

# Polegate Town Council

## Council Tax increase for town

Polegate Town Council has voted to increase the precept (council tax) this year to enable it to progress a number of projects. Wealden District Council will no longer finance the provision of public toilets in the High Street and, subject to cost, the Town Council may pay to keep them open. Street lighting is ageing and many replacements are required, as are improvements to drainage at Brightling Road Leisure Ground and changes to the Council offices in the High Street to improve accessibility for residents who wish to attend Town Council Meetings. These additional costs are compounded by the shortfall created by the reduction of the grant Polegate Town Council receives from Wealden District Council. This grant will continue to reduce by 15% per year until it no longer exists, so Polegate Town Council may have to increase its precept year on year to cover the shortfall if it is to maintain services.

The percentage increase that will show on the Town Council part of the Council Tax demand will be 21.29%, which equates to £13.68 per household per year on a Band D property (26 pence per week) and less for those on lower bands and those who either do not pay or pay reduced council tax.

Where possible, the Town Council will continue to provide necessary services which can no longer be provided by the County and District Councils; for example, additional weed killing around the town and the retention of the High Street toilets.

## Keep our verges verdant

Those of you who read our last newsletter may recall an article about parking, and, in particular, inconsiderate parking. Unfortunately, the issue has not gone away. If anything, we have received an even greater number of complaints, many of which relate to vehicles parking on, or driving across, grass verges.

Most of the verges in Polegate are owned by East Sussex County Council, and to that Council falls

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the cost of repairs when verges are damaged. Ultimately, that cost is borne by you—the Council Tax payer.

If you see a vehicle that someone has inconsiderately parked on a grass verge, please make a note of the registration number and pass the details to East Sussex County Council Highways on 0345 60 80 193.

## Diary date for dog owners

From the 6th April 2016 it will be compulsory for all dog owners to have their dogs microchipped. The Dogs Trust will be holding a free microchipping event in Polegate on the 9th May, in advance of this legislation. The venue, times and further details will appear on our website, notice boards and newsletters later this year.

## Pick up...or pay up

Failing to clean up dog faeces is a particularly anti-social act. Apart from the risk to health, nobody wants dog mess trodden into their homes, businesses or vehicles. So residents may welcome Wealden District Council's Dog Control Order, which came into force on the 1st January. From now on, any dog owner who fails to clean up after their dog will be guilty of an offence. The Order applies to all public places within the Wealden District, and includes roads, pavements, pedestrianised areas, parks, gardens, recreation grounds, car parks and beaches. Wealden's Street Scene Officers and Sussex Police PCSOs will be able to issue £75 fixed penalty notices to offenders.

There are a number of dog bins around the town specifically for the depositing of dog waste. Ordinary Council waste bins may also be used, so there is never any excuse for leaving dog mess anywhere in Polegate.

A copy of the Dog Control Order can be viewed on Wealden District Council's website.

## A Dickens of a day

Polegate's annual Dickensian event, which took place on the 7th December, raised nearly £600 for local charities. A variety of stalls sold gifts with a seasonal theme, Father Christmas was on hand to greet Polegate's younger citizens, and entertainment came from the Kingfisher Scout Band, the South Downs Singers and the Long Man Morris Men. The Christmas lights were switched on by John 'Dobbo' Dobson, recipient of the Council's 2013 Civic Award.

The Mayor's tea party for retired Polegate residents, which took place the week before Christmas, raised a further £235.

Polegate Town Mayor Cllr Malcolm Cunningham will be presenting cheques to St Wilfrid's Hospice and the Polegate Children with Cancer fund later this month.

## What a load of rubbish!



This chair was recently found partially blocking the pavement in Hailsham Road. Now, it is possible that it fell through a rift in the

Fabric of space, but what seems rather more likely is that some inconsiderate (to put it mildly!) individual has dumped it there.

The Council employs a part time litter picker who spends around 15—20 hours a week picking up the litter deposited in the Council's open spaces, play parks and other areas. Unfortunately, however, we are rapidly reaching the point where there is more litter than he can deal with in the time available, and he increasingly encounters instances of fly tipping, like the chair in our picture.

Please help us to keep Polegate tidy by taking your litter home, or depositing it in one of the bins provided.

Your Town Councillors and their phone numbers: Chris BERRY 486705; Edward BOARD 486508; Don BROADBENT 482896; Michael CLEWETT 486647; Malcolm CUNNINGHAM (Mayor) 486260; George GIBBS MBE 484109; John HARMER (Deputy Mayor) 485801; Joseph O'RIORDAN 486021; Hugh PARKER 486478; Margaret PIPER 485611; Mark PYBUS 482128; Daniel SHING, Stephen SHING 489265; Jill VOYCE 486429; Tim VOYCE 486429

If you encounter litter in our parks, please let us know. To report litter in the area of the High Street, or fly tipped items, contact Wealden District Council on 01323 443322. For litter deposited on private land (for example, the Co-op car park) contact the land owner.

## A cold shoulder for cold callers

As you are probably already aware, Polegate is designated as a 'no cold calling' zone. But despite this, some businesses choose to ignore the fact, and attempt to sell goods or services on the doorstep. Some of these sales people can be very persistent.

If you are visited by a doorstep seller, be polite but firm. Tell them that you do not deal with uninvited traders, then ask them to leave and not to return. If they fail to leave when told to do so they may be committing a criminal offence. For all instances of cold calling in Polegate, telephone Trading Standards on 0845 40 40 506. In an emergency contact the police on 999.

## Street lighting update

Some time ago Polegate Town Council resolved to move to part night lighting (using more energy efficient LED bulbs) in Polegate on Town Council owned street lights. Some lighting columns have already been changed and those requiring repair or replacement will follow over the coming months.

East Sussex County Council highlighted certain streets as residential (pink routes) and others as residential but well used (yellow routes). Pink routes will have all compatible street lights converted to part night lighting; the lights in these streets will be switched off around midnight, and switched on again at around 5:30am. Yellow routes will be mainly converted to part night lighting, but the areas around road junctions will be lit all night. It can take a few days for the lights to settle down, the result being that they may be off during the day and on at night, and some streets will have a mixture of lighting.

A map showing the lighting scheme routes can be viewed online at [www.polegate-tc.co.uk/pages/polegate\\_news.asp](http://www.polegate-tc.co.uk/pages/polegate_news.asp)