

Finance & Resource Management

December 18th Full Council

First of all, I would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. Do reach out to people in the village who may be without support at this time.

In line with our Finance Report for November 26th Full Council.

Final details are being checked ahead of our January 14th Full Council.

In line with next steps for councillors mentioned in my November report.

- Budget requirements were submitted by 2nd December.
- Strategic discussion ahead of decision-making for precept and budget to be held in this meeting.
- We have focused on priorities and social value taking into account your comments to our precept survey.
- Financial details to be checked in the period to January 7th.

January 14th 2025 meeting will give space for discussion and for decision on precept and budget for financial year 2026/2027.

Financial information for Girton Parish Council will be available for discussion at our January 14th and made available on our website and social media by Wednesday 7th January 2026. As Finance Chair it strikes me that our community does not understand what we are asking for when we ask for comments on what rise might be acceptable to you and what the charges actually are and who is paying the precept.

Here are the Council Tax Bands A–H in England, based on the property's open market value as of 1 April 1991:

Band	Value Range (Apr 1991)
A	up to £40,000
B	£40,001 – £52,000
C	£52,001 – £68,000
D	£68,001 – £88,000
E	£88,001 – £120,000
F	£120,001 – £160,000
G	£160,001 – £320,000
H	over £320,000

- These bands are used to calculate your annual Council Tax bill.

The system still uses 1991 valuations for Council Tax bands because:

1. Administrative simplicity

Revaluing every property regularly would be a huge task—millions of homes would need reassessment, creating cost and complexity for councils and the Valuation Office Agency.

2. Political sensitivity

A revaluation could shift many homes into higher bands, increasing bills for some households. This is politically unpopular, so governments have avoided it.

3. Stability for budgeting

Councils rely on predictable tax bases. Frequent changes would make financial planning harder.

4. Historic precedent

The original system was designed to be simple and hasn't been updated in England since 1991 (though Wales did a revaluation in 2005).

In short: it's about cost, complexity, and politics, not fairness. Many experts argue the system is outdated and needs reform, but it's been deferred repeatedly.

The parish precept is part of the Council Tax, which is collected by the district council and then distributed to parish councils. It's not a separate tax—it's an element within the overall Council Tax bill.

If someone is on benefits or has a low income, they may qualify for Council Tax Reduction (CTR) or other support schemes. These schemes reduce the amount of Council Tax they pay, which includes the parish precept portion. So:

- The precept still comes from Council Tax overall, but individuals on benefits often pay less (or sometimes nothing) because of CTR.
- The shortfall isn't taken from the parish council—it's covered by the billing authority (district council) through its budget and government funding.

In short: people on benefits don't directly fund the precept if they receive full CTR, but the parish still gets its full precept because the district council makes up the difference.

Our recommendation of £10 per year raise for a Band D house ensures that your services and money is supported by a staff team and key person risk has been addressed. See comments in our budget and precept papers. Strengthening our capacity and resources are the first steps in achieving Girton's Great Plan.

Councillors who are 'volunteers' and Council Staff' are doing all they can to improve Girton.

We want to know from you what more we can do to increase engagement in Girton.

Ann Muston

Chair of Finance & Resource Management Committee

16th December 2025