

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk
Sent: 14 July 2026 13:08
To: 'Abbie Panks'
Cc: Cllr Angela Archdale; Cllr Sandra Howard Cllr;
cllr.clive.hill@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk;
cllr.david.harrison@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk;
cllr.david.wroth@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk;
cllr.josie.flower@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk;
cllr.kate.kilby@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk;
cllr.kevin.crompton@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk; Mark Latter Cllr; Melanie Lewis Cllr;
Nicola Durrant Cllr
Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Hi Abbie,
Thank you for your response. I hope you are recovering well.

Having read your reply carefully, it misses the central concern raised by the Parish Council.

Throughout your response, Freebridge continues to state that its understanding of Parish Council support arose from "earlier discussions with Parish Council representatives", "previous discussions with Parish Council representatives", "engagement undertaken over a number of years" and "discussions undertaken by colleagues involved in the project".

However, this is precisely the point the Council has consistently explained is incorrect.

There were no discussions between Freebridge and Docking Parish Council regarding support for this scheme before the planning application. No Parish Council meeting considered the proposal, no resolution was passed, no councillor was authorised to represent the Council's position, and no delegated representative was appointed to discuss the matter with Freebridge. No discussions with PC have taken place.

Accordingly, the Parish Council is asking Freebridge to evidence the discussions upon which these repeated statements are based.

Please could you provide:

1. evidence that Freebridge consulted with Docking Parish Council prior to the planning application, including the date(s) of that consultation and any minutes, notes or other contemporaneous records.

If Freebridge is unable to provide evidence of such consultation, then the repeated references to previous discussions with Parish Council representatives are incorrect and should be withdrawn

As the explanations provided are founded upon that assertion, the Council's original questions remain unanswered and will require a substantive response

The Council would therefore appreciate a response addressing this specific factual issue followed by an accurate response to the concerns.

Separately, the Council has now considered your earlier request for a meeting and has agreed that a meeting should take place. Please could you let me have a selection of suitable dates. As councillors are volunteers, the meeting will need to take place outside normal working hours.

Kind regards,
Annalisa
Clerk to Docking Parish Council

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 13 July 2026 13:18

To: clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: FW: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Annalisa

My apologies for the delay, I had an accident last week so a little behind myself

Following our conversations last week, I have set out below responses to the points you raised. I hope this provides helpful clarification on the Docking scheme, our approach to local housing need, and the wider service issues discussed.

Why did Freebridge state that the Parish Council supported the Docking scheme before the Council had been consulted or expressed any support?

Freebridge understood that there was general support for addressing local affordable housing need in Docking. This understanding was based on earlier discussions with Parish Council representatives, engagement undertaken during the early stages of the project, and feedback received through public consultation activity. Freebridge did not intend to misrepresent the Parish Council's position. The concerns later raised through the planning process were not matters that had previously been brought to our attention during earlier engagement.

Why was it subsequently suggested that the Council had changed its position when no prior consultation had taken place?

Our understanding was formed through discussions and engagement undertaken by colleagues involved in the project from the outset. When the planning application was progressed by a new member of the team, the information handed over indicated that the principle of delivering affordable housing to meet identified local need had been supported. References to a change in position were intended to reflect the difference between that earlier understanding and the formal objections later submitted. They were not intended to suggest that the Parish Council had failed to engage properly with the planning process.

Why was it indicated that a local occupancy approach depended upon Parish Council support, whilst also stating that the application would proceed regardless because it was "too late" to reverse?

No pressure was intended in discussions about local occupancy arrangements. Rural exception sites are normally brought forward to meet identified local housing need and are commonly supported by Parish Councils or local communities seeking affordable homes for local people.

The Docking proposal originated following a local housing needs survey which identified a need for affordable housing within the parish. The site was initially promoted by the landowner, the Ripper Trust, specifically to help meet that identified local need.

Any discussions about allocation arrangements were intended to explain how rural exception site policies operate. They were not intended to influence the Parish Council's response to the planning application.

