

St Dennis Parish Council Budget Report for 2026 – 2027

Background:

The Parish Council must produce an Annual Budget and comply with the relevant Financial Regulations, including its own Standing Orders. Planning concerning budget content and the factors that influence its details usually commences in October of each year. The Parish Council needs to budget for a number of reasons:

- To plan for future activities
- To provide opportunity to monitor progress during the year, by comparing what it actually spends against what it plans to spend
- To assist the Council with setting its precept
- To provide a framework authority for expenditure under various headings.

Precept – what it is and it's legal basis:

The precept is the Parish Council's share of the Council Tax. The precept demand goes to the billing authority, in our case Cornwall Council, who collect the tax for the Parish Council. The precept is the main source of income for St Dennis Parish Council.

During the process of setting the precept the Parish Council should be mindful that the amount it sets must be sufficient to cover the following:

- Meeting the office expenses
- Adequate insurance cover
- Meeting Cemetery Expenses
- Employment of staff
- Maintenance of Parish Assets grass cutting, grit bin re-fills, litter picking etc.
- Adequate funding for the management of the Playing Field Trust
- Adequate funding for the running of the public toilets
- Funding for village enhancements and projects or events

Risks associated with setting the precept:

Capping of Parish Council Precepts- Whilst capping is possible in the future, the Department for Leveling Up Housing and Communities has again exempted Town and Parish Councils. This means that we can continue to set precepts without a referendum.

Sustainability of Village Amenities- The continuing operation of amenities in the parish relies on the efforts of the Parish Council to raise income whilst controlling costs. There are times when the Parish Council will need to rely on external funding or where the Parish Council itself will be asked for financial assistance. With the continued growth of the services the Parish Council now undertakes, and the need for improvement and maintenance as well as the provision for new services for the population. There is an expectation that as in previous years the Parish Council will be expected to undertake a number of services that are no longer offered by Cornwall Council or are not adequately maintained at present. Such as the Hall Road Play area that the Parish Council have recently taken over.

Personnel Costs- The Parish Council must be aware it needs to comply with employment law and pension legislation. Annual pay awards and performance reviews should be built into the budget for future years. In addition, as the Parish Councils' responsibilities grow the need for additional staff to assist with the management of these responsibilities is required. This year we have increased the hours of the maintenance staff to reduce the need to hire external contractors and we plan to increase those hours again in 2026-2027. Most of our employees have "opted-in" to the pension scheme provided this increases staff costs through employer contributions. In addition to these changes within the allowances and thresholds that came into place in April 2025 have greatly increased the overall staff costs,

as a Parish Council is unable to claim the National Insurance Small Business Relief towards these costs. The budget summary shows these costs in comparison to last year.

Asset Replacement Reserve- The Parish Council should on an annual basis consider a sum to be made as a contribution to the Ear Marked Reserve fund for the replacement of assets held by the Parish Council on a rolling basis. The Parish Council needs to ensure that it has sufficient reserves to allow for asset replacement planned within 2026 – 2027 and to cover any new capital projects such as new play equipment for Hall Road and the ongoing replacement of benches throughout the parish.

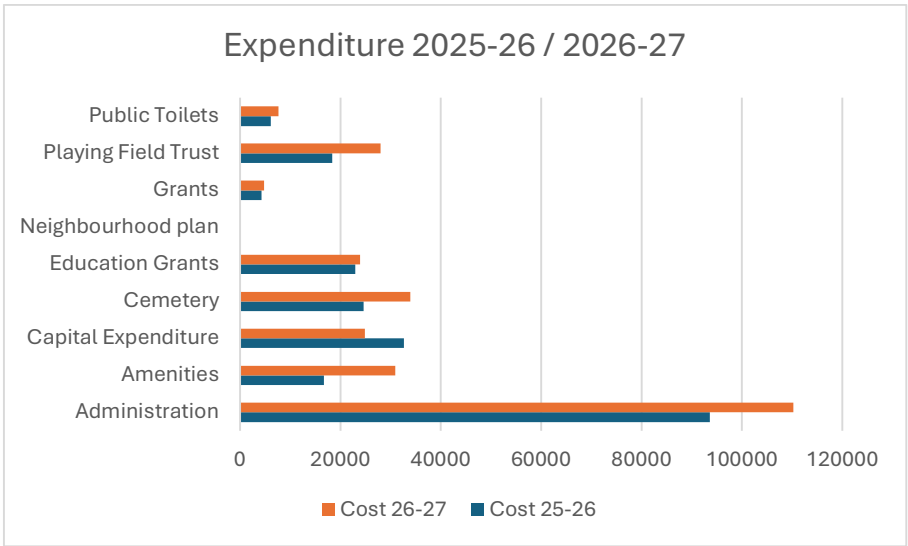
Failure to Contribute to General Reserves – The Parish Council currently has a sufficient level of general reserves, but these have been heavily utilized in 2025 – 2026 and they are due to reduce again in 2026 – 2027 as other planned projects are undertaken. Reserves are held in accordance with Proper Practices which state that one of the key stages in determining a budget is to “provide for contingencies and consider the need for reserves” As with any financial entity the Parish Council must ensure that it has sufficient reserves (both general and earmarked) to finance both its day-to-day operations and future plans.

