



# UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Council Offices, Civic Centre  
Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1AE  
Tel: (01825) 762774  
e-mail: [townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk](mailto:townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk)  
[www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk](http://www.uckfieldtc.gov.uk)  
**Town Clerk – Holly Goring**

---

Meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** to be held on  
**Tuesday 26 May 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 13 April 2026
- 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

### 6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1. To note the extension to the Wealden District Council Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) – Dog Fouling
- 6.2. To appoint members to Outside Bodies (Local Nature Reserve Supporter Group)
- 6.3. To appoint members to the Conservators of Ashdown Forest and 'Weald to Waves' initiative
- 6.4. To confirm members for the working groups of the Environment and Leisure Committee
- 6.5. To request any items for the Strengthening Local Relationships meeting with East Sussex Highways (date to be confirmed)

**7.0. ENVIRONMENT**

- 7.1. To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates
- 7.2. To consider Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration Proposal for Elizabeth Gardens
  
- 7.3. To review the impact of illegal Off-Road motorised vehicle activity and anti-social behaviour in our Local Nature Reserves and ancient woodlands

**8.0. LEISURE**

- 8.1. (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
- 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**  
19 May 2026



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on  
Monday 13 April 2026 at 7.00pm  
Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Uckfield

**PRESENT:**

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

Cllr. Bernadette Reed (Vice-Chair)  
Cllr. Donna French  
Cllr. Spike Mayhew

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Councillor Peter Selby

Thomas 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. None were forthcoming.

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

None received.

**3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Councillor D. Bennett (due to a family commitment) and Councillor M. McClafferty.

**4.0. MINUTES**

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 2 March 2026

**EL.52.04.26** It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on 2 March 2026, be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4.2. Action list

Members noted the report with no items requiring removal.

4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only

Members noted the report with no items to be removed.

4.4. Forward plan – for information only

Members noted the report.

**5.0. FINANCE**

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the report without comments.

- 5.2 To note the income & expenditure report ending 31 January 2026  
Members noted the report without comments.

## 7.0 ENVIRONMENT

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

Members noted the report. Following a recent visit to Boothland Wood, the newly installed fencing to protect the ancient woodland had been subject to vandalism. A section of the boundary fence (north bank) had been displaced, likely due to interference from dog walkers. This would continue to be monitored.

The Estates Manager mentioned the need for CCTV to monitor this area and would investigate the installation of suitable signage to discourage trespassers.

It was noted that some local authorities in the UK were increasingly restricting professional dog walkers in public spaces, with several areas introducing licensing or permit schemes to manage this activity. This may be subject to further review.

- 7.2 To consider a review of the X-section at Snatts Road Cemetery and what would be permitted within the Cemetery Rules and Regulations

Members considered the report relating to the X-section, which had originally been designated as a lawned area with headstones only.

Concerns were raised regarding the challenges of maintaining consistency in memorials, and it was agreed that this matter could be reviewed sensitively and appropriately.

Members noted that this issue could not be addressed solely in response to an individual request, as it involved wider considerations and could be complex in nature, particularly in balancing consistency, existing arrangements, and the needs of multiple stakeholders.

Further discussion included the potential introduction of curved grave areas and other memorial features, alongside the need to carefully consider the impact on existing graves.

Members also emphasised the importance of clear and timely communication with families and funeral directors regarding any decisions being taken.

### **EL.53.04.26 Members **RESOLVED** to agree to:**

- (i) reconvene the working group to review the X-section and develop any proposals, and;
- (ii) engage with the relevant stakeholders, including Deed holders and funeral directors, and;
- (iii) explore options for maintaining consistency whilst allowing for flexibility around edging and memorial styles.

## 8.0 LEISURE

Nothing to report.

## 9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- 9.1 To receive a brief update from the Joint Allotment Working Group

Members received and noted a verbal update. Clarification would be sought on the appropriate use of the allotment shed and whether any planning or licensing requirements would apply in relation to its current operation.

## 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 – with thanks to Councillor C. Macve.

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**

There were no Chair's announcements.

**12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS**

**EL.54.04.26**

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 noted the updates. Opportunities for advertising in local publications would continue to be explored.

12.2 To note an update from the Society of Local Council Clerks on the Law Commission's final consultation report on burial and cremation

The report noted a confidential update from the Society of Local Council Clerks regarding the Law Commission's consultation on burial and cremation matters. It was further noted that the final report was expected to be published in mid-2028.

The meeting finished at 8:25 pm.

