

Ryhill Parish Council

WEBSITE: www.ryhillcouncil.co.uk

Clerk to the Council
Charles Greaves

Address for correspondence:

47 Meltham Road

Honley

Holmfirth HD9 6HW

Email: ryhill.clerk@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2023

CHANGE OF CLERK TO THE COUNCIL

Our clerk of 21 years, Clare Baxter, resigned from her position at the end of March 2023. We were extremely sorry to see her go. Clare was presented with a commemorative crystal award and flowers from councillors in grateful thanks for her many years of service to the parish of Ryhill and her support to councillors over such a long period of time.

We have been fortunate to appoint Clare's replacement relatively quickly. Charles Greaves joined us on 1 July 2023. Charles has a lot of experience in local government work as well as a finance and legal background. We are delighted to welcome Charles to our parish council and look forward to working with him for a long time to come.

COUNCILLORS:

Andrew Atherton

Cheryle Bashforth (Chair)

Gloria Booth

Lisa Booth

Brian Burnage (Deputy Chair)

Richard Caley

Karen Fretwell

Angie Morley

Trasi Staves

*Your parish councillors are some of the 80,000 local councillors nationally who give their time **unpaid** to the parish council to support their local communities. Each councillor undertakes other roles within the council as part of their duties as well as other voluntary work for the parish. The Clerk to the Council/Responsible Financial Officer is part-time (9 hours per week) and is a paid employee.*

CONTACTING THE COUNCIL

Over the last few years, the Council has been subjected to unprecedented harassment and abuse from a very small number of people. This is unacceptable and is one of the reasons that Council resolved that any future correspondence must be directed to the above postal address and should not be sent to individual councillors because they have no delegated powers (LGA 1972, section 101).

Email correspondence will not be accepted as Ryhill Parish Council does not have (opt in) consent forms attached to its electronic systems in agreement with GDPR requirements.

Council may refuse to answer requests that it deems vexatious due to the tone, language or criticism or if the burden on the small authority is oppressive in terms of time and resources. Council's vexatious behaviour policy may be found on our website: www.ryhillcouncil.co.uk

In July of 2022 the Freedom of Information Officer ruled in favour of the Council when one individual's vexatious behaviour was deemed to be onerous and costly for a small authority. The report was published on the Information Commissioner's Office website:

<https://ico.org.uk/media/action-weve-taken/decision-notices/2022/4022557/ic-148723-m9l3.pdf>

We have included this here in the interests of transparency.

THANKS TO THE MANY VOLUNTEERS WITHIN THE PARISH

Council would like to extend grateful thanks to those parishioners who voluntarily carry out tasks for the parish including: litter picking, adoption of planters, fetching and carrying, minor repairs on property owned or managed by Council, delivering the newsletter, helping at community events, etc.

These acts of kindness, without cost to the parish, are very important and more especially when there have been repeated contacts to a variety of authorities to complain about the Council.

These challenges have to be investigated by said authorities and their fees charged to our parish. These fees are extremely high, for example, external auditors investigating a recent challenge charged £350 per hour plus VAT. The total cost for this one challenge was £1576.20. This is money gathered from the precept that has to be diverted away from other projects that may be of importance to parishioners.

WEBSITE

Council commissioned the development of a new professionally designed website this year. This was in response to advice from our external auditors because Wakefield MDC, where we posted our annual accounts, was unable to guarantee continuous access to them by all interested parties. This generated a challenge to our accounts for 2021-2022 and a large bill to the parish from the external auditors who were required to investigate this.

Your opinion matters

Now that we have a website, we will be placing the newsletter on there. We would like to know whether parishioners would prefer to have just an online version with copies placed in the community buildings within the parish or whether you would prefer to continue with the delivery to every address in the parish.

SAFE SCHEME

The Safe Scheme involves paying for extra policing in our parish to deal with specific problems identified and reported to by parishioners. The scheme is operated in conjunction with West Yorkshire Police and involves the deployment of our regular neighbourhood police team for extra hours each month within the parish of Ryhill. The times will vary as complaints and problems arise. The Chair and Deputy Chair of the Council are the designated links between the parish and the police team but parishioners will often speak directly to officers during their patrols. The Safe Scheme Coordinator produces a detailed monthly report for Council and we have recently begun to post a summary on our website. We continue to fund the Safe Scheme in Ryhill because of the very positive results achieved and the appreciative comments by parishioners. Parishioners may contact the Clerk to the Council to suggest priorities for our officers or speak directly to officers during their time within the village.

WAKEFIELD RURAL NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING TEAM

Parish Council continues to work with the neighbourhood policing team. Their main aim is to work with local communities and partners to reduce crime, target known offenders and problem areas, tackle anti-social behaviour and provide reassurance and long-term solutions to local problems.

Parishioners with concerns should contact the team with the assurance that their issues will be dealt with in confidence.

As always, if you see anyone acting in a suspicious manner or witness a crime taking place, please contact West Yorkshire Police on 101 or 999 (in an emergency).

It is important that crimes and suspicious incidents are reported via the correct channels because this builds up a picture of what is happening in communities and determines how police resources are deployed.

If you are reporting a crime that is not an emergency, please use 101 or the online reporting service at www.westyorkshire.police.uk/reportcrime

For suspicious incidents and to give information please use 101 or Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 or

Giveinformation/Crimestoppers (crimestoppers-uk.org)

If you wish to report anti-social behaviour please use 101 or report it via www.westyorkshire.police.uk/asbform



<https://twitter.com/#!/WakeyRuralNPT>



www.facebook.com/wakefield-rural-npt



VILLAGE CARETAKER

We continue to fund our own village caretaker who undertakes a wide variety of tasks on behalf of the parish council.

Our caretaker is John Hope and you may see him around the village as he carries out his work. The tasks are often those no longer undertaken by Wakefield MDC and that parish council has to provide.

STREETS IN RYHILL WITH HAVERCROFT POSTAL ADDRESSES

Did you know that the following streets are in RYHILL even though they have been allocated Havercroft addresses by the postal services?

They are:

Madeley Road, Drive and Mews;

Beachill Road, Crescent and Drive;

Hemmingway Close;

St James' Court;

Church View Close;

Greenacre Walk;

Lodges Close;

Ryecroft Avenue;

Park Walk;

Ings Close and

Kings Wood Drive.

We are highlighting these so that you know that you are represented by the parish councillors of Ryhill.

ALLOTMENTS

We have two allotment sites in the village: Cemetery Road and Sunnybank. These are popular but from time-to-time vacant plots become available. Parishioners who would like an allotment should contact the Clerk to the Council as on page 1. If there are no vacancies you will be placed on the waiting list and contacted should a plot become available.

HANGING BASKETS BULB PLANTING AND PLANTERS

We are committed to improving the look of the village with these. We have received many positive comments about the hanging baskets and the adopted planters that we have purchased and installed over the last few years. The hanging baskets are provided by First Impressions at Ackworth.

The planters are provided by us and are maintained by parishioners who have adopted them. Council provides reimbursement for twice yearly planting of planters though some adopters choose to fund this themselves. We are grateful to all of our adopters for maintaining the planters and helping to improve the appearance of the village.



ADDITIONAL GRIT BINS AND ROCK SALT

Since 2010 we have taken steps to help residents with extreme winter weather snaps through the purchase and storage of rock salt supplies. The grit bins are filled late autumn by our village caretaker. Over the years we have purchased and installed a total of 20 additional grit bins most of which are used properly by parishioners. Any theft or vandalism is reported to our Safe Scheme officers to monitor along with their other duties.



CHRISTMAS TREE AND LAMP POST DECORATIONS

We continue to fund the provision of the tree and lights for the Christmas season with the kind cooperation of St Paul's Methodist Church.

We also provide the lamp post decorations. Sadly, the number of these is determined by Amey/Wakefield MDC who carry out safety checks annually and determine the lamp posts that may be used.



PROTECTION OF GREEN SPACES OWNED OR LEASED BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

We continue to maintain and protect the green spaces within our parish boundaries: Ryhill Park and Stray and the old station site for public amenity. Many of you have told us how much you appreciate these areas and we would like to thank all of you who use the areas with respect to other users and those who control and clean up after their pets as requested.



RYCROFT SPORTS CENTRE

The parish continues to support the Centre and the services offered through financial contributions twice annually. Councillors from Ryhill Parish Council are Trustees or are active members of the management team.

The Centre is now in its 22nd year supporting the community and is looking a little tired. Some refurbishment and decorating will begin in the coming months. There remain worries about rising costs, utility costs being of particular concern.

The Centre's external sports facilities offer football, cricket, crown green bowling, 4G all-weather pitch and this year rugby makes a welcome return. Indoors badminton, karate, majorettes and tots football use the sports hall and the fitness and weights suites are open daily.

The social area with bar and catering kitchen provides food and refreshment throughout the day and caters for parties and receptions for all occasions. There is a weekly luncheon club every Wednesday.

As part of the Coronation celebrations the Centre hosted the Big Help Out on Monday 8th May to encourage people to volunteer to help support community activities.

The Centre will be holding the village gala this year in July/August, details to be announced.

Contact Rycroft Leisure Centre: 01226 723659

Email: **sports@rycroftleisure.com**

Follow on Facebook

Rycroft Youth Centre

Opening times

Monday 4.00 to 5.30pm. 8 - 12 years

6.00 to 8.00pm 13 - 16 years

Wednesday 5.00 to 7.00pm. 13 - 16 years

The Youth Centre offers a wide range of activities every week and operates successful summer camps during the school holidays. Activities range from arts and crafts, music, dance, performing arts and sport.

The Centre is again grateful to the Lottery who are supporting the Youth Centre for a further three years.

Contact Rycroft Youth Centre: 01226 723659

Email: **youth@rycroftleisure.com**



KING’S CORONATION BIG LUNCH 8 MAY 2023

Ryhill Parish Council donated funds and organised this special event to mark the Coronation of King Charles. We felt it important to bring the community together in some way and what better way than an afternoon tea at the local Rycroft Leisure Centre. Afternoon tea boxes were purchased from Polly’s Mixtures Gift and Coffee Shop, Sharlston.

Help was provided by a number of people, but mostly we would like to thank the volunteers from the Young at Heart group who helped with the setup, a tombola, raffle and the tea and coffee stall. We would also like to thank St Paul’s Methodist church and Havercroft and Ryhill Community Learning Centre for the loan of tables for the event.

The council also wanted to ensure that we included local talent as entertainment to reinforce the meaning of community, and we were lucky to have local vocalist Ellen Roy and Alex Hemingway, drums to entertain us for the afternoon.

The council would like to thank everyone who attended and help make the afternoon a big success.



DEFIBRILLATOR

The defibrillator for our village is located outside St Paul’s Church Chapel Street. It is used approximately once a fortnight. The replacement pads are provided and funded by Ryhill Parish Council and Cllr Booth cleans and resets the device after every use.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Once again, councillors would like to thank our district councillors for their support over the last year. Cllr Maureen Cummings has been particularly proactive and has also taken the minutes at two of our recent parish council meetings.

COMMITTEES

Each elected member undertakes additional roles as part of their work for Ryhill Parish Council.

Allotments Working Party:	Cllrs Atherton, Bashforth, G Booth, Burnage, Morley
Allotment Site Contacts:	Cllrs G Booth, Morley
Highways, Environment:	Cllrs Atherton, Caley, Fretwell
Litter Cart:	Cllr Caley
Newsletter:	Cllr Bashforth
Rycroft Leisure:	Cllr L Booth
Rycroft Trading:	Cllr Staves
Ryhill PC Planning sub-committee:	Cllrs Atherton, Bashforth, Burnage, G Booth, L Booth
WMDC Liaison:	Cllrs Burnage, Morley
YLCA:	Cllrs Burnage, Fretwell
Special Events Working Party	Cllrs Atherton, Fretwell, Morley
WebsiteCommittee	Cllrs Bashforth, L Booth, Fretwell, Morley

PARISH PRECEPT 2023-2024

The parish precept has been set at £54,185 for 2023-2024, the same as for the last 9 years. Council has tried to make savings despite increases in almost every bill for services because they know how parishioners are struggling with the cost of living.

These include councillors undertaking repairs themselves, undertaking the role of clerk/RFO unpaid instead of paying for a temporary clerk, delivering the newsletter themselves rather than paying a delivery contractor.