Failure to Manage Restricted Funds – St Dennis Parish Council receive an annual payment to be spent specifically on the provision of Education Bursaries. These funds must be held in a designated restricted reserve to support the expenditure in the provision of grants for educational purposes. CIL funding is another such reserve; it is an income paid to the Parish Council to be spent on capital projects to offset the impacts of development in the area. Whilst The Community Infrastructure Levy is zero rated within our parish, a contribution is received from Cornwall Council’s CIL funding.

The Precept Demand:

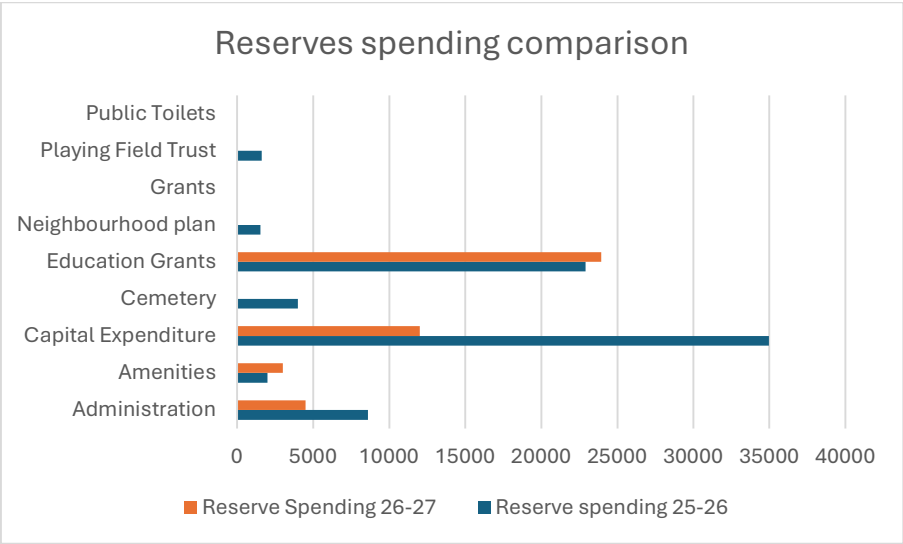
The starting point for the preparation of the draft budget involves an examination of recent trends in respect of receipts and payments along with known associated costs for new assets and new expenditure incurred.

The expenses for 2025-2026 are compared with the predicted expense for 2026 – 2027 in the chart below:

