**Challock Parish Council Meeting Minutes**

Audrey Allen Room, Memorial Hall

Thursday, 11th January 2024, 7.32 pm

Members of public present:14

Apologies

No apologies were received.

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act 1972, s 85.

Present

Chairperson Cllr Brown, Vice-Chairperson Cllr Thomas, Cllr Walpole, Cllr Aitken, Cllr ShallCrass & Di Sandy (Clerk).

Welcome

Chairperson welcomed everyone present to the parish meeting

Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interests.

Relevant Legislation: Localism Act 2011, s 31.

Councillor Co-option

Received applications from Ruth Hayes and Michael Fisher. Unfortunately, Ruth Hayes stepped down from applying for Councillor for personal reasons. Michael Fisher was co-opted onto Challock Parish Council.

New co-opted member received a copy of code of conduct and to complete Acceptance of Office form and Disclosure of Pecuniary Interests form.

Minutes of Last Meeting

4.1. Matters arising from Minutes 23rd November 2023

Clerk has sent a recorded delivery letter to parishioner concerning the recent installation of temporary white marker posts.

“The Parish Council notes you have installed white marker posts in front of the boundary of your property. The land as you know is common ground in the ownership of the Parish Council.

The Parish Council notes that you installed the marker posts to protect the Lees grass, but you will appreciate that as the land is in the ownership of the Parish Council permission is required for the installation of marker posts.

The Lees Common deeds registered with Land Registry states “The grantees for themselves and their successors in title covenant with the Grantor that no poles, posts, stone curbs or other items or things will be erected or laid above ground level on the said roadway and path”.

The Parish Council need to be mindful when granting permission and not setting a precedent.

The Parish Council are therefore granting permission for the marker posts to remain for a temporary period. The Parish Council may request in the future that the marker posts are removed. The Lees common land is an open space which affords high level of protection, and the Parish Council have to be mindful that the Lees common land does not become too enclosed.

You will understand that this land is and will remain Parish Council land and no work carried out on it will be deemed to have changed this fact.”

Noted.

4.2 Minutes of 23rd November 2023 meeting were signed by Chairperson Cllr Brown as a true record.

Proposed by Cllr Aitken and seconded by Cllr Walpole

All agreed

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act 1972, Sch 12, para 41 (1).

**PC Bradley Lindridge Downs West Ward**

We have a new beat officer for the Downs West ward – Bradley Lindridge will try to take a proactive approach in the way he polices the community. He intends to visit each area at least once every time he is on duty and preferably will spend time on foot, walking around in the local area!

He has set up first monthly coffee morning/meeting at Wye to discuss local issues and attended parish council meetings at Aldington & Pluckley.

Downs West Area consists of Challock, Boughton Aluph & Westwell. There were no reported incidents during October, November & December, in Challock area.

Clerk has emailed PC Langridge parish meeting dates.

Resolved. PC Bradley Lindridge for Downs West Ward was received.

Clerk’s Report

Highways

Reported to Highways concerns of flooding adjacent to Rattle Hall, Buck Street and reported water leak along Buck Street. Works has since been completed. If the area becomes flooded again Clerk to put in a complaint to KCC.

Reported damage to the triangle area at Westwell Lane, junction to KCC Highways.

Clerk reported pothole in Blind Lane and tree shrub obstructing footpath, Buck Street.

Public Rights of Way

Reported fallen tree obstructing footpath AE88 Green Lane opposite entrance to Landews.

Litter Bins

The clerk reported to ABC street cleaning that the bins have not been emptied for past couple of weeks. The bins have now been emptied.

The Lees

The grounds man has repaired the Lees grass and grass seeded adjacent to Otterpley and Eastbury caused by Next delivery lorry and other delivery vehicles. Clerk has emailed Next with an invoice of £28 for grounds man carrying out the repairs to the Lees grass. The damaged caused by the Next delivery lorry was minimal. The area adjacent to Eastbury is worst. The clerk has emailed the parishioner requesting they fill the potholes at that end of the Lees track and to repair the Lees grass from the damage caused by construction vehicles attending the site.

The clerk has emailed a letter to parents via the school’s on-line newsletter and to the Methodist Chapel requesting no parking on the Lees due to the damage caused to the Lees grass. Users of the Methodist Chapel to use the car park at the back of the Chapel.

