



# THE UCKFIELD VOICE

DECEMBER 2025

EDITION 274

thevoice

## MAYOR'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2025

BY CLLR. KAREN BEDWELL

As I reflect on the past year, I feel truly honoured to have continued serving as Mayor of Uckfield.

This role has given me the chance to meet so many inspiring people - community groups, charities, volunteers, and more - all working hard to support every generation. Their kindness and commitment have brought people together, helping to ease feelings of loneliness and isolation that can be felt in growing towns like ours. Uckfield continues to thrive as a town, showing the strength and generosity of a community that supports one another in times of difficulty. It is amazing to see how we celebrate shared achievements and welcome new families to our traditions, old and new.

### An incredible year

Over the spring and summer, it was wonderful to see the town come alive - whether at the Holy Cross Church Spring Festival, the Lions Summer Fete, or the Town Council's Weald on the Field, with friends, neighbours, and families enjoying quality time together.

Autumn brought its own magic, with the Bonfire and Carnival Society being joined by visiting groups to light up the High Street for good causes. We also marked the 80th anniversaries of VE and VJ Day, while November brought the solemnity of Remembrance – an occasion of even greater significance in light of current world events.

Late Night Shopping puts our High Street at the heart of Christmas festivities,



showcasing local businesses, and Holy Cross Church Christmas Tree Festival offers a moment of reflection on what is important to us at this time of year, remembering those no longer with us and offering support to those facing challenging times.

### Christmas wishes

As the year draws to a close, I would like to thank everyone in Uckfield for the kindness, community spirit, and support you have shown me and one another throughout the year. On behalf of Uckfield Town Council, our staff and councillors, I wish you all a joyful Christmas and a safe, peaceful New Year.

Contact us through:



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

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

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- **Uckfield Town Council Achievements in 2025**
- **Christmas Opening Hours**
- **Plans for 2026/27**
- **Upcoming Meetings**

## UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL IN 2025

This calendar year, Uckfield Town Council has been working hard to address the aims we laid out in our Strategic Plan. Having reached the end of another busy year, we have an exciting opportunity to reflect on our achievements during 2025.

### Protecting our the environment

We've continued tackling ash dieback, with our three-year project to tackle the disease set to be completed with works in Boothland Wood this winter. Alongside continued tree survey works, we've implemented new mapping software to modernise the way we protect our green spaces. Additionally, we've started ecological appraisals of Boothland Wood, and West Park and Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserves (LNR), including dormouse and newt surveys.

### Climate and conservation

We're planning an Eco Expo for March 2026 to showcase alternative technologies, and in the meantime we've installed electric charging points at Victoria Pleasure Ground and the Source Car Park to support our new grounds vehicles, which replaced previous vehicles which came to their end of the lives. Conservation and tree planting remain a priority, with fresh planting completed in spring 2025.

### Improving community spaces

Our community buildings have seen important upgrades to ensure compliance with new electrical, fire safety and water regulations. We've also performed conservation work on Harlands Pond, added new fencing and information boards at West Park LNR, and are in talks with a commercial enterprise about refurbishing the historic Signal Box.





### **Supporting your sports and play**

The artificial cricket wicket was replaced in April, football pitches have been renovated over the summer, and new movable goal posts installed at Harlands and Victoria. Welfare facilities at Harlands are underway, and we're exploring drainage improvements and funding opportunities for the Skate Park. On top of this, Victoria Play Area was fully upgraded and Hempstead Recreation Ground's zip line replaced, with the new facilities officially opened in October.

### **Brightening the town centre**

We've worked with contractors to bring more festive lighting to Uckfield High Street for Christmas 2025, and expanded floral displays to the Tesco roundabout, creating a colourful welcome for residents and visitors alike.

### **Celebrating together**

This year we marked the 80th anniversaries of VE Day and VJ Day with special events, hosted our most

successful Weald on the Field festival yet, and prepared for the annual Remembrance Parade and services.

### **Backing local groups**

Through our grants programme, we awarded £22,000 to local organisations, alongside service-level agreements to Wealden Citizens Advice and Wealden Volunteering.

### **Planning for the future**

We've been working with partner agencies, residents, and businesses to understand Uckfield's infrastructure needs, from allotments to cemetery space. This feeds into the draft Neighbourhood Plan, where initial meetings are currently underway. This helps with grant funding opportunities and responding to planning applications.

### **A year to celebrate**

We're proud of what we've achieved in 2025. With your continued support, including the amazing community groups and charities who do vital work in our town, we're set to do even more in 2026.

# CHRISTMAS OPENING AND 2026/27 PLANS

BY HOLLY GORING, TOWN CLERK



## Setting our priorities and budget for 2026/27

We're currently setting our priorities and budget for the next financial year. Did you know that one third of the Town Council's income is generated through the council's own means and not through your council tax (precept)? As many are experiencing at home and work, we too are seeing increases in our costs, and this will continue into 2026. Members will review a first draft of the strategic priorities and budget papers for the financial year 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027 at Full Council on 1 December 2025.

The key documents will then be placed out for public consultation via our website: <https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/community/have-your-say/>

You have until Wednesday 7 January 2026 to respond.

We will finalise and adopt our strategic plan, annual budget and annual plan for the Town Council on 12 January 2026. The Town Council will then inform Wealden District Council of the level of precept we require.

## Christmas Opening Hours

The Civic Centre and Luxford Restaurant will close after service on Christmas Eve and reopen on Monday 29 December 2025. Despite closing on New Year's Day, both the Civic Centre and Luxfords Restaurant will be open for the remainder of that week.

Grounds staff will be working on a rota system to ensure litter collections continue over the Christmas break and any urgent matters are addressed. The Town Council offices will close at 3.00pm on Christmas Eve and reopen on Monday 5 January at 9.00am. Our main email account ([admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)) and voicemail will be monitored over the Christmas break, should any urgent issues arise.

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

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

Agendas and minutes can be viewed on the Town Council website at <https://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/agendas-and-minutes/>. Meetings are held in

person in the Council Chamber at The Civic Centre and all start at 7pm. All questions should be sent to the Town Clerk at: [admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)

MON 1 DEC	- FULL COUNCIL (DRAFT BUDGET)
MON 8 DEC	- PLANS
MON 15 DEC	- GENERAL PURPOSES
MON 5 JAN	- PLANS
MON 12 JAN	- FULL COUNCIL (BUDGET)

## COMING NEXT MONTH

- Councillor Soapbox
- Making the most of green spaces
- Community Grants Update
- Last Month in Your Council

