13 April 2026 Ryhall Annual Parish Meeting held in the village hall

Enjoyed over a relaxed glass of wine and a nibble of cheese

The meeting was hosted by Cllr. David Wilby 42 people were in attendance

1. **The Minutes of the previous meeting were noted**
2. **Reports in no particular order are set out as the minutes of this meeting.**

Message from Ryhall Parish Council

Firstly, I must apologise for not being with you this evening. I am currently in Jersey celebrating a significant birthday with Shaun. My thanks go to Cllr Wilby for stepping into the breach once again.

It has been an interesting and very active year for the Parish Council, with several major issues dominating our work: the threat of Ryhall Library closing, the sale of the second field, and outline planning permission being granted for 63 houses on land off Meadow Lane.

We are pleased — and extremely grateful — to the Friends of Ryhall Library, who fought a valiant campaign against RCC. Their efforts secured a reprieve for our much-loved library, which has also recently benefited from a small makeover. We were successful in having it registered as an Asset of Community Value, a status that remains in place for five years. I urge residents of Ryhall and the surrounding villages to support this valuable asset as much as possible. The same applies to all our local groups and businesses, which rely on community engagement to thrive.

We were also fortunate that the Meadows second field was purchased by someone whose only wish is to see it continue to be used by the community exactly as it always has been.

We were not so fortunate with the planning application for the Meadow Lane development. However, the Planning Committee will continue to challenge RCC wherever necessary to ensure that any development is appropriate and right for the village.

This year we were delighted to welcome David Denham onto the Council. David has taken on the considerable task of developing a Neighbourhood Plan for the village, working alongside a steering group of three volunteers. Creating a Neighbourhood Plan is no small undertaking — I will leave David to explain more — but I would like to personally thank him and the steering group for their commitment and hard work.

Lastly, Local Government Reorganisation. Cllrs Wilby & Corby, in their roles as County Councillors, are keeping the parish council abreast of developments.

That just leaves me to say a heartfelt thank you to all councillors, and to our Clerk, Sarah, for their dedication, hard work, and willingness to step forward each month to support and be an integral part of our beautiful village. Debbie, Chair

Finance

During the year we received a CIL payment of **£4,056**, part of which has been allocated to improving the lighting on the footpath that runs through the churchyard.

Our budgeting for **2025/26** was prudent, and we ended the year with an underspend of approximately **£10,000**. This was helped by the dry summer, which reduced grass-cutting costs. However, we did need to carry out essential tree safety work arising from the recent inspection report. Overall, this careful management meant we were able to reduce the drawdown from reserves.

Looking ahead to **2026/27**, we will continue to monitor spending closely, but our reserves are now stabilised and provide a healthy and responsible buffer for the parish.

At every Parish Council meeting a financial report is provided please come to a meeting or check the website to keep abreast of how your precept is managed. Sarah Gresty-Parish Clerk

The Neighbourhood Plan

Today is a big day in development of the Ryhall and Belmesthorpe Neighbourhood Plan. We are now ready to circulate the Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire for residents and businesses to provide their views so we start preparing the Neighbourhood Plan.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a powerful document with formal legal status that will enable our parish to influence developments within the Parish and allow the Parish to grow whilst still continuing to be a great place to live and work. Several other local communities including Market Deeping and Ketton have produced Neighbourhood Plans which they are using to control developments in their parishes.

Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan will be "owned" by the Parish Council who will oversee progress, the work will need to be undertaken by a small steering committee who will report regularly to the Parish Council:

The Parish Council started the process last year and have already:

- Agreed the formal boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan which was the Parish so that both villages can be included in the plan;
- Had the boundary agreed and ratified by Rutland County Council;
- Received the formal approval to start a Neighbourhood Plan by the County Council;
- Agreed a service level agreement between Rutland County Council and the Parish Council; and
- Formed a small steering group to prepare the questionnaire which covers many subjects including development, the environment, transport and amenities.