**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	The Marketing and Engagement Officer and Senior Administrative Officer have liaised and are due to identify websites comparable to local parishes, to see what they provide. We agreed to explore work that will provide more details and local information later this year. Meeting booked 26 <sup>th</sup> May.
<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.

Resolution no.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL.18.09.24</u>	<p><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 <b>RESOLVED</b> 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 further consideration of routes needed to be explored.</p>	02.09.24	HG	<p>At the Environment &amp; Leisure meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2026, members agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* To temporarily fence off access to parts of Boothland Wood to enable Redrow developers to complete necessary works and soil removal, and;</li> <li>* to liaise with ES ROW and seek their advice, and;</li> <li>* to share key information with the local community via social media and in the Voice pages of Uckfield Matters, and;</li> <li>* to approach Redrow to determine the next steps to protect this ancient woodland, and;</li> <li>* to formally raise concerns with WDC regarding the failure to notify the Council of the closure of any ROW affecting Council-owned property within this ancient woodland. <b>-last two options still to action</b></li> </ul>
<u>EL20.09.25</u>	<p><u>To receive a progress update on water ingress into Ridgewood Village Hall</u>  Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to agree to:  (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 &amp; Compliance Manager has confirmed that the next stage of works would be advertised on the UK Government procurement portal - 'Find a Tender.'</p>
<u>EL21.09.25</u>	<p><u>Update on the Uckfield Station Car Park and electric charging</u> Members wished to arrange a separate meeting this year with APCOA to explore some questions</p>	21.09.25		<p>Not being pursued - no further action required.  <b>NFA</b></p>

<u>EL53.04.26</u>	<p><u>To consider a review of the X-section at Snatts Road Cemetery and what would be permitted within the Cemetery Rules and Regulations</u></p> <p>Members <b>RESOLVED</b> to agree to:</p> <p>(i) reconvene the working group to review the X-section and develop any proposals, and;</p> <p>(ii) engage with the relevant stakeholders, including Deed holders and funeral directors, and;</p> <p>(iii) explore options for maintaining consistency whilst allowing for flexibility around edging and memorial styles.</p>	13.04.26	RN	Survey questionnaire being sent out to Deed holders w/c 25/5/26
-------------------	--	----------	----	---

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE  
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2026-27**

**Outstanding new initiatives**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Speed reduction initiative (already have £3,199.64 in earmarked reserves)</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>69</b>
<b><u>FC.82.01.22</u></b>	Plus £2,000 placed into budget in 2022/23	08.04.26	Speed survey data has been obtained for the main access corridors into and out of Uckfield from East Sussex Highways. This will be shared with members shortly.	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Permanent welfare facilities for Harlands Playing Fields</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>89</b>
<b><u>FC.90.01.25</u></b>	£12,000	08.04.25	Temporary toilet provision has been installed and will be revisited in 2027-28. Funding options have now become available through the Football Foundation and are being explored. The temporary facilities are to be removed on 18/05/2026 and will return in September.	

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Conservation and wildlife monitoring (longer-term project)</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>91</b>
<b><u>FC.90.01.25</u></b>	£8,000 - minus £7,890. = £110.	08.04.25	Wildlife appraisals for 2025/26 have been completed, and more specific surveys will be actioned in 2026/27.  We have incorporated £15k within the budget in April 2026 – March 2027 for further work in this area.	

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE  
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2026-27**

**Projects in 2026/27 Budget – New Initiatives**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Football Renovations</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>92</b>
<u><b>FC.86.01.26</b></u>	£12,000	12.01.26	Initial overseeding and fertilising have been completed, 18g per sq M. football foundation grant received to aid in renovations	
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Harlands Pond Management Plan Works</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>93</b>
<u><b>FC.86.01.26</b></u>	£500	12.01.26		
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Fencing for Boothland Wood</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>94</b>
<u><b>FC.86.01.26</b></u>	£10,000	12.01.26	The second part of phase one is due to start in May 2026	
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Fencing for Paygate Wood</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>95</b>
<u><b>FC.86.01.26</b></u>	£1,500	12.01.26	To be carried out summer/autumn	
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Bracken roller</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>96</b>
<u><b>FC.86.01.26</b></u>	£1,000	12.01.26		
<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Programme for handling Himalayan Balsam</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>97</b>
<u><b>FC.86.01.26</b></u>	£2,500	12.01.26	This has now commenced, with a focus on preventing growth.	

**UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL  
 ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE  
 PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2026-27**

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Double Bins</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>98</b>
<b><u>FC.86.01.26</u></b>	£2,000	12.01.26		

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>New Flatbed Lease</b>		<b>Project Number</b>	<b>99</b>
<b><u>FC.86.01.26</u></b>	£3,500	12.01.26		

## ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN – 2026

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		
<b>26 MAY 2026</b>	To note the extension to the WDC Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) – Dog Fouling	SA Officer
	To appoint members to Outside Body – Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group	SA Officer
	To confirm members for the working groups of the Environment and Leisure Committee	SA Officer
	To consider Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society 200 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration Proposal for Elizabeth Gardens	SA Officer
	To review the impact of illegal Off-Road motorised vehicle activity and anti-social behaviour in our LNRs and ancient woodlands	Estates Mgr
	To request items for Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) meeting with East Sussex Highways in mid-June/July 2026 (date tbc)	
	10.2 – Biodiversity Link – Ashdown Forest and Climate Change	SA Officer
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Marketing report	

DATE OF MEETING	DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT
-----------------	-----------------------------------

## ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE FORWARD PLAN – 2026

<b>6 JULY 2026</b>	Draft SLR Mins from meeting (or next meeting depending on the period this falls within)	SA Officer
	Draft Sports Pitch licence agreements for consideration (tbc)	SA Officer
<b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>	Marketing report	
<b>DATE OF MEETING</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF AGENDA ITEM/REPORT</b>	
<b>1 SEPT 2026</b>	To confirm details of the consecration of the Y-section at Snatts Road Cemetery	SA Officer
	To note an update from the Allotment Working Group	SA Officer

## **Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2026**

### **Agenda Item 6.1**

#### **TO NOTE THE PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) – DOG FOULING EXTENSION 2026**

##### **1.0 Purpose**

1.1 To inform members of Wealden District Council's proposal to extend the existing Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) related to dog fouling for a further three years from 21 November 2026, and to seek the Council's views on the proposed extension (Appendix 1).

##### **2.0 Background**

The current Dog Fouling Public Spaces Protection Order was introduced by Wealden District Council and has been in force for the past three years. The Order makes it an offence for any person in charge of a dog to fail to remove the animal's faeces from designated land.

Public Spaces Protection Orders are made under the UK Parliament's Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and can remain in force for a maximum of three years before they must be reviewed and, if appropriate, renewed.

##### **3.0 Evidence of Effectiveness**

Performance data demonstrates a significant reduction in dog fouling since the introduction of the PSPO.

Wealden District Council uses the National Indicator **NI195**, which measures environmental quality according to the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse.

Pre-PSPO, 0.8% of transects inspected failed due to dog fouling. Over the course of the PSPO and subsequent extensions, this has decreased to 0.4% in 2022/23 and 0.0% in 2025/2026.

##### **4.0 Current Position**

Despite the positive results, reports of dog fouling continue to be received, and dog fouling remains a matter of public concern due to its impact on public health, cleanliness, and the enjoyment of parks, footpaths, and open spaces.

Without a PSPO in place, the Council would lose an important enforcement mechanism for addressing persistent issues and encouraging responsible behaviour.

##### **9.0 Proposal:**

No changes are proposed to the wording, scope, or enforcement provisions of the existing Order.

The Council is being consulted as a stakeholder and is not required to take any formal action other than deciding whether to submit comments.

##### **10.0 Recommendation:**

It is recommended that members of this committee:

(i) Notes the proposal by Wealden District Council to extend the Dog Fouling Public Spaces Protection Order for a further three years from 21 November 2026, and;

(ii) To note that replacement signage is also being designed by the Estates Manager that outlines the policy for dog fouling and prevention.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton



## **WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, CRIME AND POLICING ACT 2014**

#### **Section 59**

### **PUBLIC SPACES PROTECTION ORDER**

This Order is made by Wealden District Council, pursuant to its powers under Section 59 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 ("the Act") and the Council are satisfied on reasonable grounds that the conditions under Section 59(2) and Section 59(3) of the Act are met.

1. The land identified in schedule One (attached) is hereby designated as the 'restricted area' for the purposes of this Order.

2. This order applies to the following persons: -

Any person in control of a dog

3. The following activities are prohibited in the restricted area: -

To allow a dog to defecate at any time and fail to remove the faeces from the land forthwith unless the person in control of the dog has reasonable excuse for failing to do so.

4. The following requirements must be undertaken in the restricted area:

To pick up dog faeces immediately and deposit in a suitable receptacle

This Order applies at all times

This Order shall take effect on 21 November 2023 and will remain in effect for three years

**It is a criminal offence for any person who, without reasonable excuse, fails to comply with a prohibition or requirement as specified in this Order. This offence is punishable by a fine in the Magistrates' Court.**

Pursuant to Section 66 of the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 any interested person who wishes to challenge the validity of this Order can do so upon one of the grounds set out therein.