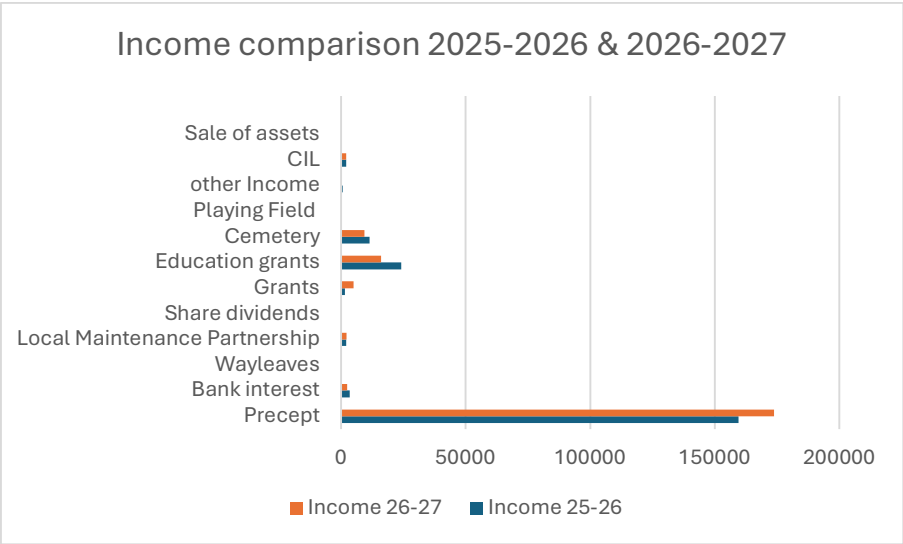


Some of the expenditure shown within the chart above is offset by the use of Ear marked reserves. The table below compares the spending from these reserves for the period of 2025-2026 and the predicted spend for 2026 – 2027.

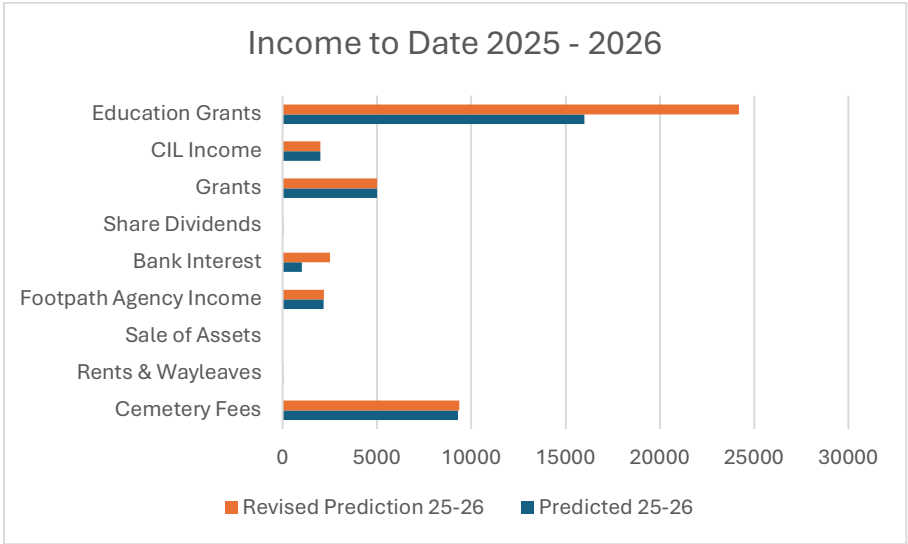
The chart below demonstrates how the previous table impacts on the overall level of reserves held for the period between 2025 / 26 – 2026 / 27.



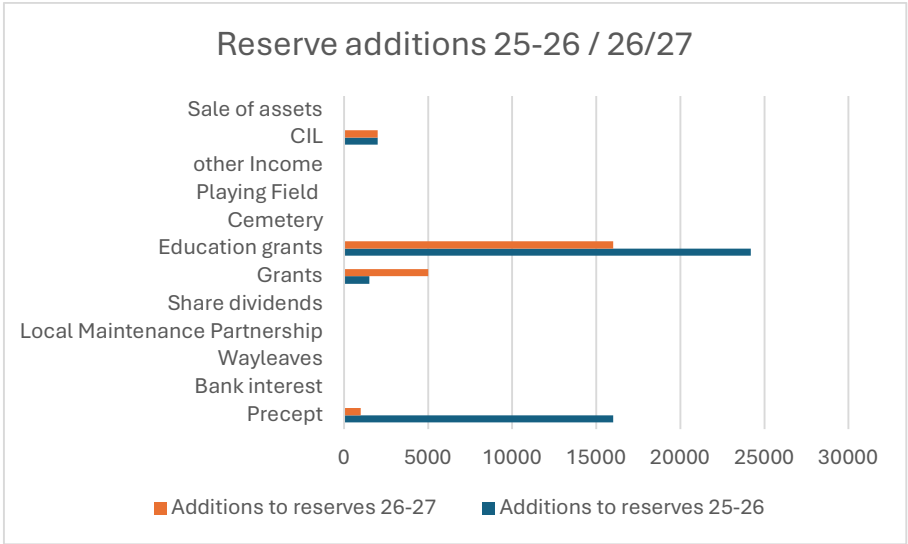
Below shows a comparison between the income received as well as the predicted income for 2025-2026 against the predicted income for 2026-2027. This is subject to change, but the Parish Council must be mindful when predicting income as there are various factors that can affect what is actually received.



