreation ground from New Road, in heavy rain.

Elizabeth Gardens

Nothing to report.

Hughes Way play area

A sink hole has appeared in the play area and this is somewhat larger than previous occasions, so will need appropriate investigation.

Luxford field and play area

Following on from the three-monthly play inspections, some repairs have been carried out. There are a couple outstanding.

The gate has been replaced and pedestrian entrance into the field, due to issues with remedial works undertaken in the car park. The work will be completed shortly.

Woodlands

Ash dieback works in Boothland Wood were completed during the winter season, and restocking work undertaken. This was the third year of the scheduled work identified within the Woodland Management Plan developed with the support of the Forestry Commission in 2021. Contractors will remove some of the timber, during the summer months once the wood has further dried out. This will be completed carefully so as to respect this natural area.

Preliminary ecological appraisals have now been scheduled to commence this spring for the following areas- Boothlands Wood, WPLNR and HMLNR. Along with this, a dormouse survey is due to be carried out in Boothland Woods due to the amount of development occurring on the surrounding land.

The Countryside Ranger is currently in the process of commissioning specialist preliminary ecological appraisals in the nature reserves. The same company will also complete a dormouse survey in Boothland Wood. A further quote is also being obtained for the inclusion of a bat survey.

The Countryside Ranger is investigating the costs, of fencing areas of the wood to protect it from footfall and damage during development construction.

Equipment & Vehicles

The two electric vans have now been delivered and are in use by the Grounds team. The diesel pick-up is due to arrive in April/May 2025. The older transit van has now been retired from service.

The replacement for the Iseki Mower has now been delivered and is making a significant impact on the mowing round owing to the fact it is road legal.

Street Furniture & Lighting

The Estates and Facilities Manager has devised a useful system to keep up to date with any pending and authorised works. We are seeing works completed in good time.

Harlands Pond

The Newt Conservation Partnership carried out some studies by Harlands Balancing Pond (near the Nightingales) and West Park Local Nature Reserve on Monday 7 and Tuesday 8 April. This involved them digging test pit holes of approximately 1 metre square.

Any other business

The Grounds team are currently working through ROSPA inspections reports, carrying out repairs and replacements.

The crown reduction of the Liquidambar tree in Holy Cross Churchyard went well and thankfully did not require a full day of road closure in Church Street.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: Tom Woollard/Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 7.3

TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE LITTER CAMPAIGN TO ADDRESS DOG FOULING IN PUBLIC SPACES

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 A litter campaign is underway following a number of concerns raised by Councillors and local residents in recent months, especially in relation to people not picking up their dog mess.
- 1.2 Unfortunately, due to a minority of dog owners who do not clear up after their pets, dog mess continues to blight our town's open spaces.
- 1.3 At a previous Environment and Leisure Committee, members asked staff to look into all those ideas raised for further investigation to address dog fouling in public spaces.

2.0 Further steps being taken to tackle the problem:



The Marketing and Community Engagement Officer included an advertising campaign in the spring edition of The Voice (April issue) to educate people about the diseases that dog faeces carries, and how to report dog fouling issues to Wealden District Council. Dog walkers were also encouraged to use a suitable alternative green space for dog exercising off leads, with various sites that are easily accessible such as Horsted Green (SANGS), Victoria Pleasure Ground and West Park Recreation Ground.



Posters have been put up where roads and pavements are worst affected. This included New Road next to the old Brickmakers Arms pub, Ridgewood Recreation Ground, the Harlands Farm Estate and near The Dene at the opposite end of town. Local vets would also be approached to see if they could put up posters.



The provision of Dog poo bag dispensers with Eco Green Communities was now in progress. A new contract was taken out in February 2024 which included nine dog bag dispensers and two cases of dog bags every year for our green spaces.

A meeting was held on 2nd April with CP Media in which we shared locations and photos of the dispensers. Eco Green now have an active PR team so they are able to seek find sponsors for advertising. The Marketing and Community Engagement Officer would send out a press release to help gain support and has also provided them with contact details for Wealden DC Street Scene so they can expand their business.