## **Schedule One**

All public places within Wealden District Council's administrative area, that is any place to which the public or any section of the public has access, on payment or otherwise, as a right or by virtue of express or implied permission of the following descriptions:-

- (a) Any highway, footways, footpaths, twittens, promenades, steps and towpaths within the area of Wealden District Council and any adjoining verges or ornamental areas, which are maintained at the public expense.
- (b) All pedestrianised areas within the Wealden District Council area.
- (c) All parks, gardens, recreation and sports grounds, commons, amenity areas and other open spaces owned, occupied or maintained by or on behalf of any of: Wealden District Council, East Sussex County Council, a registered social landlord/housing association, any town or parish council within the Wealden area, any other public authority or any charity.
- (d) Any cemetery, crematorium, burial ground or churchyard.
- (e) Any public car-park or parking space.
- (f) All beaches.

Exempted Land:

Any woodland, marsh or agricultural land and any Access Land as defined in Part 1 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000.

## **Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2025**

### **Agenda Item 6.2**

#### **TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO OUTSIDE BODY – LOCAL NATURE RESERVE SUPPORTERS GROUP SUPPORTERS GROUP**

##### **1.0 Outside Bodies**

- 1.1 At the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council on 18 May 2026, it was agreed that a representative (and substitute) for the L.N.R. Supporters Group would be appointed at the first meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee.
- 1.2 The Clerk advises that two Council members who express an interest in being appointed representatives for the supporters' group. It would be beneficial if they are users of the local nature reserves and/or have a keen interest in the ecology of West Park Local Nature Reserve and the Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve, both of which are owned by Uckfield Town Council.

##### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members are required to appoint a maximum of two representatives (one and one substitute) to the Local Nature Reserve Supporter Group.
- 2.2 We would also benefit from re-creating an appointment for between two and five members for the proposed River Walk along Hempstead Meadows. These groups may wish to be combined.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

## **Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2025**

### **Agenda Item 6.3**

#### **TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO THE CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST AND 'WEALD TO WAVES' INITIATIVE**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 At the Annual Statutory meeting of the Council on 18 May 2026, it was agreed that a representative (and substitute) for the Conservators of Ashdown Forest and 'Weald to Waves' initiative would be appointed at the first meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee.
  
- 1.2 The Clerk advises that two Council members who express an interest in being appointed representatives for this group.

##### **2.0 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Members are required to appoint a maximum of two representatives (one and one substitute) to the Conservators of Ashdown Forest and 'Weald to Waves' initiative.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

## **Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2026**

### **Agenda item 6.4**

## **TO CONFIRM MEMBERS FOR THE WORKING GROUPS OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**

### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 At each Annual Statutory meeting of the Council, appointments are made to the council's committees, outside bodies, and working groups which sit under Full Council. Any working groups which report to the standing committees of General Purposes or Environment & Leisure are appointed at the first meetings of these committees.
- 1.2 Some working groups are already underway, but it would be prudent to refresh the membership of these working groups and invite councillors to put themselves forward.
- 1.3 The working groups which sit under this committee are:
  - Allotments Working Group;
  - Fees & Charging Working Group;
  - Climate Change Steering Group;
  - Cemetery Working Group;

### **2.0 Background to these working groups**

- 2.1 The Joint Allotment Working Group have met once so far this year, on 16 March, with tenants and representatives from the Allotment Association.

Recent updates: The Allotment Competition will be judged in July by Stavertons Nursery. Arrangements for forthcoming events include the Plant Swap event on 23rd May 2026 from 10am to 12pm, organised by the Allotment Association. They are also assisting with the allotment checks this year.

Previous members included: Councillors K. Bedwell, S. Mayhew and A. Smith.

- 2.2 A Fees and Charges Working Group first met on 30<sup>th</sup> September and again on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025 and looked at the allotments, cemetery provision and sports hire facilities for 2026/27.

They reviewed the fees and charges for 2026/27, and associated terms and conditions. Further work is required to address current investment in grounds maintenance, and the potential to create leases and licence agreements i.e. such as West Park. A number of sports and community facility improvements are being introduced across all sites,

Previous members incorporated those above from the Allotment Working Group members and Councillor M. McClafferty.