Freebridge progressed the scheme in good faith, based on engagement undertaken over a number of years, previous discussions with Parish Council representatives, and public consultation events attended by local stakeholders. Once significant time and resources had been invested in developing the proposal and preparing the planning application, we had a responsibility to continue the planning process so the Local Planning Authority could determine the application on its planning merits. This should not be interpreted as disregarding the concerns raised, but as appropriate stewardship of the investment made in seeking to deliver affordable homes for local people.

What is Freebridge's response to the concerns raised regarding the independence, interpretation, and application of the local housing needs survey?

Local housing needs surveys are routinely used to understand housing demand within a community. The survey undertaken for Docking followed an established methodology and was intended to provide evidence of local housing need. As with any survey, the results are dependent on the responses received and provide a snapshot of identified demand at a particular point in time.

Rural exception sites operate under specific planning and allocation arrangements designed to prioritise households with a qualifying local connection. The purpose of the survey was to inform the scale and type of housing required and to support the planning process. The planning application has been assessed by the Local Planning Authority against relevant planning policy and supporting evidence.

In relation to other developments and allocations, each scheme is subject to its own planning consent, legal agreements, and allocation criteria. As a result, direct comparisons between individual developments do not always reflect the different policy and operational requirements that apply to each site.

You also raised concerns that recent developments in the area have not been fully let to local residents, including the Brancaster scheme, and that some Freebridge properties in Docking have remained empty.

Having checked, we only have one void property in the Docking area which is going to auction. The closest we have is one property between Great Barwick and Barmer, on Monks Close, where the tenancy is terminating tomorrow.

With regard to Brancaster, Freebridge worked to secure the site for local lettings including engaging with the local MP. While this was not agreed initially by the Borough Council (who determine this, not Freebridge), a local lettings plan was eventually confirmed which will remain in perpetuity, ensuring that local residents have first chance at securing these homes.

How does Freebridge monitor the effectiveness of its complaints and escalation procedures where recurring themes are identified?

Residents can raise concerns through a range of channels, including telephone, email, online services, face to face with the communities' team, during our out and abouts, written correspondence and direct contact with operational teams. Once concerns are raised, they are allocated to the relevant service area for investigation and response.

Where issues cannot be resolved immediately, we aim to maintain regular communication with residents and clearly explain the next steps, timescales, and available escalation routes.

Freebridge monitors the effectiveness of its complaints and escalation procedures through thematic analysis, governance oversight, customer feedback, and service improvement monitoring. Quarterly reviews of

complaint data and the Lessons Learned Register are used to identify recurring themes, systemic root causes, and emerging trends. Where patterns are identified, improvement actions are agreed, assigned to named owners, and monitored through the Lessons Learned Group, with escalation where progress is not being made. Actions are only closed once evidence demonstrates both delivery and impact.

We measure effectiveness through complaint volumes, escalation rates, response times, customer satisfaction, Housing Ombudsman determinations and progress against improvement actions. Thematic findings and learning are reported through the Lessons Learned Group, Operations Committee, the Member Responsible for Complaints and the Board. This provides assurance that recurring issues are identified, addressed, and embedded into service improvement activity.

Freebridge's complaints process operates within a wider regulatory framework. Complaint handling is governed by the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code, which sets expectations around accessibility, fairness, timeliness, learning, and accountability. Freebridge completes regular self-assessment against the Code and reviews Housing Ombudsman determinations and learning reports to identify improvement opportunities.

Complaints also contribute to consumer regulation by providing evidence about service quality and customer outcomes. Where complaints identify wider service failures, recurring issues or risks relating to consumer standards, this intelligence informs performance monitoring and assurance reporting.

We publish complaints information and actively monitor complaints, comments, and compliments so that the organisation can learn, improve services and deliver better outcomes for customers. The Board Member Responsible for Complaints provides additional oversight, helping to ensure transparency, accountability, and a positive complaints culture across the organisation.

