



COLD ASH
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN
Steering Group Update

APRIL 2024





ITS TIME TO VOTE!



Vote in the referendum on Thursday May 2nd 2024 to decide whether to adopt the Cold Ash Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

The NDP is a set of planning policies, developed by local residents, to ensure that new developments are appropriate for our local parish.

*If adopted West Berks Council will use the NDP when making planning decisions in our area:
<https://coldashpc.org.uk/ndp/ndp-document/>*

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	YES
<input type="checkbox"/>	No

**Your voice
Your Choice
Your Parish future**

CAPC NDP Steering Committee

What I'll be covering



1. A reminder, what is an NDP?
2. Why we are doing it
3. What an NDP can't do
4. How we have approached it
5. Our NDP....Objectives & policies
6. Where are we now
7. How you can help
8. Questions





What is an NDP?



A Neighbourhood Plan describes **what is important** to the people who live and work in the area. It does this in a **form of policies and design standards**. These form the basis for **decision-making** by the Parish Council and **engagement with West Berkshire Council** on development within the parish.

In essence, our Neighbourhood Plan enables us to **influence change to ensure it best meets the desires of our community**.



Why are we doing it?



Our Vision

Our vision for Cold Ash Parish is as:

A beautiful, desirable place to live, preserving the distinctive rural villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, with their own identities, whilst also providing a variety of settings and dwellings across the whole parish that take advantage of modern infrastructure and transport links to local towns and beyond.

Aim of our NDP

Fundamentally the aim of the NDP is to find the **most sustainable solution** for the allocation of new housing in our Parish for the lifetime of the West Berkshire Local Plan, taking into consideration the Parish's unique circumstances, limitations and challenges posed by prospective developments in Thatcham.

“Most sustainable” means **careful allocation and placing of housing developments so as to optimally protect, and where possible enhance, the character and quality of life** in the Parish and the identity of its settlements.



Why are we doing it?



The plan can give us:

- **a much greater say on what happens in the area over the next 15 to 20 years.** Without it, planning decisions will be taken based on the Local Plan, which does not necessarily drill down to the level of detail that might be required
- **It will also help us to attract funding to the area.** Those people bringing forward new developments have to pay something called the Community Infrastructure Levy (**CIL**). The levy is intended to fund the provision, improvement, replacement or maintenance of infrastructure required to support development in an area as set out in its local plan. With a 'made' Neighbourhood Plan, **the local community would benefit from an uplift in the level of CIL received, from 15% (capped at £100 per existing property) to an uncapped 25% of CIL receipts from neighbourhood area.**

So, why not stick to using the Village Design Statement (VDS)?



1. The VDS was for **guidance only**, West Berks Council (WBC) was under no obligation to take those comments into account. The policies in the NDP, once accepted, will be incorporated into the Local Plan and have equal weight to the policies developed by WBC
2. The VDS only covered the villages of Cold Ash and Ashmore Green, whereas the **NDP covers the whole parish**. This provides the basis for representing the whole parish.
3. The NDP enables the 'Qualifying Body', Cold Ash Parish Council, to determine where best to site development in the parish and what type of development.
4. Having an NDP will increase the proportion of the payment Cold Ash will receive of the payment developers make to WBC (**known as CIL money**) from **15% to 25%**. This will provide more money to improve local facilities.



What an NDP cannot do



The plan doesn't:

- **Allow us to restrict the number of new dwellings in our parish, although we have successfully managed to negotiate our allocation down to zero; we are therefore a non-allocating NDP**
- **Stop the allocation of Strategic Sites, which are allocated directly by WBDC , although we have received assurances from WBDC that they do not intend to allocate any further Strategic Sites in our parish beyond those allocated through the DPD (Coley Farm and Poplar Farm) plus CA10 (Sims Metal Yard & Passey's and Son's). We should know if this position is likely to change prior to enacting our NDP**
- **Stop development within settlement boundaries, of which there is an 'presumption in favour' of development. But we can influence the nature of any development**
- **Allow us to directly influence changes related to Traffic, Travel and Transport issues**



How we approached it



Our NDP Vision simplified in 6 Objectives



1. Sustainable Development:

- Support energy-efficient, carbon-neutral development that preserves heritage and fits the village context.
- Direct development to sustainable locations within defined boundaries.

