



Town Clerk's Update

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



22 August 2025



STC Team News

Congratulations to Lily our Community Engagement Manager who gets married tomorrow (Saturday). We wish her every happiness on her big day and in her forthcoming marriage.

We have an under graduate Aksel who is studying Biodiversity at University we are really pleased that he will be working with us for the next few weeks and helping the Town Council to progress its initiative to register land for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

Biodiversity Net Gain is required by developers to compensate for loss of natural habitat etc. If the developers cannot provide on its site they can purchase elsewhere, currently this is out of Sevenoaks. The Town Council's aim is that any loss of BNG should be compensated within the town not in other counties.

Launch of Chatty Cafe at Cafe on the Vine

This week the Mayor launched Sevenoaks Chatty Café and the first week was a success! We had five attendees by the end, plus four volunteers and two health care workers.

The Chatter & Natter table is a welcoming space for conversation and connection. Hosted by friendly volunteers, this is part of the national Chatty Café Scheme and is a great way to bring people together.



Chatty Cafe will be held every Wednesday 1.30 p.m. – 3.00 p.m. at Café on the Vine.



Buckhurst Play Area

Following some concerns expressed on social media the following update was provided:

Statement re Buckhurst Play Area – 20th August 2025

We apologise for the current condition of Buckhurst Play Area and that it is not up to the standard we and the public would expect. There are several mitigating factors for this.

Lease of Land

The playground land area is within the Environmental Park and leased from Knole Estates. The current lease is due to end next month September 2025. Discussions have been taking place about the renewal of the lease. This has been complicated by the plans Sevenoaks District Council has for neighbouring land with development of the Leisure Centre etc and whether different access etc might be required. This has created uncertainty in investing in the play area when it was not known if the lease would be renewed. I am pleased to say that agreement has been reached to renew the lease to 2034.

Vandalism

At the same time, we have been suffering vandalism in the park. For some reason it seems to be a new game for teenagers to remove fencing panels from around the toddler play area. This will be renewed asap.

Wear & Tear

Sevenoaks Town Council wanted a play area in the centre of town and took a 10-year lease on the only land available and invested £100,000 in play equipment. Some of this has now reached its renewal time. As mentioned before there was concern about investing further due to uncertainty about lease renewal.

Now that this uncertainty has been addressed the following is being actioned asap:

- Renewal of Lease of Land
- Order placed for replacement surface for zip wire – installation date tbc
- Fencing to be replaced around toddler play area
- Repairs where needed to current play equipment
- Within space allocation some new pieces including seesaw and new springers.

It is hoped that all of this investment will bring the popular play area back up to a standard that people have enjoyed



Town Centre Masterplan – public consultation

We continue to consult on the Town Centre Masterplan. This is an important consultation wide ranging from how the town centre looks in the future to options to consider for changing traffic routes whether one way or potentially pedestrian areas.

Town Councillors will have a stand at the Street Food Fair at the Vine on Saturday 6th September.

Local Government Reorganisation & Community Assets

The government's plans for Local Government Reorganisation are moving forward as the government says, 'At Pace'. Sevenoaks Town Council are not involved in the future of KCC or Sevenoaks District Council this is for them to agree plans with the government. However, the Town Council is very concerned about the future of local community assets which makes living, working and visiting Sevenoaks the town it is.

The Town Council already operates many community facilities but there are some which belong to Sevenoaks District Council and the concern is that when the district council ceases to exist these assets will automatically move to a new Unitary Authority who will be a considerable distance away and is likely to be overwhelmed with social care responsibilities and unable to have the capacity to worry about local parks or markets etc in Sevenoaks.

The Town Council is seeking feedback in a survey from local residents on this matter. The survey can be found at www.sevenoakstown.gov.uk or paper copies can be collected from the Town Council's office on Bradbourne Vale Road.



ABOVE 31 young people joined the House in the Basement Youth Café annual trip to Broadstairs.

STC Projects

More free entertainment for children during the school holidays – see below.

RIGHT Local children seem to enjoy the outdoor theatre experiences around the town this week.

Thank you to Cllr Ancrum and Cllr O'Hara for photos.



Free summer band concerts at the Vine

Continuing this week and every Thursday and Sunday from 20th July to 7th September.

Following feedback from previous years, we have introduced a more family-friendly atmosphere for our Thursday night performances. To support this, we are providing a bouncy castle (subject to weather) as a child-friendly attraction.



Thursdays 6 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Sundays 3 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Sunday 24th August Kent Police Band

Thursday 28th August West Kent Concert Band

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Save the date

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

Sunday 24th August Bandstand: Kent Police Band, Vine

Thursday 28th August Bandstand: West Kent Concert Band, Vine

Sunday 31st August: Smash Cricket, Vine

Saturday 6th September: Street Food Festival, Vine

Sunday 7th September Bandstand: Almost the Last Night of the Proms
with Oxted Band, Vine

Saturday 20th September: Sevenoaks Bike Festival Vine

Saturday 4th October: Vegan Food Festival Vine

19th March 2026: Mayor's Charity Concert, Stag

Wishing you all a good weekend.

Linda