Freebridge operates a two-stage complaints process. Stage 1 complaints are responded to within 10 working days of receipt. Stage 2 complaints are reviewed by a Head of Service and responded to within 20 working days of escalation. Performance against these timescales is monitored through regular complaints reporting and oversight arrangements, with compliance measured against the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code. Freebridge has responded to 100% of Stage 1 complaints and 95.8% of Stage 2 complaints within the required timescales.

In addition to formal complaints data, we review wider customer feedback through our Customer Insight Panel, which is made up of Freebridge customers and regularly reviews service trends, including complaints. This helps ensure that concerns raised by residents inform continuous improvement across our services.

What steps is Freebridge taking to address recurring concerns raised by residents regarding anti-social behaviour, property condition, repairs, and maintenance?

We take all reports of anti-social behaviour, property condition issues, and repair concerns very seriously. Concerns are reviewed by the ASB and Safeguarding team and, where required, investigated in line with our policies and procedures and where necessary, partners such as the local authority or police.

In relation to Docking specifically, there are no outstanding ASB cases, trends or complaint patterns indicating wider unresolved issues affecting the community.

Where concerns relate to alleged criminal activity, including reports of drug-related activity, we work closely with Norfolk Police, as criminal investigations fall within their statutory remit. We have spoken with Norfolk Police, and, to the best of their knowledge, they have not received reports of ASB in or around Docking relating to Freebridge customers. Regardless, they have agreed to arrange additional patrols in the area to provide reassurance and maintain a visible presence.

The police have indicated they are aware of one case of ASB, but this does not relate to a Freebridge tenant.

We continue to review our property inspection processes and inspection checklists through our communities' team to ensure they remain effective in identifying issues promptly and maintaining the quality of homes and neighbourhoods.

Where residents raise concerns about the condition of their home, these are logged and reviewed by the relevant housing, repairs or asset colleagues depending on the nature of the issue. This may include concerns about damp and mould, structural condition, external areas, boundaries, drainage, windows, doors, heating, safety-related matters, or the general standard of repair. Where an inspection is required, we will arrange for the property to be assessed so that the cause of the issue can be understood, and the appropriate remedial action identified.

Property condition concerns are prioritised according to risk, urgency, and impact on the resident. Issues that may affect health, safety, security, or the ability to use key facilities in the home are treated as a priority. Other works are scheduled in line with repair priorities, contractor availability and any wider planned maintenance or investment programmes that may provide a more effective long-term solution.

We also use property condition information to help identify recurring themes across homes and neighbourhoods. This includes reviewing repair history, repeat reports, inspection findings, complaints, customer feedback, and any patterns that may indicate a wider asset issue. Where themes are identified, they are considered through operational service reviews and asset management planning so that individual repairs are not treated in isolation where a broader response is needed.

Where a resident remains dissatisfied with the response to a property condition issue, they can escalate the matter through our complaints process. This ensures the concern is independently reviewed, any service failure is identified, and any learning is captured through the same lessons learned arrangements described above.

ASB can also be reported through the Freebridge website and includes detail of what is and what isn't deemed ASB <https://www.freebridge.org.uk/freebridge-customer/anti-social-behaviour-asb>. Information about how to report ASB is also available through the tenant platform and in the quarterly customer magazine which goes to all Freebridge customers.

For repairs at present, there are 10 open jobs relating to external works in Docking.

What is Freebridge's policy where properties are considered uneconomical to repair, and how does this align with the identified need for affordable housing? How does Freebridge monitor and address properties that remain vacant for extended periods?

Freebridge closely monitors properties that become vacant through a structured void management process. Once a property is returned, inspections are undertaken to identify any repairs, or improvement works required before the home can be re-let. The length of time a property remains empty depends on the scale of works

required, the availability of contractors, and any regulatory or safety requirements that must be completed before a new tenancy can begin.