Grounds man has filled the potholes on part of the 1st Track.

Muga Project

Clerk to enquire with local planning consultants to assist with planning application for the MUGA. Clerk has inquired with BFT Surveyors if they are able to assist.

Notice Board

It has now been agreed to place the notice board on the village hall wall adjacent to the defibrillator.

The grounds man to fit the notice board in the coming weeks.

Resolved. The clerk’s report was received.

Correspondence

* Received an email from ABC notifying of Coronation Living Heritage Fund; The Environment, Property and Recreation team has been successful in obtaining a Coronation Living Heritage Fund (CLHF) capital grant of £49,897 to support the planting of community orchards across the borough. CLHF is a unique tree planting initiative created to mark the Coronation of HM King Charles III. To support this project ABC will be inviting parish and community councils to apply for free fruit trees, along with planting sundries in early 2024, to be planted within their own parish areas next winter.
* Received quotation from Landscape Services for annual grass maintenance for the Lees £1755.55.
* Received an email from KCC East Kent Area Kieran Doble inviting the Parish Council to meet with KCC Team Leader Lisa Gilham and KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins to discuss Faversham Road footpath scheme proposal.
* Received a complaint from parishioner concerning the outcome of the parish meeting on the 23rd November concerning parent parking on the Lees track and residents contributing to the maintenance of the Lees tracks.
* Received an email from a parishioner concerning damage caused by Next lorry and other vehicles to the Lees grass adjacent to Otterpley and Eastbury.
* Received an email from parishioner concerning the damage to the Lees caused by construction vehicles parking near the Lees track and obstructing delivery/service vehicles who drive on the Lees grass and reverse into parishioners’ driveways. Clerk has requested that the construction vehicles park at the village hall car park or one of their vehicles park at the Old Post Office car park. The builders said as a goodwill will repair the Lees grass.
* Received a complaint from a resident concerning the damage to the triangle area at the junction at Westwell Lane. Requests the Parish Council consider installing wooden posts and reflectors around this island to prevent vehicles driving across it. The resident has recently found two of the white and black reflective roadside bollards abandoned close to the location, resident has looked and cannot deduce where they have come from, but they are undamaged. With permission, the resident would install these two bollards on two of the corners and pay for the materials to install them.
* Received a quotation from G W Landscaping for annual grass maintenance for 15 cuts for the Lees £5250.
* Received an email from parishioner concerning parking issue at Orchard Lane and request the Parish Council arranges for the parking bays to be marked up.
* Received an email from ABC print room regarding the recent 25% increase for the printing of the foresters. Having revised the finishing costs, going forward the price would be £177.71 per month, which would be less than a 10% rise.
* Received a couple of emails from parishioners requesting clarification regarding parking at the car park adjacent to the Old Post Office.
* Received an email from A251 Safety Group offering to attend one of our parish meetings to gauge concerns regarding the A251 road safety and to inform the Parish Council of their campaign to reduce the speed to 40 mph from Challock to Faversham and an end to HGVs using this stretch of road as a through route.
* Received an email from PC Landridge introducing himself and concerning a reported water leak along Buck Street.
* Received an email from Ashford Borough Council notifying they have successfully secured funding from UK Government’s Rural England Prosperity Fund (REPF). Alongside the allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), Ashford Borough Council has been awarded £590,000 REPF funding, specifically to support rural areas in the borough up to March 2025. The following grants are:-

Rural Green Business Grant – to provide grants to support energy efficiency or

energy transition projects in commercial premises in rural parts of the borough.

Rural Electric Vehicle Charging Point Grant – to provide grants to support the

installation of Electrical Vehicle Charging Points at publicly accessible parking sites in rural areas of the borough.

Rural Place and Provenance Grant – to provide grants to support rural food and drink producers, hospitality and tourism attractions or venues to increase productivity and sustainability for businesses, support the creation of start-up spaces and tackle the ‘Last Mile’ challenge in rural areas.

Community Amenities Grant (Round 2) – to provide grants using REPF and UKSPF

funding for improvements to community infrastructure such as village halls or outdoor play areas. Following a successful first round for the 2023/24 financial year, further UKSPF and REPF funding has been allocated for projects proposed in the 2024/25 financial year.

The applications will open in rounds and the current round is now live until 11:59pm Sunday 4 February 2024.

