

RATLEY AND UPTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a Parish Council Meeting held on 26th June 2025 in Ratley Village Hall at 7:45 pm		
No	Agenda Item	Action by
	<p>Present Cllrs. A Simpkins, D Payne, A Graham, J Obbard, Clerk and one member of the public</p>	
1.	<p>Open Forum No items</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies Apologies were received from Cllr. Berry who was out of the Country.</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of Interest None received</p>	
4.	<p>Edgehill Quarry updates. Cllr Mills reported that he had visited quarry yesterday – this was not a ‘surprise’ visit as the owners were aware of his visit. He was informed that the that quarry opens at 8:00. He witnessed the CCTV camera being positioned well, with a good view of trucks turning right out of entrance. The owners reportedly had no problem sharing CCTC footage, which will be made available shortly.</p> <p>There was some concern from the Councillors that the Quarry owners / operators appeared to have full control of the camera and the footage, and were free to select the images / video that they wished to share.</p> <p>Weight limit – this had to be put back owing to the purdah period. The Portfolio holder has to sign it off, which is believed to be imminent, and should be ratified at the next cabinet meeting.</p> <p>The Baulks footpath repair – the contractor plans to carry these works out during the 5th / 6th July weekend.</p>	
5.	<p>Minutes of previous meeting – 22nd May 2025 The minutes of the last meeting were proposed by Cllr. Simpkins, seconded by Cllr. Graham, agreed by all and duly signed by the Chair.</p>	
6.	<p>Matters arising from minutes of meeting on 22nd May 2025</p> <p>6.1 20 mph speed limit in Edgehill - Clerk to make contact with Parish Councillor at Tysoe – Chris Bell – who has had some experience of rules around traffic calming, lighting etc.</p> <p>6.2 Claranet Web Hosting - Clerk to investigate how to comply and how to avoid having to change to a “.gov” domain. – probably need to do something. All to consider options.</p>	<p>JO</p> <p>JO</p>

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	<p>6.3 Finance. All Finance actions were completed.</p> <p>6.4 Replacement picnic table near toddler swings – this has now been delivered to the Clerk’s home. Awaiting installation following removal of existing wooden table.</p> <p>6.5 Playground –</p> <p>6.5.1 Trim trail – Two large posts need replacing. Some posts are available – if long enough Cllr. Berry will use these, otherwise will order new ones. Carry over.</p> <p>6.5.2 Elephant needs painting. The Chair offered to paint this. Small pots of required colours to be purchased.</p> <p>6.5.3 Goal posts – significant corrosion. This action is now completed – a thank you card from the Parish Council has been sent to the kind volunteer.</p> <p>6.6 Old offices at the Hornton Masonry site. These are in very bad condition and there is considered to be a real risk of children injuring themselves. There is now a squatter in residence claiming adverse possession rights. The site owners agent is aware of the problems.</p> <p>6.7 The Clerk was asked to email Sarah Brooke Taylor to request more information about the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements to support the development of houses in the old quarry land adjacent to The Vicarage.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JO</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Planning Applications</p> <p>7.1 25/01258/LBC Upton House – replacement doors No objections were raised. Clerk to post appropriate comment.</p> <p>7.2 25/01391/AGNOT Lockhill Farm - Creation of new farm access track. Although some had felt that the application may be somewhat disingenuous, no objections were raised on planning grounds. Clerk to post accordingly.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">JO</p> <p style="text-align: center;">JO</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>District and County Councillors reports</p> <p>8.1 - District Council report – Cllr. Littlewood presented his report which is shown at Appendix 1.</p> <p>8.2 – County Councillor’s report – Cllr. Mills presented his report, which had been previously supplied. This is shown at Appendix 2</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Parish Plan</p> <p>9.1 Communications Sub-Committee. No items</p> <p>9.2 Environmental sub-committee Edgehill wildflowers Cllr. Graham mentioned that she may have to weed kill some weed suckers. Also, there may be a need to plant more plugs, but it will not be worthwhile doing this until we get some rain.</p>	

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10.	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>10.1 305 emails and 1 printed communication received since the last meeting .</p>	
11.	<p>Registering the Rose and Crown as a Community Asset – discussion</p> <p>Councillors agreed that we should look at the process to register the pub as a Community Asset. Clerk to investigate.</p>	JO
12.	<p>Finance</p> <p>12.1 Invoices for Payment – 10 transactions had been approved Councillors and paid by the Clerk since the last meeting – See Appendix 3 for details.</p> <p>12.2 2025/26 Accounts – these were discussed – See Appendix 3. Bank statements for both the Current account and the Savings account covering the period since the last meeting were presented for inspection. These tally with the Parish Council accounts.</p> <p>12.3 2024/25 Audit – Final accounts – These were presented as they formed the basis of the Internal Audit. These are shown in Appendix 4.</p> <p>12.4 2024/25 Audit – Certificate of Exemption – Unlike in previous years, as Ratley and Upton Parish Council had an expenditure of more than £25,000 during the 2024/25 financial year, we are required to have a full external audit carried out. Agreement with the requirement for an external audit was proposed by Cllr. Simpkins - chair, seconded by Cllr. Graham and agreed by all.</p> <p>The Internal Audit report was presented</p> <p>Clerk to make necessary arrangements following approval of AGAR</p> <p>12.5 2024/25 Audit – Annual Governance Statement – Following discussion about the 2024/25 finances, acceptance of the Annual Governance Statement was proposed by Cllr. Payne , seconded by Cllr. Simpkins. and agreed by all.</p> <p>Section 1 of the Annual Return was then signed by the Clerk and Cllr. Simpkins in her capacity as Chair.</p> <p>12.6 2024/25 Audit – Accounting statements. Approval of the Accounting statements, as audited by Monika Morgan on 5th May 2025 and signed by the Responsible Financial Officer on 25th June 2025 was proposed by Cllr. Graham, seconded by Cllr. Simpkins and agreed by all.</p> <p>Section 2 Accounting Statements, having previously been signed by the RFO, were then signed by Cllr. Simpkins in her capacity as Chair.</p> <p>12.7 2024/25 Audit – Additional Clerk duties – The Parish Council are required by law to publish certain information the PC web site. This includes:</p>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Report • Annual Governance Statement • Accounting Statements • Bank Reconciliation • Analysis of Variances • Information regarding public right to inspect accounts. <p>Clerk to complete documentation and forward to Alex Graham for publishing on the PC web site.</p> <p>Clerk to email AGAR report, Bank Reconciliation and Analysis of Variances to External Auditor</p>	<p>JO</p> <p>JO</p>
12.	<p>Parish Maintenance</p> <p>13.1 General</p> <p>No items</p>	
13.	<p>Urgent Business</p> <p>Following an initial enquiry about a potential to build a home for a local family House at Coleman’s – generally felt that PC could support the development.</p>	
14.	<p>Next meeting.</p> <p>The next meeting will be held in Ratley Village Hall on FRIDAY September 5th</p> <p>Dates of next meetings:-</p> <p>October 16th</p> <p>December 11th</p> <p>Cllr. Graham reported that she was unable to make the October meeting – Apologies.</p> <p>Meeting closed at 21:25</p>	

Signed (Chair) _____

Date _____

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Appendix I – District Councillor Report Tysoe ward Parish Council Report June 2025

1. Private Management Companies operating Public Open Spaces, Flood Alleviation Schemes, and Estate Roads.

A Motion on Notice has been posted by the Shadow Leader of the Council Daren Pemberton and seconded by the Leader Susan Juned. To be debated at the next Full Council meeting 14th July. There are many new developments that suffer from indifferent management and pay high costs for the privilege. Costs are unregulated and approaching unaffordability. The motion will enable a working group to accept evidence from residents and the MP's that represent the communities of SDC.

2. Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution.

Warwickshire County Council and the District and Borough Councils are to be abolished and replaced with a Unitary Authority. The new Authority will take on the combined responsibilities of the existing two tiers of local government which was the preferred option of the WCC prior to the last local elections. It now seems clear that it will not be possible for Warwickshire to join the West Midlands Combined Authority as the Mayor has clearly stated that the proposal will not be supported. Warwickshire can stand by itself as the population exceeds the 1.5m minimum set by the Government. There are two practical options that are being considered;

- a. A single Unitary Authority essentially replacing WCC without a Mayor.
- b. Two Unitary Authorities; on North Warwickshire, and one South Warwickshire.

The two new authorities would comprise North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, and Rugby Borough Councils, and SDC and WDC respectively.

The financial case for a single unitary authority is compelling but other issues are to be considered of a more social and local economy driving cohesion to communities.

In my opinion a Bi-Unitary Authority would replace one two tier system with another. On the other hand, SDC historically has demanded the lowest Council Tax of the other current Authorities and consolidation into a single authority would require a unified Council Tax demand.

It appears that the current 'preferred option' is a Bi-Unitary option but this will come before the SDC Cabinet on the 7th July, and Full Council on the 14th of July to confirm the 'preferred option' and for work to commence on the submission that will be made to the Minister of State for Local Government and English Devolution on the 28th November 2025.

3. South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP).

Work on the SWLP continues. It was recently announced at the Parish & Town Council Forum that the Housing Land Supply for SDC, originally quoted at some 24 years has now been reduced to 5 years and 22 days. This is due to increased housing demand loaded onto Rural Authorities with a corresponding reduction on Urban areas as well as a change to the standard method of calculating local Housing Need. The consequence of this change is that Reserved sites, Grey-belt, and brownfield sites will be actively sort to full fill Local Authorities duty to deliver more housing.

Currently there is no Policy in SDC for this and we will need to have one before the SWLP will be ready. If we do not achieve this then the flood gates could well be opened to developers.

In addition, Announced yesterday: Government's Neighbourhood Planning Support program is not being renewed by MHCLG. This disappointing but not unexpected news means that Town & Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums can no longer secure grant funds or free technical support packages for Neighbourhood Plan projects.

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4. Ellen Badger Hospital

I shall be attending a site visit as a member of SDC's Overview & Scrutiny Committee (OSC) next month to see exactly what has been provided for the community and how SDC funds have been spent. I shall report back in September. Cllr Malcolm Littlewood, Member for Tysoe Ward Stratford on Avon District Council

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Appendix 2 – County Councillor Report

County Councillor Report

Ratley and Upton Parish Council Meeting 26th June 2025

Supporting young people's mental health

Understanding and looking after mental wellbeing is just as important as taking care of physical health and a good habit to develop as early as possible.

Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/6236/supporting-young-people-s-mental-health>

FIS

Warwickshire's Family Information Service (FIS) provides information, advice and one-to-one support on issues including family relationships, finance, housing, parenting support and more. Learn more at

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/directory-record/40/family-information-service>

Help shape Autism support in Coventry and Warwickshire

People with experience of autism services in Coventry and Warwickshire are being asked to share their views. Coventry and Warwickshire All Age Autism Strategy was launched in 2021 to outline plans for improvement of services and support provided by Warwickshire County Council, Coventry City Council, Coventry and Warwickshire Integrated Care Board, and partner organisations and providers, to autistic people and their families, living in the area.

This five-year strategy was coproduced with support from autistic people and their families and people working in services and organisations that support them. The Strategy is divided into five priority areas that were identified through engagement and coproduction. A delivery plan is in place that describes how the Strategy will be delivered and to identify the roles and responsibilities of various organisations and services in delivery of the five priorities.

Priority 1

Support autistic people and people with social, communication and emotional health needs to help themselves pre and post diagnosis

Priority 2

Reduce inequalities for autistic people and make Coventry and Warwickshire autism friendly places to live

Priority 3

Develop a range of organisations locally with the skills to support autistic people

Priority 4

Develop a specialist support offer

Priority 5

Co-produce, work together and learn about autism

Find out more and have your say: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/6434/help-shape-the-future-of-autism-support-in-coventry-and-warwickshire->

Household Support Fund

Warwickshire County Council is continuing to distribute its Household Support Fund grant allocation via its established Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme (WLWS). The offer to residents is wide ranging and has been commended by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). It includes an extended welfare offer to all eligible residents by application, a countywide energy voucher campaign, automatic cost of living support for families/carers of children eligible for benefits-related free school meals, specific grants to Act on Energy and the Local Community Food Forum, as well as welfare grants for community-led groups and initiatives, including schemes led by district and borough councils that meet the funding criteria. The primary objective is to provide support with the **cost of essentials, including food, energy, water and wider essentials to those most in need**. In addition to providing immediate relief, this grant also aims to prevent poverty in communities related to these essential needs, enhancing local resilience through long-term, sustainable support. **Application form sent to Parish Clerk 6th June**

Drowning Prevention Week 2025

New data from Warwickshire Fire and Rescue Service has revealed that July sees the highest number of water-related incidents in Warwickshire. As Drowning Prevention Week 2025 begins, Warwickshire Fire and

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Rescue Service (WFRS) is intensifying its educational efforts and highlighting vital safety measures to help prevent incidents and keep residents safe.

A cornerstone of WFRS's prevention strategy is its comprehensive water safety education programme. This vital initiative is being delivered directly to young people across Warwickshire through various community groups, including Scout groups. The interactive programme equips young people with essential knowledge on how to stay safe around water, recognise dangers, and what to do in an emergency. Find out more about staying safe around open water: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/6426/drowning-prevention-week-2025-equipping-young-people-and-enhancing-water-safety>

Warwickshire County Council Launches Free Scooter Training to Promote Safe and Active Travel for Children

Warwickshire County Council's Road Safety Education Team is proud to launch a new initiative offering free practical scooter training to children across the county — promoting both safe travel and active lifestyles. The training is currently being delivered in schools that are actively engaged with Warwickshire's Safe and Active Schools Programme, as well as through Warwickshire's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Programme.

The training, delivered by qualified Road Safety Officers, focuses on developing essential skills for safe scooting.

This initiative encourages children and families to consider active travel options, such as scooters, for short journeys — including the school run. By building confidence and competence through hands-on training, children are empowered to travel safely and independently, while developing lifelong habits that support health, wellbeing, and sustainability.

In a generous show of support, Micro Scooters has donated 20 scooters and helmets to the Road Safety Education Team. These will be made available to schools following training sessions, helping to remove barriers to participation and ensuring all children have the opportunity to learn and travel safely. This partnership highlights the power of collaboration in delivering meaningful community impact. If you want to find out more about practical scooter training opportunities in Warwickshire, please contact Warwickshire Road Safety education Team at: roadsafetyeducation@warwickshire.gov.uk.

To find out more about Micro-Scooters please visit: <https://www.micro-scooters.co.uk/>

National Gypsy, Roma and Traveller History Month

A series of free community roadshow events are being held in Warwickshire in June to mark national Gypsy, Roma, and Traveller History Month.

Thursday 26 June at Stratford-upon-Avon Library, 10am – 2.30pm

Friday 27 June at Bidford-on-Avon Library, 10am – 2.30pm

Monday 30 June at the headquarters of Warwickshire Police, 10am - 2pm

The final event at the headquarters of Warwickshire Police will feature campfires and traditional activities, including the opportunity to see a traditional horse-drawn vehicle. The roadshow has been organised by the Warwickshire Gypsy, Roma and Traveller engagement working group, which was established in 2020 and consists of a collection of professionals and support services along with several Warwickshire schools. Read more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/6429/warwickshire-marks-national-gypsy-roma-and-traveller-history-month-with-community-events>

Pedestrianisation of the Parade in Leamington

The views of Leamington's residents, visitors, and businesses are being sought on new concept plans to transform Parade into a traffic-free space to give the town centre a major economic and cultural boost.

Discover more: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/6372/views-sought-on-pedestrianisation-of-the-parade-in-leamington>

Have your say on local transport services

Warwickshire County Council is calling on residents to have their say in the 2025 National Highways and Transport Public Satisfaction Survey, which began rolling out from 6 June 2025.

The responses will help shape the future of local highways and transport services across the county. Warwickshire is one of 111 local authorities taking part in this national initiative, which offers residents the opportunity to comment on a wide range of services – from road conditions and footpaths to cycling infrastructure and public transport.

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At least 3,300 randomly selected residents across Warwickshire will receive the 12-page questionnaire by post, with the option to complete it online using a unique access code. A reminder will follow, and results will be published in late October 2025. Read more:

<https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/news/article/6436/warwickshire-resident-invited-to-have-their-say-on-local-transport-services>

County Councillor Grant Fund

Just a reminder that the application window for Round 1 of the Councillors' Grant Fund 2025-2026 opened on Monday 9 June at 9.00am, closing on Sunday 20 July at 5.00pm.

Chris Mills- County Councillor Ratley & Upton

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Appendix 3 - Current Account status up to 26th June 2025

Payments					
Date	Who	Ref	VAT	NET	Total
02/04/2025	Thomas Fox - Cut 1	1531855582	£83.15	£415.75	£498.90
04/04/2025	Walc Subscription	1536707421	£25.00	£157.00	£182.00
22/04/2025	Bank Service Charge	452194490		£4.25	£4.25
23/04/2025	A Berry (Grass Seed)	1547005401		£11.99	£11.99
23/04/2025	J Obbard (Massey Harpers) Stock Board	1551966232	£62.06	£310.32	£372.38
25/04/2025	Thomas Fox - Grass cutting Cuts 2 & 3	1548308507	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
26/04/2025	Screwfix (A Berry) - washers for climbing frame	1548808941	£2.97	£14.82	£17.79
26/04/2025	Metals4U (A Berry) - tubing for climbing frame	1548308507	£9.25	£46.26	£55.51
17/05/2025	Clear Insurance	1560991899		£492.24	£492.24
19/05/2025	Monika Morgan	1561944446		£75.00	£75.00
19/05/2025	Bank Service Charge	454640713		£4.25	£4.25
23/05/2025	Thomas Fox - Grass cutting Cuts 4 & 5	1569335567	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
23/05/2025	John Hopkins - bus shelter	1564228576		£100.00	£100.00
23/05/2025	Ratley Village Hall - donation	1555344373		£750.00	£750.00
23/05/2025	Ratley PCC - maintenance support	1560481625		£750.00	£750.00
04/06/2025	No Butts Bins - picnic bench	1562706577	£149.00	£745.00	£894.00
14/06/2025	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q1	1580499308		£517.14	£517.14
14/06/2025	HMRC - PAYE Q1	1576832068		£344.76	£344.76
17/06/2025	Bank Service Charge	454640713		£4.25	£4.25
24/06/2025	A Berry - Wickes Paint and sundried for goal posts	1582638735	£6.90	£34.50	£41.40
24/06/2025	A Berry - Wickes Paint for goal posts	1582390596	£2.70	£13.50	£16.20
24/06/2025	A Berry - Wickes White Spirit for goal posts	1582639359	£0.98	£4.87	£5.85
26/06/2025	Thomas Fox - Grass cutting Cuts 6 & 7	1587180100	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
	Year 2025/26 Total		£840.91	£7,290.40	£8,131.31
	Current Balance				£788.47

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Appendix 4 - 2024/25 Accounts (to support approval of Annual Governance and Accounting)

Date	Who	Ref	VAT	NET	Total
10/04/2024	WALC Subs	1324316673	£24.20	£151.00	£175.20
11/04/2024	Npower - Lighting charges	1327752922	£12.35	£246.98	£259.33
22/04/2024	Caloo - Swings	1331006163	£737.00	£3,685.00	£4,422.00
22/04/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 2 and 3	1331007392	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
22/04/2024	Lighthorne Tree Care - High Street Bank	1330273438		£550.00	£550.00
18/05/2024	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q1	1355034626		£453.57	£453.57
18/05/2024	HMRC - PAYE Q1	1349952711		£302.38	£302.38
25/05/2024	John Hopkins - cleaning bus shelter	1354117305		£100.00	£100.00
25/05/2024	Clear Insurance	1354216305		£382.62	£382.62
30/05/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 4, 5 & 6	1354707810	£249.45	£1,247.25	£1,496.70
01/06/2024	Well Medical (J Obbard) - Defib' pads	1359050568	£23.98	£119.90	£143.88
27/06/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 7 and 8	1331007392	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
28/06/2024	Monika Morgan - Internal Audit	1376553754		£75.00	£75.00
27/07/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 9 and 10	1384370556	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
02/08/2024	Naturescape wildflowers	1401546423	£112.00	£560.00	£672.00
02/08/2024	Claranet Web Hosting	1402960160	£12.10	£60.50	£72.60
03/08/2024	Lighthorne Tree Care - Cherry trees Town Hill	1389261671		£540.00	£540.00
22/08/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 11 and 12	1408518338	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
09/09/2024	A Graham - warning tape for wildflowers	1422139270		£9.96	£9.96
24/09/2024	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q2	1431152536		£453.57	£453.57
24/09/2024	HMRC - PAYE Q2	1432579095		£302.38	£302.38
24/09/2024	Ratley Village Hall	1427557221		£750.00	£750.00
24/09/2024	Ratley PCC	1431251103		£750.00	£750.00
25/09/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 13 and 14	1428123370	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
26/09/2024	A Berry - Glue for Barbeque	1419425884		£5.85	£5.85
21/10/2024	PlaySafety Ltd	1443318359	£19.60	£98.00	£117.60
21/10/2024	Thomas Fox - Cuts 15 and 16	1434079924	£166.30	£831.50	£997.80
26/10/2024	Caloo - bolt covers	1437099099	£7.10	£35.50	£42.60
28/11/2024	Thomas Fox - Banks, hedges and wall	1465089386	£93.32	£466.62	£559.94
07/12/2024	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q3	1474492963		£644.29	£644.29
07/12/2024	HMRC - PAYE Q3	1474493507		£429.53	£429.53
07/12/2024	Moore & Tibbets	1470777976	£150.00	£750.00	£900.00
07/12/2024	A Berry - land registration	1474497377		£6.00	£6.00
27/01/2025	WCC - Street light maintenance	1497738356	£14.90	£74.52	£89.42
03/02/2025	No Butts Bins - picnic bench	1498576571	£226.80	£907.20	£1,134.00
13/02/2025	Shipston Home Nursing donation	1504073874		£200.00	£200.00
28/02/2025	J Obbard - Clerk fees Q4	1507542165		£517.14	£517.14
28/02/2025	HMRC - PAYE Q4	1516721007		£344.76	£344.76
01/03/2025	Thomas Fox - Banks and hedges 2	1521846008	£39.24	£196.22	£235.46
18/03/2025	Bank Service Charge	1528382193		£4.25	£4.25
28/03/2025	Thomas Fox - Hedge cutting and tree clearance	1528382193	£344.20	£1,721.00	£2,065.20
29/03/2025	Ratley Village Hall - meeting charges	1524033431		£200.00	£200.00
	Year 2024/25 Total		£3,064.04	£22,329.99	£25,394.03

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