

Financial Information: Rampton & Woodbeck budget for 2021/22



2021/22 will see a necessary increase in the Parish Precept. The Council and the Clerk have worked hard to keep the increase to a minimum.

We have strived at self-generating our income to keep the precept as low as possible and we will continue to look for ways to increase self-generated income. A table in this statement shows how our precept at Band D is **reduced** by £58.58 at Band D and £38.97 at Band A due to our self-generated income. If we had no assets which generate an income for the parish, our Precept would higher by this amount. We have also received kind donations from local businesses and residents to cover the cost of the maintenance of the parish flower planters without it being a burden on the tax-payer.

The reason for the increase this year is to offset the cost of various factors, including those which were beyond the control of the Parish Council, including inflation, a further 70% cut in funding from Bassetlaw District Council, known as the Concurrent Grant, Insurance Premium Rise, the Parish Council setting aside £1000 to ringfence per year to build up a fund to replace existing parish council assets as they fail and require replacement. The other factors contributing to this year's rise were Notts Association of Local Council Membership, the introduction of a fee for Notts Association of Village Halls and Community Centres since its merger with RCAN and legal requirements of compulsory Pension Contributions for our Village Lengthsman.

We shall continue to maintain safe visibility of the grass verges at Woodbeck Crossroads, which we feel is essential given the fact there have been fatal accidents there over the years and that the County Council have reduced the cuts. Our Village Lengthsman works three days per week for us keeping the pavements clear, litter and dog foul collecting, salt gritting in winter, playground inspections and maintenance, weedkilling and strimming, painting and wood staining of parish furniture, certain tasks outside the village hall, power washing the parish bins to varnishing benches. Sam now undertakes duties as far as the gates at Woodbeck. Therefore, we continue ensure we have a pleasant place in which to live. It is through his efforts that we hope to enter again into the Nottinghamshire Best Kept Village Completion.

Pinder Park is well used by the community and visitors to the Parish, after attempting various frequencies of grass cutting, the current method works the best. To keep the park in good condition we have secured a 5-year zero percent rise contract with Acer Landscapes Ltd, which will mean 7 years in total with no rise at all.

We're pleased to announce that the overall electricity cost of the village hall continues to remain low due to our solar panels

To enable to future investment in the infrastructure of the village hall, Martin continues to be a valued member of staff who has been working reduced hours on Flexible Furlough during the Covid-19 pandemic. The furlough reclaimed money is being used to increase the vastly underfunded reserve account of the Parish Council. The guide for Parish Councils is to hold between 6 months precept and 2 years precept in reserve at all times, the Parish Council has only had 6 weeks precept in reserve until now, and the furlough has put the PC in good stead with complying with the minimum end of the recommended reserve scale. Martin continues to search for ways the hall can be used such as Madam Crepe, Woodfired Pizza during lockdowns and Tier 3. He also assists the Clerk and Village Warden with various tasks. Recently when the Village Warden was self-isolating, Martin emptied all the parish bins in his absence, undertook litter picking and put out the parish wheelie bins.

Our Clerk also works hard for the benefit of the parish, this year he has arranged the installation of replacement swing sets, all funded **not** at Tax Payers expense and secured a grant to provide war memorial benches noticeboard for Woodbeck and Rampton.

The Parish Council land in the former quarry area, rented by Tarmac, is now in aftercare and we hope the final legal conveyances will complete in 2021. After which the Council can make a decision as to the future of the farmland down Torksey Ferry Road to hopefully increase our rental income and therefore offset this against future precepts. We will continue to look for opportunities and ways to maximise self-generated income.

Whilst this year's rise shows on the Council Tax Statement shows as a percentage. It is deceptive because the monetary rise is small. It is a shame Bassetlaw show percentage, it would be more meaningful to show the actual change in pounds and pence, which is small at parish level (the majority of Council Tax which goes to the County Council, District Council, Police, Crime Commissioners and the Fire Service). The total cost to residents for services provided by the Parish Council in 2021/22 will be rising in bands A to D as follows:

Tax Band	Increase Per Year	Increase Per Month
Band A	£12.42	£1.04

Band B	£14.49	£1.21
Band C	£16.56	£1.38
Band D	£18.63	£1.55

This is still an average sized precept for Bassetlaw, cheaper than some Parishes, and far cheaper than several parishes in the midlands and northern England. The careful management of our assets and our proactive approach to our rental income reviews, contributes to our lower precept.

The work of your Council represents excellent value for money. All Councillors, whilst elected, volunteer and give of their time freely to support village life and make Rampton & Woodbeck a great place to live.

In the past Parish Council tried to make the Council fit the Precept, rather than the Precept fit the Council, relying on the Concurrent Grant from Bassetlaw, bank interest and then the Parish Council reserve savings (all of which have reduced to negligible amounts). This caused the precept to be falsely low for many years and culminated in the necessary increases. Current guidance from the National Association of Local Councils and the Society of Local Council Clerks that Parish Councils should not set any arbitrary, random figure for their precepts, the law requires parish councils to set a precept that is a 'balancing figure' known in legislation as the 'council tax requirement'. The precept should be set to be the amount of money required to balance the accounts after deducting 'other estimated income' in our case this is all rental income from Parish Land and Property. Our self-generated income reduces the cost of the precept to the tax payer for 2020/21 quoted in the table later in this report.

We have included a precept comparison with a selection of local and national parish council precepts. As you will see from the table, our precept is still lower than several other parish councils and vastly lower than many national figures. This is because we have worked hard to keep our rental income reviewed.