* Received an email from the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF) who is linking up with Communities Prepared to highlight a series of free online training workshops taking place in the New Year for local community volunteers looking to develop their skills and create their community resilience plans. Encouraging parish and town councils, and other community groups, to take part in these courses, to help them become better prepared to respond to a range of potential emergency situations in their local area, from flooding and severe weather to a loss of utilities.
* Received an email from parishioner concerning the continued issues with flooding adjacent to Rattle Hall. Requesting Parish Council’s assistance in applying pressure to KCC Highways in resolving the flooding issue.
* Received an email from KALC concerning the DD80 Anniversary. RINGING OUT FOR PEACE: we are encouraging every Cathedral and Church throughout the UK to ring their Bells at 6.30pm on 6th June, so we ask you to contact your local Churches etc., inviting them to take part. All those taking part in the DD80 Anniversary will be sent the Certificate of Grateful Recognition.
* Received an email from We Are Beams - Thank you for your Grant of £50 that we received 7th January 2024 which is very much appreciated. I would like to take this opportunity to invite the councillors and the William Oure Charity board members to attend our site at Hextable to view what you have helped to support with this donation.
* Received an email from KALC regarding the launch of the Kent Parish Council Winter Support Scheme, which was officially launched on the 10th January 2024. Applications are now open for Town and Parish Councils to seek funding for either new or existing initiatives aimed at assisting individuals experiencing financial hardship due to the ongoing cost-of-living crisis.

It is important to note that the available funds are limited and will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Strongly encourage early applications.

The scheme is designed to support a diverse range of low-income households, including families with children, older individuals, unpaid caregivers, and those living with a disability—each facing unique and acute challenges. Funds from the scheme can be utilized for various purposes, such as purchasing food, washing machines, fridge freezers, slow cookers, air fryers, as well as energy-saving items like lightbulbs, warm packs, draft excluders, and winter clothing. Additionally, the funds can contribute to managing health conditions, safeguarding independence, and preventing social isolation. On-line application form made by the Parish Council. Clerk to place information on the website and forester.

**Matters arising from Correspondence**

* Regarding Orchard Lane car parking issue, the clerk has emailed parishioner that this is not a parish council matter. The clerk has advised parishioner to contact their housing association and directed parishioner to ABC and how to make an online disabled parking bay application.
* Regarding parishioner’s complaint of the triangle adjacent to Westwell Lane junction the Highways Village Inspector has been out to the site to investigate the island, no essential works are required on the verge, he has also cleared the drains which are flowing which should prevent the flooding and will keep monitoring this. The clerk has replied to Highways inquiring about installing bollards on the island.
* The clerk has replied to parishioner complaint concerning parent parking on the Lees common.
* Regarding the continuous flooding issue along Buck Street. Highways has recently attended the site and cleared the drains and hopefully repaired the leak. Clerk has emailed parishioner informing them the Parish Council will write to KCC Kieran Doble and KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins if the flooding issue returns.
* Annual maintenance quotations to discuss at the next Parish Meeting on the 22nd February.
* Councillors agreed for the Clerk to apply for funding grant under the current round to replace one of the older play equipment in the play park.
* Clerk has replied to Road Safety Group inviting them to attend the Parish Meeting on the 22nd February.

A forester sub-committee meeting to be arranged within the month to review advertising fees and costs.

 Resolved: Cllr Aitken volunteered to be representative for the Forester Sub-Committee.

All correspondence has been circulated.

Finances

**Bank Reconciliation**

The current account balance on 31st December 2023 is £21,203.85

Resolved. The bank account balances and reconciliations for 30th November & 31st December 2023 were signed by Chairperson Brown and Vice Chairperson Thomas.

**3rd Quarter Accounts Monitoring Form**

Resolved. The 3rd Quarter Accounts Monitoring Form for the 1st October 2023 to 31st December 2023 were signed by Chairperson Brown and Vice Chairperson Thomas.

**Draft Budget & Proposed Precept for 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025.**

**Summer Fair** update provided by Cllr Walpole for consideration of upfront costs. The two previous summer fairs organized by the Friends of Challock Church raised over £10,000. At the meeting held on the 30th November, nine key roles were identified in order for the summer fair to come together i.e. raffle organizer, treasurer, café - food and refreshments, barbeque & beer tent, vintage cars, entertainment, stalls & funfair rides. A number of people have come forward to help at the café, vintage cars, barbeque & beer tent. Friends of Kingswood are keen to get involved as well as a number of people helping out on the day. Committee will decide where the funds raised will go to, an opportunity for the whole village to benefit. Some upfront costs would be required i.e. raffle tickets & insurance. Cllr Walpole explained her role is to try to co-ordinate a committee coming together not looking to organize the summer fair.

