



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

Meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** to be held on
Monday 19 January 2026 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 24 November 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. Bills paid
- 5.2. To note the income & expenditure report ending 30 November 2025
- 5.3. To consider an amendment to the Allotment Agreement and rent review notice

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1. To note a new method statement for the dressing of Graves in the X-Section and Garden of Remembrance at Snatts Road Cemetery
- 6.2. To note an update to the Memorial Safety Policy – No. 33
- 6.3. To note the draft minutes from the Strengthening Local Relations (SLR) meeting held on 15 January 2026

7.0. ENVIRONMENT

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

8.0. LEISURE

(Nothing to report)

9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

9.1 To note an update from the Climate Emergency Steering Group

10.0. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 10.1 All Weather Pitch Operational Group
- 10.2 Biodiversity links - Ashdown Forest and Climate Change
- 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 Trust Board
- 10.8 Wealden Food Partnership Advisory Group
- 10.9 Uckfield & District Twinning Association – AGM only

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

13 January 2026



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 24th November 2025 at 7.00pm
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

PRESENT:

Cllr. Angie Smith (Chair)
Cllr. Karen Bedwell
Cllr. Michael McClafferty
Cllr. Spike Mayhew

Cllr. Bernadette Reed
Cllr. Donna French
Cllr. Chris Macve

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor Peter Selby

Holly Goring – Town Clerk
Tom Woollard – Estates Manager
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.

Two declarations of interest were declared:

Councillor K. Bedwell declared a prejudicial interest in relation to the Ridgewood Village Hall car park on the action list at item 4.2, and although there were no further updates the Chair suggested that she be asked to leave the room if anything did come up in relation to this item.

Councillor B. Reed in relation item 7.3 as she was previously a member of The Woodland Trust and Sussex Wildlife Trust, but has been working on the local nature recovery strategies project with Sussex Wildlife Trust.

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

None.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

4.0. MINUTES

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 13 October 2025

EL.31.11.25 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 13 October 2025 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2. Action list

There were no items to remove, with just an update on **EL20.09.25** that sections (i) to (iii) had been completed. Members subsequently noted the report.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only
Members noted the report.

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 Chair raised one minor query in relation to a penny difference in the comments (the Hempstead CocoSwing) between the supplier invoice and Bankline. The Town Clerk confirmed that this had been identified and would be rectified as a credit in the next payment to the company.

5.2 To note the income and expenditure report ending 30 September 2025

There was an income line listed for repairs to Holy Cross Churchyard, although this did not have any allocation or money spent against it. The Town Clerk provided clarity in that the Town Council was responsible for the maintenance of the closed churchyard, holding an agreement that went back historically. The nominal code was kept within the report, in case further repairs were required. There was no budget set against this, however.

5.3 To consider budget priorities and initiatives for 2026-27

The Chair asked if any members had any additions other than those proposed in the report. Members provided a few more ideas for consideration, including:

- Adding to, or complementing the River Uck adaptation project and other aspects of the Hempstead Meadows Nature Reserve. There was a Himalayan Balsam programme already in place, which would largely fall into Hempstead Meadows.
- The footpath consultation and re-direction for Boothland Wood, which may incur additional costs.
- Some of our green spaces were under severe pressure with visitor impacts, including West Park nature reserve and development plans surrounding Bird in Eye North were of concern within the east of the town. This could require visitor management mitigation through community infrastructure levy funding.

The Estates Manager mentioned that the budget for consultation and habitat improvements would increase significantly this year, along with professional fees.

- To look into providing Christmas lighting on the trees in the High Street.
 - Along with the potential approval of the Bird in Eye north line planning application, it may also be prudent to put a contingency in place to look further into the idea of an extension to the riverside walk in the future. This would require exploring initial costs, such as legal fees and land registry searches, although this would not be achievable for the next financial year, it may be worth considering building up a sinking fund for this project if this went ahead.
- The idea of having a gate at Hempstead Meadow to deter fly tipping. The Estates Manager agreed that this was a good idea and was looking into a suitable replacement, as there was a gate there previously.

EL.32.11.25 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to agree to all those ideas for consideration mentioned above.

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

6.1 To review the fees and charges for Allotments in 2026-27

A member asked why the working group opted for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rather than the Retail Price Index (RPI). The Chair of the Fees and Charges working group explained that by and large, the ONS regarded the CPI to be a fairer assessment of inflation over the RPI, and was actively working to remove the RPI, as this tended to overestimate inflation, so rather than putting prices up, this was the right approach.

EL.33.11.25 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to the proposed increase to the Allotment fees and charges in April 2027-28, of the rate of CPI at that point in time plus 1% and an admin fee of £16.