- 2.3 The Climate Emergency Steering Group previously set out a Climate Change Policy for the Town Council and commissioned a carbon audit for the Town Council's facilities. Members of the group also organised the third ECO EXPO which went well on 21 March 2026. The Uckfield Green Partnership was formed from this working group the previous year, but has now become its own entity focusing on town wide initiatives.

Previous members included: Councillors K. Bedwell, A. Smith and D. French.

### **3.0 Looking ahead**

- 3.1 There is potential for at least two of the working groups to combine, especially where there are synergies.

#### **4.0 Recommendations**

4.1 Members are asked to confirm the appointment of 'no less than three and no more than five members' per working group, as per the working group policy. Members are asked to consider how to proceed with the work required for:

- (i) Allotments;
- (ii) Sports facilities
- (iii) Cemetery;
- (iv) Climate Change Steering Group;

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

## **Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2026**

### **Agenda Item 6.5**

#### **TO REQUEST ANY ITEMS FOR THE STRENGTHENING LOCAL RELATIONSHIPS MEETING WITH EAST SUSSEX HIGHWAYS (DATE TO BE CONFIRMED)**

##### **1.0 Summary**

1.1 Members are asked to provide any items they may wish to raise for the next Strengthening Local Relations meeting (date to be confirmed in late June or July).

1.2 This meeting is a partnership meeting between Uckfield Town Council and East Sussex Highways and takes place every six months (the last meeting was held on 15<sup>th</sup> January). This enables us to raise ongoing issues that need to be brought to attention.

1.3 The agenda will be circulated two weeks before the meeting by ES Highways Customer Service Management so that all attendees, including the Highway Steward, are aware and can provide any feedback or updates at the meeting.

##### **2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 Members are requested to submit any items for consideration for the Strengthening Local Relationships meeting by the end of May. This will allow ES Highways sufficient time to investigate all items ahead of confirming the meeting date, which is expected to take place in late June or July.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

## **Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 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 of the Council's Estates.

##### Victoria Pleasure Ground and skatepark

The drainage issues at the skatepark have been investigated and are awaiting the report; the structural repairs have been completed.

Contact has been made with Contractors with a view to upgrading the skate park layout and facilities. The two companies that have been contacted have both carried out work locally and recently. These works will include an extension/addition to the current skate park, along with a pump (Bike)Track.

I am currently awaiting confirmed dates for site visits.

This Play facility is the next provision to be upgraded.

##### Hempstead Lane Play Area and Hempstead Meadows LNR

A meeting was attended with the developer for the bird in eye site to discuss the possibility of re-igniting the river walk alongside the Rotary Club. A further meeting with the developers is required when a plan for the desired route is decided.

Himalayan balsam is being regularly strimmed as part of a trial to assess whether intensive strimming/mowing can help reduce its dominance. Early signs are encouraging.

We will also continue balsam pulling. An evening session with the Scouts is planned for 12 June, and additional volunteer sessions will likely be arranged.

##### West Park Recreation Ground and West Park LNR

Bracken control is ongoing, with regular cuts being carried out in the areas cleared last autumn.

Regular cutting of bracken and stinging nettles forces the plants to use valuable energy reserves for regrowth, which should gradually reduce flowering and spread over time.

In the cleared areas, grass is now recovering, helping to suppress the growth of nettle and bracken. Some wildflowers are also beginning to establish.

We also had a promising meeting with the Nute Conservation Partnership, who are potentially looking to create a pond in the wet meadow area, which would provide significant ecological value.

##### **Community Orchards**

Annual pruning at the West Park Community Orchard has been completed, including the removal of unnecessary stakes and strimmer guards from the trees, as these can become detrimental to growth at their current age.

In addition, cultivation around the bases of all the trees and a layer of chipped mulch has been applied to help retain moisture.

Maintenance work at Ridgewood and New Barn is currently underway. Stone fruit trees will be pruned later in the season.

#### Snatts Road Cemetery

The coppicing started in Paygate Wood.

#### Elizabeth Gardens

Nothing to report.

#### Hughes Way play area

Routine maintenance has been carried out in line with the inspection reports, which included pressure washing the equipment and cleaning around the safety surfacing.

#### Luxford field and play area

The quarterly inspection has been carried out by Kompan, with only two moderate faults found. Both of these faults were due to the bins not shutting correctly.

#### Boothland Wood

It had been acknowledged that the impact of the recent closure of the Public Right of Way across Ridgewood Farm until at least May would increase footfall through Boothland Wood.

Phase 1 of the fencing project at Boothland Wood had commenced. Two sections of the fence line had been cut since work commenced.