Cllr Thomas. Parish Council are not in the position to lend funds out of parish precept.

Councillors discussed the precept. To increase the precept to £27500 would be an increase on a band D property of £6.63 from 44.94 to 50.37 for the year. To increase the precept to £25,000 would be an increase on a band D property of £0.84 from 44.94 to 45.79. To keep the precept to £24,000 would be a decrease of £0.99 from 44.94 to 43.96.

Resolved. The Parish Council agreed to the budget set and the precept for 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025 to remain at £24,000.

All agreed.

Resolved. The remaining £5450 from Faversham Road Footpath Scheme is to be decided for reallocation to another project at a later date.

All agreed.

Noted. The clerk’s laptop will need to be repaired or replaced. Clerk’s laptop is 10 years old. Mick Maiden to provide quote for keyboard replacement and upgrade SSD hard drive.

**December & January Payments**

The following cheques was signed at the parish meeting: -

Cheque No 102750 Stationery £48.49

Cheque No 102751 Pilgrims Hospice Tree Recycling £30

Cheque No 102752 Grounds man (Next Invoice Lees damage) £28

Cheque No 102753 Stationery (Printing Paper & Postage) £11.45

Cheque No 102754 HMRC Clerk’s Tax £393.20

Resolved. The cheques were signed by Cllr Walpole and Vice-Chairperson Thomas.

William Oure Charity

1. **Farm Tenancy Agreement**

Harry Kenton BTF advises that we go for a 5-year tenancy agreement with a 3-year rent review rather than a 10-year. This is because a farm tenancy agreement over 7 years needs to be registered with the Land Registry which is costly and time-consuming. Harry advises the 5-year tenancy with a 3-year rent review and then a rolling tenancy is common practice.

 Councillors ratified the approval of Farm Tenancy Agreement proposal by BTF.

1. **The Metro Bank Account as of 31st December 2023 £3523.69**

Received £500 Rent from tenant.

Payments Christmas Hampers £329.57

Resolved: Chairperson Brown & Vice-Chairperson signed the Metro Bank Balance and Reconciliation.

1. **Metro Bank new savings Account**

Current Community William Oure Account is not earning any interest. Limited edition rate for the Community Instant Access Deposit Account 4.00% AER variable for 12 months.

Resolved: To change William Oure Community Account to Instant Access Deposit Account.

Cllr Thomas & Clerk to sign the Instant Access Deposit Account form.

1. **Christmas Welfare Hampers**

Clerk along with the help of the knitting group made up the Christmas hampers containing hot water bottles, toiletries and festive food and a drink. The hampers also contained a knitted blanket provided by the knitting group. 10 hampers for our senior parishioners and one family hamper were distributed. The hampers were well received and received thank you letters from parishioners.

The Parish Council would like to thank the knitting group for their help with the Christmas hampers.

1. **Donation from John Harvey**

Received a cheque for £280 from John Harvey from the sale of the Coronation Celebration print sales £80 and John Harvey has made a personal contribution of £200. The total funds to go to Challock Primary School for their installation of a defibrillator.

The Parish Council would like to thank John Harvey for his generous donation. Clerk to write a thank you letter.

**Highway Matters and Highways Improvement Plan**

1. **Faversham Road Footpath Scheme**

Met with KCC Kieran Doble, team leader Lisa Gillham and KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins to discuss a number of updates and proposals for the footpath scheme. We are pleased to announce that the footpath scheme has now been approved to commence construction in the summer. The remaining £192 monies has been transferred to KCC in house legal team. The deeds of dedication for Dorset Bungalow are now in the process of being dealt with by KCC legal department. ABC Ben Lockwood has consulted with the Leader Noel Ovenden, and he is happy to confirm that Ashford BC will fund the scheme as outlined in our email. Please be advised that this will complete our commitment to the scheme so any latter phases would need to be subject to a further proposition and consideration if this comes forwards. Ben Lockwood will instruct their legal team to draft a funding agreement for ABC funding £14,250 for the project costs. KCC are drafting a funding agreement for KCC Ward Councillor Charlie Simkins £5000 grant. A grant application from ABC Ward Councillor His Worshipful Mayor Larry Krause for £1500 has also been made. Challock Parish Council to fund the remaining £14,250 to the scheme. KCC to send the PC an invoice. Waiting on confirmation when the tree works & vegetation removal will take place.