Self-Generated Income & Grants	Income	Precept Saving @ Band D	Precept Saving @ Band A
Forest Garden Field 4.81 Acres	£451.00	£1.54	£1.03
South Ing Yard 7 Acres	£700.00	£2.39	£1.59
Phone Mast	£5,500.00	£18.77	£12.52
Rampton Wharf 0.5 Acre	£525.00	£1.79	£1.19
Post Office £3.97 x 5hrs x 52 weeks	£1,560.00	£5.33	£3.55
Bowling Green	£25.00	£0.09	£0.06
Wayleave - Electric Pole South Inge Yard	£39.12	£0.13	£0.09
Wayleave - Electric Pole Forest Garden Field	£8.21	£0.03	£0.02
Surveyors Field 10.695 Acres	£1,229.93	£4.20	£2.80
Notts County Council Lengthsman Grant	£1,000.00	£3.41	£2.28
Bassetlaw District Council Street Cleaning Grant	£1022.00	£3.49	£2.33
Village Hall Income Substitute Central Govt non-domestic business rates grant to cover 2020/21 loss of income	£5,100.00	£17.41	£11.61
Total	£17,160.26	£58.58	£38.97

Budget Comparison to a few Bassetlaw Parish's	Amount @ Band D 2020/21 Previous Financial Year
Tuxford (a larger parish than ours)	£171.41
Torworth (a parish 2 thirds size of ours)	£154.64
West Stockwith (a parish 1 third size of ours)	£129.81
Misterton	£129.31
Rampton & Woodbeck	£125.82
Budget Comparison to a few National Parish's	Amount @ Band D Previous Financial Year
Bodmin (Cornwall)	£325.29
South Kirkby (South Yorks)	£299.96
Great Aycliffe (County Durham)	£244.59
Seaham (Northumberland)	£241.75
Shirebook (Notts)	£240.72
Hemsworth (South Yorks)	£206.51
Whitwell (Notts)	£198.54
Langwith (Notts)	£157.84

Every year, the level of council tax for the district council is determined by dividing the amount of money required to cover spending on service delivery by the number of properties for which council tax is payable – expressed as average Band D equivalents.

The number of Band D equivalent properties varies each year as a result of new homes being built and old ones being demolished. The number is also affected by the levels of people eligible for discounts. Since 2015-16 the Government introduced some changes which have impacted on the number of properties for which council tax is payable (the tax base). The changes include the ending of the council tax benefit regime and its replacement with the local council tax support scheme – which reduces the tax base.

Precept Facts

What is the Taxbase? - This is the average number of band D equivalent properties within the Town or Parish.

How the Taxbase is calculated - The taxbase is produced from the Council Tax system. This produces a listing of all the properties in each Parish, it then adjusts this to take into account any discounts that are given, for example, single occupancy, if a resident receives council tax support, second homes, homes that are empty or exempt.

The properties are then translated into band D equivalent's using the ratios below:

Band A 6/9	Band B 7/9
Band C 8/9	Band D 1
Band E 11/9	Band F 13/9
Band G 15/9	Band H 18/9

Finally, they add on the estimated number of Band D equivalents to be built in the year and apply a collection rate. This then gives us the total number of band D equivalent properties to use for the tax base. This is done by Bassetlaw District Council and they then tell us the relevant taxbase for each Parish to enable us to work out the precept.

What is the Taxbase used for? - The taxbase is used to calculate the Band D charge for each Parish. This is done by dividing the total precept requirement by the taxbase. This figure will be compared to the previous year's band D charge and published on the Council's website.

A common query is when the parish have set their precept at the same monetary value as the previous year but find that their charge per band D property has gone up. This will be due to the tax base having gone down i.e. number of properties we can collect from has changed.

Why might the Taxbase go down? – The taxbase could go down due to more properties in that Parish claiming for discounts, most commonly an increase in the number of properties claiming single occupancy discount. Other factors include homes being demolished, becoming empty, becoming second homes, boundary changes or a change in collection rate.

Setting the precept – We need to work out what our expected expenditure is going to be in the next financial year to provide the services we need to the parish. Then we need to deduct from this figure what income we get in from rents. From this figure we then deduct the BDC grants allowed to us which will be sent out with the taxbase information to arrive at the Precept requirement. This is then divided by the taxbase to arrive at the impact on the Parish Council Taxpayer.

Increased Concurrent Grant Reduction from Bassetlaw Council - Central government has reduced its level of financial support via the Revenue Support Grant to Bassetlaw District Council by 40% year on year, and equivalent efficiencies and savings have to be found from all areas of expenditure across the District Council. Accordingly, a reduction of 40% each year has been built into the Concurrent functions grant allocation. Bassetlaw District Council advised each Parish Council in 2014 *"Bassetlaw will continue to reduce its concurrent grants to you; therefore, you need to factor these reductions into your budgets. You will see how Harworth & Bircotes decided some years ago to increase their precept to invest in their infrastructure for their local people. Regards the Concurrent grant, there is no more money and what money there is expected to further reduce over time."* However, **Central Government has increased the reduction in 2019/20 to 70%**, accordingly, a reduction of 70.0% on the 2020/21 figures has been built into the Concurrent functions grant allocation

Transparency Regulations: This law came into force in 2015 and requires that Parish Councils with turnovers **below** £25,000 per year provide detailed expenditure on-line of items of expenditure over £100 however, there is **no legal requirement** for a Parish Council, such as Rampton & Woodbeck with turnover exceeding £25,000 but less than £500,000, to publish detailed items of expenditure over £100. The only legal requirement is to publish the basic summary of finance statement on the external audit form. However, our Parish Council believes that being transparent is the way forward and will continue to provide financial information on our parish website.