

NEW MILLS TOWN COUNCIL

In the High Peak of Derbyshire

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January 2025

Dear Residents of New Mills,

By law, New Mills Town Council must have a balanced budget for the 2025/26 financial year. Like many councils, we are facing rising costs across the board to meet growing demands. Most of these costs are beyond our control to enable the same operation of services as in 2024/25. We are working hard to identify ways to increase income and we have had recent success with grant applications.

We are pleased to report that, despite overspends in prior years that resulted in the use of Town Council reserves, one-off income and careful financial management has meant that we anticipate to end the year with a £20,000 un-ring fenced surplus.

We have also been successful with grant applications to HPBC for the following projects

- £23,000 as 80% of the funding required to replace the boiler and heating system at the Town Hall, which had been condemned and out of use for over 12 months.
- £4,000 towards replacement guttering at the Town Hall, which is causing water damage to the building.
- £4,000 towards electricity upgrades at High Lea Hall to allow the Heritage Centre and cafe to function more efficiently.
- £2,000 towards carrying out a full replacement of the boardwalk in Hague Bar Meadows of this very well used access route ahead of summer 2025.

We will continue to identify new funding sources to improve and invest in the assets of the town.

However, these alone are not enough to offset the rising costs we face, which are summarised below. We regret to inform you that we are left with no choice of the need to increase the Town Council portion of the precept this year by 24.0%. For a Band D property this represents an increase of £22.42 per year, 43p per week. Many of the properties in New Mills are in Band A, B or C so will pay less.

Inflation: This is variable but currently stands at 3.5%.

National Insurance: Recent changes to employer contributions are estimated to increase annual costs to the Town Council by £7,500.

Energy Costs: We are facing significantly higher bills for heating, lighting, and powering public buildings and services.

Wage Inflation: Pay increases for council staff to match cost-of-living increases.

Material & Equipment Costs: The cost of materials and equipment needed to service vehicles, manage parks and maintain buildings has gone up significantly.

Building Repairs & Maintenance: Essential works are required at the Town Hall and High Lea Hall, important civic buildings of the Town used by residents, community groups and visitors.

High Lea Hall: Continued opening to the public, with the aim to increase the number of hours in 2025/26.

Town Council Reserves: These need to be re-established to expected levels.

As residents ourselves who will also have to pay any increase, we understand the impact this will have and deeply regret the necessity of this decision. We remain committed to managing the town's finances responsibly.

Thank you for your understanding.

Yours sincerely,

New Mills Town Council

New Mills Town Hall is heated by a new boiler installed in
October 2024 purchased with the assistance of

