

District Councillor report for East Challow for 20241211

BT Digital Voice roll-out

I took part in an online briefing by the Rural services Network on the gradual (quite quick for these sorts of services) switchover by BT from the old copper-based phone land lines to the new digital system called Digital Voice for our land lines. Many of us will already have switched over; we did some time ago. The new system is more efficient and has a number of benefits. It includes more protection against fraud and nuisance calls – all done by AI. We have certainly seen a positive difference there. New phones can be provided free and it is a very flexible system, for example for those who have more than one corded phone in the house. Battery backup, which can provide cover for up to 24h in the event of a power cut, can be included and where there is poor phone signal there is also a backup system.

Roll out to more rural premises will take place next year. Anyone with any queries should call 150 or 0800 800 150. Please also identify anyone who you need may have additional needs.

Hedge planting East Challow

We will be planting 40m of mixed species hedge on the sports field car park on Sunday January 5th. We will have prepared the ground by auguring the holes so the work will be light. All helpers very welcome.

Ridgeway villages Tourist Guide/Map

The text and photos for the 45 assets have been sent to 4PointsMapping to make the map/guide. I still need to include the Fox at Denchworth which might be a goal for walkers on the paths north of East Challow. Apart from the need to convert PP slides to PEG or HEIC files the rest will hopefully just be proof checking. The North Wessex Downs Landscape Trust have said that they will signpost it on their web site.

The Mission

I am sure that we all know that the future of the Mission is by no means secured despite the text in the planning application. We are going to put together a list of groups who are interesting in using the space but without the long term security which can only be provided by the landowner its future remains uncertain.

Neighbourhood Plan

This will need a light-touch review of the policies to align with those in the developing Joint Local Plan. This will be done in the New Year. This is not a full review which will be needed after 5 years.

A417 flooding

Until the inspection chamber that sits at the end of Ben Smith's ditch, across the field, is cleared out, together with the pipe that is fed by it, I can't see much change in the amount of water pouring onto the road. The Vale and OCC have had all year to fix this – well before this winter which has resulted in more flooding in Abingdon etc. I could write pages on this but

the short-term measures include the above and clearing the stream along the A417 but longer term measures affecting the brook as far as Challow Marsh Farm are also needed. There is also an independent group of councillors and hydrologists who are trying to put pressure on the county council.

Temporary Traffic Restriction Orders (Road closures)

TTRO 14651 Circourt Rd (A417-Brook Lane, Denchworth) potholes 19-20 December 2024

TTRO 14643 Blowing stone Hill-Kingston Warren road surface repairs 16-18 December 2024

TTRO 14644 Westcot Lane (full extent) road surface 8th January 2025

District Councillor Dr Paul Barrow
Ridgeway Ward
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December 7th 2024