6.2 To review the fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery in 2026-27

EL.34.11.25 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to the proposed increase to the Cemetery fees and charges for April 2026 – March 2027, to be based on the rate of CPI at year end (March 2026) plus 1%. Figures would be rounded to the nearest £5.

6.3 To review the fees and charges for the provision of Sports Hire in 2026-27

EL.35.11.25 Members **RESOLVED** to unanimously agree to the proposed increase to the Sports Hire fees and charges for 2026-27, to include:

- (i) For Cricket seasonal hire: rate of CPI at year end plus 1%, and;
- (ii) For the hire of community space or off-pitch hire: rate of CPI at year end plus 1%, and;
- (iii) For Football seasonal hire – the stepped percentage increase as set out last year (25% compounded increase based on previous year's figures), and;
- (iv) To offer a licence agreement to Uckfield Grasshoppers Junior Football Club for the exclusive use of West Park pitches initially for one season (August 2026 to May 2027), with scope to extend for two thereafter.

The Chair also pointed out that local football clubs had fully understood the reasons behind the decision for the costings plan for football seasonal hire, and what was needed for the provision of football.

6.4 To review the 2026-27 proposal from East Sussex County Council on their Urban Grass Verge Cutting contract

The Chair asked if we were still able to continue to manage with the two cuts per year, as chosen last year. The Town Clerk confirmed that because we had a dry summer, the weather was on our side, although we tended to get the usual queries in relation to visibility at West Park on the junction with Bell Farm Road, or the The Drive which were the worst areas affected.

Regardless of the two cuts, East Sussex Highways were still required to ensure visibility splays at key junctions. We had received one complaint from a resident in Coopers Green, although this fell outside of our boundary, although when the Town Clerk went to have a look, it was not one of concern.

The Estates Manager agreed concurred that this was weather dependent and hard to predict, whilst this could affect the pressures on the grounds staff and their workload in the future.

Members still preferred to stick with the option of two basic cuts per year, with the aim of putting aside any savings for future needs.

One member asked on behalf of a local resident which areas we were responsible for in relation to the entrance to West Park. The Town Clerk pointed out that at the moment, we had no legal standing to undertake grass verge cuts at this junction, as well as for the safety of our grounds staff, and that this should be carried out by East

Sussex Highways and their appointed contractors. Also, this area was currently regarded as a rural verge. An enquiry had been submitted to designate this space correctly to urban, as with any verges owned by East Sussex Highways this would be their responsibility.

Members agreed that Option 1 did not cause any issues last year members proposed to carry on with this.

EL.36.11.25 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to Option 1 – two cuts over the course of a year to be carried out by ESCC at no cost to the Parish/Town Council. Urban grass will be managed for safety purposes only.

6.5 To request any items for the Strengthening Local Relationships meeting with East Sussex Highways in early January 2026

One member only recently noticed whilst driving into Queens Approach on Manor Park that the kerb stones were raised, and that this probably wasn't the only issues with kerb stones on this particular estate.

Also, the state of the pavements at the bottom of Lewes Road. It was felt that this required a proper management and a repair scheme, rather than being carried out by piecemeal.

The bollard and sign designed for the purpose of traffic calming, at the lower end of Lewes Road, was still considered to be dangerous for vehicles coming from both directions. Vehicles had to navigate when it was safe to manoeuvre around the bollard heading north into town, whilst traffic coming from around the other direction had no indication about this and did not slow down. Also, it was not clear for vehicles exiting the Ridgewood Place development and drivers ready to manoeuvre around the bollard on Lewes Road, who had the right of way.

Church Street could do with resurfacing. The area at the end of Regency Close was like a minefield, which was very uneven from Holy Cross back to Dawson Hart. Some resurfacing was also required at Budletts Roundabout and Blackdown roundabout with concern for motorbikes.

EL37.11.25 Members noted the report and agreed for any other ongoing items (received no later than the Christmas period) to be raised at the Strengthening Local Relationships meeting with East Sussex Highways on 15 January 2026.

7.0 ENVIRONMENT

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

Members noted the report – no comments made.

7.2 To consider suggestions from Uckfield Rotary Club for their 75th Anniversary

Members were grateful to the Rotary Club for approaching the Town Council with the offer to contribute to an item for the town. They had suggested perhaps the potential to upgrade or replace the bus shelter.

Other ideas raised, included:

- To replace one of the statues along Bell Farm Road.
- A statue within Elizabeth Gardens to keep the context of this area as a rotary funded place since they originally provided this to commemorate an anniversary celebration.
- A Town Noticeboard on the lamp post outside Hartfields, as this would be an ideal position for our advertising and information.