This chart demonstrates the changes between what was predicted for 2024 – 2025 and compares this to the actual income received for accounts other than the precept as the precept is a known factor when looking at the Parish Council’s income.

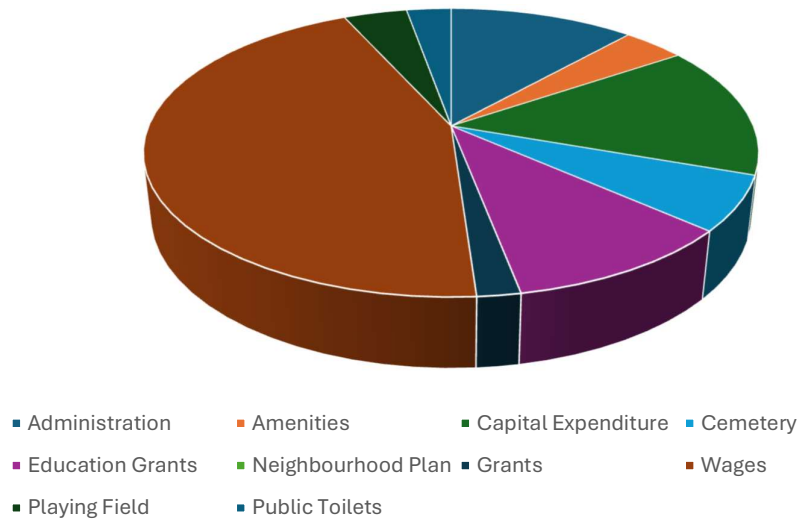


As highlighted earlier in this document the Parish Council carries reserves for projects and contingencies, and restricted funds. Below we can see what has been allocated to the reserve fund in the current year compared to what we are predicting to add to the reserves in 2026-27.

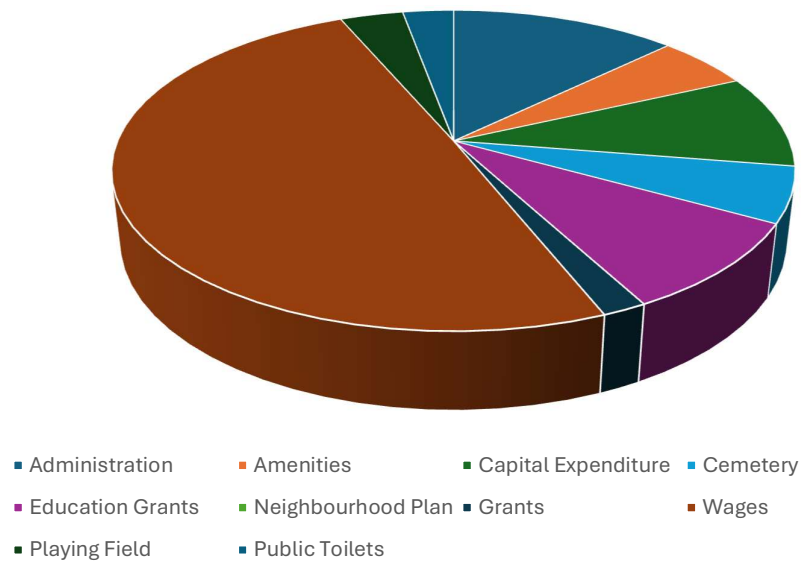


The pie charts on the following page illustrate the various categories of Parish Council spending. A significant portion of the budget is allocated to staff costs, as the Parish Council currently employs six part-time staff members. These employees are responsible for managing the key areas under the Council's remit, ensuring the smooth and efficient operation of its services. Under the Local Government Act 1972, section 112(1), councils are required to appoint the necessary officers to fulfil their duties effectively. Employing staff not only meets this legal obligation but also helps reduce costs that might otherwise be incurred through the use of external contractors.