The questionnaire is the first stage of the Neighbourhood Plan and will reveal what the issues are that affect the residents and businesses in the village. We hope to start analysing the returned questionnaires in June with preliminary results available at the Village Fete. We will then enter a phase of deciding policies based on views of the community and drafting the plan. Cllr. David Denman

St. John's Churchyard Champions

Churchyard Champions are a friendly group of volunteers who care for St. John's Churchyard. We tend the flowerbeds, prune shrubs and trees, manage the wild area and have taken on a variety of projects such as building a compost heap, surveying churchyard wildlife, maintaining the paths and working with local school children to build a giant bug hotel.

The group was established in 2020 just after the first lockdown during the Covid epidemic. Being able to meet others in a safely distanced way was really appreciated by people who had had to stay at home and were in great need of some social contact. The initial makeover saw the churchyard, neglected and overgrown with weeds, transformed by 60 volunteers removing mountains of ivy, brambles and nettles. Shrubs and trees were cut back into shape, pots planted, old flowerbeds were opened up and new ones created which are now full of flowering plants throughout the year. Benches invite all villagers and visitors to stop and rest awhile to enjoy the space and the church.

6 years later, the group is still going strong with about 20 regular members. We love to welcome new people. Cake and hot drinks provided. Just come along with some gardening tools and gloves if you have them on the 1st Saturday of each month, March to Oct, 10am-12pm. Contact Sandra Chapman
Tel: 07554-740370 for details

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Ryhall Meadows Playing Fields

Happily, a relatively quiet year for the Playing Fields.

One Touch Football has continued to be the main user of the football pitches and pavilion, running training sessions for girls and boys of mixed age groups during the week and hosting matches on Saturday and Sunday. In the main things to have gone smoothy with OTF's use of the pitches fitting in pretty well with the local residents' use of the area.

The playground continues to be very heavily used by both local residents and visitors to the village. Several bits of equipment are nearing the end of their usable lives, including a set of infant swings which recently we have had to decommission for safety reasons. The charity is investigating the costs of providing suitable replacements.

An application has been submitted to the Charity Commission to close the Management Association down as a charity and form a new charity as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This is a less cumbersome form of charitable organisation and it is hoped that this will give the charity a better foundation on which to continue to manage the playing fields. The new charity will be called Ryhall Meadows Community Charity which, whilst not an exciting name, we hope will project a more inclusive image and encourage better community involvement (help) in the running of the playing fields in future.

In conjunction with the change of name, the Parish Council is granting the charity a new 30 year lease of the playing fields. This will replace the existing lease which has been running on a short-term basis from one year to

the next. The new lease will help provide stability which will enable the charity to plan for the future with some confidence.

Once the new charity has been approved by the Charity Commission and the new lease is in place, it is hoped that the charity will be able to develop stable plans for the continued maintenance of the playing fields as well as their improvement for the benefit of the residents of Ryhall and Belmesthorpe, whilst maintaining the area's village character. *Jo Gresty - Chairman*

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Ryhall Village Hall: Proud to serve everyone in our community

Ryhall Village Hall has long served as the parish's social and cultural hub. Since it was established in the early 1970s the building, a former Victorian primary school, has hosted an extensive series of weekly events for all ages.

These range from sessions for toddlers, yoga, an art club, pilates, various dance groups, children's parties, wedding receptions, musical shows, quizzes and pantomimes.

Ryhall Village Hall is proud to be recognised as a valued community asset.

It has kept up to date with the needs of the age and offers a modern kitchen, which includes a large catering-size cooker, high-speed dishwasher, fridges, microwave and hot water boiler, a bar area with chiller cabinet and a stage with curtains for shows and presentations. There is also a free car park.

The hall is administered by the clerk, Martin Virgin (07872 564000), and he is supported by the hall management committee, a group of volunteers and trustees who are all determined that the hall be maintained at the highest order to serve the many demands of a busy and active community.

Ryhall Village Hall is a registered charity, run on a non-profit basis, though it is determined to be self-supporting and pay its way without being a burden on the parish council which has overall responsibility.

Further details can be found on the hall website, ryhallvillagehall.co.uk

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Belmesthorpe Neighbourhood Watch marks its thirty-fourth consecutive year—an achievement few Rutland villages can match.

The committee met twice, welcoming new members to replace retirees. Welcome packs were issued to new residents, helping maintain our strong membership.

Email remains our main communication channel, with only a small number of homes not on the list. Our WhatsApp group now covers over half the village and remains active, with around two-thirds of members posting recently.