1. **Highways Improvement Plan Review**

A public consultative meeting set for Thursday, 18th January 2024 in the Audrey Allen Room. Clerk has advertised the meeting in the Forester and will place notice on the website, Facebook page and notice boards commencing 11th January 2024.

Relevant Legislation. Highways Act 1980, ss.43.50, The Road Safety Act 2006 (c 49)

Planning Applications

PA/2023/2265 Land rear of Paddock View, Faversham Road, Challock

Four semi-detached one-and-a-half-storey dwellings and one two-storey detached dwelling with associated parking, landscaping, ecological enhancements, and access from Faversham road.

Noted. The Parish Council had received six letters from parishioners objecting to the planning application.

Cllr Thomas unanimous object to this planning application.

Cllr Fisher commented on the original application there was a strip of land not registered. This has since been registered by current owners and takes 10 years to confirm ownership.

Cllr Walpole commented the access road is owned and maintained by the residents of Paddock View and the strip of land to the left as you enter into Paddock View belongs to King & Johnson.

Cllr Brown commented on lack of infrastructure, the protection of ANOB. Outside of the village confines. Unique habitat, the grass land is mowed once a year, not a dedicated meadow. Pre-application feedback from ABC hasn’t been addressed. ABC Simon Cole pre-application advice commented close to the post office. We don’t have the infrastructure. Access onto the busy A251 sight lines are poor. Noted the Environmental agency has objected to the planning application, not sufficient water drainage provided.

Clerk to draft planning application comments for councillors’ approval.

Ratification of Planning Applications

The following planning application was ratified.

PA/2023/2240 Land north of Old Clockhouse Green Challock, Kent

Erection of four detached dwellings with associated access, car ports and parking.

Resolved: Planning Application PA/2023/2240 comments (see appendix 1) were ratified by the Parish Council

 Relevant legislation: Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Challock Local Housing Needs Survey

The Rural and Community Housing Enabling Service working with Challock Parish Council and Ashford Borough Council undertaking of housing needs survey. Lauch date from the 15th January 2024.

Residents are to receive a postcard in the post, providing information on how to apply the on-line survey. Paper copies of the survey are available to collect at the Barn Shop.

The Lees Common

8.30 pm Meeting closed. Open up to public forum.

Member of public commented that the bollards should not be installed until the Lees grass has been repaired. The lees track needs to be removed, start again. Parishioner commented they would like to have a go at tidying up the grass area at the top of the Lees, adjacent to Church Lane.

Discussion took place on creating a car park on the Lees common.

Cllr Thomas said the Lees Common ground is protected.

* 1. Meeting re-opened.
1. **Installation of bollard posts top of the Lees, Church Lane.**

Cllr Walpole commented on removeable bollards. Cllr Aitken removeable bollards would be susceptible to be stolen.

Resolved: It was agreed to receive a quote from the groundsman of the installation of the bollards at the top end of the Lees, adjacent to Church Lane.

1. **Lees Tracks Consultation Meeting**

Chairperson Brown informed the Parish Council of a company near Lenham, who construct their own roadway using recyclable stones. Roman type road, very effective and longevity factor. Making enquiries.

Resolved: Consultation Meeting date to be advised subject to a further quotation received regarding the roman road type road.

Village Community Events

**DDAY 80 Commemorative Thursday, 6th June 2024**

Parish Council planned event in commemoration of D-Day 80 years.

The lighting of the bonfire beacons at 9.15 pm and the community/nation undertakes the International Tribute. The reading of the Tribute. Fish & Chips supper/picnic on the recreation ground starting at 8 pm. RINGING OUT FOR PEACE: we are encouraging every Cathedral and Church throughout the UK, to ring their Bells at 6.30pm on 6th June, so we ask you to contact your local Churches etc, inviting them to take part.