EL.38.11.25 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to all of the suggestions raised above and to offer those ideas to the Rotary Club.

7.3 To consider a response to the East Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy Consultation

Due thanks were given to Councillor Reed and the Town Clerk for their time and input into their preparation of a response. This was an impressive piece of work. This was a Sussex wide nature recovery programme and being delivered within four parts, with additional habitat maps provided.

The overall submission looked constructive except that quite a big gap analysis had been undertaken whilst looking at each of these documents to see how this related to Uckfield and the work that they were doing within the parishes and nature pledge. They also identified species not mentioned.

Members had been asked to view the draft response and approve its submission.

EL.39.11.25 Members noted the report and approved the draft response and submission to the East Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) Consultation. This was submitted within the set time frame provided, by 26th November 2025.

8.0 LEISURE

Nothing to report.

9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

Nothing to report.

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

Nothing to report at this time.

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

[Councillor S. Mayhew left the room at 7:40pm prior to discussing the request below]

EL.40.11.25 Members noted the report with thanks for Councillor C. Macve and approved the purpose of the letter from Crowborough Town Council in Appendix A, and for the Town Clerk to prepare a similar draft letter to Southern Railway, on behalf of Uckfield Town Council.

[Cllr Mayhew re-entered the room at 7:46pm].

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

The Chair announced a couple of events coming up in 2026:
The Green shoots Fashion Show on 26 February 2026 with a shout out for helpers,
and, to invite stall holders for the Eco Expo event happening on 21 March 2026.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.40.11.25 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 were pleased to see an increase in event ticket sales.

12.2 To consider proposals for CCTV improvements
EL.41.11.25 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED to** agree to proceed with the proposals set out in the report.

The meeting finished at 7:52pm.

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>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. A report has been submitted to E&L on 19/1/26 in relation to priorities in 2026.
<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.

Resolution no.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<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	In progress
<u>EL20.09.25</u>	<p><u>To receive a progress update on water ingress into Ridgewood Village Hall</u></p> <p>Members RESOLVED to agree to:</p> <p>(i) proceed with Quotation 2 from Contractor A to minimise the impact and ensure the safety of our leaseholders, and;</p> <p>(ii) enable leeway of an additional expense of fifteen percent just in case this goes slightly over budget, and;</p> <p>(iii) investigate the suggestions with the company that were raised at the meeting by experienced councillors in this field, and;</p> <p>(iv) continue to look into more radical ideas to fix the car park in the longer term.</p>	20.09.25	JH	<p>The works have been completed and the Estates team will monitor, whilst exploring options for the remainder of the car park works.</p> <p>The Facilities Manager confirmed that the next stage of works would be advertised on the UK Government procurement portal - 'Find a Tender.'</p> <p>Sections (i) to (iii) have been completed.</p>
<u>EL21.09.25</u>	<p><u>Update on the Uckfield Station Car Park and electric charging</u></p> <p>Members wished to arrange a separate meeting this year with APCOA to explore some questions being raised that needed further clarification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would residents have to pay to park in an electric bay, as there was a sign stating an automatic pay to park as you entered? • Would residents be penalised for using an electric parking bay as a normal parking spot? • What were the current rates and subsidising rates? • Was there any security for parking overnight? • Would there be enough spaces to park? 	21.09.25		Meeting with APCOA to be arranged in the New Year.

Resolution no.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL27.10.25</u>	<p><u>To receive an update on a management plan for Snatts Road Cemetery</u></p> <p>Following concerns raised from the Grounds team in relation to grass cutting and health and safety members resolved to agree to the proposed management plan to remove any items not permitted on graves. This task would involve contacting deed owners where possible, and asking Deed holders to remove any items or they will be stored for collection.</p> <p>Members appreciated that this would need to be handled with care and our reasons for doing this would need to be clearly communicated. The team were in the process of creating new signs and cards to put on graves and wording to be placed on social media if needed.</p>	27.10.25	RN	A report has been submitted to E&L on 19/1/26

**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 2025/26 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Permanent welfare facilities for Harlands Playing Fields		Project Number	89
<u>FC.90.01.25</u>	£12,000	08.04.25	Temporary toilet provision has been installed and will be revisited in 2027-28.	

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 and have commenced, alongside a dormouse survey of Boothland Wood. The preliminary bat survey has been carried out in Boothland Wood and findings are due to be submitted. We are due to receive reports from mid-January. We have increased the budget from £8-15k in April 2026 – March 2027.	