Cost 25-26



Cost 26-27



The 2026 – 2027 Budget and what it means for you.

Cornwall Council have advised that the tax base calculator and indicative tax based information as issued to the Parish Council office via email, is used to calculate the Precept to be set and the effect that this will have on your Council Tax. The figures are based on Band D properties in the Parish. Below is shown an analysis of the increases by St Dennis Parish Council for the period from 2021 – 2022.

Year	Tax Base	Band D	Movement in £	Movement in %	Precept in £	Weekly cost Band D	Weekly Increase Band D
2022 – 2023	744.11	168.77	15.33	9.97	125584.00	3.24	0.29
2023 – 2024	756.87	185.07	16.24	9.62	140026.00	3.56	0.31
2024 – 2025	759.01	186.73	1.72	0.93	141757.00	3.59	0.03
2025 - 2026	772.33	206.44	19.72	10.56	159442	3.97	0.38
2026 - 2027	767.40	226.47	20.03	9.7	176791	4.35	0.38

This of course is based on a band D property here is St Dennis the majority of properties are in either band A or band B the chart below reflects how this will affect those properties.

Year	Tax Base	Band A	Movement in £	Movement in %	Precept in £	Weekly cost Band A	Weekly Increase Band A
2022 – 2023	744.11	112.51	10.20	9.97	125584.00	2.16	0.19
2023 – 2024	756.87	123.34	10.83	9.62	140026.00	2.37	0.20
2024 – 2025	759.01	124.48	1.14	0.93	141757.00	2.39	0.02
2025 - 2026	772.33	137.63	13.15	10.56	159442	2.65	0.25
2026 - 2027	767.40	150.98	13.35	9.7	176791	2.90	0.25

Year	Tax Base	Band B	Movement in £	Movement in %	Precept in £	Weekly cost Band B	Weekly Increase Band B
2022 – 2023	744.11	131.27	11.90	9.97	125584.00	2.52	0.23
2023 – 2024	756.87	143.89	12.62	9.62	140026.00	2.77	0.24
2024 – 2025	759.01	145.23	1.34	0.93	141757.00	2.79	0.02
2025 - 2026	772.33	160.57	15.34	10.56	159442	3.09	0.29
2026 - 2027	767.40	176.14	15.57	9.7	176791	3.39	0.30

The following pages contain a copy of the agreed budget for 2025 – 2026 and a breakdown of expected changes within the Reserves.

ST DENNIS PARISH COUNCIL
BUDGET 2026/27

V.2

	2024/25 Actual		2025/26 Actual	2025/26 Est Oct - Mar	2025/26 Forecast	2025/26 Budget	2026/27 Proposed	2026/27 BUDGET COMMENTS/NOTES
Expenditure								
Administration								
Office Salaries, NI & Pensions	63,572		38,346	39,431	77,777	75,265	91,273	
Other Administration Costs	19,515		13,757	11,744	25,501	30,000	33,743	
Amenities	5,765		2,872	5,730	8,602	16,000	14,130	
Capital Expenditure	14,256		22,309	10,300	32,609	28,500	24,800	
Cemetery	9,715		5,496	7,976	13,472	19,400	14,700	
Grants	2,833		237	4,000	4,237	4,500	4,750	
Maintenance Wages	12,441		9,718	9,800	19,518	19,000	39,742	Maintenance Operatives increase in hours 2026-2026
Playing Field Trust	7,292		5,192	3,511	8,703	9,050	9,385	
Public Toilets	6,022		2,843	3,295	6,138	7,550	7,600	
Total Core Activities	141,411		100,770	95,787	196,557	209,265	240,123	
Education Grants	17,039		6,476	16,430	22,906	23,357	23,931	EMR Release
Neighbourhood Plan				0	0	1,516	0	EMR Release
Total Expenditure	158,450		107,246	112,217	219,463	234,138	264,054	
Receipts								
Precept	141,727		159,442	0	159,442	159,442	173,791	
Cemetery Fees	14,260		5,920	5,590	11,510	9,300	9,350	
Rents & Wayleaves	16		0	16	16	20	20	
Sale of Assets	14,913		0	0	0	0	0	
Footpath Agency	1,299		1,309	0	1,309	1,309	1,300	
Highways Agency	654		0	684	684	863	863	
Bank Interest	4,554		2,041	1,500	3,541	1,010	2,505	
Share Dividends	15		9	8	17	20	20	
Other Receipts	0		742		742			
Grants	10,640		0	1,500	1,500	5,000	5,000	
C.Tax Benefit-Grant	0		0		0			
CIL Income	0		0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	EMR Addition
Total Core Activities	188,078		169,463	11,298	180,761	178,964	194,849	
Education Grants	23,153		24,189		24,189	16,000	24,189	EMR Addition
N/Plan					0			
Total Income	211,231		193,652	11,298	204,950	194,964	219,038	
Net	52,781		86,406	(100,919)	(14,513)	(39,174)	(45,016)	
Earmarked Reserves:								
Additions	61,708		24,189	3,500	43,689	23,000	24,000	
Releases	(29,944)		(28,336)	(40,806)	(75,602)	(55,323)	(44,431)	
General Fund Incr/(Decr)	(84,545)		(82,259)	138,225	46,426	71,497	65,447	
Fund Balances:								
General Fund	150,881		223,336		150,183	104,807	117,409	
Earmarked Reserves	343,987		339,840		312,074	269,201	291,643	
TOTAL	494,868		563,176	0	462,257	374,008	409,052	
GF Equiv. Months	9.6		12.49		8.2	7.83	5.33	
Tax Base	759.01					772.33	767.40	Decrease from 2025 - 2026 rates of -0.64%
Band D Tax Rate	186.73					206.44	226.47	9.7% increase