No crime was recorded in the village again this year, though some outlying properties experienced attempts to steal equipment or access private land. Our communication channels allow rapid reporting of such incidents, which we pass to the police.

Our verge planting has produced striking spring displays of daffodils and crocuses. After years of representations—especially over the past year—the village has also gained a full-fibre broadband network, significantly improving connectivity.

Our only disappointment has been the lack of suitable venues for social events since the Blue Bell's success has left no available times. We hope to run a defibrillator refresher course and organise a village picnic similar to our 2023 King's Coronation event.

Taken from a report from Adrian Gombault, Chairman, Belmesthorpe Neighbourhood Watch. (full report available)

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Flagpole. The flagpole came about because we had monies left over from the Queens diamond jubilee.
It was dedicated 11th November 2013 to Commemorate the Diamond jubilee and the men and women of WW1 WW2 and subsequent conflicts.
Since then we have collected flags for every occasions Birthdays, Anniversary's, and birth announcements ,we are happy to help you celebrate any occasion.
We very much appreciate any donations to help with the up keep of the garden.
The main reason we are really proud is the fact, we fly flags
for all national events, including all commonwealth countries national days

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RYHALL
ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

What a year we have had at Ryhall Allotments! An ambitious committee driving improvements to the site and hosting social events designed to include the wider community, with our lovely plot holders at the heart of the Association.

Our four events were a highly successful Scarecrow competition, which was featured in gardening magazine 'Kitchen Garden', a delightful afternoon tea, a Harvest Festival brought to us by the Methodist Church and our pumpkin festival, which brought a good number of Ryhall resident families into the allotments for the first time. Not forgetting our stall at the village fete which was a fantastic day, and of course the addition of a school garden, a dedicated allotment space for Ryhall Academy children.

On site, improvements have been made possible by generous grants from Ryhall Parish Council and the Village Fete Fund. We have also fund raised via our social events and now have two compostable toilets (vital for our social activities), a larger social hub which we call The Massingham Retreat (named after our former chair Gerald Massingham) and most recently a new pedestrian security gate which allows easier access to the site, and an eighth water butt offering convenient access to water.

There are 41 whole, half and quarter allotments and all generations get involved with the growing of fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers - and keeping hens! Up to four or more people may be involved with each plot, making us quite a large group of hobbyists! And the results can be spectacular as we saw with the beautiful harvest festival arrangement produced by one of our tenants.

This year, we have several upcoming events: best planted wheelbarrow, the village fete, the pumpkin festival and finally our big summer show, where the whole community will be invited to enter fruit, veg, herbs and flowers in a fun competition, with a delicious afternoon tea, prizes and certificates for a variety of categories, including 'young gardener'. This will take place in August. We will continue to make improvements to the site - we hope to add gravel grids to our pathways, to stabilise the ground and give a hard-wearing, non-slip surface.

The allotments are currently all full, but our waiting list has plenty of spaces, so why not put your name on the list? Dave Pearce, Chair, Allotment Association E: ryhallallotmentcommittee@gmail.com

Ryhall Bowls Club has a long sporting history. Bowls has been played here since the 1950s, but prior to that, quoits was played on the site over 100 years ago! With a brick-built Clubhouse constructed in 1994, the facility is an asset to the village and we were delighted that the refreshments for the village fete were served here in 2025.

Half a million people play bowls in the UK and we would love to see more Ryhall residents join us on the green. With an enthusiastic committee, we are promoting the sport and our club, and our recent registration evening saw around a dozen potential new members, which is a fantastic start to the season.
As part of our development, we have applied to the Charities Commission to change our status from a community association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This would enable us to access new sources of funding, to support the future growth of the club and extend the range of services on offer.

Bowls is a very social game, and we have bowls to loan new players. A highly inclusive sport, suitable for all ages and where men and women can participate socially on an equal basis, we also have a team competing in the Stamford and District Bowling League.

The green is maintained by the committee - this year through a lot of hard work, and following the first mow of the spring, it is looking very promising for the season ahead.

