

# Unitary Authority

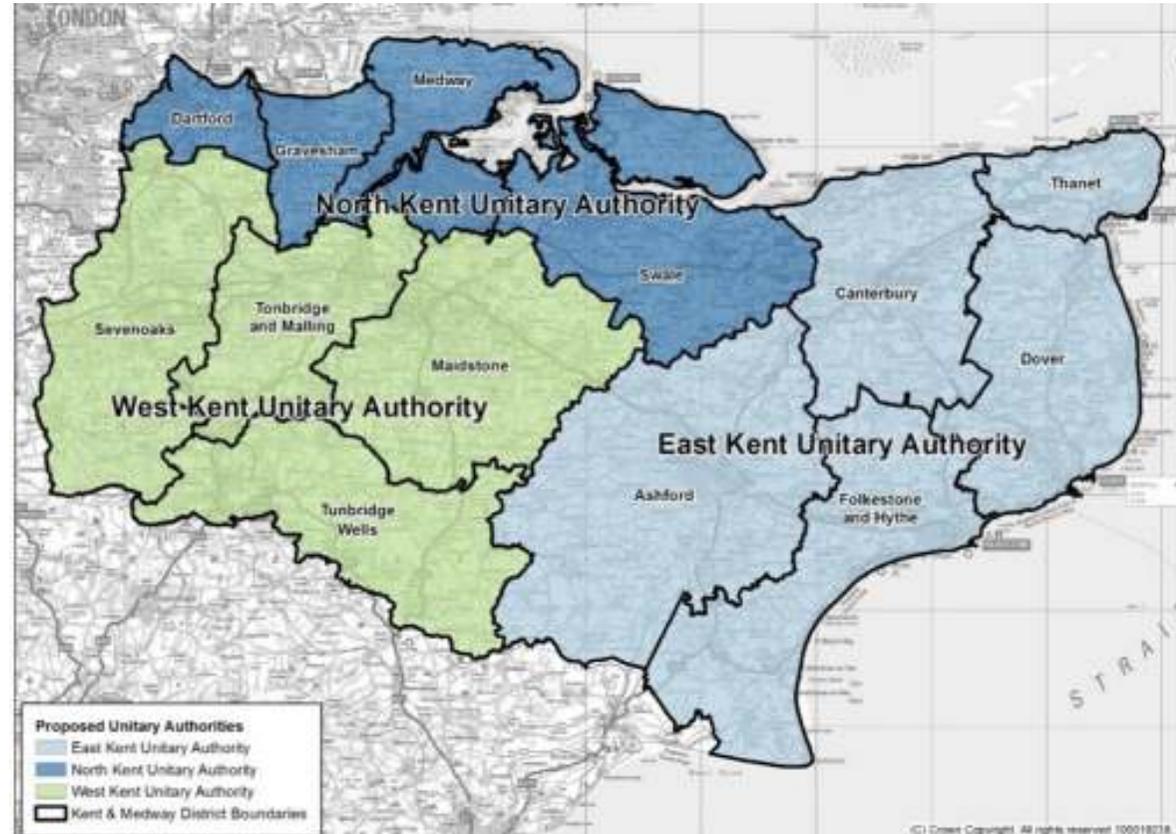


*local decisions are made in Royal Tunbridge Wells*

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Kent County Council will be abolished under Local Government Reorganisation.

A new **West Kent Unitary Authority** is the most likely outcome, covering Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks and Maidstone serving around **500,000 residents**.

Government is expected to confirm the structure and timetable in the first half of 2026 with implementation potentially by **spring 2028**.