Our gratitude has been offered to staff at the Co-op adjacent to the Highlands roundabout for their contribution with this litter campaign, and we were informed that their bin was being used by dog walkers. They would also be getting another litter bin shortly due to increased demand.



The Coordinator of the Duke of Edinburgh Award at Uckfield College has advised that Uckfield College are keen to support this litter campaign, although at the moment their Bronze and silver DofE students are nearing the completion of their award sections for this academic year, having started their volunteering in September. However, they would be happy to revisit when their next cohort begins in September. In the meantime, Mr Sidwell has copied in Mr Harvey, who leads their super-curricular programme and is looking to relaunch their Eco Club. This could be a great opportunity for those students to get involved, and we were asked to get back in touch, to explore how they can best support this important cause moving forward.



A local resident had reported a lot of litter being dumped near the Dene by the underpass including glass bottles and empty vapes, and dog faeces. She was picking up packets of food on a daily basis whilst taking her children to school and had reported the problem on three occasions to the local school, to see if they could assist.

Brighter Uckfield often helped out with issues such as this, although it was not fair as they also had lives to live and would also welcome some younger volunteers! This will be raised with the school as above and posters have been included for this area.



Wealden District Council had extended their Public Protection Spaces for Dog Fouling in 2023, so staff were asked to find out if there was any data in respect of fines being issued. The Senior Street Scene Officer replied as follows:

“Unfortunately, dog fouling, like littering, is very rarely witnessed so we’ve been unable to issue any fines as no one has been seen. However, we have issued several warning/advisory letters to people suspected of not clearing up after their dog which has had a positive effect.”



Members were also keen to find out exactly how to get this problem under control since our town was increasing and to ask about a Dog Warden:

“We haven’t had a dog warden for many years. Dog fouling falls to us in the Street Scene team and when an issue is reported we visit to assess the problem and whether signage is adequate or whether there’s a suitable location for it if not. We usually spray the fouling with bright, biodegradable temporary paint to both highlight the issue to the dog owner and other users of the area. If on the highway, we usually arrange for our cleansing contractor to clear the fouling a few days later.

We don’t encourage others to use spray as this could be considered graffiti plus there’s no guarantee they wouldn’t start writing messages on the pavement as well!

When we have the resources and time, we carry out patrols of problem areas talking to dog owners and handing out dog poo bags. Always being polite and chatty. That's really useful for intel as well.

We have a dedicated form for reporting dog fouling:-

<https://www.wealden.gov.uk/environment-and-pollution/animal-welfare/cleaning-up-after-your-dog/>

In relation to campaigns, public engagement is key although the person who repeatedly does not clear up after their dog is sadly not going to take any notice of signage or start picking up just because a bin has appeared.

Some areas hold dog shows to reach dog owners, although you often find they attract dog owners from outside of the area and most pick up anyway.

I wish you luck with your campaign but if there's anything we can help with please let me know. Also, if you have a problem area on the highway do let us know so we can try our best to resolve it."

After which a telephone conversation was held to find out if there was anything we have missed or that they can do to help. We were informed that if residents were reporting dog fouling incidents to Wealden (on the form provided or by telephone) if they know who it might be, then they would issue a warning/advisory letter, and that area could be patrolled.



The Ranger was looking at installing fencing in Boothland Wood due to anti-social behaviour and to regenerate the area, which could also help to protect specific areas of the woodland, from over use.



The Head Groundsman had ordered 14 combination locks (12 + 2 spare) for all of the allotment access gates, with a view to trialling on the gate from the Bird in Eye site through to Keld Drive and the newest Ridgewood gate adjoining the recreation ground. The aim was to trial this short term to deter dog walkers accessing allotment sites.



Contact details were provided where staff were smoking outside a retail business at the top end of Belmont Lane, and where a large amount of cigarette ends had accumulated on the ground outside the office building. The residential managers to the freeholder have asked the tenant to install a cigarette box on the wall.

3.0 Updates on other items raised:



To look into reinstating a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. This could still focus on activities like organising street clean-ups, hosting community events, educational talks with schools and encouraging residents to know their neighbours and reporting suspicious activity.