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN – 2025/26

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	Councillor representatives
Reports from outside bodies	Councillor representatives
Marketing report (confidential business)	Marketing & Comms Assistant

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	
19 JANUARY 2026	To consider a new method statement for the dressing of Graves in the X-Section & Garden of Remembrance	SA Officer
	To consider revised Memorial Safety Policy number 33	SA Officer
	To consider an amendment to the Allotment Agreement – rent review notice	SA Officer
	Minutes from the January SLR meeting	SA Officer
	Climate Change Steering Group Update	Wrking Group
CONFIDENTIAL	Marketing report	M&CE Officer

ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN – 2025/26

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT	
2 MARCH 2026	Feedback from wildlife appraisals	Estates Manager
	Proposals for free exercise classes at Ridgewood Recreation Ground	SA Officer/TClerk
	Options for consideration for replacement vehicle for the Movano	Estates Manager
	To confirm the Consecration date for Y-section at Snatts Road Cemetery	SA Officer
	Update from the Allotment Working Group	SA Officer
	Update from the Climate Change Working Group	SA Officer
	Draft Sports Pitch licence agreements for consideration	SA Officer
	Update on 3G Pitch application	Estates Mgr/TClerk
CONFIDENTIAL	Marketing report	M&CE Officer

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Monday 19 January 2026

Agenda Item 5.3

TO CONSIDER AN AMENDMENT TO THE ALLOTMENT AGREEMENT AND RENTAL REVIEW NOTICE

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 At the Environment and Leisure Committee on 24 November 2025, members agreed to a proposed increase to the Allotment fees and charges for April 2027/28. The proposed increase would align with the rate of CPI in March 2027 plus 1%. The administration fee would increase from £15 to £16.
- 1.2 We are further presenting this to members, to formally advise that this change for 2027/28, will require giving a period of 12 months' notice, to allotment tenants.

2.0 Rent review proposal – Allotment Agreement

- 2.1 There was no increase in 2025/26.
 - 2.2 Legal advice from The National Allotment Society advises:
The current rent revision clause requires at least six months' notice of any increases but was recommended that we change this clause to provide that the rent will be reviewed in November/December for an increase in the following April and that tenants will receive at least three months' notice of any increases (see App A & App B).
 - 2.3 We would therefore recommend that we follow our standard procedure of giving tenants 12-month notice prior to 6 April 2026 in writing, and that this outlines the new rental amount for the following year and also informs tenants of an amendment to the rent revision clause.
- ##### **3.0 Recommendation**
- 3.1 Members are asked to agree for the rental agreement to be revised before issuing the a letter to allotment tenants prior to 6 April 2026, which provides 12 months' notice of the revised charging schedule.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 19 January 2026

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

Nothing to report.

Hempstead Lane Play Area and Hempstead Meadows LNR

Himalayan balsam control will commence again in the Spring in the nature reserve, with a new method of control in the hope of preventing this from re-establishing in the reachable areas.

Findings of the ecological appraisal are due in late January.

A new soakaway has been installed within Hempstead Recreation Ground to protect the built asset(s).

West Park/Rocks Park Play Area

The play area equipment is coming to the end of its life. The repairs to the double swing were completed in December. This will be the next play area to be upgraded.

West Park Recreation Ground and West Park LNR

100m of stock fencing has been replaced over winter along the Rocks Road section of West Park Local Nature Reserve, to include a new kissing gate. The bracken control has been carried out and dead hedging.

Snatts Road Cemetery

New signage is currently being designed to reiterate rules and regulations.

Elizabeth Gardens

Nothing to report.

Hughes Way play area

The entrance pathway slabs were vandalised and on the maintenance list to be replaced. This may have to be concreted instead for longevity.

Luxford field and play area

Nothing to report.

Woodlands

Year 3 of the Woodland Management Plan to address ash dieback has been completed.

Preliminary ecological appraisals are continuing for the following areas: Boothland Wood, West Park Local Nature Reserve and Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve.

Equipment & Vehicles

The procurement process is underway for a replacement flatbed type vehicle for 2026/27 to aid in litter collection, as well as green waste removal and material collection. This will include caged sides and a tipping back. Electric alternatives are being considered.

Street Furniture & Lighting

The festive lights were a success with no complaints received.

Harlands Pond

An ongoing second round of Siltex will be applied over winter and the planting of a wild flower selection is taking place.

Selby Meadows

Nothing to report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: Thomas Woollard/Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 19 January 2026

Agenda Item 9.1

CLIMATE EMERGENCY STEERING GROUP UPDATE

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report incorporates general updates on biodiversity and climate change.

In December, the LNRS team issued an update in relation to interim results from the public consultation survey.

More than 730 emails, surveys and map comments were received during the six- week public consultation on the draft Local Nature Recovery Strategies for West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.