# Town Council

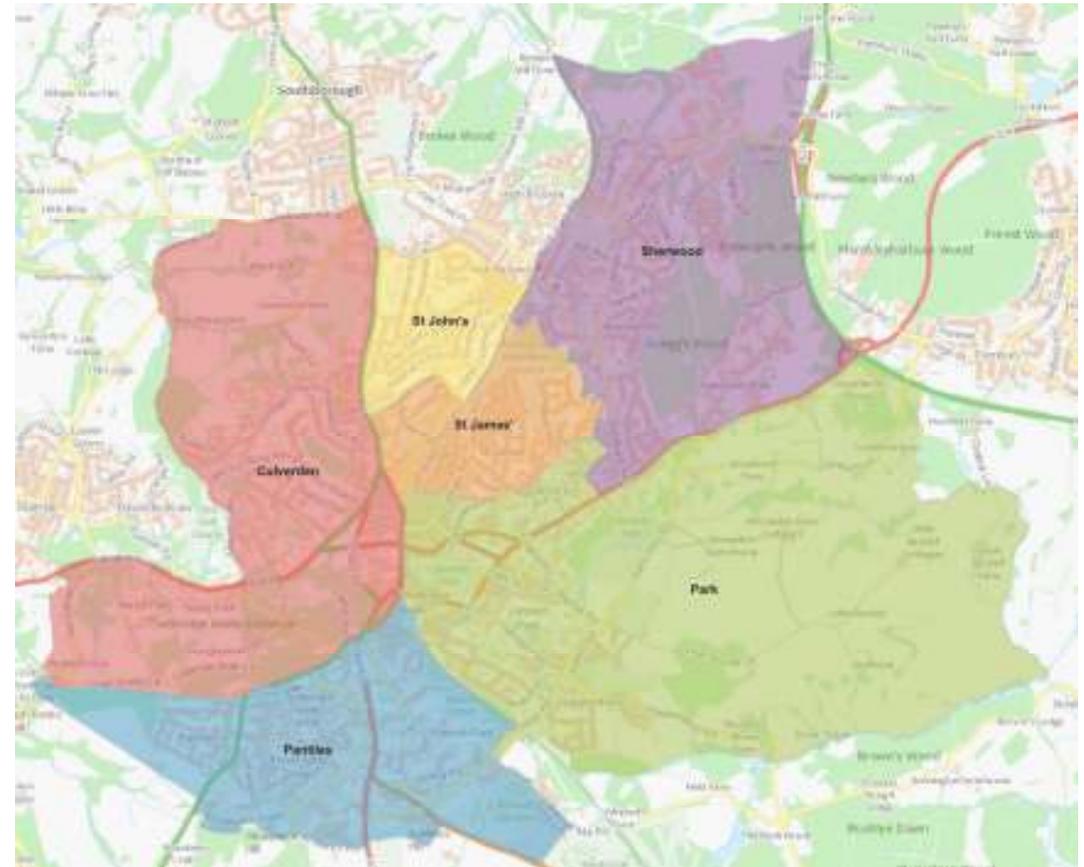
*A way to keep local decisions local – especially for community services*

The Community Governance Review is nearing completion, with final recommendations due in **February** and a **Full Council vote on 22 April 2026**. If approved, a new **Town Council** could be in place by **May 2027**.

•**Current proposals would transfer only allotments to a new Town Council; parks and other local assets would pass to the new unitary authority.**

•**Government guidance discourages asset transfers ahead of reorganisation**, making it unlikely the Borough Council will agree to park transfers now – leaving future negotiations to a **new Town Council and the Unitary Authority**.

•**Sevenoaks and Southborough already manage parks locally** – at the very least, **Tunbridge Wells should be treated on the same basis**.