Inclusive of the Playing Field Trust

	Opening	25-26			Closing	26-27			Closing
	Balances	Receipt	Payments	EMRs	Balances	Receipt	Payments	EMRs	Balances
	at 01.04.24				at 31.04.26				at 31.03.27
GENERAL FUND									
Opening Balance	132,784				132,784				150,183
Receipts	216,185	204,950			204,950	210,849			210,849
Payments	-166,324		-219,464		-219,464		-264,054		-264,054
Additions to EMRs	-61,708			-43,689	-43,689			-24,000	-24,000
Releases from EMRs	29,944			75,602	75,602			44,431	44,431
TOTAL	150,881	204,950	-219,464	31,913	150,183	210,849	-264,054	20,431	117,409

Agreed by Full Council
Min Ref : 249/25

To enable the Council to make their decision they are provided with alternative increases, and it is these alongside the documents above that these figures are carefully considered when setting the precept. A copy of these budget workings can be found on the following page.

Precept Workings 2026 - 27						
Band D Rate 1.76% to 766.57						
	Previous Years	Precept	%	Band D	%	
	2021-2022	111137	3	153.47	2.8	
	2022-2023	125584	12.9	168.77	10.14	
	2023 - 2024	140026	11.5	185.01	9.62	
	2024 - 2025	141727	1.2	186.3	0.93	
Option A	2025 - 2026	155899	10	201.86	8.1	
Option B	2025 - 2026	159442	12.5	206.44	10.56	
Option C	2025 - 2026	162986	15	211.03	13.2	
General Fund Equivalent in Months						
Year	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25		
General Fund	84376	110385	124839	112788		
Spend	178083	149102	138466	147810		
Months	5.68	10.8	10.8	9.16		
Alternatives	10%	12.50%	15%			
Spend	179815	179815	179815			
General Fund	101228	104117	108315			
Equivalent Months	6.75	6.9	7.2			

The table above outlines the scenarios for various projected budget increases. These projections must be carefully balanced to ensure the Parish Council maintains sufficient funding in its general reserves. Town and Parish Councils are required to keep a minimum reserve equivalent to three months' spending to cover potential delays in receiving the precept and to meet any expenses that arise beforehand. Ideally, reserves should be able to support up to 12 months of operational costs for financial stability. With the proposed 12.5% increase for the 2025–202 budget, the general reserve fund predicts to cover approximately 6.9 months of the Council's running costs, ensuring a prudent and balanced approach to financial management.

Prepared By: Lynn Clarke PSLCC Clerk / RFO to St Dennis Parish Council.

Date: 15th December 2025

