



THE UCKFIELD VOICE

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WEALDEN VOLUNTEERING

BY CLLR. PETER SELBY

As a volunteer, one can do so many different things, all of which are rewarding and extremely helpful to the recipient.

For over 30 years, Uckfield Volunteer Centre (UVC), situated at the top of the High Street, has provided an essential service locally. During this time, the Town Council are pleased to have been keen supporters, both financially and professionally, of UVC, and to have helped enable many charities and organisations to benefit right across the town.

Their service will now be expanding, first to take in Heathfield and then eventually Crowborough, Hailsham, Forest Row and elsewhere. To allow for this wider brief, UVC has now rebranded as Wealden Volunteering. The expanded service will enable volunteers from new areas to partake and serve the increased demand.



The benefits of volunteering

Whether for a few hours a week or much longer, volunteering can provide so many benefits. This includes providing a sense



of community, meeting new friends and acquaintances, increasing social skills, providing job prospects, improving health and much more. It allows you to participate in something which may be entirely new yet encouraging and fulfilling. UVC has a very successful record of matching volunteers to the right opportunities. This can only get better with wider engagement as Wealden Volunteering.

Get in touch

Further information can be found by visiting the Wealden Volunteering office at 79 High Street, or calling 01825 760019.

Their email contact is: office@wealdenvolunteering.org.uk.

Get involved with their work, and find out what is ahead in 2024 that will need your help and expertise!

Cllr. Peter Selby

Contact us through:

admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

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



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D-DAY BEACON LIGHTING EVENT

On Thursday 6 June 2024, countries across the world will come together to mark 80 years since the D-Day landings and Battle of Normandy.



The D-Day landings on 6 June 1944 were the largest seaborne invasion in history. Along with the associated airborne operations, it marked the beginning of the liberation of France and western Europe.

To commemorate this huge event in world history, beacon lightings are taking place across the United Kingdom and its overseas territories.

Events begin at 8.00am on 6 June with the D-Day 80 Proclamation by Town Criers across the UK, the Channel Islands and six other nations.

From 6.00pm, the Town Council is honoured to be holding a commemorative event to accompany the beacon lighting at Victoria Pleasure Ground.

There will be entertainment in the form of dance, music, and games, in addition to food and drink. This event, suitable for all the family, will precede the beacon lighting and reading of The International Tribute, which both take place at 9.15pm.

NEW WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

In early April, a by-election was held to elect a new Wealden District Councillor for the Uckfield New Town Ward.

A closely-fought contest was confirmed by a recount completed after midnight. Donna French - who is also a Town Councillor and will shortly step down as Deputy Town Mayor - won by a margin of four votes from her opponents Keith Wilson (Labour - 578 votes), and Helen Firth (Conservative - 413 votes). Cllr. French said: "On 4 April, the residents of Uckfield's New Town Ward put their faith in me, and I was elected as their new District Councillor.

"As with my Town Council role, I stand as an Independent. I intend to work with the other Independent Councillors and also cross-party for the benefit of the Ward, Town and District.



"I am looking forward to my new role, although I realise that there are plenty of challenges ahead. The most urgent is scrutinising the Draft Local Plan, which is possible until 10 May. Time is limited to have our say and feed back our points for consideration. It is a huge task to ensure that we have the best Plan possible, for Uckfield especially. "Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need to and I look forward to this new chapter."

COUNCILLOR UPDATE

Councillors can only hold the position of Chair for a maximum term of three years. This year, our Town Mayor, and two of our three Committee Chairs, reach the end of their three-year terms.

To celebrate the work they have achieved, we caught up with Councillors Jackie Love, Karen Bedwell and Spike Mayhew to find out what is next for them.



**Cllr. Jackie Love - Town Mayor
(2021-24)**

It has been an absolute honour to have been Uckfield's Mayor for the last three years. Uckfield has been my family home for 25 years, and every single day the town warms my heart with its community spirit. I hope I have supported this amazing spirit and that you feel as a Town Council we have made a difference. I still have another three years ahead representing Uckfield as a Town Councillor, which will take me to a grand total of 12 years representing the town.



**Cllr. Karen Bedwell - Chair of
Plans Committee (2021-24)**

After three years as Chair of the Plans Committee, I can reflect on the committee's crucial work in representing the views of residents. We have attended and spoken at two planning inquiries and a planning hearing, successfully challenged Bird In Eye and Downlands Farm plans, and supported residents in getting their voices heard at Mockbeggars Farm. Personally, it has meant long days, lots of reading and being out of my comfort zone, but I have enjoyed the challenge and am proud of what we have achieved.



**Cllr. Spike Mayhew - Chair
of Environment & Leisure
Committee (2021-24) and
former Town Mayor (2018-21)**

It has been a very busy time over the last three years for the Environment and Leisure Committee. We have danced at Weald on the Field, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the King's Coronation, welcomed our friends from Arques-la-Bataille, and supported fitness classes on Harlands Field. We have tackled ash dieback and started replanting our woodlands, supported our ground staff and formed working groups to engage with allotment holders and sports pitch users. I look forward this year to the D-Day celebrations, another Weald on the Field and the challenges of a new role within Uckfield Town Council.

IMPROVEMENTS TO TOWN CENTRE CCTV

Public-facing CCTV cameras operating across the county of East Sussex were upgraded in April after funding was secured.

The upgrade included the Town Centre CCTV system within Uckfield. A third of the costs for funding the upgrade was secured by the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner through the Home Office Safer Streets 5 programme, and it is estimated that the new system will save an average of half of annual maintenance costs.

Supporting new technology

The cameras, owned by local authority partners across Sussex, were upgraded to support digital functionality. With updated technology, the cameras would continue to be accessed by Sussex Police to support lawful purposes, and address crime and disorder.



'Providing valuable support'

Assistant Chief Constable Howard Hodges said: "We are pleased that cameras across the county are being upgraded to new digital cameras with better functionality.

"These cameras, owned by individual town, district and county councils, play a crucial role in crime reduction efforts by providing valuable support to law enforcement.

We recognise the importance of CCTV, and residents and visitors can be assured that the cameras will continue to be a supportive tool for improving community safety here in Sussex."

Speaking in March 2024, Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner Katy Bourne added: "This funding is particularly valuable during times of financial strain nationwide, enabling councils to sustain and advance this essential work."



CCTV coverage has continued to operate as usual while the upgrade work has been underway.

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

either in the Weald Hall or Council Chamber at The Civic Centre and all start at 7pm. All questions should be directed to the Town Clerk at:

admin@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

MON 13 MAY	- PLANS
MON 20 MAY	- FULL COUNCIL (ANNUAL STAT)
TUE 28 MAY	- ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE
MON 3 JUNE	- PLANS
MON 10 JUNE	- GENERAL PURPOSES

COMING NEXT MONTH

- Car Parking
- Allotment Competition
- Weald on the Field
- Footway Improvements
- Local Plan

