

Chelveston-cum-Caldecott News

Parish Council & Village News – February & March 2025

The Parish Budget and Precept: At the January meeting, the Council agreed a balanced budget for 2025-26, with a Precept (local tax) of £12,800 (*up from £12,360*). The Councillors were conscious of the rising costs faced by many residents, so limited the Precept increase to just 3.56%.

But, the number of households in the parish paying the full rate of Council tax has fallen from 218 to 213, so the percentage increase appearing on the Council tax bills will be nearer 5.99%.

Regardless of the percentage, the amount is the same (£440). For a Band D household, the parish element will be £3.40 (~7p / week) higher.

In comparison, the Police element is likely to be £14 higher and the Fire & Rescue element £5 higher.

The Parish Council “App” is now live: The flyer that comes with this newsletter details how to load the App onto your Android or Apple smartphone via a QR code.

Get notifications of What's On, News items, and meetings as they appear on the parish website, all delivered direct to your smartphone.

Chelston Rise defibrillator: Martin King Construction Ltd, the developer at Chelston Rise, has generously paid for National Grid to install an electrical supply across the road to the old bus shelter. The Parish Council is now arranging the installation of the heated cabinet to house the defibrillator.

Asset of Community Value: The Parish Council has successfully nominated the Village Hall for re-listing as an ACV to preserve it for the community.

Rights of Way MM16 and MM17 on the CRE Park: following requests from the Parish Path Warden (Ray Dyer), CRE Ltd have cut back the hedges on MM16 to restore the full width, and have filled in the deep holes on MM17 (at the road end) with ballast. CRE Ltd have been thanked for their actions.

Grass cutting: Having used the same contractor (Mowerman) for the last three years, the Parish Council has re-competed the contract to ensure we are still getting value for money.

However, as part of the cost saving measures to keep the Precept down (see above), the number of cuts per season will be reduced. The Council will select the winning bid at the February meeting.

Quiz Night: The Events Team are running another of their very successful quiz nights on **Friday 28th February** at 7pm at St John's church. For tickets, please contact Carol on 07880 556286.

Chelveston Village Hall: In previous newsletters, we have explained the proposed restructuring of Chelveston Village Hall. In late December 2024, the Charity Commission approved our plans, and a new Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was registered. The **Educational Foundation of Bailey and Levett CIO** now owns and operates the Village Hall. The new Board of Directors are all members of the Parish Council, your elected representatives, operating the venue on your behalf.

The first employee of the new Foundation is Maxine Routledge, our new Village Hall Manager. She is responsible for the smooth running of our community venue on a day-to-day basis. Janet McMillan will continue to manage the finances of the Foundation on a voluntary basis, providing the Directors with independent assurance that all is well financially.

Job Opportunities: The Foundation is now seeking to recruit a small team of Assistant Caretakers who will work with Maxine to keep the Village Hall running efficiently. The days and hours to be worked are very flexible to fit around the Hall bookings and individual's availability. In recent years we have found that having a pool of available people works well, giving everyone the flexibility they need. We currently pay **£12.00/hour** (to be revised upwards in April 2025), reflecting the caretaker's responsibility for the venue.

The last three of our Assistant Caretakers have been responsible sixth formers who were keen to demonstrate their maturity and employability as part of their university entrance applications. The Foundation is very keen to support young people in the Village, and this is an excellent opportunity for capable individuals to prove their worth. Please contact the Clerk of the Council if you think you have the skills and competencies we need.

Local Elections 2025: Thursday 1st May 2025 will be Polling Day, with all the seats on NNC and the Parish Council up for grabs! So why isn't your name on the ballot paper?

You don't need to be a legal expert or a finance wizard (that's what Clerks are for), nor do you have to belong to a political party (no “whipping” on how you must vote at the parish level), but rather as a Cllr you should want to make things better for the local community for current and future generations.

Since few problems can be solved by just throwing money at it, you'll need to be open to alternate ideas and be able to work with others to achieve an acceptable outcome. Speak to one of your current parish Cllrs (details over) for further information.

Next Issue: The April & May issue of the Newsletter should be delivered in the first week of April, so if you want to publicise a parish event, please let me know before the end of March.

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Events – February & March 2025

The Parish Church of St. John the Baptist (contact Arthur Wright - 624530).

There is a communion service **every Sunday morning at 9am.**

The church looked beautiful for Christmas and we all appreciate the efforts put in. We thank especially Russell Hodgson for the lovely Christmas tree and the way it was decorated so beautifully together with the church itself.

We look forward to Snowdrop weekend on the **15th and 16th February**, and the churchyard should be its usual stunning display of snowdrops and aconites. We will be pleased to welcome visitors who come to admire them and will be offering our customary hospitality of tea and cakes over Saturday and Sunday, together with various other items for sale.

Arthur Wright & Andrew Wager, Churchwardens

Free Spirits (contact Kathy Brooks)

The next meeting will be held at the Village Hall on **Monday, 17th February**, from 1.45 to 3.45pm. Our Speaker will be Les Evans, a former Concorde Pilot. This should be of interest to both ladies and gentlemen and all visitors will be cordially welcomed at a cost per person of £3, including refreshments. Just come along on the day.

The Village Improvement Working Party (contact Martyn Rixson, Chair VIWP)

The villages of Chelveston and Caldecott once enjoyed being a dark environment with little, if any, pollution from artificial lighting. This has now changed. In forming the Village Improvement Working Party a number of residents have commented on the growing trend of artificial lighting to illuminate properties throughout, a trend that no longer sees the villages enjoying dark skies. Many people choose to live in villages because of their peace, tranquillity and dark skies at night.

Security of properties is important and many residents have installed security lighting that triggers when movement is detected and then goes off after a few minutes, this type of lighting is important and needed. To get back to a rural village environment and start enjoying dark skies again, could residents consider how they illuminate their property throughout the night?

The next meeting is on **Wednesday 12th March 2025 from 7:30pm at the Village Hall**, and residents are welcome to bring ideas to the meeting or contact me by email at cllr.martyn.rixson@chelveston-pc.gov.uk, or by post at 2 High Street, Chelveston, NN9 6AS.

The Environment Team

Whether you love nature and walking or you would just like to meet a few new people, join us for our next meeting or one of our friendly, short walks around our local area. There is no cost.

Wednesday 19th February at 7pm : Environment Team meeting – all are welcome at the Village Hall.

Sunday 23rd March at 2pm : Signs of Spring walk (incl. homemade cake). Exploring the footpaths and hedgerows around our villages. Approx 2 miles. Meet outside the Star & Garter. Shorter route option for smaller children. No dogs please.

Sunday 20th April at 2pm - 4pm : The Big Village Litter Pick - Meet at the village hall to sign in & collect equipment. Refreshments will be available.

Email Ellen, Shayna and Chad for more information - ccvillagewildlife@gmail.com

The Parish Council usually meets on the second Monday of the month at **7.30pm**. Members of the public are welcome to attend and may speak on any agenda item at the Chair's discretion.

The agenda and meeting papers are posted on the website (www.chelveston-pc.gov.uk) and the agenda is on the parish noticeboards at least three clear days before the meetings.

Parish Council Members & Officers

Chair: Andrew Seaman, Rosemoor, Raunds Rd.
Vice: Jennifer Harwood, 7 Britten Close.
Andy Cuthbert, 38 The Crescent, Chelston Rise.
Clinton Hill, resides in the parish.

Carol Parsons, 5 Pokas Cottages.
Martyn Rixson, Threeways, 2 High Street.
Peter Smith, 2 Bidwell Lane, Caldecott.
Clerk: Mark Hunter, Ashbury, Caldecott .

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