



Town Clerk's Update



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

5 March 2026

We're collecting donations at Sevenoaks Annual Town Public Meeting

Sevenoaks Loaves & Fishes Foodbank is looking for donations of:

- Non-perishable food, e.g:
 - UHT milk
 - Coffee
 - Sugar
 - Tinned meat
- Hygiene products
- Men's grooming products
- Deodorant
- Cleaning materials

For more information about Sevenoaks Loaves & Fishes Foodbank, please visit www.sevenoaksfoodbank.co.uk

Please bring any donations along to the meeting on Monday 9 March

Bat & Ball Centre, Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN



THANK YOU

Local Government Reorganisation – public consultation

The Local Government Reorganisation consultation will finish on 26th March.

Please see www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk for links to further information.

Local Government Reorganisation

What does it mean for you?

The consultation runs from
5th February to 26th March

A printed summary is available at
Sevenoaks Town Council offices



Mayor's Fundraising Concert

On 19th March, the community is invited to 'Swing into Spring', a marvellous evening of live music at The Stag, hosted by the Mayor of Sevenoaks, Cllr Tony Clayton.

Swing into Spring is set to be an entertaining night filled with the captivating sounds of jazz and choir singing, all in support of the Mayor's chosen charities: Citizens Advice in North and West Kent and Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust. Both organisations play a vital role in supporting local people.

The evening will kick off with an exhilarating performance by Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra, under the expert guidance of its Musical Director, Mike Austin. Adding to the excitement, this performance will feature the incredible saxophonist Derek Nash, a star from the front line of the Jools Holland R&B Orchestra, as a special guest soloist. But that's not all! The night will be brought to a harmonious close by two exceptional choirs. The audience will be enchanted by the amazing harmonies of Green Street Blues – an a cappella chorus, followed by the exhilarating energy of Sevenoaks Sings, ensuring that every note resonates with joy and enthusiasm.

Swing into Spring promises to be an unforgettable evening filled with music, community spirit and a shared commitment to supporting our local charities. The Mayor of Sevenoaks, Cllr Tony Clayton, said, "March 19th is the last day of 'official' winter. You can feel spring in the air at last. Please come and Swing into Spring with the Kent Youth Jazz Orchestra and Derek Nash, star of Jools Holland's R&B Orchestra, the brilliant Green Street Blues, and the big community choir Sevenoaks Sings. All are giving their time and talents in aid of two good causes. Sevenoaks Citizens Advice helps local people solve problems with the cost-of-living crisis, housing, employment and many other issues, with professional, quality assured advice – and it's free! Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust helps young people at our House in the Basement youth café as well as out on the street – an essential support to the Town Council's youth activities. This will be a musical program to put winter behind us, and to do what Sevenoaks does best – support local charities who contribute so much to the town."

Tickets can be booked via The Stag website at www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk

For more information, contact communityeng@sevenoakstown.gov.uk



Sevenoaks town council

CHARITY CONCERT

SWING INTO SPRING

19 March 2026 at 7:30pm
Stag Theatre, Sevenoaks

Mayor's fundraising concert featuring:

- **KYJO with Derek Nash**, star of the Jools Holland Rhythm and Blues Orchestra
- **Green Street Blues**
- **Sevenoaks Sings**

Book tickets at www.stagsevenoaks.co.uk or scan QR code
Proceeds go to the Mayor's charities:

SAYT Sevenoaks Area Youth Trust
Believe in Your Worth

citizens advice North & West Kent

Tickets
Adults: £20
Under 18s: £10



Future of the Stag Community Arts Centre

Sevenoaks Town Council raises concerns about potential cost of District Council community asset transfers following NALC report

At Sevenoaks Town Council's (STC) Finance and Delivery Committee meeting on 23rd February, councillors considered the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) Case Studies in relation to community asset transfers as part of the Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) process.

This NALC resource brings together practical examples of devolution of assets to parish and town councils across the country. It highlights how councils of varying sizes and at different stages of devolution are approaching the transfer of assets and services from upper-tier authorities.

The following was written about the case studies on the NALC website, "The resource supports councils that are considering, negotiating or delivering devolved responsibilities, providing real-world insight into what works, what to watch for and how others have approached similar decisions...The resource reflects a growing trend of responsibilities being passed to parish and town councils."

The NALC report includes a summary outlining different councils' precepts and expenditure levels, alongside the types of assets proposed to be transferred. These range from market rights and theatres to parks, playgrounds and youth services.

Sevenoaks Town councillors noted that in none of the examples in the NALC case studies are upper-tier authorities shown to be charging town or parish councils to take on these assets. Instead, arrangements often involve grants or service level agreements to support the transfer of responsibilities.

The STC Finance and Delivery Committee members noted that this national context is highly relevant as town and parish councils across the Sevenoaks District prepare expressions of interest and business cases for the potential transfer of community assets as part of LGR. At a recent Sevenoaks District Council Finance & Investment Advisory Committee meeting, assets were agreed that they could be transferred to parish and town councils at a cost.

The NALC report indicates that such an approach would be exceptional. Councillors expressed concern that charging town and parish councils to take on publicly owned assets risks creating an artificial cost for residents. For Sevenoaks Town Council, any requirement to pay for the transfer of assets would have implications on its precept and for local taxpayers.

Councillor Claire Shea, Leader of Sevenoaks Town Council remarked, "It's quite astonishing that Sevenoaks District Council is trying to charge taxpayers for assets that they already own. No other council in the entire country is double charging residents in this way. Many of these assets were given to Sevenoaks District Council or its predecessors for the public to use. So why are they in effect being sold to the public now? It makes no sense and, more importantly, will throw the future viability of much-loved assets such as the Stag Theatre into doubt. We would urge Sevenoaks District Council to reconsider and its councillors to stand up for their communities rather than some hypothetical balance sheet."

Sevenoaks Town Council is actively requesting and trying to negotiate with Sevenoaks District Council for certain assets to be transferred prior to the District Council's dissolution and the creation of a new unitary, starting with:

- Stag Community Arts Centre
- Hollybush Recreation Ground
- Land at Bradbourne Vale Road (Horses Field)
- Land at High Street – Market Rights
- The Shambles

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Sevenoaks Town Council believes that the local Town Council is the most suitable authority to own and operate these community assets and be custodians for current and future generations, rather than a remote new Unitary Authority who will have considerable financial and operational constraints on resources particularly surrounding social care. The Town Council have also agreed to 'overage' conditions to prevent the Town Council trying to gain financially from the transfer of the asset.

The NALC case studies have been shared with Sevenoaks District Council. Town Councillors maintain that devolution should strengthen local stewardship of assets, rather than impose additional financial burdens on residents.

SIGN THE PETITION

Petition for Sevenoaks District Council to transfer the freehold of the Stag Community Arts Centre to Sevenoaks Town Council at no further cost



PLEASE SIGN HERE



[www.change.org/
stagfreehold](http://www.change.org/stagfreehold)

Sign the petition at www.change.org/stagfreehold

My recent meetings included:

- Planning & Environment Committee*
- Sevenoaks Welcomes Refugees – Launch of Strategy
- Interviews for Part Time Facility Manager

*All of Sevenoaks Town Council's Meetings are open to the public and available to watch live on YouTube see www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk for details.



Longspring Wood

Sevenoaks Town Council is pleased to announce that its plans to enhance Longspring Wood have been formally approved by the Forestry Commission.

The Town Council purchased Longspring Wood in 2024 as part of its Green Community Investment Plan. This was made possible thanks to generous contributions from the Sevenoaks community, for which the Council remains extremely grateful.

Longspring Wood is a valuable addition to the Town Council's portfolio of open green spaces. The woodland is accessible via existing public rights of way and is located close to Sevenoaks Common, another important Town Council asset.

Sevenoaks Town Council's plans for Longspring Wood include:

- Increasing biodiversity through additional planting, selective thinning, and coppicing to create a more varied woodland structure
- Improving the age structure and composition of compartments using sensitive, low-intervention silvicultural methods
- Eradicating invasive species to protect native habitats
- Improving public safety as the woodland transitions from private ownership to publicly accessible open space.
- Alongside these improvements, the Town Council plans to enrich visitors' experiences by creating wider, drier path networks and fostering a more diverse and engaging natural environment for the community to enjoy.
- Initial work will focus on ride management (maintaining open paths), removal of invasive species, and targeted planting to boost biodiversity.

Sevenoaks Town Council warmly welcomes volunteer support and will be hosting designated volunteering days later this year during the autumn/winter. Anyone interested in getting involved is encouraged to contact communityeng@sevenoakstown.org.uk. Further details about these volunteering opportunities will be shared later this summer on the Sevenoaks Town Council website at www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk.





Join us at the Sevenoaks Annual Town Public Meeting



Monday 9 March 2026
Bat & Ball Centre, Sevenoaks, TN14 5DN

Have your say on matters relating to Sevenoaks Town

Come along at **6.30pm** to talk to Town Councillors and visit voluntary organisation stands. **The meeting will start at 7pm.**

Please submit questions you would like to ask the Town Council by 12pm on Friday 6 March to council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk

For more details, please contact us:

- By telephone: 01732 459953
- By email: council@sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Find out more at www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk

Agenda:

- **Welcome from the Mayor of Sevenoaks**, Cllr Tony Clayton
- Presentation of **Sevenoaks Town Council's Annual Report**
- Presentation about **Kent Family Hub** by Ellen Shaw, Family Hub District Manager
- Presentation of **Sevenoaks Town Council Grant Awards** to Voluntary Organisations
- Presentation of **The Stag's Annual Report** by Tony McEwen, Deputy Chief Executive
- **Comments and queries** from local people on any matters relating to Sevenoaks Town

We are collecting donations for **Sevenoaks Loaves and Fishes Foodbank** at the meeting: non-perishable food, hygiene products and cleaning materials. Thank you!



Save the date

Visit our events page for more information: www.tinyurl.com/STCNewsEvents

Date	Event	Venue
Friday 6 March	International Women's Day Event	Bat & Ball Centre
Monday 9 March	Annual Town Meeting	Bat & Ball Centre
Thursday 19 March	<u>Mayor's Charity Concert - Swing into Spring</u>	Stag
Friday 27 March	Great British Spring Clean - volunteers needed!	Pontoise Mill Pond Wood
Saturday 4 April	Vegan Market	Vine
Saturday 2 May	Climate Fair	Vine
Saturday 30 May	Health & Wellness Fair	Vine
Friday 12 and Saturday 13 June	Beer on the Vine	Vine
Tuesday 4 August	Family Fun Day	Greatness Recreation Ground
Friday 20 November	Sevenoaks Business Awards	Bat & Ball Centre

Wishing you a good weekend
Linda