Two reports (one for West Sussex, and one for East Sussex and Brighton & Hove) will be published in February 2026 to present and address this feedback in detail.

In the meantime, a snapshot of results from the **303 consultation surveys** can be found at the following link: <https://sussexnaturerecovery.org.uk/news/interim-results-from-the-public-consultation-survey>

- 1.2 Wealden District Council have also just shared the adoption of their latest Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for 2025-30: [Wealden's Climate Change Strategy | Let's Talk Wealden](#) followed by a 5-year funded project for Wilder Wealden Project in November.

The Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan for 2025-2030 is a bold, community-led roadmap to tackle climate change, protect nature, and build a greener healthier future for everyone. The strategy sets out the co-benefits of climate action, including to health, energy security and stronger community resilience and has eight objectives to bring the strategy's vision to life.

The Wilder Wealden project is a flagship nature recovery initiative led by Wealden District Council in partnership with Sussex Wildlife Trust. It is designed to operate at a landscape scale, connecting habitats across rivers, woodlands, farmland, and urban green spaces. The project aims to restore ecological networks, improve the districts climate resilience, and support nature-based solutions to flooding, carbon sequestration, and soil health.

2.0 Coming next

- 2.1 There have been a number of changes since the Town Council prepared its own policy (2021) in terms of our fuel supplies, our vehicles and our land management. A review will commence in 2026, and aim to provide a more up-to-date carbon audit of our business in 2026.
- 2.2 As we look ahead to 2026, the Climate Change Steering Group are making priorities for the new calendar year.

- (i) The Green Shoots Upcycled Fashion Show - Thursday 26 February 2026;
- (ii) The Eco EXPO - Saturday 21 March 2026;

- 2.3 Wealden District Council are encouraging local groups and organisations to put forward proposals to the Community Led Infrastructure Fund (CLIF).

These are capital grants available between £5-200k for support to multipurpose community buildings, green spaces, cultural infrastructure and other leisure/sports projects across the district. Whilst preparing for Wilder Uckfield, this could include nature recovery and identifying wildlife corridors and rural footpaths, as well as Nature-Based Solutions for climate change.

For further information and eligibility criteria please visit: CLIF@wealden.gov.uk.

- 2.4 Grants of up to £3,500 are also being offered to help communities across the Wealden district to create, restore, and enhance community orchards which provide spaces for people to connect with nature, learn new skills, grow food, and strengthen community ties. Visit: [Grants available for communities to grow orchards - Wealden District Council](#) or for more information about the grants or local Network, please email sustainability@wealden.gov.uk

- 2.5 The Climate Team at Wealden are keen to hear from community organisations as to how they can help support your work on climate and nature. This might include through:

- Jointly hosting workshops,
- Facilitating peer-to-peer learning with other groups,
- Providing communications support and helping promote your events
- Exploring joint projects that deliver local climate and nature benefits

They would also love to hear your ideas for new initiatives or challenges you'd like us to help tackle.

- 2.6 Wealden District Council also have a District Councillor Ward grants initiative and some funds are still available by application.

- 2.7 Wealden will also be launching a new Local Plan Reg 18 consultation in mid-February and the Town Council will need to prepare its response.

3.0 Recommendation

- 3.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Councillor A. Smith and Councillor B. Reed

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Monday 19 January 2026

Agenda Item 10.1

ALL WEATHER PITCH OPERATION GROUP

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 Sophie Mantle was welcomed to the meeting held on 18th November 2025 as the member from ESCC, replacing Pauline Young.

The report on the usage and performance of the pitch was presented to the meeting in the absence of a representative from Freedom Leisure. This showed continuing full usage by all the regular hirers during the week and at weekends. Saturday afternoons were still held open for matches.

New nets and clips had been purchased for both the 5 and 11-aside goals

There was currently a waiting list of eleven clubs for a regular contracted booking. Concern was expressed about the intention of a new 3G pitch being provided by The Town Council, but in view of the waiting list this was not considered to be a problem as there was currently excess demand for the single pitch.

Overall, the pitch was in good condition. The next inspection by the rugby was next year and the football association in 2027, with regular quarterly maintenance carried out by the approved contractor. The sinking fund was healthy and was placed in a high-interest account.

The Grasshoppers currently had 450-500 players and the problems previously encountered with the under-18 players had been resolved.

The Football Association had ongoing plans for their Future Fit Programme, which would involve further pitch demand.

The local representative reported on the continuing noise problems and queried on the permitted hours of use under the planning permission, and whether acoustic barriers could be installed. It was considered that these would be extremely expensive.

The next meeting will be held on 24 June 2026 at 3pm.

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton