

# RIPON CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2024/25



*Making Ripon a better place to live*

## Mayor's Introduction



Cllr Sid Hawke  
The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Ripon  
for the term 2024/25

It has been a great honour to serve as Mayor of Ripon during the 2024-2025 civic year. Ripon is a city steeped in history and tradition, and it was a privilege to represent this remarkable city and to witness first-hand the dedication, generosity and resilience of our residents, businesses and community groups.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my fellow Councillors for their continued commitment and the Council staff for their professionalism and support throughout the year. I am also pleased to note that during the year we welcomed a new co-opted Councillor, whose contribution has already added value to the work of the Council.

Over the past year, the Council focused on a variety of practical priorities to support Ripon's growth and wellbeing. We reviewed wide range of planning applications to help guide the city's development. We continued key community traditions and events – including celebration of the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day. The Council provided funding for temporary public toilets at the Paddling Pool, improving access for families and visitors during the summer months. Three telephone boxes were adopted for community use, and we supported a range of local initiatives through two grant funding schemes. The Council managed ongoing responsibilities for Hugh Ripley Hall and Quarry Moor.

## Meet Your Councillors

Ripon City Council consists of 12 Councillors, split into four wards: Spa, Moorside, Ure Bank and Minster.

Councillors' contact details are available on the Ripon city council's website: <https://www.riponcity.gov.uk/about-us/city-councillors/>



Cllr Chris Hardisty



Cllr Pauline McHardy



Cllr Tony Duncan



Cllr Peter Horton - Deputy  
Leader of the Council



Cllr Julie Ann Martin-Long



Cllr Andrew Williams -  
Leader of the Council



Cllr Barbara Brodigan



Cllr Jackie Crozier



Cllr Stuart Flatley



Cllr Jo Bate



Cllr Sid Hawke



Cllr Gary Camplejohn

## Councill Meetings

Most decisions about Council business are taken at formal meetings of the Council. The Council has Standing Orders which act as the written rules of the Council and set out the Councils internal organisation, administrative procedures and procedural matters for meetings.

Meetings are held in the Council Chamber situated on the first floor of Ripon Town Hall. Full Council usually meets on the first or second Monday of each month except August.

Members of the public are always welcome to attend. Each meeting includes a section where members of the public are invited to question, seek clarification or make representation to members of the Council on any agenda item.

Details of the meetings, including dates, agendas, agenda packs and minutes can be found on the website.

In 2024/25, the Council held 10 Full Council meetings, including the Annual Meeting.

During 2024/25 the Council had 4 Committees: Alderman T F Spence Committee, Events Committee, Hugh Ripley Hall Committee and Staffing Committee.

Two working groups – Partnership Funding and Commuted Sums – were active and held meetings during the past year.



Photo courtesy of Ripon Photographic Society

## Events Committee

The Events Committee work to produce the community events on the square and civic events.

Committee members in 2024/25: Cllrs Andrew Williams, Stuart Flatley, Tony Duncan, Peter Horton, Chris Hardisty, Jo Bate

The Committee oversaw the following events in the year 2024/25:

- 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day and the traditional Ripon Weekend which marked the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Engineers' Freedom of the City.
- August Bank Holiday Saturday.
- Commemorations for the Battle of Britain and Remembrance Sunday.
- Christmas Lights Switch On event (with very large turnout).
- New Year's Eve event (had to be cancelled due to adverse weather forecasts).

Following the Committee's resolution RCC purchased 100 crowd barriers which will be made available to Ripon based not for profit organisations, charities and community groups to use at events in Ripon for a nominal fee.

## Hugh Ripley Hall Committee

The Hugh Ripley Hall Committee meet regularly to discuss issues relating to the hall's operation and maintenance.

Committee members in 2024/25: Cllrs Jackie Crozier, Tony Duncan, Peter Horton, Stuart Flatley, Chris Hardisty, Barbara Brodigan

In the year 2024/25:

- All appliances were PAT tested.
- The gas boiler and cooker were serviced.
- Some emergency lighting fire extinguishers were replaced
- It was agreed that the prices for room hire would be increased by 10% from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.
- PPL PRS costs were significantly more this year compared to the previous year.
- A tender process to restore the area adjacent to the accessible toilet (plastering and decorating) has been conducted and will be returned to the next meeting of the committee for a decision.





## Alderman T F Spence Committee

Ripon City Council is sole corporate trustee for the Alderman T F Spence Charity. The Charity is responsible for the site at Quarry Moor. Statutory Charity obligations aside, the Charity delegate the daily running and operation of the site to the Alderman T F Spence Committee.

Committee members in 2024/25: Cllrs Julie Ann Martin-Long, Tony Duncan, Peter Horton, Stuart Flatley, Chris Hardisty, Pauline McHardy

### In the year 2024/25:

- Maintenance plan agreed early in the year; assents obtained from Natural England; all approved works completed.
- Tree works completed (felling of 8 trees, pollarding in the car park area, maintenance on boundary with New Park homes).
- Part-time warden carried out regular inspections and submitted reports.
- Act of vandalism: memorial bench set on fire.
- Agreement reached with North Yorkshire Police for regular patrolling.
- Tender completed for management contractor/partner – responses will be reviewed by RCC in June 2025.
- The car park has been temporarily closed due to health & safety reasons; a tender for repair and resurfacing has been completed and the matter will be considered by RCC in June 2025.
- Committee members took part in “Sights and Sounds of Ripon” event on a Quarry Moor stand, with Chair and Vice Chair engaging with visitors.
- Preparation started for application to DEFRA’s Higher Tier Countryside Stewardship Scheme – applications open July 2025.

## Staffing Committee

The work of the Staffing Committee is centered around the employment of staff and their conditions of employment and as such much relates to personal issues.

Committee members in 2024/25: Cllrs Jo Bate, Peter Horton, Stuart Flatley, Andrew Williams, Jackie Crozier.

## Council Assets

### Hugh Ripley Hall

The Council facilitates the use of Hugh Ripley Hall by local community groups, organisations and residents for a wide range of activities, events and meetings.

We have continued to make improvements to Hugh Ripley Hall including routine maintenance, decorating and investigating energy efficiency.

The hall and rooms within are available for regular hirers, the minimum sessions are 2 hours.



### Quarry Moor

Ripon City Council is the sole corporate trustee for the Alderman T F Spence Charity who is responsible for the site at Quarry Moor. Quarry Moor is a nine hectare Local Nature Reserve with two areas of Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) designation, for species rich calcareous grassland and its geological exposed rock face.

The Council provide an annual grant to the charity to allow for the provision of a warden and maintenance of the site, including adherence to the Management Plan for the SSSI element agreed with Natural England.



## Telephone boxes

RCC adopted 3 telephone boxes located on the Market Square and set out their intended future use: Ripon Bid will take on one box to provide information to visitors; the second box will be designated for general community use, ideas are being developed with Fountains Church, who initially submitted an adoption application but subsequently withdrew in favour of the Council. The third box will potentially include a Hornblower penny press. We are currently progressing essential preparatory works – such as re-glazing and locking system installation which are required before the project can proceed.

## Double Devolution and Community Asset Transfer

Ripon City Council have been working in partnership with North Yorkshire Council to progress a double devolution bid with the view to taking ownership of the Town Hall, Hugh Ripley Hall, and the Wakeman's House.

RCC formally requested that NYC grant a minimum 30-year lease for the Town Hall, including a break clause exercisable only by RCC, and the option to acquire the freehold for £1 if desired during the lease period. RCC also resolved to seek the freehold of the Wakeman's House and agreed to proceed with an application for a Community Asset Transfer in respect of Hugh Ripley Hall.

## Ripon City Plan

Since the City plan was adopted in 2019, the Council's response on any planning application submitted within Ripon has been determined in accordance with the plan.

Ripon City Council has limited powers and is statutory consultee in the planning process. All relevant planning applications matters are included on Full Council meeting agendas with members of the public welcome to attend. Decisions made by Full Council meeting are submitted in writing to the planning authority.



## Support for Local Organisations

### Partnership Funding

We are proud to support local not for profit, charitable or community organisations by providing them with core funding year on year via the Partnership Funding Scheme. In 2023 we signed agreements with 9 organisations and committed to providing annual funding until the next election in 2027. The scheme was re-opened in 2024/25 and an agreement to provide funding to Ripon Disability Forum was reached. Agreements with three new organisations will be signed during the term 2025/26.

The amounts awarded in 2024/25 are below:

Ripon Library Action Group £1,900.00	Ripon Poetry Festival £2,000.00
Ripon in Bloom £3,500.00	HADCA £3,000.00
Ripon YMCA £3,470.00	Ripon Community Link £1,950.00
Ripon Together £2,000.00	Friends of Hell Wath £1,000.00
Ripon City Festival Trust £2,000.00	Ripon Disability Forum £1,800.00



## Support for Local Organisations

### Small Grants Scheme

The Scheme is designed to be an easy access source of funding for local organisations with charitable status or those operating as a not-for-profit. The primary requirement is that the funding project must clearly be of benefit to the people of Ripon. Applications were open from April until the end of November 2024.

The following awards were made during 2024/25:

Studley Royal Cricket Club £950.00	North Yorkshire Citizens Advice & Law Centre £988.00
Ripon City Photographic Society £596.00	Ripon Young Musicians £65.02
Ripon Community Poppy Project £747.40	Ripon Rotary Club £500.00
Friends of Spa Gardens £1,000.00	Mind in Harrogate £1,000.00

If you would like your organisation to receive the funding, please see the guidance and forms on our website:

<https://www.riponcity.gov.uk/finance/grants/>

## Events

### D-Day Anniversary and Ripon Freedom Weekend

On 8-9 June, the City Council delivered a programme of civic and community events to mark the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of D-Day and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Royal Engineers receiving the Freedom of the City.

Daytime events featured military displays and demonstrations by the Royal Engineers in the Market Place, attracting large crowds and public interest.

Evening entertainment featured tribute acts to Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, Madonna and Kylie Minogue, followed by an Ed Sheeran Tribute and a lively performance by the Party Band, which got the crowd dancing and brought the event to a festive close.

### Summer Bank Holiday Event

On Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> August, Ripon Market Place hosted a full day of family entertainment as part of the Summer Bank Holiday celebrations. Free activities ran from 12 noon to 11pm.

The north of the square featured fairground rides, including the popular Twist Ride for thrill-seekers, as well as the Children's Carousel, Cup and Saucer Ride. Additional attractions included interactive stations from North Yorkshire Police, Fire & Rescue, Ripon Museums and Jennyruth Workshops.

In the evening, the Market Place transformed into a live music venue with performances of popular hits from the 70s, 80s and 90s.



## Events

### Battle of Britain

On Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September, Ripon City Council held a remembrance service at the Ripon War Memorial in Spa Gardens to honour those who fought in the Battle of Britain.

Civic guests, Councillors and representatives of the Royal Air Forces Association gathered to pay tribute to the courage and sacrifice of those who defended the skies in 1940.

The Right Worshipful the Mayor of Ripon, Cllr Sid Hawke, laid a wreath on behalf of the Council.



### Remembrance Sunday

On Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> November, the city marked Remembrance Sunday with a well-attended wreath-laying ceremony in Spa Gardens, with around 2,000 people in attendance.

After the service, the Civic party processed to the Town Hall, where the Mayor took the salute as the 21 Engineer Regiment paraded past towards the Cathedral.

The day concluded with a remembrance service at the Cathedral, bringing the community together in honour of those who served and sacrificed.



Photos courtesy of The Stray Ferret



## Events

### Christmas Lights Switch-On Event

On Saturday 16 November, Ripon celebrated the start of the festive season with the annual Christmas Lights Switch-On Event.

The day began at 1pm with the arrival of Santa and his reindeers in the Market Place, drawing a large crowds and creating a joyful atmosphere for families and children. Fairground rides and a climbing wall were available free of charge and proved very popular throughout the day.

From 3pm, live entertainment was provided by performers singing festive favourites, leading up to the main event at 5pm, when the Right Worshipful the Mayor, Cllr Sid Hawke, and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Jackie Crozier, officially switched on the lights, the centre stage tree and decorations around the city shone brightly bringing Christmas cheer.

### New Year's Eve Event

The Council had planned to host a community celebration on New Year's Eve, including live music and fireworks display.

However, due to severe weather forecasts and in the interest of public safety, the event was regrettably cancelled.

