

Parish Council Finances

Dear residents,

Firstly, a Happy and healthy New Year to you all.

Each year, your Parish Council is required to prepare a budget and to consider what amount of precept we need to receive from Amber Valley Borough Council, which then forms the main part of our income for the coming year.

One other source of income is gained from the cemetery, which of course is offset by maintenance such as regular mowing, strimming, hedge cutting and repairs to the receiving house, all required to keep the cemetery tidy and attractive.

Finally, we occasionally apply for grants to help us to achieve larger projects. An example of this is that, when we receive the planning permission for them soon, you will see the appearance of some new entry signs for Holloway, plus a beautiful information board placed at the corner of Holme Close, all of which celebrate the bicentennial of the birth of Florence Nightingale, our iconic previous resident.

Until our budget of 2020, the parish council had not asked for an increase in precept for many years. This year, again, we feel that it is necessary to increase the precept required by 5%, which means an additional cost to a Band D property of £2.66 per year. A 0% increase would have resulted in us receiving less money this year due to the number of properties in the parish paying reduced council tax or no council tax at all and in addition, our initial 2021 budget was already showing a deficit of nearly £1000. The 5% increase will balance this deficit and make it possible for us to achieve the improvements that we wish to make for you, our residents in the coming year.

Amongst these, we plan to build an extra path and handrail at the side of the cemetery to make it safer for those accessing the graves on the hillside. We already have quotations for this essential, though expensive work and will be placing an order for this at our February meeting.

We are looking at improving our play area after requests from some our younger residents to provide better facilities for older children as our playground currently only caters for young children.

It is also likely that we will be required to have a tree survey and tree work completed for the memorial Grounds, Cemetery and Lea Recreation Ground to ensure that they remain safe for the many people who visit.

You may have noticed that the enthusiastic cemetery working group, all parish councillors and their spouses, did much additional voluntary work last year to tidy and maintain trees, shrubs and flower areas in the Cemetery, Memorial Gardens and Lea Recreation Ground to keep our costs down. They will also be evident soon helping a contractor (local resident) who will be cutting the hedge free of charge, something we have previously paid for.

A wildflower area has been planted at the playground, with the help of pupils at Lea School.

Two other councillors and their spouses have volunteered to maintain the flower circle on the end of Church Street, opposite the Florence Nightingale Memorial Hall and have cleared and initially replanted ready for the spring.

Your parish councillors are all passionate about this beautiful parish that we live in. In these difficult times, we are not able to be as visible as we would wish to be but, if there is anything you would like to suggest or request, please contact us via our contact details, shown in this magazine and on both the parish council and village websites. There is also a contact form on the parish council website.

Pat Ward,

Chair, Dethick, Lea and Holloway Parish Council