Void performance is monitored through regular reporting, with a focus on minimising the time properties remain unoccupied while ensuring homes are safe, compliant, and suitable for incoming residents.

Where a property is assessed as uneconomical to repair, Freebridge follows a formal asset management process. This considers the condition of the property, the cost of remedial works, long-term sustainability, value for money, and the overall benefit to current and future residents.

Given the significant demand for affordable housing across West and North Norfolk, decisions to remove homes from the affordable housing stock are not taken lightly. Where disposal, redevelopment or replacement is considered, this is done in the context of maintaining and, where possible, increasing the supply of good quality affordable homes available to local communities.

As one of the three housing associations with homes in Docking, we remain committed to working constructively with the Parish Council, residents, and other local stakeholders. While views may differ regarding the planning application, our objective throughout has been to respond to identified housing need and to manage our homes and communities responsibly. We welcome continued dialogue and will continue to engage openly and professionally with the Parish Council on matters affecting residents and the wider community.

Should you have any additional questions, now or in future please feel free to come direct to me should you need to

Kind Regards,

Abbie Panks
Head of Communications and Engagement
Freebridge Community Housing
Direct Dial: 01553 666825
Mobile: 07345 702571

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 06 July 2026 14:35

To: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: Re: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Thank you for the additional information, Annalisa- this is why I suggested a phone call so I could understand the issues.

In terms of light issues / signage etc please can you tell me where they have been reported to so I can follow up as to why you have not been given responses.

Monks close community centre now sits with my department but I have not received any correspondence from the Parish Council about it, please can you let me know the nature of the enquiry

and where your enquiries have been directed on that front too please and I will, of course come back to you.

I'll be back at my desk tomorrow so will come back to you on the other points from your previous email then

Abbie

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk <Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 2:04 pm

To: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Abbie, I am so confused, council has come to you because they keep hearing reports and continually redirect to Freebridge.

And the perception is that nothing is happening. And Councils communications with Freebridge have also been challenging. (eg reporting broken lights, requesting assistance for some signs, speaking about Monks close communication centre – there is little traction nor action without deep and continual perseverance – and still after several year's we await response to monks close community centre)

Council asking Freebridge directly to get on top of these things, and your response has been to ask council to ask people to speak to Freebridge (which is already being done and getting nowhere) Not to take action and investigate yourself.

Do you have a schedule of when Freebridge are in the area? Can this be sent to all your tenants so they know? Would you be able to contact all of your Docking tenants to investigate concerns and to encourage reporting?

Do you have case studies for effective reporting and Freebridge response?

Do you have stats for length of time from reporting to resolution? Number of cases? number of unresolved cases? Number of resolved cases?

If you have wording that we could put on Facebook we will also publish this.

What actions can Freebridge take?

Thanks,
Annalisa

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 06 July 2026 12:24

To: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: Re: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Hi Annalisa

We have communities' team patch workers who work in the area face to face with customers regularly, which is another way reports can be made. The team are in the area regularly.

I would strongly encourage as a parish council (as others do) to encourage customer to speak with Freebridge

Thanks

Abbie

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk <Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: Monday, July 6, 2026 12:19 pm

To: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Thanks – I understand. Anecdotally, the general impression that council is given is that there is no pint reporting things to Freebridge because it doesn't get sorted So maybe that why its not reported?

Or maybe because no one likes to 'snitch' = so maybe Freebridge could be a bit more proactive in keeping an eye.

Cheers,
Annalisa

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 03 July 2026 14:01

To: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Annalisa

Your email indicated that there were individual cases, hence why I asked

I will come back to you on the below but in the meantime, I can tell you that we have absolutely zero reports of ASB reported in Docking so again – helpful to understand why these have not been reported to the ASB team by residents

Abbie

Abbie Panks
Head of Communications and Engagement
Freebridge Community Housing
Direct Dial: 01553 666825
Mobile: 07345 702571

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk <Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 03 July 2026 13:56

To: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Hi Abbie,
Thank you for your response.

I believe there has been a misunderstanding as to the purpose of the Parish Council's correspondence.

The Council is not presenting individual housing complaints for investigation. Should Freebridge consider that any of the wider concerns raised warrant investigation, that is entirely a matter for Freebridge. The Council is not acting as an evidence-gathering body on behalf of residents, nor is it seeking to investigate or substantiate individual cases.

Individual residents are responsible for raising and pursuing their own concerns directly with Freebridge through your established processes.

The Parish Council's role is to represent the interests of the community by raising recurring themes and wider concerns that have been brought to its attention.

Accordingly, the Council is seeking Freebridge's response to those wider issues, rather than asking Freebridge to investigate individual cases.

The Council would therefore be grateful for a response to the following matters raised in our original correspondence:

Planning application and engagement

- Why did Freebridge state that the Parish Council supported the Docking scheme before the Council had been consulted or expressed any support?
- Why was it subsequently suggested that the Council had changed its position when no prior consultation had taken place?
- Why was it indicated that a local occupancy approach depended upon Parish Council support, whilst also stating that the application would proceed regardless because it was "too late" to reverse?
- What is Freebridge's response to the concerns raised regarding the independence, interpretation and application of the local housing needs survey?

Housing management

- What steps is Freebridge taking to address recurring concerns raised by residents regarding anti-social behaviour, property condition, repairs and maintenance?
- How does Freebridge monitor and address properties that remain vacant for extended periods? Are you aware of the length of time properties were recently left empty in Docking?
- What is Freebridge's policy where properties are considered uneconomical to repair, and how does this align with the identified need for affordable housing?

Communication and complaints handling

- What processes are in place to ensure residents receive timely responses and effective resolution of concerns?
- How does Freebridge monitor the effectiveness of its complaints and escalation procedures where recurring themes are identified?

The Council is not requesting investigations into individual resident cases and is therefore unable to provide addresses, complaint references or other case-specific information. Those matters remain between Freebridge and the residents concerned.

If Freebridge considers that any of the strategic questions above cannot be answered without reference to a specific case, please identify which question that is and explain why.

I trust this clarifies the purpose of the Council's correspondence, and I look forward to receiving Freebridge's response for council.

Kind regards,
Annalisa

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 03 July 2026 13:37

To: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Annalisa,

I am trying to provide a full and fair response to the concerns raised in your original email. However, to investigate these matters properly and provide meaningful answers, we need more specific information. At present, the points raised are broad allegations and do not contain sufficient detail for us to identify the cases being referred to or review the actions taken. In particular, we would be grateful if you could provide the relevant property addresses, dates, and details of any reports made in relation to the issues listed below. This information will enable us to investigate each concern thoroughly and respond accurately.

Specifically, we require further details in relation to:

- Reports of drug-related activity within certain estates.
- Reports of anti-social behaviour affecting housing areas.
- Concerns regarding property condition, including damp, mould and heating issues.
- Alleged delays in repair responses, including heating failures during winter periods.
- Concerns that properties are not being maintained to an acceptable standard.
- Concerns regarding properties remaining empty for extended periods.
- Concerns regarding properties that may have been deemed uneconomical to repair and any related decisions about disposal.

We would also appreciate further information regarding the concerns raised about communication and responsiveness, including:

- Examples of delayed or inadequate responses to complaints.
- Cases where residents feel issues were not resolved satisfactorily.
- Examples of where residents believe meaningful engagement did not take place.
- Details of concerns regarding complaints handling or escalation processes.

Once we receive this information, we will be able to investigate each matter fully and provide a detailed response. We are keen to understand any genuine concerns and work constructively with the Parish Council to address them.

Kind regards,

Abbie
Abbie Panks
Head of Communications and Engagement
Freebridge Community Housing
Direct Dial: 01553 666825
Mobile: 07345 702571

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk <Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 03 July 2026 13:31

To: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Hi Abbie,

As I have already explained, this matter must go to the July Council meeting. I have bolded and underlined where I previously confirmed this.

The reason is straightforward. The Parish Council is a statutory public authority and can only conduct its business in accordance with the law.

- Individual councillors have no delegated authority to meet and discuss Council business or agree the Council's position outside a formal Council meeting.
- The Council's collective position can only be agreed by resolution at a properly convened Council meeting, which is held in public unless there is a lawful reason to exclude the press and public. These are held monthly.

For that reason, the meeting you have requested cannot simply be arranged. The Council must first decide, by formal resolution, whether it has the authority to facilitate such a meeting.

This is why I asked you to submit your enquiries by email.

Had you done so, the Council could have considered your enquiries and agreed its responses at the July meeting.

Instead, the July meeting can only consider whether the type of meeting you have requested can be authorised.

If the Council resolves that it can, your enquiries would then be raised at that meeting and then the Council will still need to consider and agree its responses at a subsequent meeting (the next one being September).

This creates at least a further 2 month delay that could have been avoided had your enquiries been submitted in writing for consideration at July's meeting.

Thanks,
Annalisa

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 03 July 2026 12:59

To: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Hi Annalisa

Just wondered if you had any idea on suggested dates yet?

We need to understand much more detail about the points raised below –if that's a phone call between you and I in the first instance to move this forward, that would be helpful please

Abbie

Abbie Panks
Head of Communications and Engagement

Freebridge Community Housing
Direct Dial: 01553 666825
Mobile: 07345 702571

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk <Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 17 June 2026 13:11

To: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Cc: Heidi Bailey <Heidi.Bailey@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Oh, sorry – on dates.. **it would need to be after the July meeting because council** will need to deliberate and decided whether they can permit a private meeting and make the necessary delegated arrangements.

But I will get back to you as soon as I know , in the meantime, some specifics about the aims of the meeting would be helpful to council. As noted, if it is just to better understand council view - then I can do that immediately in a phone call with you, or by email.

If it is to discuss resolutions, then council will need to appoint a committee that can advise the clerk on what can be said. – Lawfully Cllrs are not able to speak on behalf of council – so we need to leverage some work arounds.

Thanks,

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 15 June 2026 18:46

To: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Cc: Heidi Bailey <Heidi.Bailey@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Hi Annalisa

Thanks for coming back to me, in terms of the meeting content we'd like to discuss the content of your email in more detail as there as lot of elements

If you can give me a couple of options on dates, that would be helpful

Thank you

Abbie

Abbie Panks
Head of Communications and Engagement
Freebridge Community Housing
Direct Dial: 01553 666825
Mobile: 07345 702571

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk <Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 15 June 2026 11:53

To: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Cc: Heidi Bailey <Heidi.Bailey@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: RE: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Hi Abbie,

Thank you for coming back to me.

I will need to discuss with council the possibility of a meeting as there will need to be a delegate of cllrs and they haven't been selected – or it will need to be full council.

Might you be able to give any further details about the content of the meeting? And in the meantime I will speak with council and come back to you?

Thanks,
Annalisa

From: Abbie Panks <Abbie.Panks@freebridge.org.uk>

Sent: 11 June 2026 15:17

To: clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

Cc: Heidi Bailey <Heidi.Bailey@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: Docking Parish Council - Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Good afternoon, Annalisa

My colleague has forwarded your email. I'm sorry to hear of your concerns.

I have spoken with our Chief Operations Officer this afternoon and would like to arrange a date with her to come and meet with you.

Can you advise when may be suitable

Abbie

Abbie Panks
Head of Communications and Engagement
Freebridge Community Housing
Direct Dial: 01553 666825
Mobile: 07345 702571

From: Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk <Clerk@dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 11 June 2026 09:53

To: Feedback <Feedback@freebridge.org.uk>

Subject: Request for Assistance Regarding Serious Concerns Arising from Freebridge Housing Development

Dear Sir/Madam,

Following recent events relating to a Freebridge Housing development in Docking, the Parish Council is writing to request assistance in addressing a number of serious concerns that have arisen during the planning process and in relation to ongoing housing management by Freebridge within the parish. These concerns are set out below.