A new fence has been erected along the entire frontage on New Barn Road. The area behind the fencing will be left to allow the woodland edge to naturally extend into the newly planted area.

Coppicing in the panhandle area began at the start of the year. This area consists predominantly of lapsed hornbeam coppice and silver birch, which has become heavily overstocked with very limited understory growth.

By coppicing the hornbeam, retaining selected standards, and removing a proportion of the silver birch, a fast-growing, short-lived pioneer species, we hope to encourage natural regeneration of the understory over the coming years.

Coppicing work will continue in further areas over the next few years.

#### Equipment & Vehicles

The order has been placed for the new flatbed type vehicle, the build slot for the vehicle is June 2026, followed by a coachwork's conversion to the rear. The anticipated completion date is still august and updates will be issued.

The new tractor has now been delivered along with a demonstrator mower, whilst we wait for the new mower to be ready.

These are both proving to be a valuable asset in the management of open spaces and grass pitches, ensuring a consistent cut and minimum compaction and disturbance.

The new stand-on mower has also now been delivered from a local supplier; this will allow the team to work more efficiently in tighter spaces, including play areas and the cemetery.

#### Street Furniture & Lighting

Nothing to report.

#### Harlands Pond

Coppicing of the trees around Harlands Pond has been carried out to increase light levels around the pond.

Strimming of overgrown brambles and stinging nettles around the pond banks is also being undertaken to improve access and habitat conditions.

In addition, a small area at the front of the pond will be sown with wildflowers to help enhance biodiversity and provide a more attractive environment.

#### Selby Meadows

Nothing to report.

## **2.0 Recommendations**

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Thomas Woollard

## Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Tuesday 26 May 2026

### Agenda Item 7.2

#### **TO CONSIDER UCKFIELD BONFIRE AND CARNIVAL SOCIETY 200<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION PROPOSAL FOR ELIZABETH GARDENS**

##### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society has advised that 2027 will mark its 200th anniversary. The Society has a long-standing role in the town's cultural calendar, with its annual parade commencing in Grange Road and its adult fancy dress competition traditionally held in Elizabeth Gardens.
- 1.2 In recognition of this milestone, the Society has expressed interest in marking the occasion with a lasting feature within Elizabeth Gardens.

##### **2.0 Proposal**

- 2.1 The Society has informally proposed the installation of a commemorative bench within Elizabeth Gardens, potentially designed or dedicated in celebration of their 200th anniversary.
- 2.2 At this stage, no detailed design proposal has been submitted. However, it is confirmed that the project would be fully externally funded. The request is therefore exploratory in nature.
- 2.3 This proposal (for a lasting memorial of any kind) has the potential to provide a positive community benefit by recognising a significant local organisation and enhancing the amenity value of the gardens.

##### **3.0 Existing Context**

- 3.1 Elizabeth Gardens currently contains three benches. One of the existing benches on the right (see images below) may be suitable for replacement due to its condition.
- 3.2 In considering any proposal for an additional bench, the following factors should be taken into account:
  - The current layout and seating capacity within the garden;
  - The visual impact of an additional installation, ensuring any commemorative bench is in keeping with the existing garden aesthetics;
  - Maintenance responsibilities and long-term upkeep, including the implications of a 10-year bench licence (any installation would be subject to the Town Council's standard terms and conditions for memorial benches and approval of design and wording).

##### **4.0 Key considerations for Committee**

- 4.1 Members may wish to consider the following:
  - **Suitability of additional seating:** Whether a fourth bench would enhance the space or risk overcrowding;
  - **Replacement vs addition:** Whether the proposal could instead align with future bench replacement cycles rather than increasing the number of benches;
  - **Design consistency:** Ensuring any commemorative installation complements the existing garden style and materials;

- **Alternative commemorations:** Whether a non-bench option may be more appropriate (e.g. plaque, landscaped feature, or interpretive signage);
- **Funding:** The project would be fully externally funded, with no financial contribution required from the Town Council.

## **5.0 Options**

5.1 The Committee may wish to consider the following options:

### **Option A – Support in principle (bench installation):**

Agree in principle to a commemorative bench, subject to design approval, funding confirmation and suitable placement within Elizabeth Gardens.

### **Option B – Support alternative memorial feature:**

Decline installation of an additional bench, but invite the Society to propose alternative commemorative features for consideration.

### **Option C – Defer decision:**

Request further detailed proposals from the Society, including design, costings, and siting plan, before making a decision.

### **Option D – Integrate into maintenance cycle:**

Consider whether a commemorative bench could replace an existing bench at the end of its lifespan.

