

Rushall Parish Council

Annual General Meeting
Thursday 22nd May 2025
Rushall Village Hall 7.30pm

Mr. Colin Gale (Chairperson) (CG)
Dr. Richard Tilbury (RT)
Mr. John Rogers (JR)
Mrs. Claire Ridge (Clerk) (CR)

Mr. Paul Oatway (PO)

1. Apologies: Iain Goodfellows and Nigel Carson
2. Minutes of last Parish Council Annual General Meeting held 30th May 2024, proposed by JR and second by RT, to be signed by CG. Accepted
3. Declaration of interest

None

4. Annual Review

RUSHALL PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REVIEW 2024-2025

By Colin Gale

Introduction

This year has continued to be very busy with village events and activities. The frequency of meetings has stayed constant with the previous years.

PC Meetings

Four scheduled meetings took place and the AGM. All of the scheduled meetings were held in person in the Village Hall. The normal precept working group was satisfied via email exchanges as it was straight forward. Meeting minutes are available on the Rushall Community Website.

Pewsey Area Board

Councillor Colin Gale continued to regularly represent Rushall at the PAB, the PAB's have continued as three meetings per annum. CG also sits on the Local Highways Footpath Improvement Group (LHFIG) and Pewsey Community Area Partnership (PCAP). The LHFIG meetings have continued to be all satisfied via virtual events with the PCAP meetings being held in person.

Village Events

The Village Hall Committee introduced regular events during the year which included a Curry Night, Burger & Brew, Ploughmans & Quiz Night, Jumble Sale etc along with the monthly Coffee Morning held at the Village Hall.

The Church held a further fundraising event in November 2024 with a talk on the Ukraine/Russia conflict. In December the church held the Darkness to Light Service and a Candlelight Carol Service which were both extremely popular. The school also held their Carol Service at the Church and there was the traditional Christmas Day service held. The number of monthly services continued at the reduced level due to the shortage of clergy.

The Parish Council carried out its annual Village Spring Clean on the 5th April with a group of volunteers followed by a well-earned retreat to the monthly 'Coffee Morning' afterwards. This is an important activity clearing up after the winter and preparing for Best Kept Village.

People

The population of the village has continued to stay fairly constant with not so many movements during the year. There is currently two houses empty and two houses being used for 'Air B&B' in the village. The current population total is around 154 including 33 children.

Planning Applications/ Planning Issues

The new government issued a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and as part of that change house building targets were significantly changed and Wiltshire's target was increased by 84%. Coupled with the fact that Wiltshire does not meet the requirement for a 5 Year Housing Land Supply, Wiltshire were placed in a very vulnerable position. To overcome that situation in the short term Wiltshire Council submitted its Local Plan for consultation and approval which maintained the old housing targets. Rushall is designated as a small village in the Local Plan and is covered by the limit of development for a small village but that limit has increased from a maximum of 10 to 20 houses in a development. Rushall PC recognised the potential impact and decided to start a review of the Rushall Village Design Statement as a 'Material Planning Document'. The original questionnaire was reviewed and updated and circulated to residents for feedback. An analysis of the feedback is in progress.

One new planning applications was received for the village during the year, construction of a wildlife pond at Rushall Manor.

The planning development for a Solar Farm above the Wilsford Barn AirDryer along the A342 has been withdrawn.

Policing

Regular Police reports were received at PC meetings

Communications

Colin Gale has produced 2 editions of the Rushall Parish News.

The new Rushall community website was maintained during the year by Claire Ridge along with the notice board at the Village Hall.

Precept

The Precept was increased by 1.87% on a band 'D' property which represented an increase of £2.18 pa.

Donations were made to PCAP and Pewsey Vale Tourism Partnership.

Best Kept Village Competition

Rushall entered the Laurence Kitching Competition for the 'Winner of Winners' for 2024/2025. Rushall scored well and did not receive any adverse comments from the judges, however, Rushall were unsuccessful this year. Rushall will be back in the main competition for 2025/2026.

LHFIG formally CATG

Colin Gale actively progressed the Rushall issues at LHFIG. Phase 3 of the footpath from Manor Cottage to half way to Rushall Drove was approved by Wiltshire Council for a substantive fund grant scheme and is scheduled to be built in March 2026. The final section to Rushall Drove has had the topography survey completed.

The further section of footpath between Hazelnut Cottage and Forge House was approved and the design for the footpath was agreed by LHFIG. This section of footpath is scheduled to be carried out in June 2025.

Community Speed Watch (CSW)

The team led by Iain Goodfellow regularly carried out speed watch throughout 2024/25. There are now 4 members of the team. The Speed Indicator Devices (SID's) that are rotated between 5 parishes were in operation throughout 2024/25. A new/additional SID was purchased and a site was identified at Rushall Bridge for the periods when the SID is at Rushall.

Defibrillator

The defibrillator remains in the telephone kiosk and is maintained by JR.

Flooding

Following on from the flooding at Rushall Bridge in January and March 2024 the ditch to the river in the front garden of Avon Villa was partly dug by CG which significantly improved the drainage. The drains at Rushall Bridge were flush twice in the year and the level of flooding was considerably less during the winter. CG has held a site meeting with Wiltshire Council Highways to discuss the drainage levels and explore improvements. CG obtained fresh stocks of sandbags but they were not deployed.

The ditch down church lane was dug and the drainage head from the drains at the crossroads was discussed with highways.

The flood plan has been updated again based on the experience during the year. CG took part in the Operational Flood South Operational Hybrid Meetings to progress issues. The PC also progressed the flooding issues with Wiltshire Council, Cabinet and Full Council.

Acknowledgements

The Chairman would like to thank his fellow councillors, and our Clerk, Claire Ridge for all their hard work throughout the year. I would also like to thank our Wiltshire Councillor Paul Oatway for his help and advice.

The PC would also like to thank Geoff Perry for the maintenance work along the
Rushal/Charlton footpath.

Colin Gale - Chairman Rushall Parish Council

May 2025

5. Declaration of councillors:

Iain is now a full councillor.

6. Election of Chairman; JR proposes, CG RT Seconds CG.

7. Questions from the floor: None

8. Date of next Annual General Meeting: TBA