

Winter 2017 NEWSLETTER

Manor Park and Hempstead Fields Residents' Association



A message from Paul Sparks, Chairman of the Association

'We are now facing another winter and with climate change we do not know what type of weather we will receive. However, let us hope that it is a mild and calm one without any of that white stuff!

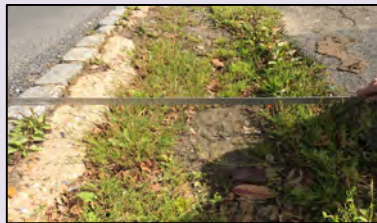
Whatever the weather, this time of the year often means that our elderly and vulnerable neighbours find it difficult to venture out and can often go several days without seeing or talking to anybody.

Therefore, it would be good for us to look out for such neighbours and provide some friendship and support. If whilst doing this you find that they have a problem or need some help and you are not sure who to refer this to, then please contact us as we may be able to help.

I would also like to wish all our residents a very happy Christmas and a healthy New Year'

Paul

The state of our verges - more inside



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Reasons To Be Cheerful - One, Two, Three



Back in 1979 Ian Drury and the Blockheads found over forty things to be cheerful about.

Here in Uckfield we also have a lot to be cheerful about, although to listen to some people you would think our lovely town was some kind of sad backwater.

Time maybe to step back and take stock of just what Uckfield has to offer and what we may be in danger of taking for granted.

First, our own local community. Compare Manor Park and Hempstead Fields with other developments and you will see that our houses are not crammed together with ridiculously narrow roads. We enjoy spacious planning with lots of green space, many magnificent trees and even our own local shops. We far outshine what you find in the rest of the town. There are not many developments that adjoin woodland, have some magnificent views and where you will find deer, foxes and a variety of birdlife living alongside its residents.

How often do you hear people complain about the number of charity shops and estate agents in the High Street? Well look again and you will find that we have a butcher, a baker and maybe not a candlestick maker but we are lucky enough have Carvill's which sells some pretty posh candles along with lots of other high-quality goods!

Yes, we have a few charity shops but even one of these focusses on designer label clothes. Plenty of independent shops too – George Moss, Hartfields, Josefina to name just three.

How many towns our size can boast an independent cinema with three screens that shows great films as they are newly released nationally? And we have a station that connects to central London, a great leisure centre and a community hospital that looks after minor injuries and undertakes day surgeries.

Right on our doorstep we have Manor Primary which is ranked as 'Good' by Ofsted and has been awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark Silver Level; Manor Twiglets found to be 'Outstanding' at its last Ofsted inspection and of course UCTC another 'Good' school which achieves some truly remarkable examination results.

All this without mentioning the great people of Uckfield. Too many community groups to list but it's worth mentioning one or two. First, The Brighter Uckfield Campaign whose volunteers get up bright and early on a Sunday to keep our roads free of litter, tackle overgrown pavements and look after the planters they have installed and keep stocked all around the town. Also through the work of the Uckfield Dementia Forum we are moving towards becoming a 'Dementia Friendly Town'.

It's all too easy to forget that this valuable work would not happen without the many unpaid hours that so many unassuming volunteers devote to the good causes that support the more vulnerable in our community.

Of course, not everything is perfect, life is not like that, but let's end on a positive and seasonal note by turning from Ian Drury to Bing Crosby (quite a leap I know!). In that iconic film 'White Christmas', Bing wisely encouraged us to *fall asleep counting our blessings instead of sheep*.



Surgery Car Service - 01825 578006

If you live on Manor Park, Hempstead Fields or in Shaftesbury Court, Streatfield House or Manor House Court then you can use this service to get you to and from the local GP surgeries. Also for short appointments at Uckfield Hospital. You do not have to be a member of the Association to use this service.

Cost of the return trip is still £3.50 – all monies are used to cover our expenses. All drivers are DBS checked.

Antisocial – what me?

We are not the kind of people that can be described as antisocial, are we? We don't spray graffiti on fences, have noisy all-night parties or vandalise cars. We pride ourselves on being good citizens.

But when it comes to parking our car on the school run then too often our good intentions go right out the window. After all we are only there for 10 or 15 minutes and so parking on the grass verge or with two wheels up on the pavement really doesn't count, does it?

In fact, this kind of parking causes some real problems to those living near the schools. Here is a quote from a resident who relies on a mobility scooter "...at school peak times traversing the pavements is a nightmare and extremely dangerous. Cars are parked on corners (all four wheels), on the hashed area close to the school and across and on people's driveways....as a mobility scooter user I feel very vulnerable ..."

Also, the once neat grass verges are fast becoming deeply rutted trenches reminiscent of a ploughed field and are a real trip hazard to those crossing the road.