# Parks – Make Your Voice heard

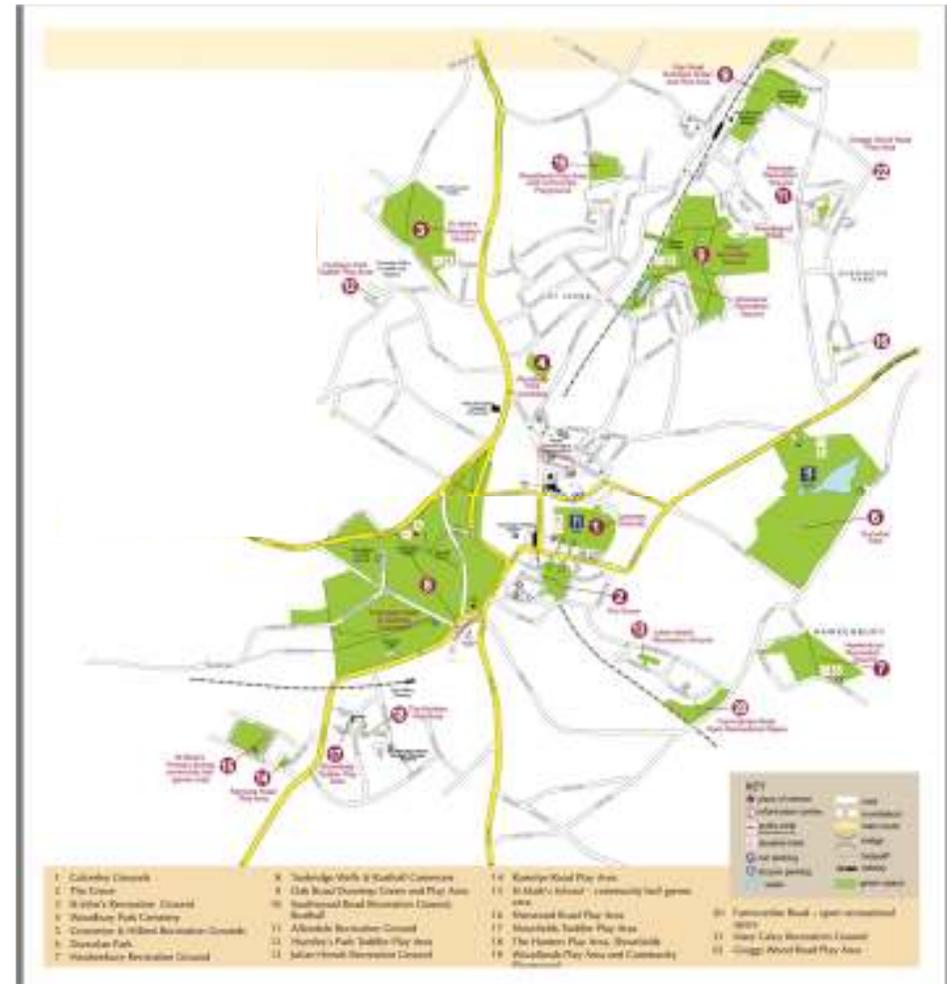
*Parks are something everyone understands – and everyone uses.*

**You already pay local council tax** (Special Expenses) **for your parks** – local funding should mean local decisions

**Decisions work best when made locally**, by people who know and use the parks. Big councils should focus on big strategic services

**Local management protects parks long-term**, keeping them visible, valued and rooted in the community.

The campaign **"Paid for locally Run locally."** Demand our parks are managed by the new Town Council. Keep Royal Tunbridge Wells Parks Local



# Parks – paid for locally, run locally



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

**Poster campaign** to raise awareness, using bold, simple messages placed around the town and near parks.

Designed to stop people, **spark curiosity and start conversations**, introducing the message *Keep Tunbridge Wells Parks Local*.

**Posters as the first step**, helping residents understand what's at stake; design developed with Friends groups and artist **Chris Burke**.

Simple **campaign website** as a central hub, explaining the issue, showing Town Forum and Friends group involvement, and allowing residents to register support and stay informed.



Friends of Dunorlan  
**Paid for locally. Run locally.**

Scan if you agree →

Takes 30 seconds



# 'My Park' - Drawing Competition



ROYAL TUNBRIDGE WELLS TOWN FORUM

*Helping families see what parks mean – and why local voices matter.*

**Next step:** work with Friends groups from all parks to agree how the competition will be run and publicised.

**Makes the issue personal** – children's artwork shows what parks mean in everyday life.

**Engages families** and the wider community, bringing new voices into the campaign.

Creates a **powerful visual statement** – a park map made entirely from children's drawings.

**Reinforces the core message** – parks are local, loved and should be managed locally.