Wealden Street Scene have been asked if they would consider attending a local event in Uckfield such as Weald on the Field and we are waiting on feedback.

The nearest contact for the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme for any tips in the Sussex area is Lewes District, although after speaking with their contact they did not appear to have any activity going on for dog fouling.



In Spain, all dogs had to be registered with the council and any dog faeces left on pavements was a criminal offence and would be DNA tested. Here are some research results in the UK:

- Small scale schemes had been trialled in the UK by Barking and Dagenham Council in 2016, and Southend Borough Council in 2019 but unfortunately were 'unenforceable'. If dogs were swabbed at the same time as the microchipping, then you would have a national database which would allow you to track the dogs, but until that comes about it's not possible to eradicate this problem.
- There was a proposal in 2021 for private contractors to be brought in by North Somerset Council to patrol problem areas and enforce a zero-tolerance policy on people leaving dog mess behind.



The waste collection costs were due to be reviewed later this year or possibly next year, working on a more reliable service and better value, and the evaluation process for Uckfield Town Council litter bins.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 8.1

TO NOTE THE PLANS FOR VE- DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Uckfield Town Councillors have all expressed their support for marking the anniversary of VE Day and VJ Day this year.
- 1.2 The Town Council wasn't able to provide resource to run an event for a beacon lighting on the day itself, and due to the scale of events happening locally and on the Saturday after, it was thought an event should be arranged in line with UK Government advice, over the bank holiday weekend before.
- 1.3 Uckfield Town Council are hosting an event on Bank Holiday Monday 5 May 2025, in the style of a street party. The event will take place between 12noon and 4.00pm. Residents were welcome to attend and mark this historic occasion.
- 1.4 There would be an array of activities for the whole family to enjoy, including food and drinks from local vendors and performances from local bands and singers.
- 1.5 The Town Mayor would be also be attending and inviting members of the Royal British Legion to join this occasion.
- 1.6 This would not happen without the help and support from our amazing local volunteers and staff.
- 1.7 Save the date and come along, help out and enjoy the atmosphere! We look forward to seeing you there!

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 9.1

REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS: CLIMATE CHANGE WORKING GROUP UPDATE

1.0 Summary Report

This report confirms the approval by Councillors at Full Council in 2024 for a pledge of natural assets and a brief summary of the Sussex Nature Partnership Map connecting the dots.

The Uckfield Town Council Nature Pledge Weald to Waves has been drafted, although not finalised. It is awaiting feedback from the Climate Change Working Group who will be looking at this in more detail. This involves support of important ecological habitats supporting Ashdown Forest and the Weald to Waves nature corridor.

Councillor B. Reed will provide a verbal update at this meeting in relation to Sussex Nature Recovery and has also provided the following link to get involved:
[Get Involved | Sussex Nature Recovery](#)

Councillor Bernadette Reed

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 9.2

REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS: UPDATE FROM THE ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 A joint meeting was held by the Allotment Working Group, members of the Allotment Association and allotment reps on 17 March 2025 at 5:30pm, at the Civic Centre.

Attendees:

Cllr. K. Bedwell, Cllr. S. Mayhew and Cllr. A. Smith (Allotment Working Group members)

David Newton (Allotment Association - President)
Stuart Woodham, Graham and Jan Smith (Framfield East allotment site reps)
Jim Horan and Vic Oliver (Bell Lane allotment site reps)
Louise T. (West Park allotment site rep)

David Scarle (Framfield East allotment site)
David West (Framfield West allotment site)

Apologies received in advance:

Carol Washer (Ridgewood allotment site rep)
Chris Scraba (Framfield West allotment site rep)

A few more allotment reps had joined following the circulation of an email looking to encourage people to join and volunteer which was positive. The working group would still be keen to hear from further volunteers for the Ridgewood and Bird in Eye allotments sites, to help with future allotments checks. This would also help to report any issues or concerns and to be a point of contact for any tenants who had any questions and ensure two-way communication between the site and Town Council.

2.0 General updates

- 2.1 There were some updates from the last meeting in relation to the general upkeep and management of the allotments, and some feedback from the grounds team.