Clerk has booked the village hall just in case of poor weather. Clerk has booked DH Event Catering to provide fish n chips and alternative menu will be toasties, baguettes, sweet & savoury crepes and barista coffee/beverages. Cricket Club to run a bar and set up bonfire beacon.

It is hoped that funding will be available to have the fish n chips at a reduced rate.

**Summer Fair 2024**

The next meeting is arranged for the 25th January at the Cricket Pavilion at 7.30 pm.

**Christmas Tree – War Memorial**

Clerk has arranged for the Christmas tree to be recycled by Pilgrim’s hospice £30 donation.

Public Participation

Parishioner thanked the Parish Council for objecting to planning application, it is important to protect open spaces.

Parishioner commented on the Lees grass and track, over the years the track has built up and is quite high, making it difficult for the tractor to cut the grass. Hopefully, residents will all contribute towards it.

Parishioner offered use of his tractor/digger to assist with the Lees track and grass works.

Parishioner commented on the dust from the Lees track can be quite harmful.

Parishioner commented on the future of the Lees track maintenance once a new track is laid.

Cllr Aitken. Everyone enjoyed the Fireworks/Halloween Event last year, proposing to do it again in October/November 2024.

Clerk. Highways Improvement Plan Consultation Meeting, 18th January at the Audrey Allen room at 7.30 pm

Relevant Legislation: Local Government Act, s 100.

**Items to be placed on the next Agenda**

Any items to be emailed to: clerk@challockparishcouncil.gov.uk no later than Tuesday, 13th February 2024.

**Next Meeting** 22nd February 2024

**Future Parish Meeting Dates:**

Thursday, 21st March

Thursday, 18th April

Thursday, 16th May AGM

Tuesday 21st May 2024 Annual Parish Meeting

Thursday, 20th June

Thursday, 18th July

Thursday, 19th September

Thursday, 17th October

Thursday, 21st November

**Meeting Closed 21.00 pm.**

**Signed as a true record by: ……………………………Tracy Brown Chairperson Challock Parish Council**

**Dated……………………**

**Appendix 1 – Planning Application**

**PA/2023/2240 Land north of Old Clockhouse Green Challock, Kent**

Erection of four detached dwellings with associated access, car ports and parking.

**Challock Parish Council Comments**

We strongly object to the planning application

Currently nineteen 3-, 4- & 5-bedroom houses are being built at Old Clockhouse Green, this application is for, four further, 4 bedroom detached houses on land at the north of the housing development currently being built.

Safety

-The access road is a continuation of the roadway currently under construction. There is no footpath associated with this roadway, for pedestrian’s, creating major concerns for safety. The 19-house development also does not provide a pedestrian footpath alongside the roadway within this housing estate, which leads to the A252. There is a commercial unit and business at the north, which lorries daily access. Furthermore, once the 19 houses are built the high number of cars associated with households, visitors and online deliveries will put further demand on the estate roadway, its safety for vehicles and pedestrians.

-Already the Parish Council has received concerns of how residents from this development will safely cross the A252 to access any village facilities – school, shop, bus stop, public house, playing field and children’s play area. There is no footpath on the north side of the A252, so all pedestrians will need to cross the A252 road just at the junction of the house estate roadway.

-The speed limit along this A252 at this point is 40mph and traffic has been reported travelling at much higher speeds in recent speed watch campaigns. We have major concerns about the safety of residents from this housing development already, four more family houses will only exacerbate the situation.

-Insufficient consideration has been given to frail, elderly, wheelchair users, parents with young children and pushchairs and young people walking to the school bus stop.

Housing & Development Plans

-It is noted that the plans allow insufficient green communal places, no visitors parking or sewage disposal placement identified or turning places for deliveries and bin collections.

Insufficient infrastructure

-We are close to several major towns and the City of Canterbury, who are resourced to cope with further housing development. Challock has poor infrastructure for even the basics. Insufficient water supply as evidenced in July 2023, 5 days without running water and having to collect bottled water from the Village Hall, a major risk to health and safety for all ages, but particularly babies and young families, frail, and elderly and those with underlying health conditions. With months of hosepipe ban in the summer, already households have been delivered bottled water from South East Water in anticipation of water cuts this December. We understand that the reservoir that provides water for Challock is down to 13% capacity currently and preparing for water cuts at Christmas.

-There are frequent electricity cuts, poor internet, no mains gas or mains drainage.