It's not too late to join us! If you fancy trying Bowls, come along to one of our roll ups, which is a friendly played on Wednesdays at 6pm and Saturdays at 2pm. It's always best to check with a committee member first in case of inclement weather, so do give us a call! We really look forward to some of you joining us soon to play this cherished sport. The green is a wonderful asset to the village - try it out!

Rob Letham (Chair) 07525 836263

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Verbal reports at the meeting

Leicestershire Police

Leicestershire Police PC Holly Bland (Beat Officer) and college reported that Ryhall is a low incident village. There have been some 3 issues recently with theft and ABS of which have been investigated further. Issues raised by the public were fly grazing of 3 horse on the meadows, these have also been reported to the RSPCA. A number plate theft Speeding especially at weekend Pc Bland urged people to sign up to Neighbourhood Links neighbourhood messaging service https://www.neighbourhoodlink.co.uk/ or any issues could be reported to her on E: holly.bland@leics.police.uk

Library

Andrew Neble gave an update on the Friends of Ryhall Library journey of becoming a Charitable Incorporated Orgnisation with a view to the future becoming a community managed library.

Friends of Ryhall Library

Bulletin – January 2026

Our journey to becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) has begun! Our six Trustees held their first meeting and applied officially to the Charity Commission earlier this month. Our Trustees for 2026 are as follows:

- Chair: Cllr Paul Douglass (Casterton)
- Secretary: Charlotte Davis (Ryhall)
- Treasurer: Jackie Holman (Ryhall)
- General Trustees:
    - Andrew Downing (Ryhall)
    - Andrew Nebel (Ryhall)
    - Robert Tiffin (Ryhall)

To decide 2027's trustees, there will be an Annual General Meeting (AGM) next year when any member of the CIO can nominate themselves to be a trustee.

Membership of Friends of Ryhall Library CIO is in the pipeline, but we are asking those in the local community to suggest what they feel is a reasonable annual membership fee to join (this is *different* to being a library services member). Fees, plus applications for grants as well as fundraising, will enable us to start exciting projects to enhance our library. To take part in this very short survey, please visit this URL to tell Trustees what fees would be reasonable to join the CIO: https://tinyurl.com/FORLFees

Our main areas of focus for the next month or so include:

- Ask the Parish Council to find out what library renovations are planned.
- Work with RCC to improve the children's area and develop a community garden.
- Open a CIO bank account.
- Link with other library groups and charities.
- Research what policies we need.
- Look to work with Ryhall Academy.

The aims of Friends of Ryhall Library:

To support Ryhall Library by:

- Advancing the educational and social well-being of residents of Ryhall and the surrounding areas.
- Protecting, enhancing and promoting its facilities, resources and services.
- Preserving the core purpose of book-lending as the library's primary service.
- Providing an inclusive community space for all that compliments existing local provision.

We will do this by:

- Consulting and engaging with library users, the volunteers, its local community, and library staff.
- Championing the wishes of library users and the community when working with the Parish Council and County Council.
- Supporting the development of library committees, groups, and projects, including seeking appropriate grants to help them grow and thrive.

If you would like to be on our mailing list for updates such as this bulletin, please email: info@friendsofryhalllibrary.co.uk.

You can also find us on Facebook as we have a new community page – please follow us and share the link with your friends and neighbours: www.facebook.com/FriendsOfRyhallLibrary

Friends of Ryhall Library
Bulletin – March 2026

Since our last bulletin, we have been informed by the Charities Commission that our application to be a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) could take up to 23 weeks. This is frustrating as means we cannot apply for grants and fundraise, but we can use the time wisely to continue preparing for the future and working with RCC (Rutland County Council).

Hopefully, by the time you are reading this bulletin, the library's temporary closure for renovation work will have ended. Do go and have a look at the newly-painted walls, new desk and new kitchen in the back room! Our sincere thanks go to Ryhall Methodist Church for hosting some of the community groups who would have otherwise not taken place during closure, and St John's Church for hosting the book lending/returning trolley.

Two of our Trustees met with staff late last month to discuss how we can work together to improve the library. Here are most of the issues that we discussed:

- The allocated Arts Council funding is still being used in full for Ryhall Library.
- The planned works include: lighting and access for the back room; a new kiosk for book lending/returns; an IT uplift; a wooden frame for the children's area; a finger plate for access to the front door. We also asked for some tea towel hooks, and a change so that the children's area swaps with the table and chairs - RCC are going to look into the feasibility of this.
- Someone from the library service is putting together "treasure baskets" for the children.
- Each library in Rutland has had to take on some of the storage – so Ryhall now has all of the Christmas books for Rutland.
- We have requested some additional furniture i.e. trestle tables and chairs, but first they want to look into safe storage of these. They'd also consider nicer storage for puzzles and a coffee table for the other corner's soft red chair area.
- There will be adult IT sessions offered in future e.g. how to access NHS app.
- They are aware that the RCC website is out of date regarding our library, and are working on this.
- They are happy to share our sessions on their Rutland Libraries Facebook page and have given us the contact details to arrange this.
- We asked what steps we could take to reassure RCC about maintaining a community garden. They are going to look into this for us.

If you would like to be on our mailing list for updates such as this bulletin, please email: info@friendsofryhalllibrary.co.uk.

You can also find us on Facebook as we have a new community page – please follow us and share the link with your friends and neighbours: www.facebook.com/FriendsOfRyhallLibrary

https://friendsofryhalllibrary.co.uk/
info@friendsofryhalllibrary.co.uk
https://facebook.com/FriendsOfRyhallLibrary

scan me

Health News The new Minor Illness and Injury Service in Rutland was launched on 1st April 2026.

St John's Church
Sandra McCune provided an update on the Churchyard Champion project, which continues to work alongside the wider restoration of the church. A new fundraising campaign has now begun to support essential internal works. Anyone wishing to help, volunteer, or join the church community is warmly encouraged to do so.
Rachael Szyszka reiterated the church's welcome to new members. Despite being without a vicar for the past four years, the congregation has bucked national trends and continued to grow, thanks to the dedication of the churchwardens and many volunteers. Unfortunately, the church experienced incidents of vandalism last year, creating a need to upgrade the CCTV system to protect the building and grounds.

Ward Councillor Kevin Corby – Discussion on Planning
Kevin gave a broad outline of the planning process and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds

Ward Councillor David Wilby – Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) and other issues
LGR not much to report on this at present, the Government will have the final say on what is decided.
Mallard Pass Solar Farm we expected an increase in traffic during the installation over the next years.

Village Fete and Village News – Becky Goff
Thanks to a dedicated team of volunteers, the *Village News* continues to be delivered in print every two months, with online editions published in the alternate months. This schedule reflects what is currently affordable through advertising income. New advertisers are always being sought, and contributions of local stories are warmly welcomed—please get in touch if you have something to share.
This year's Village Fete will take place on **11 July** on the Meadows Playing Field. Planning is well underway, and in the coming weeks there will be calls for donations and volunteers to help make the event a success.

Residents' Issues Raised
Concerns were raised about an increase in rats, particularly in the Burley Road area. A general discussion suggested that the mild winter, the availability of food sources, and the practice of feeding birds may all be contributing factors.
Actions agreed:
- The Clerk will prepare an article for the next *Village News* reminding residents not to leave accessible food or waste that may attract vermin.
- Rutland County Council will be asked to distribute an information leaflet to households.

Ryhall CE Academy

The school continues to flourish.

As well as very good academic standards, Ryhall CE Academy is centred on educating the whole child. There is active children's eco and ethos council, and the children are very conscious of their place and responsibilities in the community and the wider world.

As a Christian school, we have strong links with St John's Church.

New initiatives are encouraged and are ongoing. Partnering with the allotment society, for example, was borne out of the Parish Meeting last year, and the school now has a fabulous allotment plot, due to the hard work and kindness of Dave, Amanda, and the allotment holders.

The school values of compassion, friendship, hope, trust, respect, perseverance, along with the character value of resilience, are lived out. Each child has had an individual 'Values Passport' which encourages recognition of the values in action, both at home and at school.

Ryhall CE Academy has, unlike many local schools, experienced a rising number of pupils on role, which is recognition of our thriving school, successful and happy learners, and a fantastic staff team.

Thank you for your support. We are so lucky to have such a vibrant and growing school in our village.

Mandy Rogers

Chair. Ryhall School Forum.

The meeting came to an end with a social chat over cheese and wine.

Chair: **Date:**