The Head Groundsman confirmed that the taps went back on, on 1st April and they would resume mowing the main paths at the beginning of April as grounds conditions allowed. The Grounds team had received some great feedback about the grass cutting which was positive. The Head Groundsman will gradually be changing the allotment taps to ones they can lock during winter, and will begin with the taps on the Framfield East and Framfield West allotment sites.

There were currently 244 plots in Uckfield and forty people were on the waiting list this month.

Committee members noted that the allotments waiting list was now similar to pre-pandemic, with just over 40 new tenants and 3 new plots created to

accommodate newcomers in the last year. Two tenants swapped plots due to upscaling or personal preference.

The next site inspections would be carried out in June with a council official, a councillor and a member of the Allotment Association present on each site. This would only take place twice a year in June and November, although the second check would only be on plots where tenants were sent a weeds letter but were still not using their plot.

It was recognised last year that we did need to manage the checks better, as it had become evident that where some tenants had planted seeds that had not yet matured, this was being missed. It was also difficult to assess plots shortly after the winter frost so for those reasons June was considered to be a better time for carrying out the checks.

The working group would continue to support any tenants with health issues, as long as they were aware and would be happy to work out a plan of action.

An email would be sent to all tenants ahead of the checks to find out if anyone wished to give up their plot, to try to be fair to those people who are still on the waiting list.

The annual invoices were being issued in April as this was the beginning of the next financial year, so it also made sense to separate those two tasks.

A brief mention was made in relation to employing a seasonal Grounds person in the near future to assist with weekly maintenance works, including grass cutting which was a major job as this included the upkeep of the cemetery, parks and open spaces as well as allotments. The team were small so this could alleviate some of that pressures they were facing. A Seasonal Grounds Person had started at the end of March 2025 for the spring/summer months of 2025.

- 2.2 At the Environment and Leisure Committee on 14 October 2024, members agreed that recent income was more or less equal and showed that we were now on target, so the proposed 2% increase for the allotment fees and charges in 2025-26 was satisfactory, and the admin fee would remain at £15 per plot.

However, some tenants had not paid their invoices on time, which put a strain on staff and resources and could mean that costs increase as a result. It was noted that the allotment agreement stated payment needed to be paid within the 40-day period after receipt of their invoice, otherwise the allotment agreement could be cancelled and the allotment would be offered to the next person on the waiting list.

3.0 Items raised - issues or concerns

- 3.1 An issue had occurred with a water leak on the Framfield West allotment site this month, as a result of someone switching on the water at the mains. Water was ejecting out from the broken tap which was only discovered by a passer-by, so it was unsure how long this had been happening. An email was circulated to tenants and the tap was fixed although the Head Groundsman has had to ask repeatedly for tenants not to switch the water on at the mains, as this had caused issues in the past and could cause the pipework to freeze too.

- 3.2 On this site, a section of grass was damaged by a tenant having a fire on the grass pathway. Fires were only permitted within the allotments and in accordance with the Allotment Rules and Regulations.
- 3.3 One tenant was concerned about the openness of the Framfield West allotment site and that various animals could enter if the gate was being left open. Other local residents had also complained recently about dog fouling in our open spaces around the town which has led to an upcoming litter campaign to tackle this issue.
- 3.4 The Working group were looking into having combination locks on all the allotment gates, for trialling on the Ridgewood and Bird in Eye sites. Also, due to recent thefts during February on the allotments, especially the sites along the Framfield Road, this could be one method to try to help to control both of those issues. The Head Groundsman had purchased 14 bicycle chain locks that were suitable for the allotment holders to use a key or code system. The codes being given out for the locks were strictly for allotment holders only and not to be handed out to anyone else, or this would not be effective.
- 3.5 A tenant raised an issue about people parking overnight in the allotment car park along Framfield Road. The idea of placing a lock on this gate was also mentioned.
- 3.6 An ash tree needed reducing at the back of the hospital car park, due to ash die back. Those trees requiring work, were now on the maintenance list for works to reduce the tree.
- 3.7 Some fencing posts needed fixing on the Bell Lane allotment site and a section of the boundary on the Framfield West allotment site, also on the maintenance list.
- 3.8 Tenants on the Framfield East allotment site had asked if an access gate could be installed leading onto the allotments from the southern side of the new hospital car park. The tenants agreed that this would be a real bonus to them, although the Head Groundsman and Ranger both had some feedback for the working group on this request to discuss in detail first. Staff would need to look into land ownership, accessibility and funding options however.

