



# THE UCKFIELD VOICE

March 2025

EDITION 265

thevoice

## COMMUNITY ORCHARD

BY THE MARKETING & COMMS OFFICER

Early in 2025, Uckfield Town Council's grounds team busily planted plenty of trees for the warmer months, including the first saplings of our Community Orchard project.

Led by Head Groundsman, Darren Miller, and Countryside Ranger, Tom Woollard, the works took in multiple sites and saw over 400 saplings planted across the town.

The Community Orchard project saw the existing orchard at West Park extended, as well as areas at New Barn Farm and Ridgewood Recreation Ground newly planted with apple, pear, plum and mulberry trees, thanks to grant funding from Wealden District Council.

Elsewhere in the town, 400 bareroot saplings were planted of different varieties in the key green spaces managed by the Town Council.

At West Park, Hempstead Meadow, Boothland Wood and Nightingale Wood, varieties including oak, field maple, hawthorn, crabapple, wild cherry, hazel, willow and holly found new homes in Uckfield, ensuring there is a healthy variety of species for the land and plenty of colour throughout the year.

### Helping an endangered species

Also included in the planting were eight black poplars, which are an endangered species in the United Kingdom with only around 7,000 living trees, according to the Woodland Trust.

Described as a declining species in the UK, being rare and growing in isolation,



black poplars are most prevalent in boggy conditions, near ditches and floodplains in locations like Shropshire, Cheshire, Somerset and East Anglia. With these conditions replicated in Uckfield, the black poplars are a good fit for our area.

The four males and four females, which are now in place in Uckfield having travelled as saplings from Kew Gardens, join an existing black poplar in Hempstead Meadows.

### Next steps of the project

With the saplings set to gradually become established over the next few months, we are excited to see their development in our green spaces.

The Community Orchard project seeks to enhance areas close to housing in Uckfield and enliven green spaces for residents, so we hope to see these plans come to fruition (literally) later this year!

Contact us through:



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

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

## WHAT'S INSIDE

- Dates to Celebrate in March
- Annual Town Meeting
- Victoria Play Area Consultation
- Upcoming Meetings

## DATES TO CELEBRATE IN MARCH

As we burst into spring with a new lease of life by the time this issue flies through your letterbox, it will be time to start marking some important dates in March.

There are a whole host of initiatives to get people active - both physically and mentally - as we enter spring, and that is where we start our run-down of March's big community dates.

### Walking Month

For several organisations, March is a big month for stepping into action.

If you're a keen walker, then you can get involved in Cancer Research's **'Walk All Over Cancer'** campaign to walk 10,000 steps a day, go one better by walking 11,000 steps a day with Prostate Cancer UK's **'March the Month'**, or take part in the **'Big Lent Walk'** to cover 200km in the 40 days of Lent.

### #GroundsWeek - 17-23 March

With one-fifth of our employees at the Town Council being grounds staff, we are always thankful for the amazing work they do to keep our town looking as green and bright as possible.



#GroundsWeek is a nationwide celebration of the people who make playing surfaces and green spaces look their best. It is a week dedicated to highlighting the skill of grounds staff,

while inspiring everyone to appreciate this vital industry. So, whether it is our staff or the brilliant volunteers who keep other sports and leisure facilities in Uckfield looking so good, we would like to take this time to praise them.

### Village Halls Week - 17-23 March

We love our Village Halls! Whether that's Ridgewood Village Hall, Foresters Hall, Victoria Pavilion or Osborn Hall, we think these spaces are wonderful for bringing communities together under one roof.



**celebrating,  
encouraging  
& supporting  
volunteers**

**17-23 March 2025**



**Village  
Halls  
Week**

Village Halls Week returns in 2025 to celebrate, encourage and support the efforts of volunteers who keep these important rural community buildings open. Plenty of local events will be taking place, so check in with your hall to see how they are taking part!

### The Great British Spring Clean - 21 March-6 April

It is the 10th year of the Great British Spring Clean in 2025, meaning there are extra-special events taking place. Keep Britain Tidy's annual nationwide litter-picking campaign is supported by thousands of individuals, families, schools, local authorities, community groups and businesses who care for the environment on their doorsteps.

We encourage local community groups, schools and organisations to be #LitterHeroes by getting involved.

## ANNUAL TOWN MEETING



# Annual Town Meeting

All Uckfield residents encouraged to attend

More info at [www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk](http://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk)

# VICTORIA PLAY AREA CONSULTATION

BY HOLLY GORING, TOWN CLERK



The consultation period for a new play area at Victoria Pleasure Ground is now underway.

Following an initial Town Council exercise to understand the approximate costings of the upgrade and ensure we had sufficient funds, contractors are now being invited to tender for the project.

Whilst we give contractors time to draw up designs, we're keen to hear from you as local residents. So please tell us: What would you like to see? Any feedback you give will form a crucial part of the process.

The play area at Victoria Pleasure Ground has typically been for younger children, so if you have children of primary school age, let us know their favourite pieces of equipment when they visit play spaces, and what themes bring our their imagination and creativity.

We will be upgrading the equipment, surfacing and facilities, and we know how important the space is to you. A public consultation day will be arranged in April once designs are submitted, but before then, we've set up a short survey online and in paper format where you can give us your views. The deadline for responses is 11:59pm on Wednesday 19 March 2025. To complete the survey, please visit: [www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/community/have-your-say](http://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk/community/have-your-say)

All feedback received through the tender process, and consultation with local residents and engagement with the local primary school, will be reported to Uckfield Town Council members in April. A couple of pieces of damaged equipment at Hempstead Recreation Ground will also be replaced by the chosen contractors during the upgrade of Victoria Play Area.



## 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 3 MAR	- ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE
MON 10 MAR	- PLANS
MON 17 MAR	- GENERAL PURPOSES
WED 19 MAR	- ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
MON 31 MAR	- PLANS

### COMING NEXT MONTH

- Councillor Soapbox
- Mayor's Celebration
- Last Month in Your Council
- Upcoming Meetings