-Currently the nineteen 3-, 4- & 5-bedroom houses are being built off Old Clockhouse Green - The Old Orchards, will add further demands on village resources, not currently apparent.

-It is not in the interests of the current residents of Challock to further reduce already poor resources. Until the water, electricity shortages, poor internet supply resolved, and mains drainage provided, then Challock should not be accepting any further housing development planning applications. Demands for electricity with air source heating and car electric charging points further exacerbates the problems for Challock.

-Pressure on small, oversubscribed village school. The local school is at maximum capacity and village residents are already having to travel to get their children into schools. No Plan is currently in place to expand the school and further building of family homes will add to the problems. It should be noted that on the planning permission for S.54 (the original 19 house approval site in October 2019 ) that S106 money has been allocated to the Charing Primary School expansion, illustrating further that Challock as a village does not have the infrastructure for any further housing developments - Ashford Borough Council Report of the Head of Planning and Development Planning Committee, dated 02 October 2019. Charing Primary School is 4 miles from Challock, therefore requiring parents to make a 16-mile journey daily, putting further pressure on highways and traffic.

- No doctors/health centre, nearest is Wye or Charing, requires a car to travel, both under pressure with over stretched facilities.

-Decreasing facilities and an increasing number of residents. The village Post Office/General store, Café, Gym studio have all closed in the last two years.

There is a lack of outdoor play space within the village, the play park is small in comparison to the now increased population.

With already 100 new dwellings constructed since 2015 it has become more evident as stated above the lack of infrastructure has a detrimental effect on our village and safeguarding and well-being of our parishioners.

Location

-Challock is in an Area of Outstanding Beauty and the protection for wildlife habitats and maintaining the current balance of housing and green spaces is put at risk and not appropriate for the village.

- The proposed houses sit on land outside the village building confines. The building confines was established through much consultation, consideration discussion. Ashford Borough Council Cabinet Approved the Village Confines Map in 2020. It would be expected that Ashford Borough Council would honour this map and refuse planning applications outside the identified confines line.

-The proposed development is adjacent to a public bridleway and the proposed land currently provides a natural habitat and supports the ecosystem. Protecting our environment is the foundation for sustaining our planet, community, and economy. Our environment supports and houses our ecosystems, allowing them to grow and thrive. If we fail to protect our environment, we will put the lives of humans, animals, plants, and more at risk.

Highways and Traffic

-Provision of public transport is weak with only Faversham to Ashford route available, six miles from secondary schools, access to sports centres and general amenities, putting further stress on highways and safety, no train station.

-As Challock sits at the crossroad of A251 and A252 road, these major routes have continuous traffic, which is narrow, with articulated lorries travelling close to the curb, combined with narrow footpath, is highly dangerous for pedestrians, especially families with young children and pushchairs.

- Crossing the roundabout is another hazard, as the signs on the roundabout are so high that pedestrians cannot see over the top and traffic does not even have to slow up to navigate around the roundabout as it is so wide.

-Other footpaths around the village are intermittent and residents often have to walk on the road instead. Impossible for wheelchair users to be safe. Increased traffic from the newly opened The Stag, which is a popular car and bike meeting place, holding large meets weekdays and weekends with over 50 cars, also situated on the crossroads of the A251 and A252, adds further road traffic in Challock.

- There are issues with speeding through the village and there is a need to reduce the speed limit to 30mph.

-The village footpaths are intermittent, narrow, poorly maintained and adjacent to major busy A roads and therefore do not provide safe routes for pedestrians including families, elderly, disabled and wheelchair users.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

-The site is located within the AONB which is identified in paragraph 11 of the NPPF and associated footnote 7 to be a “protected area” which in this instance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed.

-Both the local plan and the NPPF highlight that great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB. The site is a valuable large open space which provides an important contribution to the openness and natural habitats and wildlife of the village and the AONB in this area.

-Development in this rural area and contribute to the increasing suburbanization of the area and would harmfully erode the traditional rural character.

 -In Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty greater weight should be given to conserving the scenic beauty. Built development within the AONB contributes to its visual quality (including open spaces that break up rural settlements) and is essential to maintaining the AONB as a natural resource.

-The protection for wildlife habitats and maintaining the current balance of housing and green spaces is put at risk and not appropriate for the village.

We trust that you will consider this objection carefully and support the need to preserve this rural community in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.