2. Green Spaces and Landscape:

- Protect rural character and green spaces.
- Enhance landscape attractiveness, biodiversity, and access to the countryside.

3. Reducing Car Reliance:

- Improve walking, cycling, and public transport options.
- Enhance physical and mental health, road safety, and well-being.

4. Village Atmosphere:

- Maintain a safe, friendly village with a strong sense of community.
- Provide community facilities.

5. Climate Mitigation:

- Support measures to combat climate change.
- Improve air and water quality, reduce plastic pollution, and restore habitats.

6. Thriving Rural Economy:

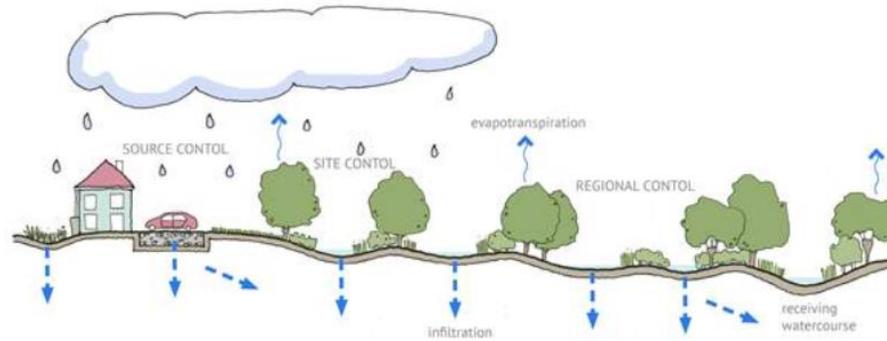
- Support existing businesses and sustainable new opportunities within the Parish.



How we approached it



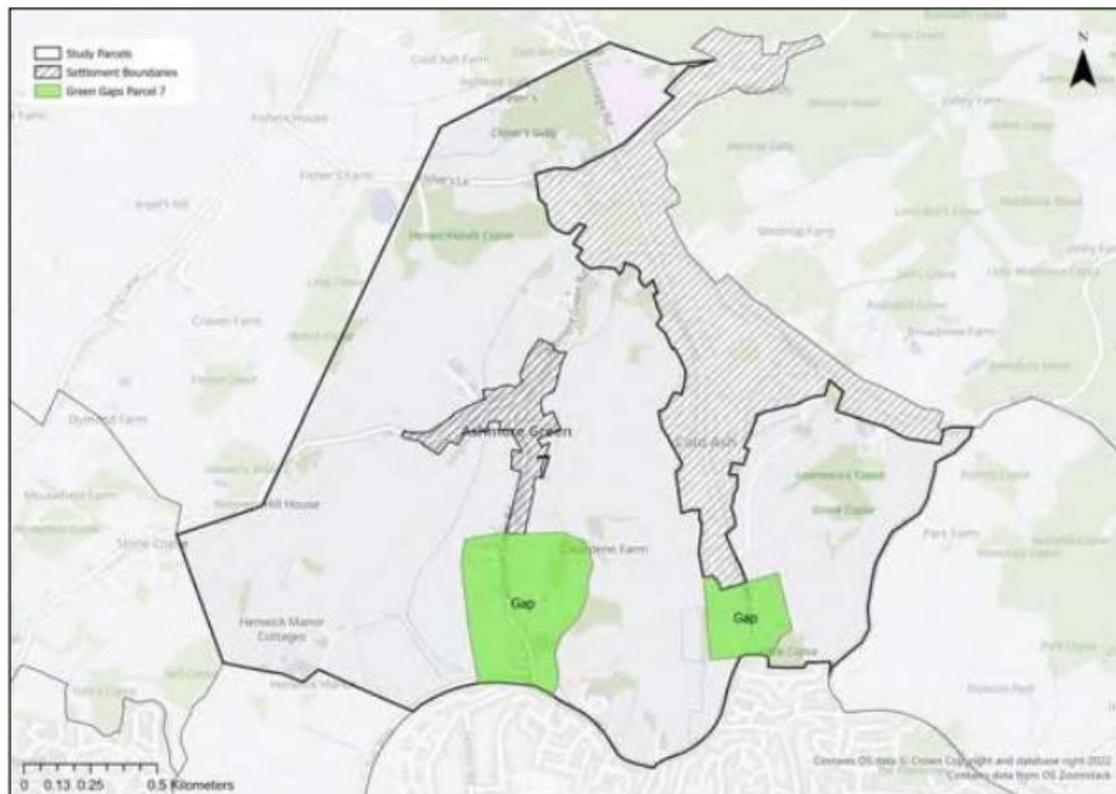
With agreed policies in place we can assess future development against them.....



Old Henwick Cottage, Grade II listed



Some examples of our policies....



- Development needs to be directed to appropriate locations to minimise environmental impact and **prevent sprawl**.
- **Settlement boundaries** play a crucial role in guiding development.
- Cold Ash and Ashmore Green are identified as villages with settlement boundaries, while other parts of the Parish are open countryside or within a protected landscape area.
- **The Local Plan Review (LPR) does not specify a housing target for the Neighbourhood Plan.**
- The Neighbourhood Plan supports WBC's growth strategy and emphasizes directing development to existing settlement boundaries.
- **It aims to preserve the rural character of the Parish and protect the landscape from urban sprawl.**
- The plan encourages the use of brownfield sites and ensures development doesn't strain infrastructure capacity.

Some examples of our policies....



POLICY CAP9: LOCAL GREEN SPACES

The following six green spaces, as shown on Figure 14 and defined in Appendix C, are designated as Local Green Spaces:

1. Cleardene Wood
2. Wildlife Allotment Garden
3. Woodland Leaves Meadow
4. Little Copse
5. Hermitage Road Recreation Ground
6. Waller Drive Recreation Park

Conformity Ref: CAPNDP Objectives: 2; Adopted Core Strategy: CS18; Local Plan Review: SP10, SP11; NPPF: 105–107, 142–156

Our NDP Seeks to designate local green spaces so that they can be safeguarded from inappropriate development.

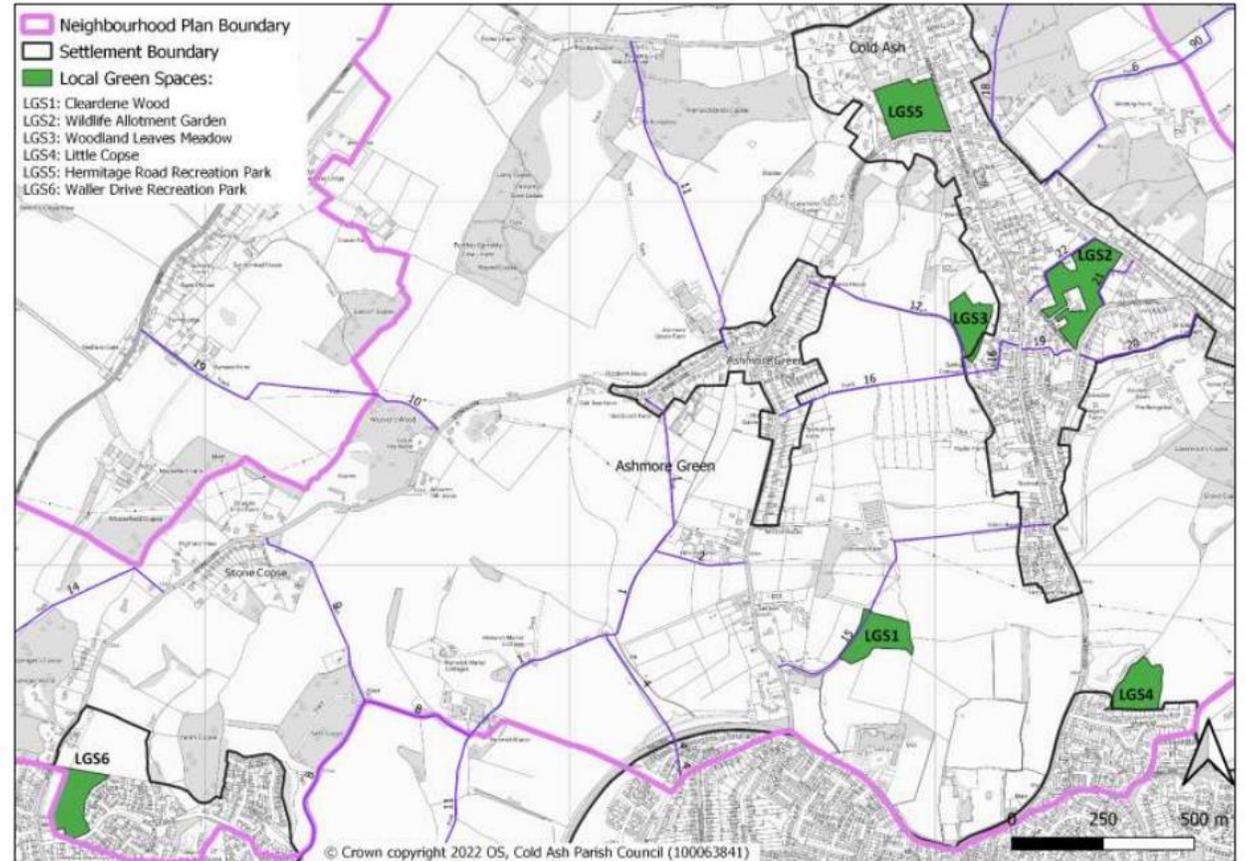


Figure 14: Local Green Spaces

Some examples of our policies....



Old Henwick Cottage, Grade II listed

3 Zones with different Policies

Village
Urban Fringe
Rural

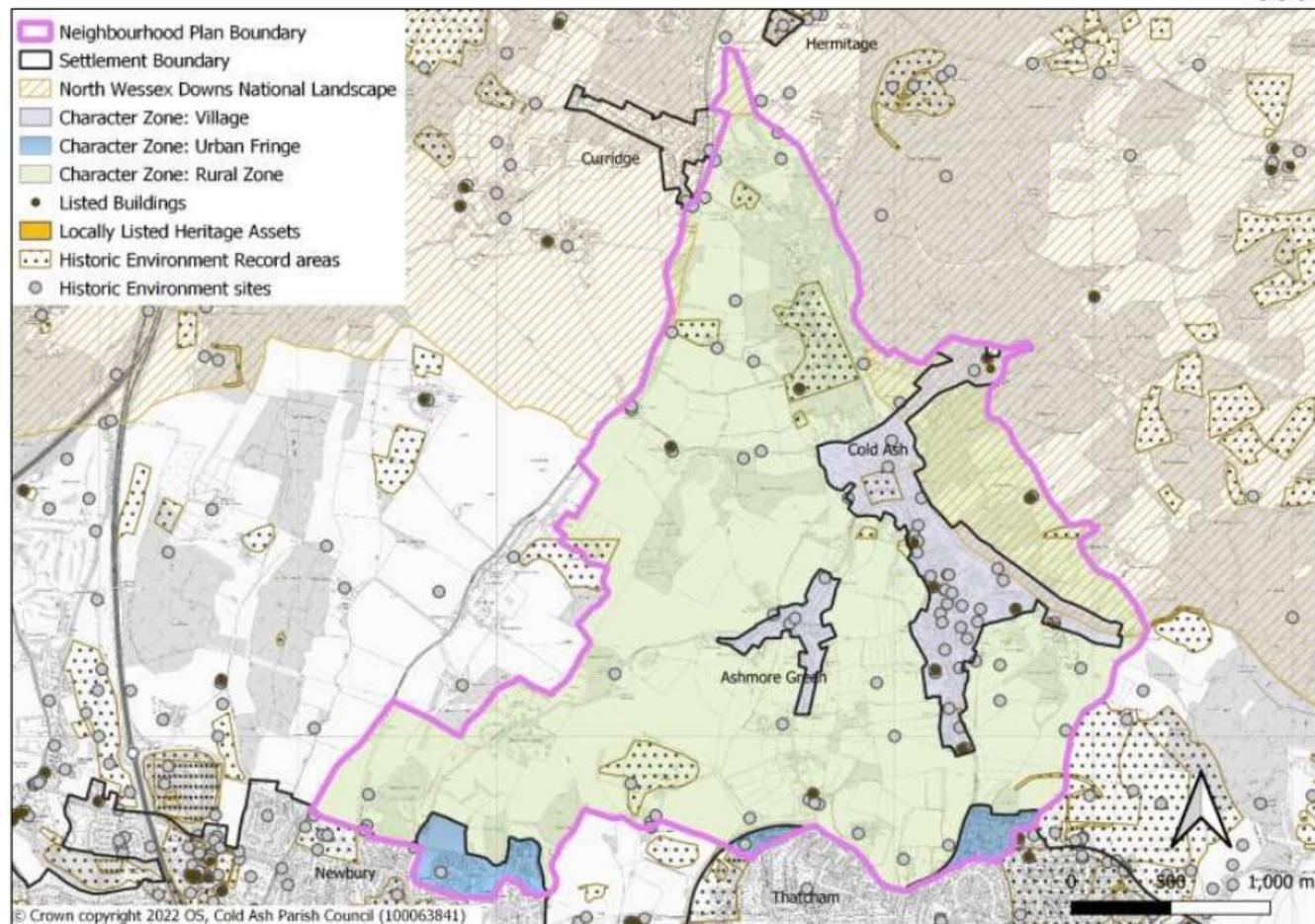


Figure 7: Identified Character Zones and local heritage assets within the Parish

Some examples of our policies....



Old Henwick Cottage, Grade II listed

Zone 1: Village Zones - Cold Ash and Ashmore Green

Zone 2: Urban Fringe Zone

Location: Where rural landscape meets Thatcham and Newbury. gardens of varying sizes, planned layout.

Development Restriction: Important to limit expansion to preserve rural and village zones, design cues from Thatcham and Newbury, density and massing of development to reduce alongside rural landscape.



Zone 3: Rural Zone

Description: Open countryside between settlements, largely agricultural, some within National Landscape.

Development Restriction: No anticipated development, any proposed development to reflect Village Zone character, protect green buffers between Cold Ash village and Thatcham's urban fringe.

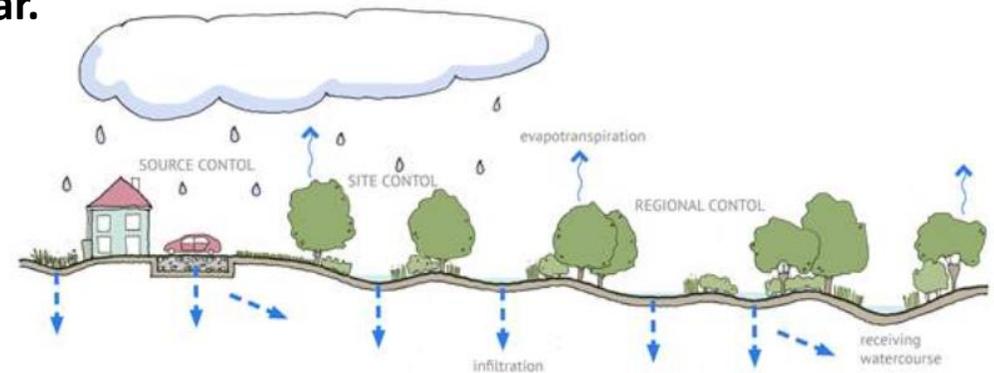


Some examples of our policies....



Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS):

- SuDS should be provided on-site unless critical reasons prevent it.
 - Lack of on-site SuDS is acceptable only with valid evidence.
 - Negative impacts on flooding may lead to unsupportive applications.
- Enhancing Wildlife and Biodiversity:
 - SuDS design should benefit wildlife.
- Include green roofs, permeable surfaces, and rain gardens.
 - Minimize flood impacts.
 - Drainage Scheme Plans:
- **Major developments and flood risk areas require a maintenance plan.**
 - **Responsibilities for long-term management must be clear.**
 - **Address adherence to SuDS plans and mitigation if targets are not met.**



Some examples of our policies....

POLICY CAP8: ICONIC VIEWS

Development should be located and designed in a way that does not significantly harm the iconic view or views concerned, identified from publicly accessible locations. Proposals will not be supported if potential impacts on landscape cannot be adequately mitigated through design and landscaping. Particular sensitivity should be shown for the iconic views, as listed below and identified on Figure 13:

1. From St Mark's Churchyard - south and west
2. From The Ridge across Westrop Farm and Gulley
3. From footpath 15 looking SW, towards Newbury
4. Looking NE towards Broadview Farm and the Pang Valley
5. From St Finian's Farm towards Watership Down
6. From Footpath 15 looking south
7. From Footpath 16 looking south
8. From footpath 15 looking east, towards Cold Ash Hill
9. View looking south east towards the Downs from the Quiet Garden off Gladstone Lane

Development proposals that could affect the above Iconic Views should be supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment that is proportionate to the scale of the development.

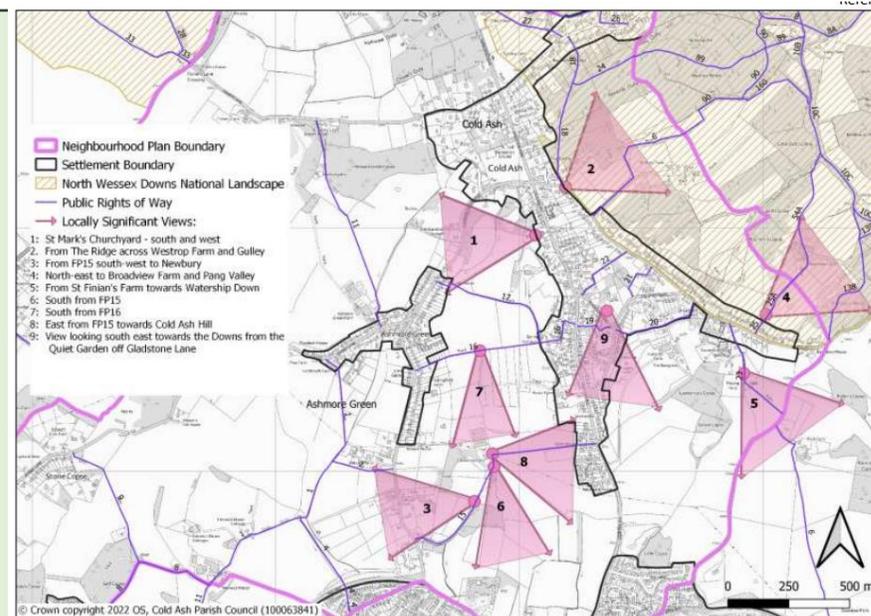


Figure 13: Map showing the location of the iconic views relating to Policy CAP8

So where are we now?

Date	Milestone	Key activities
Stage 1: 2017	Establishment: Setting up the SG committee structure and building capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Steering Group and Working Groups established. Training on neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood area formally designated. Regular (monthly) SG meetings inaugurated. Webpages developed. Social media used to raise awareness, post invitations to meetings, etc. Engagement and communications approach established.
Stage 2: 2018-2020	Engagement: Gathering and analysing evidence (from surveys, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 x village public meetings held. Engagement and activity on the Green Infrastructure Plan. Exhibitions, including Village Show, Christmas Fayre. Initial 'Village Development Survey'. Local Housing Needs Survey. Parish-Wide questionnaire. Working Groups fact-finding and preparing evidence base. Meetings with LPA officers and committees. Meetings with landowners and developers.
Stage 3: 2018-22	Documentation: Producing key documents, i.e. Draft Policies and Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Researching other NDPs Selecting preferred format for CAPNDP. Response to emerging Local Plan consultation Inputting findings from the NP process. Initial drafting of Neighbourhood Plan policies and gaining feedback from the local community.
Stage 4: 2021-2024	Finalising Policies & Plan: Including final consultation and agreement via Referendum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparation of the Pre-Submission Version Neighbourhood Plan. SEA/ HRA screening undertaken. Regulation 14 consultation. Submission Version Plan submitted to LPA. Examination and Referendum.



Our 7 year journey and we are nearly therehopefully



How you can help?





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YES
 No

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**If you believe you can help
or need additional information,
please contact Cold Ash Parish Council**

email: clerk@coldashpc.org.uk

mail: The Parish Office, Cold Ash, RG18 9JH

Phone: 01635 860004



ANY QUESTIONS?



Yes

No



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