## **6.0 Recommendation**

6.1 At this stage, it is recommended that the Committee not commit to installation but instead invite the Uckfield Bonfire and Carnival Society to submit a more detailed proposal, including design concept, proposed location within Elizabeth Gardens, and confirmed funding arrangements.

6.2 Fees and charges are in line with our memorial bench policy.

6.2 This would enable a more informed decision to be made, ensuring any commemorative feature is appropriate to the site, sustainable, and consistent with the Council's wider open space management approach.

Contact Officers: Thomas Woollard/ Rachel Newton



## **Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2026**

### **Agenda Item 7.3**

#### **TO REVIEW THE IMPACT OF ILLEGAL OFF-ROAD MOTORISED VEHICLE ACTIVITY AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN OUR LOCAL NATURE RESERVES AND ANCIENT WOODLANDS**

##### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 Members are asked to consider recent reports of illegal use of motorised vehicles within Hempstead Meadows and the surrounding area, together with incidents involving unauthorised fires and the construction of informal bike trails in woodland areas. Members are invited to discuss the potential impact of these activities on local nature reserves, ancient woodland, public safety, and the amenity of nearby residents.

##### **2.0 Summary of Recent Incidents**

- 2.1 A councillor has obtained video footage showing motorised vehicles being driven through Hempstead Meadows. This evidence has been submitted to Sussex Police.
- 2.2 The incident appears to have extended to Budletts Common, where neighbouring residents reported similar activity to the Sussex Police Rural Crime Team.
- 2.3 Officers from the Rural Crime Team attended the area, including Budletts Common, although the vehicles had already left. Reports indicate they travelled through Uckfield towards Snatts Road, with possible access to the surrounding ancient woodland and the South Downs National Park.
- 2.4 A further report was received regarding significant damage to Nightingale Wood recently, including holes being dug, bike trails being constructed, and fires set (images provided below).

##### **3.0 Issues for Committee Consideration**

- 3.1 The apparent increase in these incidents suggests a need for further discussion regarding:
1. The impact on local nature reserves, ancient woodland, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
  2. Damage to habitats, footpaths, and boundary infrastructure.
  3. Risks to public safety and disturbance to nearby residents.
  4. Possible preventative measures and partnership working with Sussex Police and the Rural Crime Team.
  5. The importance of recording related incidents, including fence-cutting, as requested by police, to help determine whether these events are connected.

##### **4.0 Possible Contributing Factors**

- 4.1 Members may wish to consider whether the commencement of works at the Redrow development site in Uckfield may have displaced off-road vehicle activity to other locations across the town and surrounding countryside.

##### **5.0 Recommendation**

- 5.1 The Committee is invited to:
- (i) Note the recent incidents and the involvement of Sussex Police, and;

- (ii) Consider the implications for protected nature reserves, ancient woodland and green spaces, and;
  - (iii) Discuss whether additional protective measures or reporting protocols are required, and;
  - (iv) Determine whether the Town Council should engage further with Sussex Police, landowners, and other stakeholders to address illegal off-road vehicle activity and associated anti-social behaviour in and around Uckfield, including the creation of unauthorised bike trails in woodland areas, unauthorised fires, damage to land and property, and other activities that adversely affect residents, public safety and the local environment.
- 

Contact Officer: Thomas Woollard/ Rachel Newton









## **Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2026**

### **Agenda Item 10.2**

#### **OUTSIDE BODY REPORTS:**

#### **BIODIVERSITY LINKS – ASHDOWN FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE**

##### **1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 To inform Members that Uckfield Men's Shed has secured funding through the Wealden District Council Ward Grant Scheme to manufacture a range of wildlife boxes and habitat features to support the Town Council's five-year strategy for Wilder Uckfield, and to seek Members' views on associated matters and next steps.

##### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Uckfield Men's Shed applied for funding through the Wealden District Council Ward Grant Scheme for a community biodiversity project to manufacture wildlife boxes for use on local nature reserves and other suitable sites. The application has been approved.

##### **3.0 Details of the project**

- 3.1 The project supports the Town Council's five-year strategy to enhance biodiversity and community engagement through the Wilder Uckfield programme.

Following previous committee work to identify opportunities to increase local wildlife knowledge and habitat provision, Councillor Reed met with representatives of Uckfield Men's Shed on 20 March to discuss the range of wildlife boxes that could be produced to assist ranger activity and biodiversity conservation.

The Men's Shed is now producing a selection of wildlife boxes using untreated, wildlife-safe timber. These will be supplied ready for installation by Town Council Rangers across reserves, woodlands, buildings and priority habitats in advance of the 2027 breeding and activity season.

