

# Welsh Newton and Llanrothal Group Parish Council

Clerk: Mrs Emma Thomas, Hadleigh, Bishops Frome, Worcester, WR6 5AP  
01885 490414 clerk@wnlgpc.org.uk

Dear Parishioner

In 2018 the funding provided by Herefordshire Council to Parish Councils to run the lengthsman scheme will cease. This scheme allows your Parish Council to employ the lengthsman to perform minor road works, cut verges, clear drains and grips and to grit the road in extreme conditions. The support for the Public Rights of Way network (P3 Scheme) will also be coming to an end in the next two years.

This means that tasks undertaken by the parish lengthsman on highways, verges or public rights of way (footpaths, bridleways and byways) will need to be funded entirely by the portion of your council tax known as the 'precept'. The precept is set by the parish council and is used to fund works locally.

In view of this change, we are writing to explain the work of the Parish Council and to seek your feedback on our proposed response to the reduction in funding.

The Council's chief month to month responsibility is to fund and administer the work of the parish lengthsman. The Council is also responsible for the Neighbourhood Development Plan which, following public consultation, sets out the Parish's planning priorities. At our monthly meetings the Council reviews all planning applications within the Parish, hears representations from the public and comments where necessary.

The Council may from time to time support local events or initiatives such as WW1 commemorations and help with the provision and maintenance of community assets such as the village hall. The Council is currently arranging for the installation of speed indicator devices on the Hereford Road in Welsh Newton, which have been largely funded by the developer of new housing next to the village hall as a condition of planning permission.

The withdrawal of County Council funding from next year will mean a reduction in the Parish Council's budget of over £3,600 (out of an annual budget of approximately £13,000). The Council is therefore faced with a choice of whether to significantly reduce the work of the lengthsman, which will mean a marked reduction in routine maintenance, or to increase the precept levied on each individual household to make up some or all of the shortfall.

In order to cover the shortfall the precept will have to rise. The current precept for a band D property is £63.49 meaning it would rise to approximately £83. The precept for other bands would increase pro rata.

The Parish Council is, on balance, in favour of increasing the precept in order to ensure that routine maintenance continues at the current standard. We would, however, appreciate your thoughts and responses as we enter a period in which vital works overseen by the Parish Council are funded exclusively by its parishioners. In particular, we would like to know if you wish the work of the lengthsman to continue at current levels and support the proposed rise in the precept.

In a further bid to reduce costs and improve communication, the Council would greatly appreciate your returning the enclosed form confirming your name, address and email address together with your agreement to receiving future communications via email. Each mail-out to all parishioners on the roll costs approximately £300.

We should also like to remind you that agendas of forthcoming meetings, minutes and details of other Parish Council activities as well as details of your parish councillors can be seen at our new website: <http://wnlgpc.org.uk>.

Yours faithfully

Welsh Newton and Llanrothal Parish Council.

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Please return the following together with a letter containing any comments on the above to the clerk, or send an email confirming your name, address and email address and willingness to receive future communications from the Parish Council via email to the clerk. Due to new Data Protection legislation, can you please resign your consent to use email – even if you have done this before. Thank you.

Name:

Address:

Email address:

I agree to receiving future communications from the Parish Council via email:

Yes / No

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Dated: \_\_\_\_\_