



# Town Clerk's Update

Council news and information from Sevenoaks Town Clerk, Linda Larter MBE



15 May 2026

## Sevenoaks welcomes Cllr Victoria Granville as new Town Mayor and Cllr Lionel O'Hara as Deputy Mayor

Councillor Victoria Granville has been elected the new Mayor of Sevenoaks at the Annual Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council, held on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> May 2026. Councillor Lionel O'Hara was elected Deputy Mayor.

Councillor Granville has been on Sevenoaks Town Council since 2019 as a Town Ward Councillor, and last year held the position of Deputy Mayor. She is also a Ward Councillor for Sevenoaks District Council.

The new Mayor and her husband, Richard Baxter, have lived in Sevenoaks for 20 years. Richard was born and educated in the town, and together they have four adult children.



Councillor Granville's working life spanned architecture, interior design and advertising. As an artist and curator of many exhibitions in Kent – including two years at the National Trust – she is still actively involved in the arts in Sevenoaks. She intends to focus on 'Celebrating Culture in Sevenoaks' and sees the arts as a vital element for community and regeneration.



Councillor Granville said, "We have a thriving creative town in Sevenoaks, particularly supported by wonderful schools' programmes, the performing arts, the Sevenoaks Kaleidoscope Gallery and the Stag theatre. As chair of the Arts and Culture Committee, I have been privileged to meet many advocates and look forward to continuing to work in collaboration with them."

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As Town Mayor, Councillor Granville aims to follow the success of her predecessors, Councillors Tony Clayton, Libby Ancrum and Claire Shea, who worked with the Sevenoaks community to make important investments in safer streets, better facilities for young people and safeguarding green spaces. She commented, “The Town Council’s Masterplans for Sevenoaks and St Johns underpin the ambition for the town’s future and are informing the Sports and Arts Strategies and town centre development. With Local Government reorganisation likely to devolve more responsibilities to town councils, the town looks forward to exciting developments at The Stag in partnership with our diverse artistic community. Among major works, completing the Greatness Pavillion, improvements to the pitches at Sevenoaks Rugby Club and upgrading of the Vine and its cricket outfield all happily demonstrate effective co-operation between the Town Council and its partners. There is much to do and we are always listening.”

Mayor Granville points out that, under the current national programme of the reorganisation of local government affecting districts and counties, “Town and parish councils offer continuity and attachment to place. They will continue to speak for their communities. My objective as Town Mayor is to represent the widest possible range of voices in building the future of our remarkable town.”

The new Deputy Mayor, Councillor Lionel O’Hara, has lived in Sevenoaks for 10 years with his partner, Pauline Nugent. He has been an active member of Brasted Parish Council and Sevenoaks Town Council as a Northern Ward Councillor.

Councillor O’Hara began his career at Coutts & Co before living in Amsterdam during the early 1980s. Returning to the UK, he then went on to build a career in media. The Deputy Mayor has also worked at The Oaks Specialist College in Tonbridge and volunteered with Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees. He is also a member of Westerham Amateur Dramatic Society, which in his words, was like finding his lost family.

Speaking about his career, Cllr O’Hara said, “While working in the world of media, I have shared moments with many well-known figures from Pelé to Elizabeth Taylor. But the most fun I have had in years was being Santa at Sevenoaks Town Council’s Christmas Lights.” Cllr O’Hara’s passion these days is teaching Tai Chi and Qigong. He also says he shares as much time as he can with his grandchildren. Cllr O’Hara commented, “My career has not been conventional, it’s been often unbelievable, and most of all a lot of fun. Being Deputy Mayor will be a privilege and an honour I will cherish, and I hope to make it memorable.”

The new Mayor, Cllr Victoria Granville, has nominated Hospice in the Weald as her charity for the 2026/27 Civic Year. This charity is the local hospice for the Sevenoaks community, providing care for those living with a terminal or life-limiting illness, and their loved ones. As well as providing in-care for patients at the end of their life, the hospice also provides vital support for people at the start of their journey through counselling, physiotherapy, and opportunities to make art or music, and live well at home for as long as possible. Councillor Granville commented, “Councillor Nick Varley has been a champion fundraiser over the last year and together we intend to raise funds and promote the aims of the hospice. As Nick says, hospice care is not just about dying – it’s about living well – and that will be the focus of my year supporting Hospice in the Weald.”



## Cllr Tony Clayton marks the end of his mayoral year with community awards and charity cheques at the Annual Town Council Meeting

As the 2025/26 mayoral year came to a close at the Annual Meeting of Sevenoaks Town Council, the Outgoing Mayor, Cllr Tony Clayton, presented prestigious awards to members of the community, as well as cheques to his nominated charities.

Cllr Clayton presented the 2026 Mayor's Award to John Levett. This award recognises the important contribution of people who voluntarily provide time and resources to benefit the Sevenoaks community. The Outgoing Mayor said, "If there's live music anywhere in Sevenoaks – it's almost certainly down to John Levett. He runs The Listening Room, helps with Music on the Bandstand, as Chairman of Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra, with Sevenoaks Summer Festival, and this year he was key in the organisation of the fundraising concert for my chosen charities. In a town with so much musical energy, John makes it happen."



Cllr Tony Clayton also presented a Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) Community Award to Homa Ansari, who was given the Mayor's Award last year. The Outgoing Mayor said, "Homa is a tireless contributor to the community, including through Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees and the Repair Café."



Outgoing Mayor's Cadets, Explorer Scout Holly Maystone and Explorer Scout Alexander Davies, were also given awards for their support during the last Civic Year.



At the Council meeting, the Outgoing Mayor also acknowledged Andrew Eyre as he retires from the position of Chief Executive of the Stag. Cllr Clayton said, "Andrew has given a huge amount to Sevenoaks in developing the Stag as we know it today. The Stag has cemented its place as the cultural centre of Sevenoaks, and for 15 years, Andrew has been at its helm."



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During the Town Council meeting, Cllr Clayton presented both the Sevenoaks branch of Citizens Advice and Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust with a cheque each for £5836.47. The Mayor thanked everyone who had made it possible to raise a total of £11672.94 for these charities, including those involved in fundraising events such as the Mayor's Quiz and Swing into Spring Concert; Bob Ogley who generously donated over £1000 from sales of his Knole Park book; and everyone who contributed to raffles and collections through the year.

As he reflected on his term in office, Cllr Clayton remarked, "I have met so many amazing people during the year, working in our community. It's been a real delight to promote as many of them as I could in my mayoral blog.

"It's a real privilege to be Mayor of Sevenoaks – the best place to live in Kent! You represent more than the Council. You also have a chance to support the voluntary and professional groups and the residents who make this town what it is. We can help bring them together and encourage what they do.

"Only Sevenoaks Town Council has the motto 'May Sevenoaks Flourish.' That's why it's so important this Council continues into future decades, doing what it says on the badge!"

At the meeting, Cllr Claire Shea, Leader of Sevenoaks Town Council, thanked Cllr Tony Clayton and his wife Gill, saying, "Tony, your dedication to the people of Sevenoaks throughout your year of office has been truly inspiring. You and Gill have given your time, your energy, and your commitment to this town with great generosity, and the council and the community are all richer for it."



## Love Your Local Market event

Sevenoaks Town Council has traditionally supported the national annual 'Love Your Local Market' campaign.

On Saturday 23 May, we will be celebrating Love Your Local Market with live music from Paul Malsom and rock painting for kids at Bligh's Clocktower.



# New Playground and Outdoor Gym Equipment for Greatness Recreation Ground

This month we are holding public consultation both in person at events and online.

We have already had lots of interesting feedback from young people who will be using the equipment.

If you want to let us know your view, please complete our surveys:

- Plans for New Playground: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/J3TP8XV](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/J3TP8XV)
- Plans for New Outdoor Gym: [www.surveymonkey.com/r/32J8BSK](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/32J8BSK)

Help choose the design of the **playground** & **outdoor gym** at Greatness Recreation Ground!

Tell us your favourite design for our new **Greatness Recreation Ground Playground**

Pick your favourite from nine options!



Please complete our playground survey with your kids.



[surveymonkey.com/r/J3TP8XV](http://surveymonkey.com/r/J3TP8XV)

Tell us your favourite design for our new **Outdoor Gym** at Greatness Recreation Ground

Pick your favourite from nine options!



Please complete our gym survey.



[surveymonkey.com/r/32J8BSK](http://surveymonkey.com/r/32J8BSK)

Sevenoaks town council

## SEVENOAKS HEALTH & WELLNESS FAIR

VINE GARDENS, SEVENOAKS TN13 3UH

Saturday 30th May | 9.30am - 4.00pm

**FREE ENTRY**

**FREE HEALTH CHECKS**

**38 exhibitors** from a vast range of backgrounds will be there:

- HEALTH PROVIDERS
- SPORTS & ACTIVITIES CLUBS
- SUPPORT SERVICES

Watch Sports & Activities demonstrations and perhaps take a free health check.

A fun-filled event designed to help the whole family live healthier, happier lives!

View services, activities and products for everyone – from adventurous toddlers to seniors looking for more in life.

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE OF ALL AGES!**

An event supported and funded by:

Can you help us with Sevenoaks in Bloom 2026?



**Gardening and tidying**



We'll be seeking extra support with weeding and tidying before judging this summer. You can also help the town to look its best by 'adopting' a planter in Sevenoaks, caring for the flowers in it and making sure it's free of weeds. We're also looking for support from businesses who can give staff time to volunteer.



**Knitted/crocheted bugs**



We welcome any knitted/crocheted butterflies or caterpillars for our displays around town, but here are some example patterns:



**Painted rocks and sculptures**



We're asking young people to help by creating their own David Attenborough-themed sculptures to display in the Vine Gardens. We're also seeking painted rocks with animals and bugs from little ones!

For more information, email [communityeng@sevenoakstown.gov.uk](mailto:communityeng@sevenoakstown.gov.uk), call 01732 459953 or visit [www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk](http://www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk)



## Save the date

Visit our events page for more information: [www.tinyurl.com/STCNewsEvents](http://www.tinyurl.com/STCNewsEvents)

Date	Event	Venue
Saturday 23 May	Love Your Local Market Event	Bligh's Clocktower
Wednesday 27 May	Forget-me-not Café: free dementia- friendly event	Bat & Ball Station
Saturday 30 May	Health & Wellness Fair	Vine
Saturday 30 May	Forrester Fundraiser	Greatness Rec
Sunday 31 May	Open Air Service - St Nicholas Church	Vine
Friday 5 June	Sevenoaks Business Show	Bat & Ball Centre
Friday 12 and Saturday 13 June	Beer on the Vine	Vine
Wednesday 24 June	Forget-me-not Café: free dementia- friendly event	Bat & Ball Station
Saturday 27 June	Art on the Vine Exhibition from Sevenoaks Art Club	Vine railings
Saturday 27 June	Hospice in the Weald - Moonlight Walk	Raleys Field
Wednesday 29 July	Forget-me-not Café: free dementia- friendly event	Bat & Ball Station
Tuesday 4 August	Family Fun Day	Greatness Rec
Wednesday 5 August	Skateness	Greatness Rec
Tuesday 18 August	Alice in Wonderland - free theatre show	Bat & Ball Centre
Wednesday 19 August	Alice in Wonderland - free theatre show	Pontoise Play Area
Thursday 20 August	Alice in Wonderland - free theatre show	Greatness Rec
Friday 21 August	Alice in Wonderland - free theatre show	Vine

Wishing you a good weekend,  
Linda