So, next time you make the school trip why not leave home a little earlier, park well away from the school and 'walk and talk' your child to school.



News in brief

Handrail at Browns Lane Shops – we had hoped to be able to install a handrail to serve the steep footpath down to the shops but as this was going to cost well over £2000 we had to look for funding. Tesco kindly offered to match the £250 the Association was able to put towards the cost but unfortunately our bid to the Town Council for a grant for the remainder was not successful as the Council's grant pot was well over-subscribed.

Big Lottery supports Big Lunch – although we were not successful with our bid to the Town Council for the handrail we were awarded £350 by The Big Lottery 'Awards for All' scheme to support next year's Big Lunch. This means we will not have to use the Association's funds and that most of the entertainment will again be provided free of charge.

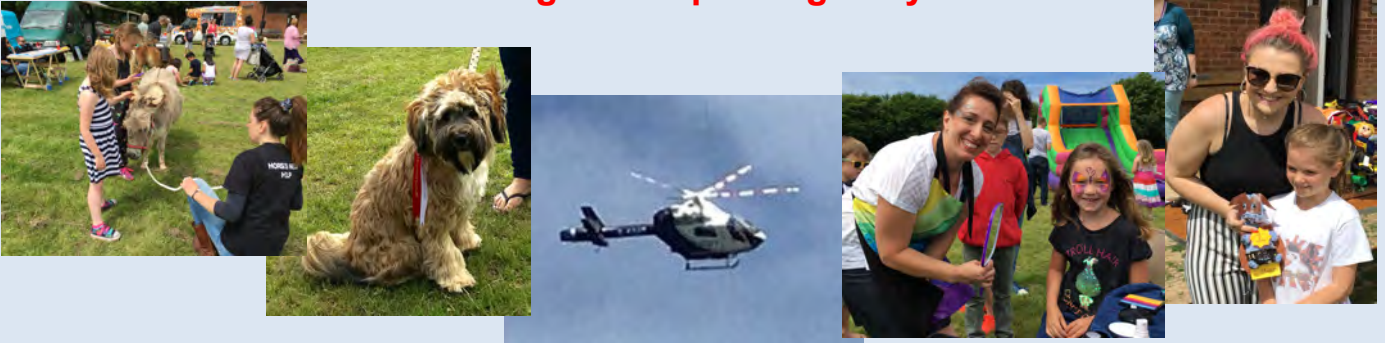
Dementia Awareness – in recognition of this growing challenge that society faces and to be able to improve the care, help and understanding that our Surgery Car Service volunteers offer, they attended a Dementia awareness session kindly delivered by Margaret Dodes-Angel of the Sussex Support Service.

Verges – in our last newsletter we told you about the continuing discussions we are having with ESCC Highways about the damage to the grass verges in Downsview Crescent and the traffic congestion caused by double parking. As we go to press we seem to be making some progress with this having enlisted the support of our County Councillor, Claire Dowling. Keep an eye on our emails and social media for progress reports.

Big Lunch 2017 – the sun shone and you came out in your droves! Such a contrast to last year when we endured heavy rain and strong winds and few ventured from home. All the usual attractions were there for the children to enjoy but this year also saw a visit from a miniature Shetland pony and donkey from the Sussex Horse Rescue plus a flyover by the Kent, Surrey and Sussex Air Ambulance helicopter, one of the charities the Association supports. We were honoured to have Jade Eardley present the 'Sew a Super Hero Puppet' competition prizes to the winners from Manor Primary. Over £250 was raised for the charities we support. Photo's on the back page.

Park bench at Browns Lane – unfortunately some kind soul decided to remove the brass plaque from the park bench the Association installed on the green outside the Browns Lane shops. We will be replacing it soon, this time with tamper proof screws!

The Big Lunch photo gallery



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Over 60? why not visit the Luxford centre?

Monday - Computer 9.30 -12.30; Cribbage 10 -12 noon; Stretch exercise 1.30 - 2.30.

Tuesday Coffee 10 -12 noon; BOCCIA - ball game 11 -12noon; Extended exercises 2.00. Scrabble 2.00.

Wednesday Darts 10 -11.30; Bridge 2pm (2nd and 4th) 10 - 12 noon; plus, outings in the Summer

Thursday Coffee 10 - 12 noon; Lunch 12 noon (book by 12 noon on Tuesday) Bingo 1.45.

Friday Table Tennis 10 - 12 noon. Short Mat bowls 2pm.

Web: www.luxfordcentre.co.uk/ Tel 01825 766388
Email: luxfordcentre.bookings@outlook.com
Annual membership £8. All Welcome.

Find us at the top of Luxford Car Park

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