4.0 Updates on upcoming 'Green' events to join and take part in!

4.1 Plant Swap at 'The Source', Civic Approach on Saturday 24 May 2025 10-2pm!

The President of the Allotment Association was keen to increase the level of interest, working in partnership with Uckfield Town Council. They currently had 35 members, but were asking for people to join who loved being part of the growing community!

The Town Council were inviting lots of local groups to help and support this worthy event! Please do come along and bring some plants or seeds to swap and spread the word!

It was still only £6 per year to join the Allotment Association, where members were given discounts on products including 50% off seed orders! The Trading Hut opened Sundays 10-11am where they were also looking to increase sales and volunteers. Anyone could come along to their meetings to speak to them

and see what they do, at the Ringles Cross Pub, usually held on the second Tuesday of each month. Just turn up!

4.2 **The Allotment Competition 2025**

We were lucky to have Staverton's Nursery sponsor us again this year! An initial meeting was held to discuss the chosen categories with the Director, Phil Staverton.

This year's categories would include 'Best Kept', Ecological Award, Childrens' Award (up to 12 years old) and Overall Winner. There would also be a certificate for Best Newcomer!

4.3 **Scarecrow Competition - late summer/ Autumn time!**

The whole town would be invited to create a scarecrow later in the year to give everyone the chance to get creative and maybe win a prize!

4.4 'We Grow' initiative had asked if they could utilise any further space for growing on in the centre of town to pilot a project for people to look after a few raised beds. They had a tight timeframe due to seeding season starting, so this has been passed to the Community Fridge to see if this was something they were interested in.

The meeting finished at 6:45pm and the next joint Allotment Group meeting was due to take place on 30 June 2025.

5.0 Recommendation

5.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 10.4

LUXFORD CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 As the meeting on 21 March 2025 was the first one of the combined committees, the Chair introduced all members present.

The new Secretary, Roger Linthwaithe, was then officially installed as a member and trustee and the new members were installed also as trustees. It was agreed to instruct the solicitors to amend the Constitution as required.

The meeting then proceeded to discuss the business as per the agenda.

The main topic being the proposal to set up a 'Go Fund Me' page to raise monies for the extension. Roy and Horst were thanked for the huge amount of work carried out so far in setting up the account.

Reports on grant applications and funding options, together with those on the general administrative matters and treasurer's reports, included the update on the transfer of the water supplier to Everflow, which is already proving an improvement.

The new bookings secretary joined the meeting and was introduced to everyone. Members wished her well, and she was thanked for the offer of her services in the future.

The next Committee meeting is on 27 June, the AGM is on 10 May 2025.
Councillor Chris Macve

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 14 April 2025

Agenda Item 10.5

REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES: UCKFIELD RAILWAY LINE PARISHES COMMITTEE UPDATE

1.0 Summary report

The meeting held on 12 March 2025 involved much discussion on several matters including the proposed Greenway/Owlsbury Farm development. There is concern over the possibility that if the Greenway is introduced it must be set up so that the twin-track railway can be reinstated without hindrance. If the Greenway is allowed to interfere with track bed and safety borders, then this will be a further adverse encumbrance with the reintroduction of the line.

The matter of the committee's bank account was further considered as it was felt Santander was not now a practical option owing to conditions imposed by the bank on opening an account.

The Facebook group page is now open and receiving comments and we have agreed with GTR to provide a popup banner on the stations advertising the page and requesting both positive and negative comments, so we can pass them on to the relevant parties.

The group responded to the TfSE consultation document and will be sending comments to DFT Consultation on 'A Railway Fit for Britain's Future'.

The Transport Secretary has responded via Rail Passenger Services Committee to say there are no plans at present to introduce battery trains, but the matter is still under review.

The next meeting is on 14 May 2025 at 2.30pm

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton