

Rushmere St. Andrew



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Parish Council is indebted to all who assisted in any way with articles and photographs for this booklet, including Mr. E. Cobby, Mr. David Price, the Rev. David Shewan, Mr. L. Shiplee, Mrs. M. Tebboth and the Rev. Martin Turner; and to the sub-committee of the Parish Council (Mr. S. Bestow, Mrs. B. Stammers, Mr. and Mrs. T. Woodgate) for collating the information.

This booklet was written and published in 1981, and we have 'reprinted' it here as it gives a good picture of the parish and its history

CONTENTS

	Page
Foreword by the Chairman	3
Rushmere St. Andrew — Past and Present	4
St. Andrew's Church	8
Rushmere Baptist Church	10
Rushmere Heath	11
Amenities	13
Education	20
Employment and Industry	21
Environment	22
Population and Housing	23
Public Transport	25
Recreation and Leisure	25
A conclusion by the Clerk	27
Directory — useful names and addresses	28

FOREWORD

This booklet seeks to outline an appraisal of the Parish of Rushmere St. Andrew by a sub-committee of the Parish Council, whilst at the same time incorporating a brief history of the Parish. Produced in this way, with all the relevant information under one cover, we hope it will be of interest to existing residents and helpful to others, especially those contemplating moving into the area.

What is an appraisal and what purpose does it serve? An appraisal is a review of the area, relating to the history, geographical location, size, population, buildings, etc., as well as Public Transport, Education, Housing, Employment, Industry, Environment, Recreation and Amenities, all of which are referred to in the following pages.

The appraisal helps to identify the assets and deficiencies of the Parish; it highlights where help may be needed and what is available; it provides an opportunity to influence our own future; it enables the Parish Council to be better informed and more able to deal with planning matters to ensure that the character of the Parish is maintained.

I hope that every household will acquire a copy of this booklet. It is, therefore, appropriate that the work and responsibilities of the Parish Council are known.

The Local Government Act 1974 enhanced the status of Parish Councils, making their position stronger and more secure. The Parish Council is an elected body which has statutory powers laid down by Parliament, including power to precept on the rates, and is able to take action on the following subjects so important to the rural scene — cemeteries, parish halls/community centres, street lighting, litter bins, bus shelters, allotments, recreation grounds, and the maintenance/repair/signposting of footpaths and bridleways. This is not a complete list but an indication of the extent of the Council's work. To summarize, the Parish Council can act on anything for the benefit of the area or its inhabitants, of

which planning and development is an important feature; a keen and active Council is a vital link with other local Authorities and voluntary organisations.

I would like to acknowledge the interest, time and effort willingly rendered by the Parish Council sub-committee in the preparation of this booklet, which I am certain will be appreciated by its readers.

H.J.W. Tebboth
Chairman — Rushmere St. Andrew
Parish Council

1981

RUSHMERE ST. ANDREW — Past and Present

The green and pleasant village of Rushmere St. Andrew lies to the East of Ipswich, with boundaries abutting the Borough of Ipswich, and the parishes of Playford, Kesgrave, Foxhall and Purdis Farm.

The picturesque name comes from Saxon times: RISCÉMARA — risc meaning a reed and mara a lake — and is recorded in the Domesday Book. People have lived in Rushmere for over 1,000 years. The village was once much larger than at present and in 1324 it was known as Reschmere cum alnesbourne, which gives credence to this fact. In Saxon times Rushmere had two manors but during the troubled times of the Norman conquest they were destroyed.

Evidence has been found of settlements in Rushmere dating back to Neolithic times. In the angle between Woodbridge Road and Playford Road a late bronze age cemetery was found and four urns, one perhaps containing ashes from this burial ground, are to be seen in the Ipswich Museum.

The soil varies from boulder clay to light sandy and over 100 years ago John Cobbold planted a hop-garden near Bent Lane, which was in the more fertile area. He also built a beer house with a bar, lodging rooms, dance floor and stables. This house, with its home-brewed beer, was popular with farmers returning from Ipswich market but the old beer house was pulled down many years ago. In the last century brick-making was carried out near the Kesgrave boundary and sand and gravel pits were worked near to Playford Road.

The Parish Church, dedicated to St. Andrew, the first Christian Missionary, in part dates back to the twelfth century. The earliest record of a "Church Estate" in Rushmere is 1086 — in the Domesday Book. A chapter dealing with the Church will be found later in this booklet.

The Falcon Inn used to be the scene of country dances at Whitsuntide, and after harvest home a supper was provided at Rushmere Hall. The Hall has long since gone, along with most of the farms that used to be in the area of Humber Doucy Lane but it is interesting to note that many of the old families are still living in Rushmere.

The Village School in Humber Doucy Lane was opened about 1846. The first reference is to be found in a Minute Book when, at the Quarterly Meeting of the General Committee of the Diocesan Education Society held at the Archdeacon's Registry, St. Matthews Street, Ipswich, on 26th June 1851 —

"An application was read from the parish of Rushmere for the sum of £5.12.0 towards the current expenses of the school, the average attendance for the past year being 56. Resolved that the grant be paid."

In 1852 the attendance had risen to 62 and the grant increased to £6.

The First Annual Report of HM Inspectors was in 1868 and stated:

"The school is beginning well under the present master. The discipline and instruction are both fair. The classes must be distinctly marked in the Register

Rushmere Church, 1842
as engraved by Henry Davy (reduced)



ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH

There are very few ancient Churches which stand today as they were first built. The normal thing with a Church is for it to be built and rebuilt, extended and reconstructed, repaired and renovated; very often when a Church was repaired the old materials were re-used and this is true of St. Andrew's Church, Rushmere St. Andrew, as we see it today. A Church has existed on this site from Saxon times, but that would have been built in wood.

Towards the end of the 12th century a stone Church was built and the present lovely South doorway, which appears in so many wedding photographs over-arching the bride and groom, is the original doorway which was built then.

The Tower was rebuilt in the 16th century (completed in 1538) and then further decorated with pinnacles and evangelists in the middle of the 19th century. It was also, unfortunately, provided with a west window. The window cannot now be seen because it is

hidden by the organ pipes but its provision was unfortunate in that the Tower was so weakened by its insertion that ringing the bells split the Tower from top to bottom with three vertical cracks. In 1980 structural strength was restored to the Tower by the insertion of a reinforced concrete ringbeam; and at the same time the bells were rehung in a new steel frame and a new roof was provided for the top of the Tower. The pinnacles which had become badly eroded over the past century were restored and a new gargoyle provided and much stonework renovated, so the Tower is once again sound and firm and the bells ring out over Rushmere after two decades of silence.

The main body of the Church was rebuilt in 1861 on the same plan as its predecessor, though enlarged to include a North aisle and re-using many of the same materials, especially the massive plain mediaeval roof beams. In 1968 the Church was further extended and its seating capacity more than doubled.

The Church has six bells. The heaviest, the Tenor, was cast in London in 1885 and the lightest two bells in Ipswich in 1675. The third, fourth and fifth bells are the most interesting as they date from around 1460 by a travelling Bellfounder from London who cast them locally.

In the Middle Ages people were not buried in coffins but in winding sheets; the coffins were only used to house the body between the death and the burial. Since only the notables had gravestones this meant that the same land could be used over and over again continuously for burials, so the Churchyard surrounding the Church lasted from time immemorial to the beginning of this century. In 1923 the Parochial Church Council decided to extend the Churchyard and took over a large part of the Vicarage orchard for this purpose. However, as a result of the large amount of building that was done both before and especially after the war, the population of the Parish went up in leaps and bounds so that Rushmere, which a century earlier had had a population of 614, became over ten times as large and the area served by the Parish Church probably has a population now of about 9,000. The Churchyard rapidly filled so that fifty years after the Parochial Church Council had opened their extension,

the Parish Council opened a Lawn Cemetery on land adjacent to the Churchyard. The Churchyard would have been filled to overflowing even sooner were it not for the fact that by far the greater majority of people dying today are cremated, not buried.

Hedges in Churchyards are traditionally of yew. Because of their poisonous nature they were unpopular with farmers but the Defence of the Realm needed yew for bows so yew hedges became traditional for the one area not being farmed, namely God's Acre, the Churchyard. The yew hedge at Rushmere was planted in 1856, in keeping with tradition, but long after fulfilling any military requirement.

RUSHMERE BAPTIST CHURCH

The beginnings of the Baptist Chapel go back to a weekly meeting that was held by members of the Skeet and Everett families — local farmers — who had connections with Stoke Green Baptist Church. It was built on seven and a half rods of land purchased from Mr. John Newson in 1859 for £10.

The ministry of the Church (or Mission as it then was) was sustained by Mr. Robert Lacy Everett (sometime Member of Parliament for the Woodbridge Division) until his death at the age of 84 in 1916. He had help from local preachers who were entertained to tea between services (at 2.30 and 6.30 p.m.) at his home, Villa Farm. Sunday School, with one hundred children and sixteen teachers, was held in the morning.

The Mission was officially affiliated to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland in 1944. Ministers of Stoke Green Baptist Church acted as part-time Ministers at Rushmere until 1954 when an Ipswich man, Mr. Derek Chilvers, was called to be lay-Pastor. This ministry was conducted for 21 years with much success. Both the buildings and the membership were built up. Seventy-five were received into membership and Boys' and Girls' Brigades begun. Much of the building extension was done by the members themselves. The members then felt the need to purchase a house for use as a Manse, and in 1978 the Rev. David Shewan

was called as the first full-time Minister.

The Church bears, fixed on its front wall, the Tablet affirming the Commoners' Rights over Rushmere Heath referred to elsewhere in this booklet.

Above all, the Church has sought to maintain a centre of Free Church and Evangelical life in the village, although the membership connections (as did Robert Everett's) also lie beyond Rushmere. It exists, as do all Churches, to affirm that the Christ, the sin-bearer, came back from death as this world's hope. This is the reality its members are committed to explore and to share in the life of the Parish.

RUSHMERE HEATH

We are fortunate to have in the centre of the parish some 168 acres of common land known as Rushmere Heath and we must be indebted to the parishioners who fought so hard in the last century to defend Commoners' rights over this land. It is accepted that Commoners' rights over Rushmere Heath existed probably from the Middle Ages but it was in 1851 and 1861 when conflicts broke out between the Lord of the Manor, the Marquis of Bristol, and Rushmere Commoners, led by Nat Ablitt, who had a tablet fixed to the wall of his cottage in The Street as lasting witness to their rights. This tablet can be seen today on the front of the Baptist Church in The Street and reads as follows:

THIS TABLET

SHEWETH EVERY PERSON'S RIGHT TO THE HEATH WHO LIVES OR OCCUPIES IN THE PARISH, BY THE DECISION OF LANCELOT SHADWELL COUNSELLOR IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS, BEING APPLIED TO WHEN THE 800 £ WAS PAID BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR THE TROOPS EXERCISING THERE, HE GAVE HIS OPINION THAT EVERY PERSON MUST HAVE EQUAL SHARE WHO CUT WHINS AND FEED CATTLE THERE, SO WE HAD ALL 8 £ EACH THEN, AND EVER SINCE THE PARISH RECEIVE 5 £ A YEAR THE TROOPS BEING FEW, THIS 5 £ IS ALWAYS DIVIDED

ABLITT

Fierce disputes broke out again in the 1880s, when the Lord of the Manor erected notices warning trespassers. These boards were torn down by the Commoners, resulting in legal action being taken against them. The case was to be heard at a Special Session of the Woodbridge Bench and the Commoners are reported to have attended in force, travelling to Woodbridge in waggons loaned by the farmers. However, the Marquis's representative withdrew the case but refused to allow the Commoners' claim. Nevertheless this was seen by the Commoners as a victory and there was much celebration in the village that night.

During the Napoleonic Wars, Rushmere Heath was used as a drill ground by the soldiers and it is believed that as far back as Tudor times the territorials of the day trained there. In 1813 about 10,000 troops were reviewed on the Heath and in that year the War Office made the first payment (£227) for use of the Heath. By 1819 monies received on behalf of the Commoners for "deprivation of rights" had accumulated to £740 and the Vicar, the Rev. J. Edge, and Churchwardens sought advice on how to distribute it. On the 23rd February 1819 a meeting was held at the Falcon Inn for the purpose of distributing the money to the 84 occupiers. As the population increased, the amount of money payable to each household was reduced and the last distribution of "Heath Money" took place in 1947, when 921 persons each received 2. 6d.

In 1958 negotiations were commenced for the purchase of Rushmere Heath by the Commoners — a transaction unique in the annals of common land — and we are deeply indebted to Mr. Hugh Law, Chairman of the Commoners' Committee at that time, for his foresight and timely action, without which the opportunity for ownership might have been lost to the Commoners for ever. Ownership is now vested in four Trustees on behalf of the Commoners, and a Committee looks after the day-to-day administration. The Commoners' Committee comprises nine members who are elected by Commoners at their Annual General Meeting. Each year one-third of the Committee retires by rotation. Any Commoner — that is a householder who

has resided at least 12 months in the ancient parochial parish of Rushmere — is entitled to attend annual meetings and be nominated for election to the Committee. Unfortunately only about 50 persons attend the Annual General Meeting, out of over 3,000 households entitled to be represented. The Annual General Meeting is held in May each year and is advertised in the local Press and on posters around the parish. The Committee would welcome greater support from the Commoners.

In 1894 a golf course was laid out on Rushmere Heath by Ipswich Golf Club, who paid £30 per annum. This arrangement was terminated by the removal of Ipswich Golf Club to Purdis Heath but shortly afterwards, in 1929, a similar arrangement was entered into with Rushmere Golf Club and continues to this day. Over the years Rushmere Golf Club have planted trees and done much to improve the landscaping of the Heath.

The Heath has happy associations for us today as an open space for leisure and recreation but over 200 years ago a gallows stood on the Heath near the present A.12 road, where criminals convicted in the Eastern District of the county were executed. On the 8th April 1763 a man named Richard Ringe was hanged on the Rushmere gibbet and his accomplice, Margaret Bedingfield, suffered an even worse fate; she was strangled and burned. Their crime was the murder of John Bedingfield, believed to be her husband. In 1781 Richard Kegson died on Rushmere Heath at the hands of the hangman. He was not a killer — merely a cunning thief. How different things are today!

AMENITIES AND SERVICES

The amenities are varied and, in some cases, supplemented and influenced by the proximity of the parish to the facilities provided in the adjacent Borough of Ipswich. This is particularly true when considering the shops.

Shops

On the north side there was a village shop which sold a good

variety of food and had an off-licence but due to insufficient support this was closed in May 1981. At the time of publication this property is offered "for sale" and hopefully it may re-open to again provide a service to the community. The nearest parade of shops to this part of the parish is in the Borough of Ipswich — Selkirk Road and Woodbridge Road East, where there is a chemist. The Post Office is just across the boundary line, at the junction of Rushmere Road and Humber Doucy Lane.

In the centre of the parish, the Beechwood Stores on the corner of the A.12/Beech Road, sells a good selection of food, newspapers and other goods.

To the south the main shops are again in the Borough of Ipswich — at the Foxhall Road/Bixley Road roundabout, and on the Broke Hall Estate. Among the shops at the Foxhall Road/Bixley Road junction there is a chemist and a Post Office. The grocery shop formerly in Foxhall Road closed in 1980.

Whilst a recent survey clearly indicated the deficiencies in shopping facilities which can lead to hardship, particularly where the elderly and infirm are concerned, the paradox is that most people shop in Ipswich, buying in bulk and availing themselves of the greater variety. It is difficult, therefore, to attract any small business to the parish and in recent years it has been a struggle even to maintain the present facilities. For a number of years there was a small supermarket in Beech Road/Blackdown Avenue but this closed in 1980.

Library Service

The nearest Public Library is in Ipswich but a mobile Library visits the parish with stopping places as follows:

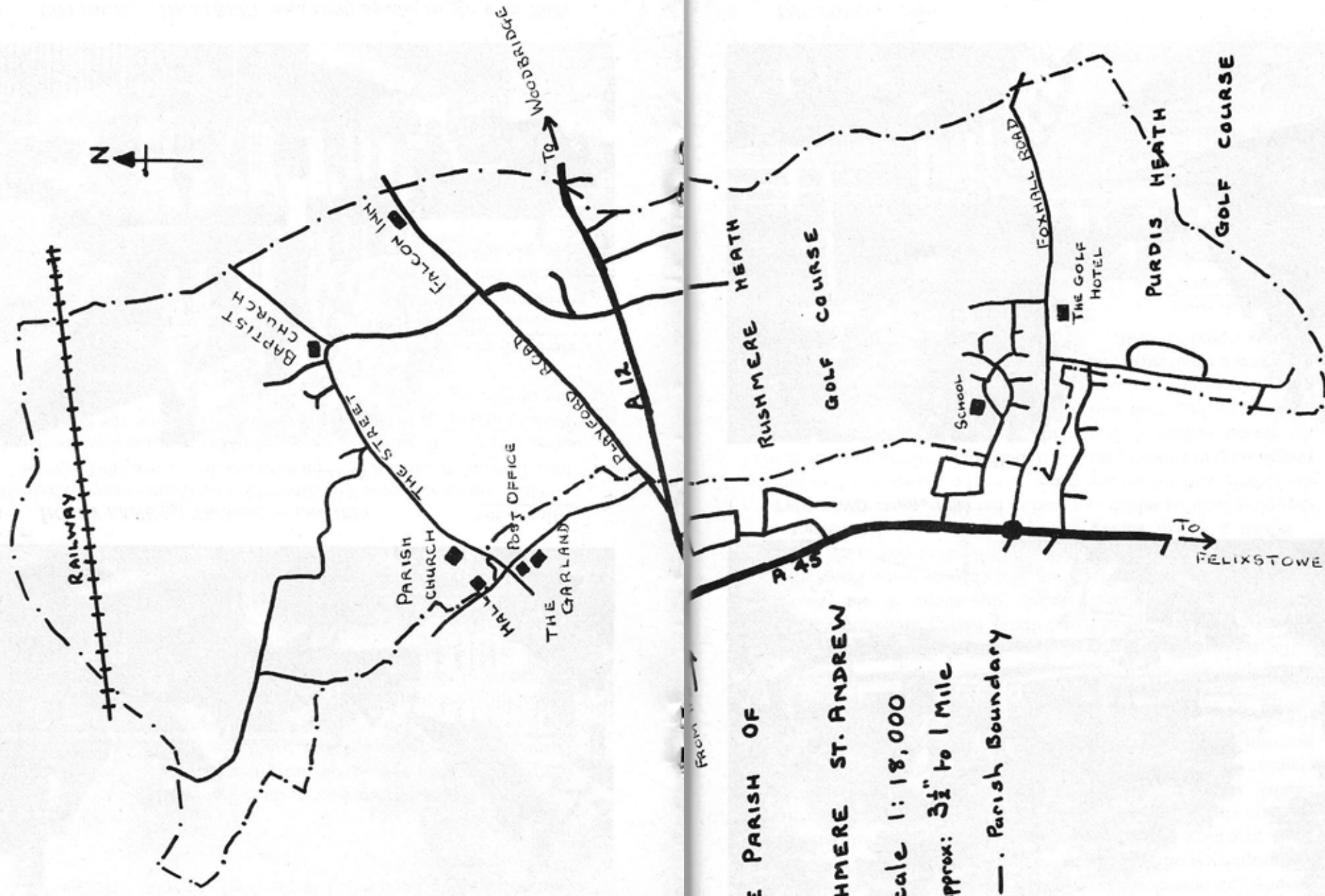
Humber Doucy Lane (Telephone Kiosk))	All Fortnightly
Baptist Chapel)	Thursday p.m.
Meadowside Gardens)	Wednesday p.m.
Foxhall Road — Golf Hotel)	
Hairdressers formerly Clare's Shop)	Thursday a.m.
Penshurst Road)	
Hardwick Close/Chatsworth Drive)	
Beech Road)	Thursday p.m.



1 THE POND — circa 1880



2 THE POND — 1980



THE PARISH OF
RUSHMERE ST. ANDREW

Scale 1:18,000

approx: 3 1/2" to 1 Mile

---. Parish Boundary



3 HOLLY LANE (off The Street) — circa 1880



4 COTTAGES, THE STREET (circa 1880) depicting the Nat Ablitt Tablet

Further details of these services can be obtained from the County Library (Mobile Services), County Hall, Ipswich, tel: Ipswich 55801.

Medical Services

There is no doctor's surgery in the parish but there are several in Ipswich within reasonable travelling distance. Heath Road Hospital and one or two clinics are also within fairly easy reach and they provide a very comprehensive range of services. The desirability of a more local-based surgery and/or small clinic for both parts of the parish is recognised, bearing in mind that ill-health can amplify the problem of distance.

Telephone and Postal Services appear to be reasonably satisfactory but there is perhaps a need for additional post boxes and telephone kiosks in certain sections of the parish.

Allotments

These are located near The Street/Playford Lane corner. There have been allotments in Rushmere St. Andrew since 1897 but the present site comprising 2½ acres (36 plots) was acquired by the Parish Council in 1975, and are considered to meet the needs of the community.

Street Lighting

In recent years the Parish Council has been carrying out a programme for the replacement of old street lights by new photo-electric cell type and this will continue until all the lights are brought up to modern standard.

EDUCATION

The only school in the parish is Broke Hall Primary School, situated in Chatsworth Drive, Rushmere Park Estate. It was opened in 1977 and caters for children aged 5-11 years resident in the southern part of the parish. Other children in this age group attend Heath School, Bell Lane, Kesgrave or Gorseland School, Deben Avenue, Martlesham.

Secondary education is provided in a Comprehensive system for ages 11-16 years at Kesgrave High School, and Copleston and Northgate High Schools, Ipswich.

Sixth form education is available at Northgate High School, Ipswich or Deben High School, Felixstowe.

Adult education organised by Suffolk County Council is available at:

Kesgrave High School
Copleston High School
Suffolk College

and art, needlework and Scottish dancing classes are held in the Village Hall.

Playgroups, privately run, are available at the Baptist Church Hall, the Village Hall in Humber Doucy Lane and adjoining Broke Hall Primary School, for children aged 3-5 years.

Denominational Schools are located as follows:

St. John' (Primary, C of E) Victory Road, Ipswich
St. Alban's (High, RC) Digby Road, Ipswich
St. Mary's (Primary, RC) Woodbridge Road, Ipswich

Independent Schools. There are no independent schools in the parish, some of the nearest being:

Ipswich School (Boys), Henley Road, Ipswich
Ipswich High School (Girls), Westerfield Road, Ipswich
St. Joseph's (Boys) Belstead Road, Ipswich

School of Jesus & Mary (Girls), Woodbridge Road, Ipswich
Woodbridge School (Co-educational), Woodbridge.

Conclusion

It is considered that education facilities meet the needs, provided adequate low-cost transport is available and there are safe pick-up points.

EMPLOYMENT AND INDUSTRY

Rushmere St. Andrew is mainly a residential area and so most of the residents who are in employment work outside the Parish. The majority work in Ipswich, where there is a wide spread of employment, including several large engineering works, hospitals, the administrative centre of the Suffolk County Council, retail trade, furniture making, teaching and two large insurance companies who have moved their main offices to Ipswich in recent years. Within a radius of 12 miles there is the small riverside market town of Woodbridge, with some light industry and boating activities; Felixstowe, with its vast dock complex which is still expanding, and Martlesham, the home of the British Telecommunications Research Laboratories and the Headquarters of the Suffolk Constabulary.

Thus the main occupations are engineering, medicine, education, insurance, Local Government, telecommunications, building, the motor industry and printing.

In considering the future of the Parish, we would not envisage any industrial development but perhaps some rural crafts or small cottage industries could be revived. In fact, at the time of going to print, it is pleasing to observe that the Forge, in The Street (near the Baptist Church) shows signs of revival.

ENVIRONMENT

The main buildings of interest in the Parish are the Church and the Chapel, both of which are described in more detail elsewhere in this booklet. Suffice to say that St. Andrew's Church is, in part, the oldest building in Rushmere; the doorway is certainly dated by successive experts as about 1190 — genuine Norman.

Though not particularly old, Rushmere Church Hall and Rushmere Post Office (the latter just outside the boundary) are well known and built in pseudo 'Tudor' style, the latter being especially attractive.

Many of the trees in the Parish are subject to a Preservation Order, which ensures that the rural quality and tranquillity will be retained as far as possible. The Parish Council maintains a continuing programme of replacement of damaged or diseased trees and many new ones have also been planted in suitable positions throughout the Parish.

Of particular note are the lime trees near the village pond in The Street, which are said to have been planted by Christopher, brother of John Milton the poet. Christopher lived in Rushmere when he became Deputy Recorder of Ipswich in 1674, the year of the poet's death, so, if true, these trees must be about 300 years old. Another special tree is The Wellingtonia (Sequoi) situated in The Limes, which must also be of considerable age.

The Village Pond, donated to the Parish Council by Mr. F.E. Tibbenham in 1977, is a focal point for families with young children, who delight in feeding the great variety of ducks and moorhens who either nest there or fly in at weekends for the feast! Because of the obvious attraction of this picturesque haven, the Parish Council chose this site as the natural home for the new Village Sign and, whilst providing a new footpath between the pond and the Church, took the opportunity to improve the pond with very pleasing results.

The Parish Council also has under consideration taking steps whereby the pond opposite Chestnut Close may be developed into an amenity area.

Rushmere Heath provides a large and very welcome open space, free of buildings, in the centre of the Parish.

Footpaths (Public Rights of Way)

The Parish has more than 50 footpaths and/or bridleways — far more than other parishes in the area. Perhaps one of the most popular walks is from Holly Lane to Tuddenham Fountain but the common land of Rushmere Heath also provides a number of well used footpaths. It is possible to walk from Bucklesham Road through to Lamberts Lane almost entirely by public footpath.

In 1979 a countrywide survey was carried out to record all footpaths and bridleways and Parish Councillors in Rushmere St. Andrew 'walked' all the footpaths within the Parish boundary. As a result of the local effort many improvements were achieved and footpaths marked.

Traffic

A new Ipswich By-Pass is being constructed, with a bridge over the River Orwell. When completed this new road will considerably reduce the amount of traffic on the Woodbridge Road (A.12) which passes along the northern boundary of the Common.

The Street, through the village, has been improved recently with the addition of a footpath but complaints are still received of cars travelling too fast along this narrow road.

To the south of the Parish problems are encountered on the Foxhall Road on occasions when Stock Car Racing or Speedway meetings are being held at the Foxhall Stadium.

POPULATION AND HOUSING

Census figures for Rushmere St. Andrew show that the population increased slowly during the 19th century — from 287 in 1801 to 668 in 1891. During the present century the Parish has become a popular residential area and by 1951 the population had grown to around 1,500. With the building of many new houses, especially to the south of the main Ipswich/Woodbridge road, and

with the increase in birth rate following the 1939-45 war, the growth has been even more rapid. In the last 30 years the population has more than doubled and is now estimated to be in excess of 3,300.

The expansion in the part of the Parish lying to the north of the main A.12 road has been small compared to the south. In recent years there have been some small residential developments to the north — The Limes and Birchwood leading off The Street, Meadowside Gardens and Bent Lane, and The Mills off Playford Road — and there has been some in-filling. A further development of 39 houses and bungalows, to be known as Chestnut Close, is being built off The Street. In this part of the Parish we also have a number of Council-owned properties, many of them catering for the older residents. A large percentage of the other properties are also occupied by the middle/older age groups.

To the south of the A.12 there has been much expansion in the post-war period. More than 120 new houses and bungalows in the Mendip Drive/Blackdown Avenue area created an upsurge of population in the 1950s and 1960s. Part of the Broke Hall Estate lies within the Parish and this, together with the more recent Rushmere Park development, has increased residential accommodation by a further 388 properties. In this area there is a wide spread of age groups, with many more children and young people. Also to the south of the Foxhall Road there is a residential caravan park — Heathlands Retreat — where more than 60 caravans provide accommodation, mainly for young couples and older people.

The County Structure Plan, published in the mid-1970s, recommended expansion of residential development to the east of Ipswich, so we would anticipate some growth within the next 10 years which could affect the southern part of the Parish.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT

As most families now own cars the need for public transport has decreased in recent years.

A bus service is provided by Sayers Coaches from Bealings to Ipswich via The Street, Rushmere St. Andrew. Eastern Counties Omnibus Company buses serve the Woodbridge and Foxhall Road areas on their way from Ipswich to Woodbridge, Saxmundham and Aldeburgh, and to Waldringfield. Ipswich Borough buses from the Woodbridge Road/Playford Road and from Foxhall Road/Bixley Road junctions provide a good service to most parts of Ipswich.

The railway passes along the northern boundary of the parish but there is no station, the nearest being Westerfield. From here direct services are available to Ipswich, Lowestoft and Felixstowe.

The main line railway station at Burrell Road, Ipswich, has regular services to London (Liverpool Street), a journey of 1¼ hours, and to Norwich. Other direct lines from Ipswich are to Cambridge and Manchester.

RECREATION AND LEISURE

The Village Hall in Humber Doucy Lane forms a focal point for many recreational and leisure groups, including the Over 60s Club, the Rushmere Evening Women's Institute and the Rushmere St. Andrew (afternoon) Women's Institute who celebrated their Diamond Jubilee in 1980. Whist Drives are held on Wednesday evenings, and the Hall is also used for craft and art classes organised by Kesgrave Adult Education Centre and by the 1st Rushmere Guides and Brownies.

The Girls' Life Brigade meets at the Baptist Church.

The 5th Ipswich Scout Troop meets in the Scout Hall in Dumbarton Road and the 13th Ipswich Sea Scout Group in Rushmere Road, both just outside the parish boundary.

Also in Humber Doucy Lane is the Church Hall, where the Mothers' Union and "Q" Club meet regularly, and where the

local amateur drama group, known as the Rushmere Players, rehearse for productions which are eventually staged at Rushmere Hall School.

The 13th Ipswich Guides and Brownies meet at Broke Hall Primary School in Chatsworth Drive, which is also the venue on Monday evenings of the Chatsworth Ladies' Club.

There is an Old People's Action Group which holds functions from time to time in aid of the elderly and disabled of the parish. They have special outings and parties for the elderly and welcome volunteers who can help with transport.

Two golf courses form part of or are adjoining the parish — Rushmere Golf Club on Rushmere Heath and Ipswich Golf Club at Purdis Heath.

Ipswich Rugby Club has its grounds within the parish, on the North-east side of Humber Doucy Lane, and the club house is available for outside functions.

A playing field for children, acquired in 1970 by the Parish Council, is situated on the Broke Hall Estate, off Salehurst Road. During 1978/79 the play area was improved and new equipment provided, with the help of Ipswich Borough Council.

Several private firms operating in Ipswich have sports grounds and club facilities within the parish, some of which extend these to persons who are not employees.

Supplementing the above are, of course, the many amenities for recreation and leisure in Ipswich, including the swimming pools, the Wolsey Theatre and the various activities held at the Corn Exchange.

Due to the present location of the Village Hall and the geographical make-up of the parish, it is difficult for many parishioners to take advantage of the leisure facilities available there. The Parish Council recognises the problem and is constantly on the alert to explore any potential solution that may present itself.

CONCLUSION

There is one institution to which the changing village will give a great opportunity and this is one that aptly enough has a long history — namely the PARISH COUNCIL.

It is a great asset as it can be adapted, through its statutory powers and its customary functions, to the needs of a rapidly evolving new community.

The PARISH COUNCIL, due to the larger ratio of councillors to the electorate than other tiers of Local Government, can readily respond to public opinion.

The task of integrating a community falls on a body or institution which will go out consciously to do so, and the PARISH COUNCIL, the smallest and weakest unit of Local Government, ably fills this role. It is also the most representative and in closest touch with the people for whom it speaks.

In addition to its statutory powers it has a great influence on complaints, and if the Parish is solidly behind the Council it can go a long way to making the community a desirable and socially happy place in which to live.

A.T. Eaton
Clerk — Rushmere St. Andrew
Parish Council