The number and type of boxes produced will depend upon volunteer capacity and the availability of suitable materials.

##### **4.0 Proposed Wildlife Boxes**

- 4.1 The following box types have been suggested:

###### **Bats**

Bat boxes suitable for Sussex priority species, including Barbastelle and Bechstein's bats, which have been recorded locally at Boothland Wood, Owlsbury and the West Park/Lake Wood area.

###### **Birds**

General-purpose bird boxes and species-specific designs for: tawny Owl, Barn Owl, Kestrel, Coal Tit, Blue Owl, Marsh Tit, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Treecreeper, Swifts and Swallows.

## **Invertebrates and Pollinators**

Bug hotels, bee hotels and solitary bee nesting blocks, with final specifications to be determined following ecological advice.

## **Hedgehog**

Hedgehog boxes are being considered, subject to advice from members regarding appropriate locations. Initial discussions suggest allotments may not be the most suitable sites.

## **Future Opportunities**

Amphibian and reptile hibernacula, including gabion structures, were not included in the initial phase but may be considered for future projects.

## **5.0 Community and Site Engagement**

- Little Horsted School has expressed an interest in participating in the project.
- Men's Shed volunteers at Rocks Park School will provide advice on school requirements.
- Horsted Green Park is being considered as a potential installation site.
- The Men's Shed is exploring the use of a "Men's Shed / Wilder Uckfield" stamp to identify each box.
- Boxes will be supplied for installation by the Town Council Ranger, who will number, map and record each location and arrange monitoring and maintenance where required in accordance with protected species guidance.
- Members are asked to consider whether the Ranger has suitable storage space for completed boxes as they are produced.

## **6.0 Additional Matters Raised**

### **6.1 Wheelchair-Accessible Picnic Tables**

The Men's Shed has advised that it can manufacture wheelchair-accessible picnic tables, incorporating access gaps on both sides for wheelchair and mobility users.

6.2 Members may wish to consider obtaining a quotation for installation at Victoria Pleasure Ground and to retain this option for future accessible infrastructure projects.

### **6.3 Men's Shed Accommodation**

Uckfield Men's Shed is currently operating from premises in Blackboys due to the lack of suitable community workshop space within Uckfield. Members may wish to consider future infrastructure or facility opportunities that could support the Men's Shed's return to the town.

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 Members are requested to:

- (i) Note the approval of the Wealden District Council Ward Grant and the commencement of wildlife box production in support of Wilder Uckfield, and;
- (ii) Consider whether hedgehog boxes are appropriate for allotments or whether alternative sites should be identified, and;
- (iii) Agree that Town Council Rangers will install, number, map and record all wildlife boxes on OTISS and arrange monitoring and maintenance where required.
- (iv) Consider obtaining a quotation for a wheelchair-accessible picnic table for Victoria Pleasure Ground and noting this option for future projects.

(v) Indicate whether any Members would like to receive a wildlife box for their own gardens or suggest additional suitable locations for installation.

Councillor B. Reed

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

## **Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee**

**Tuesday 26 May 2026**

### **Agenda Item 10.4**

#### **LUXFORD CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE**

##### **1.0 Summary report**

1.1 The Annual General meeting of The Luxford Centre, which was held on Saturday 9th May, was well attended by members of the club and the two committees.

The Chairman opened the meeting by welcoming those present, especially Cllrs Karen Bedwell, Town Mayor, and Spike Mayhew, Deputy Mayor.

The Treasurer gave an update on the club's finances, which showed an improved state, with them hopefully returning to a positive position in this current year.

The Chairmen of both the House and Executive Committees reported a healthy year during 2025, and thanks were given to members of both committees. A special welcome was passed to Terry Bate for joining the Club as Treasurer, and thanks were recorded to Yvonne Linthwaite and Joan Richards for their service as retiring Treasurers. Both Chairmen thanked Bob Burchett for his untiring work with The House Committee and were thankful that he was continuing as a Trustee.

Mike Evans was presented with a gift from The Club on his retirement after 30 years of service from the club's inception.

The membership numbers continue to grow and are now in excess of 200.

The meeting then proceeded to elect the Chair, secretary and members of the House Committee, and this was followed by the officers and committee of The Executive Committee.

There was then an update on the fundraising for the hall extension and a huge vote of thanks to both Horst and Roy for all their continuing efforts.

The meeting closed with thanks to all the attendees.

##### **2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 Members are asked to note the report

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton