Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan

2025 to 2042
Appendix H - Infrastructure Assessment



September 2026

Prepared by the Ringmer Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Ringmer Parish Council

Introduction

Any neighbourhood development plan setting out the vision, objectives and policies relating to development in the parish needs also to set out an assessment of the infrastructure needs and plans that are the building blocks of any development, and the glue that holds it all together.

It is also immensely difficult for a parish, any parish, to be authoritative on the assessment, provision and delivery of this infrastructure. In most cases, it is not the owner of the infrastructure, nor the commissioning body, has no decision-making powers, has no, or very limited, budget in the wider context of infrastructure delivery. Furthermore, it does not hold the countywide, regional or national perspectives necessary to understand how transport, utilities, healthcare, education and other services must function together as an integrated, cohesive system.

The planning, funding and coordinating of these infrastructure networks sit largely beyond the remit and capabilities of parish councils, notwithstanding the important role of parish councils in representing local needs and priorities.

That said, a lack of cohesion, planning and delivery of appropriate infrastructure at the right level and at the right time is felt, brutally often, at local, parish level, when the county or nationwide infrastructure planning and delivery fails to achieve the outcomes desired, is delayed, often for years, or is simply inadequate to address the needs.

It must also be recognised that, in many cases, the critical infrastructure currently in place is already failing our community. This is evident in the provision of water supply, where year after year residents face hosepipe bans and restrictions lasting for many months. It is also apparent in wastewater treatment, where our local treatment works has one of the worst records for discharging raw sewage into local watercourses.

Similar pressures are evident in education, with local primary schools already operating at capacity, let alone being able to accommodate the significant increase in demand that would result from major housing expansion. Transport infrastructure presents further challenges. Decision-makers and responsible agencies repeatedly suggest that more people will walk, cycle, or use public transport, despite the reality that this is an already car-dependent community.

Moreover, the adequacy of public transport remains a significant concern. Existing services are satisfactory only if journeys are limited to Lewes, Brighton, or Eastbourne. Travel beyond these destinations is often hindered by prohibitively long journey times and a lack of direct connections to railway lines used by commuters. Electricity supply is another area of concern, with residents frequently experiencing unplanned power outages.

The additional strain that large-scale developments would place on our infrastructure, and consequently on our community, must be fully assessed and addressed in advance. Infrastructure improvements should be delivered proactively, with sufficient capacity in place before any significant new housing development is permitted.

Therefore, this infrastructure assessment is aimed at influencing those decision-makers elsewhere within the governance structure who have the powers, resources and responsibilities to deliver infrastructure. It identifies what the parish considers to be the critical infrastructure required both as the building blocks of future development and as the glue that binds communities together.

Beyond these functional requirements, it also considers the infrastructure, facilities and services that contribute to the character of the parish and make it a more pleasant, attractive and fulfilling place in which to live.

We therefore set out in two sections the infrastructure needs for the parish:

1. In **Appendix 1** the critical infrastructure, the commissioning, technical design and delivery of which lies in the hands of decision-makers elsewhere, such as
   - Statutory infrastructure (e.g. water, sewerage, electricity, gas)
   - Highway and transport means
   - Digital and telecommunications provision
   - Health, education, and emergency service provision

   It is intended to:
   - Sit alongside and support the Neighbourhood Development Plan
   - Provide clear evidence of infrastructure needs to decision-makers
   - Inform planning consultations and infrastructure provider engagement
   - Assist local authorities in infrastructure coordination

   The current assessment is based on available evidence and the lived experience of the community at the present time. While some infrastructure may be considered adequate today, this may change as the village grows through development planned in the Lewes Local Plan.

   Our expectation is that infrastructure investment must keep pace with development. Without it, infrastructure that is currently adequate may decline from adequate to poor and, ultimately, to failing.

   Conversely, sustained investment can ensure that growth is supported while maintaining and enhancing residents' quality of life.

2. **Appendix 2** addresses community amenity infrastructure that the parish council has the ability to influence, commission, deliver or responsibility for maintaining subject to available resources and within budgets. This includes items such as meeting spaces, playgrounds and recreational facilities, heritage assets, green spaces and traffic calming measures.

   Delivery often depends on collaboration with other agencies whose priorities may differ from those of the parish council. Major capital projects may also take time to deliver, as funding must be secured through reserves, future income or external funding sources.

This infrastructure assessment supports and should be read in conjunction with the full Ringmer Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Appendix 1: Critical infrastructure provided by external agencies

Below lists the critical infrastructure which we know must be in place, provided by other agencies, to ensure the parish functions to the reasonable expectations of the community. The assessment of status, impact and required improvement are provided in the expectation that the appropriate agencies will take those views into account when assessing developments for approval.

Ref	Infrastructure Dependency (and relevant policy)	Provider	Current Status Assessment (Good/Adequate/ Poor/Failing)	Impact	Evidence Source	Required improvement
1	Wastewater capacity (R1, R24)	Southern Water	Failing	The Ringmer WWTW in Neaves Lane, is located less than 10 metres above sea level and drains into Glynde Reach. It is operating at close to and more frequently above licence and design capacity, with a headroom of only an additional 40 households. There is evidence that Glynde Reach suffers from serious pollution, with lower water quality than any other East Sussex River and a further substantial fall in water quality between 2009 and 2013. Many of the rural parts of Ringmer Parish do not have access to mains drainage and rely on private cesspits or similar arrangements.	Statutory consultee response; community engagement.	Massive increase in treatment capacity required immediately and phased thereafter to cope with increased development demands.

2	Water Supply (R23)	South-east Water	Poor	Increasing water usage restrictions with frequent bans on certain water uses over extended periods. Increasing incidence of leaks from failure of pipework. Exceptionally low levels of water in reservoirs placing more pressure on the environment from water extraction from aquifers and rivers.	Community survey; provider correspondence. SE Water 5 Year Business Plan 2025 to 2030 states that the plan is to cut individual daily water use to 110 litres per head by 2050. Current usage per person is 233.4 litres, 109 litres is lost through leakage per property daily. There is no detail how the reduction will be managed.	Increase water capture and storage capacity, fix leaks proactively, increase water metering.
3	Surface drainage (R1, R24)	Southern Water/ Lead Local Flood Authority/ East Sussex County Council (ESCC)	Adequate	Increasing incidence of flooding of houses and roads following rain.	Flood mapping; resident reports	Increase capacity to deal with increased flood events, reduce amount of hard surfaces, do not build over aquifers.
4	Electric network capacity (R5)	Power networks UK/ commercial providers	Adequate	Occasional but regular outages in parts of Parish, possibly due to overhead cabling, increased demand from new housing.	Provider consultation. • Published datasets show Amber at 11 kV and primary level and Amber-to-Red at LV level • There is no published spare "Green" capacity for large new demand without reinforcement. [ukpowernet...orks.co.uk], [griddata.uk] 2,200 homes would typically mean: • Definite LV reinforcement	All new developments to have cabling placed underground. Cabling infrastructure to support the installation of heat pumps and solar panels

					• Very likely 11 kV reinforcement • Likely primary substation reinforcement (extension or new build) Developer-funded infrastructure under UK connection charging rules. [library.uk...orks.co.uk]	
5	Gas network capacity (R5)	SGB South-east	Good	Reliance on gas supply being reduced.		Installation of heat pumps and solar panels in new developments
6	Roads - truck/strategic (R16, R17, R18)	National Highways for truck roads	Adequate	No trunk roads inside Parish but critical for connectivity to outlying places of work, education and leisure.		Publish long-term planning for strategic network improvements and avoid delays/postponements
7	Roads – major. non-strategic (R16, R17, R18)	ESCC/Unitary Authority	Poor	Increasingly congested during peak times leading to longer journey times/delays to schedule public services, increased pollution levels. Road condition generally poor, in some cases failing, leading to damage to vehicles and constant road works. Some access roads are **inadequate** for future expansion of public service transport provision	Traffic data; NP consultation. Community feedback and vehicle volume observations	Housing development should proceed at a slower pace, with reduced growth targets. Traffic management should be improved, at known congestion pinch points. Greater emphasis should be placed on forward planning of transport networks, including identifying freight/lorry routes away from the village. Road maintenance standards need to be improved. Roads should be repaired to provide a long-life repair. Infrastructure works should be better coordinated.

						Utility companies, highway authorities, and other agencies should Use DfT's Street Manager
8	Pavements & Crossings (R16, R17)	ESCC/Unitary Authority	Poor	Poorly maintained, liable to flooding from surface water, inadequate capacity, non-existent in critical areas, not cohesive. Difficult to persuade community to do more walking if path network inadequate	Community engagement; site observation.	Proper provision of adequately maintained pavements, that are connected to network used by community.
9	Cycle ways (R16, R17)	ESCC/Unitary Authority	Failure	Only cycle way, Earwig to New Road. Non-existent in the housing areas of the village. Thus, forcing cyclist onto busy, pot-holed roads or poor path network which negatively affects pedestrian uses. Difficult to persuade community to do more cycling if cycle ways/network inadequate.	Community engagement; site observation.	Proper provision of adequately maintained cycle ways, that are connected to network used by community and other settlements.
10	Public transport – bus (R16)	Private company (Stagecoach)/ East Sussex County Council/ Unitary Authority	Adequate	Buses only go via Lewes to Brighton or via Hailsham to Eastbourne. While service 29 goes through the Parish it does not go via Ringmer, the main settlement in the Parish thereby no connection to Uckfield (train service) Crowborough or T/Wells. ESCC funding for service 28 extension to Hailsham/Eastbourne only for one more year 2027. No “local”	Timetable review; community feedback. Community feedback.	Provide funding for public transport to ensure continued service provision. Provide more community bus services as found in other Districts. Provide a cohesive, joined up network that combines different forms of public transport linking at transport hubs e.g. bus services to connect with trains at Lewes

				service serving the increasing number of new developments and consequently people using private cars leading to greater congestion. It does not encourage the community to use public service more frequently.		and Uckfield especially for peak commuting times.
11	Public transport – train (R16)	Private company (Southern)/ Network Rail	Failure	Whilst there is no provision in Ringmer, many residents rely on the train for work and education purposes. There is no direct public transport link to either Lewes or Uckfield and therefore rely on private cars and incur high parking charges at the station. This does not encourage the community to use public transport and increases costs	Timetable review; community feedback.	In the absence of a direct service in Ringmer, provide bus connectivity to railway services at Lewes and Uckfield.
12	Healthcare – GP (R22)	Lewes Foundry Healthcare	Poor	Long waiting time to get appointments. To get an appointment, residents often must accept an appointment in Lewes, creating more journeys adding to pollution, costs, inconvenience	NHS information. Community feedback	Expand provision in Ringmer, be more imaginative on provision e.g. a “pop-up” service in the Broyle.
13	Healthcare – dentist (R22)	Private (no NHS)	Poor	No NHS provision locally, although the private service appears to adequate and of a high standard.	NHS information. Community feedback	As a national issue this needs to be addressed by government policy and funding.
14	Healthcare – optician (R22)	Private organisations	Adequate	Ther4 is no provision in Ringmer. Some private organisations provide home visit facility.	NHS information.	NA as not considered as having a major impact

15	Education – early years/nursery (R22)	Private organisations	Poor	Provision as currently provided is inadequate to meet the need with limited places, with times that do not match parental employment demands and at a cost that makes the provision almost unviable.	Community feedback	As a national issue this needs to be addressed by government policy and funding.
16	Education – primary 5-11 (R22)	ESCC/ Unitary Authority	Failure	Primary school at capacity leading to families being unable to get primary school children into the local school, resulting in out-of-village journeys, separating siblings and lack of cohesive path into local secondary school.	ESCC reporting. Community feedback	Provide additional capacity for primary provision withing the village for the ever-increasing size of the community. Provide school street status to prevent congestions around school at peaks times. Will need to expand the current 1.5 form entry to 2 forms
17	Education - secondary 11-16 (R22)	ESCC/ Unitary Authority/ King's Academy Ringmer	Adequate	With the closure of the VI form capacity has increased for 11-16. The school is also fed by out-of-parish communities there is increased numbers being bused into the village creating congestion around the school. Only normal service buses provided resulting in large numbers of students trying to access the service. Youth services formerly provided by ESCC were moved to the Academy but have now	Ofsted report 2024. Community feedback	Provide school bus service to alleviate student congestion issues. Improve crossing facilities of the busy road and reduce vehicle speeds e.g. peak time 20mph restrictions, to improve safety. Increase youth services provision to meet current and future need

				been discontinued. There is thus a significant unmet social need.		
18	Education - tertiary 16-19 (R22)	ESCC/ Unitary Authority	Adequate	Only now provided out-of-parish, resulting in additional journeys		
19	Higher education (R22)	Universities	NA	Whilst it may be desirable for those wishing to access higher education to do so locally, there is no bar and historically applicants will travel to other parts of the UK to access the appropriate course.		As a national issue this needs to be addressed by government policy and funding. Address both the affordability of study and support and promote viable alternatives to higher education.
20	Telephone – landline (R8). Full fibre by 2027	Open Reach/ private companies	Adequate	Reducing reliance on copper wire technology. Digital service failure in power outage.	Community feedback	Extend full fibre to home and businesses, replacing reliance on copper technology.
21	Mobile network (R8)	Private companies	Adequate	Coverage can be patchy in outlying parts of the parish leading to outages. Failure in power cuts.	Community feedback	Improve mast and signalling across the parish. Install power backup.
22	Broadband (R8)	Open Reach/ private companies	Adequate	Without full fibre supplied to the parish it will impact on working from home and the ability to access highest-speed functionality. The current network suffers frequent, albeit minor, outages	Ofcom data; Community feedback	Extend full fibre to home and businesses, replacing reliance on copper technology.

Appendix 2:
Community infrastructure that the community or the Parish Council manage.

There are two main settlements with planning boundaries, Ringmer village and the Broyleside. There are in addition several small hamlets in the countryside, some of which are the remains of medieval settlements that pre-date Ringmer itself. The parish includes elements of two distinct landscape character areas, as identified in the National Character Assessment, which are the South Downs and the Low Weald. Ringmer village stands at the transition between them. In the Lewes District Rural Settlement Study, Ringmer Village is classified as a Rural Service Centre while Broyleside is classified as a Local Village.

There are major constraints in providing additional community infrastructure, mainly due to the availability of space and funding to provide new construction. The Parish Council will seek to have developers provide facilities within developments where this is viable; and it receives Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds which may be used to provide a degree of capital funding for projects. Other capital projects need to be funded out of general precept reserves, ideally with matched funding from other sources.

However, these then need to be self-sufficient thereafter in terms of operating and maintenances costs, and therefore ongoing viability needs to be assessed before any capital projects can be undertaken. If provided by a third party, often a not-for-profit or charitable organisation, they also need to demonstrate future financial viability, with some support from the Parish Council out of the tax-payer precept as necessary.

Below lists the major community infrastructure within the Parish, who owns or provides the amenity, its current use, and potential for development of existing and new amenities.

Ref	Current amenities (and relevant policy)	Provider	Current Use and Assessment	Potential Future Development
1	**Community open spaces (green and blue)**			
1.1	Village Green. Lewes Rd(R13) A registered village green	The Christie Estate, leased to Ringmer Parish Council (RPC)	The main open space of the village, home of the village cricket club (see below) and stool ball. A children's play area is in one corner, and used for fairs, circus, village events. Very visible and maintained in part by the cricket club and RPC. Ringmer Wild Flowers maintain certain areas for wildlife. Has a "no parking on the Green" policy	None envisaged as it is a multi-use open space already well used and frequented, including fair, circus, Summer Fayre. Could provide trees for shading and further seating, with agreement of Christie Estate and funding.

			with exemptions granted for events where viable.	
1.2	Almond Field, north of Lewes Rd (R13)	RPC– legacy from local resident	Maintained in accordance with legator trust deed as a quiet space for nature and contemplation. Has a no dogs policy to ensure quiet.	Potential for additional wildlife-friendly planting and seating. Use of sheep as a natural means of keeping grass under control and source of funding.
1.3	Anchor Field (R13)	RPC	Seen as an informal open space for residents to have impromptu picnics, and children to kick a football.	Possible siting of a picnic table, waste receptacles.
1.4	Fingerpost Field off Broyle Lane (R13, R20)	Owned by Lewes District Council (LDC)). Due to transfer to RPC in 2026	Came into ownership of RPC in 2026. Site of new skatepark after small amenity removed when football club sold its land for development of Caburn Field. Also, site of small impromptu football pitch and more recently an enclosed playground	RPC will set out a new vision for development of the space with additional recreational facilities, walking/running track and "sensory" and seating area for consultation with the community.
1.5	Village pond adjacent to The Green(R13)	RPC	The main pond (of several in the parish) after which Ringmer got its name.	RPC undertaking assessment of maintenance requirement to clean up pond and vicinity with a view of its long-term health.
1.6	Cheyney Field adjacent to the green (R20)	Charity	Used by community clubs as well as by the Cricket Club as a second wicket and practice nets. Home of Ringmer Croquet Club and Ringmer Bowls Club.	None envisaged.
1.7	Broyle Close off Broyle Lane (R20)	LDC – no transfer to RPC envisaged	Small children's playground with play equipment.	None envisaged.
1.8	Broyle Rec off Broyle Lane (R20)	RPC	Open area for informal football.	None envisaged.

1.9	The Forges Communal Open Space, off western end of Lewes Rd(R13, R20)	LDC	An open space including a play area for small children. No formal responsibility of RPC.	
1.10	Springett Avenue Shopping Precinct (R7)	Private Organisation	This is the main retail site for the parish, established in the 1960s/70s, providing 11 retail units. The area outside has had minimal development in that time with a small number of benches, planters and a flagpole. It could be a focal point for other activities and has occasional had choirs and music bands perform there.	RPC has recently reached agreement with the landlord of the area to make proposals to renovate the precinct to make it more attractive and provide community amenities for use by various groups and associations.
2	**Community indoor meeting spaces**			
2.1	Village Hall Lewes Rd (R19)	Charitable Trust	The main indoor community space for Ringmer, with two halls, one smaller hall, two kitchens, community library and public toilet. Built 1897 with extension in the 1974 and 2016. The community space in Ringmer has reached capacity, with a recent problem which required the closure of one hall showed that there are very limited alternatives to move to.	A plan to re-develop the Village Hall was produced several years back. This could be revisited with a view to updating and costed in the light of expected expansion of the village, Alternative options of additional indoor community meeting space could be explored with developers to supplement the facility of the main Village Hall.
2.2	Church Hall adjacent to St Mary's Church (R19)	Chichester Diocese	Used primarily for Church community use and occasionally for activities supported by the Church.	None envisaged.
2.3	Goldsborough Hall, adjacent to Cheyney Field (R19)	Scout Association (Cheney Trust site)	In need of extensive renovation.	Some renovation has been completed. Potential for RPC support.
3	**Sport facilities** There are inadequate indoor facilities for exercise, the gymnasium and main hall at King's Academy Ringmer are only available outside of school hours and in term time. There is a small private members gym is in the shopping precinct.			

3.1	Cricket pitch on The Green (R20)	Private association	The cricket club has been a part of village life for well over a century and provide a cohesive part of what make us a village. The cricket club building is leased from the Christie Estate	The Cricket Club, like other clubs and associations in the village, may approach the RPC for financial support. It is currently developing a plan to upgrade its pavilion and equipment shed to provide modern and improved facilities for members, players, and visiting teams, which in principle RPC supports
3.2	Football pitch near King's Academy Ringmer/ Lewes Road (R20)	Private association (ESCC site)	Ringmer AFC was founded in 2020/ Provides facilities for amateur league football	Mission Statement of the club: *"Striving to become a sustainable asset of value to the wider community through first-class facilities, access, and opportunity for all. Proudly providing a high-quality level of football with a focus on developing a pathway for local players."*
3.3	Sports facilities east of King's Academy Ringmer(R20)	Ringmer Community Land Trust, managed by Ringmer Football Club.	A new outdoor sports provision for the community as part of a mixed-use residential / leisure site development.	Management is by Ringmer AFC.
3.4	Fingerpost Field(R20)	RPC	Skatepark Provided at Fingerpost Field and opened in 2025.	RPC will set out a new vision for development of the space with additional facilities, to promote exercise by cycling, walking/running.
3.5	Swimming pool adjacent to King's Academy Ringmer (R20)	ESCC	Recently upgraded and re-opened after community lobbying. May be affected by local government re-organisation.	None envisaged.
4	**Heritage assets**			

4.1	Jubilee Rose Garden (R6) Lewes Rd adjacent to The Green	LDC	Maintained by RPC.	None envisaged.
4.2	Old Pump at Jubilee Rose Garden (R6)	LDC	Maintained by RPC.	None envisaged.

4.3	Pump and Green, Lewes Rd (R6)	RPC	Maintained by RPC.	Recently installed wooden posts and chain link. May need to assess subsidence issue given recent hot dry weather.
4.4	Jubilee Cottages Potato Lane, and other affordable housing	Charitable Trust	Housing provided at low, affordable rents, supported by RPC via maintenance grants.	RPC set aside funding to support additional acquisition of affordable housing, as it has in the past.
4.5	War memorial adjacent to The Green(R6)	RPC	Recently cleaned and maintained.	None envisaged.
4.6	Village Sign adjacent to The Green (R6)	RPC		None envisaged.
5	**Other**			
5.5	Bus shelters	RPC	Located at: Community Collage westbound, Kennel Corner westbound, Kiln Rd, Laughton Road eastbound and westbound, Old PO Mews westbound, Glynde Corner westbound, Pump Cottage westbound, A26 near Cock Inn westbound, Jubilee Rose Garden eastbound	Additional bus shelters and waste bins will be requested as part of housing developments.
5.6	Wooden Fingerposts	ESCC, maintained by RPC	Located at: Wellingham Lane/Barcombe Mills Lane, Norlington Lane/Ham Lane, Norlington Lane/Bishops Lane, Boxhall Pump Green, Harveys Lanes/Green Lane	None envisaged.
5.7	Traffic calming (R17)	ESCC	There are currently few traffic calming measures in the village or elsewhere in the Parish, as our roads and pavements are owned and managed by ESCC. Any new traffic-calming initiatives require its agreement and cooperation before they can be introduced. In addition, many proposals also require the support of Sussex Police to ensure that they do not create	Where feasible, and subject to the agreement of East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and other relevant authorities, the Parish Council aim to encourage the adoption of the following measures: • **Quiet Lanes** to help reduce vehicle speeds on rural lanes that

			unintended safety risks or give rise to compliance and enforcement concerns.	are used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders for recreational purposes, thereby improving safety and encouraging shared use of these routes. • **A School Street** on Harrisons Lane to create a safer environment for children and other road users at school arrival and departure times. *(Please note that this is not considered feasible outside King's Academy.)* • **Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs)** at up to three locations where excessive vehicle speeds pose a risk to the safety of other road users. We may also consider: • **Traffic-calming features**, such as pinch points or raised sections of carriageway, at key locations where speeding is a persistent concern, subject to feasibility assessments and the approval of the relevant authorities.
5.8	Allotments (R21)	LDC, RPC and Ham Lane private users	The parish has four areas of allotments (Earwig Corner, the Electricity Substation, Broyle Lane, Green Close), which are rented at low/nominal rents to people resident within the Parish to grow their own produce. The Parish supplies water at the Electricity Sub Station in addition to the plots. Private allotments at Ham Lane.	RPC will look to support additional allotments and community gardens provisions amongst new developments, given land is generally not available separately.

5.9	Cemeteries, Church Lane	RPC. (Original Church yard. Now closed to new burials) Current Church yard, Parochial Church Council	Capacity at the "new" cemetery will be reached over next 10-15 years. A nearby site will be needed to be found and acquired by the Parochial Church Council who are responsible for the management and maintenance of open churchyards. Currently no funding is earmarked for acquiring a new site.	