1. Freebridge conduct, strategy and engagement in relation to the Docking planning application
 1. That Freebridge Housing stated there was Parish Council support for the scheme in order to progress the application, at a stage when no consultation had taken place and no such support had been given, and that the application proceeded on the basis of that false representation
 2. That following the Council's objection, Freebridge Housing stated that the Council had changed its position despite no prior consultation having taken place, and implied that the Council had not properly understood nor competently engaged with the planning documents
 3. That the scheme would not proceed with a local housing allocation or local occupancy approach for Docking unless Parish Council support was secured, and that if Parish Council support was not given, housing would instead be prioritised on a borough-wide basis and Docking would not be prioritised within that approach, thereby placing pressure on the Parish Council in relation to its response
 4. That it was also stated that, had the Parish Council not supported the project, it would not have proceeded, but that it was also stated that, due to investment already made, it was "too late" to undo the application, and that Freebridge Housing would not reverse its position based on a false representation of Parish Council support. There is no record of any such support having been given (nor even having been consulted prior to the first objection).
 5. Concerns are raised regarding the reliance on the local housing needs survey used to support the scheme, including questions as to its independence and impartiality in circumstances where the land had already been identified by Freebridge and the survey was commissioned and funded by Freebridge
 - i. That the interpretation of the survey findings appears flawed; so that reported demand may not represent net additional housing need where respondents are existing Freebridge tenants seeking to move within the existing housing stock, resulting in internal transfers rather than new housing demand and potential vacancies elsewhere within the system
 - ii. that expressions of preference to live in Docking may reflect desirability rather than demonstrable housing need in a settlement with limited employment, education provision and public transport, raising questions as to whether the evidence provides a sound and reliable basis for the scale and location of the proposed development
 - iii. That recent developments in the area have not been filled fully locally (for example Brancaster with 2 from Kings Lynn rather than all local need and where residents from Docking would have been closer and better fulfilled the local need restriction) along with ongoing empty Freebridge properties in Docking.
2. Management of existing Freebridge housing stock
 1. The Council continues to receive repeated complaints from residents regarding Freebridge housing within the parish, including:
 - i. reports of drug-related activity within certain estates
 - ii. reports of an social behaviour affecting housing areas
 - iii. concerns regarding poor property condition, including damp, mould, and inadequate heating provision
 - iv. delays in repair response, including heating failures during winter periods
 - v. concerns that properties are not being maintained to an acceptable standard of habitability
 - vi. concerns that some properties have remained empty for extended periods, which raises questions regarding the accuracy of stated housing need and allocation pressure within the area
 - vii. concerns that properties have in some cases been allowed to fall into such disrepair that Freebridge Housing has indicated they are no longer economical to repair and may be sold or

disposed of rather than retained and refurbished to meet ongoing housing need, with the Parish Council considering this approach to be inappropriate in the context of declared housing demand

3. Communication and responsiveness: The Council is also concerned about the handling of concerns raised by residents, including
 1. delayed or inadequate responses to complaints
 2. lack of clear resolution following reporting of issues
 3. failure to engage meaningfully with residents raising serious concerns
 4. loss of confidence in complaints handling and escalation processes

Request for assistance The Parish Council would be grateful for assistance in reviewing and addressing the matters set out above, and for consideration of appropriate responses where relevant.

Given the seriousness of the issues raised, the Council respectfully requests that this correspondence be treated as a formal escalation.

A written response would be appreciated within a reasonable timeframe.

Yours faithfully,

Annalisa

Clerk/ Responsible Financial Officer: DockingParish Council.

Please be aware that the clerk role is part time and the inbox not monitored out of hours - so I will respond when I am in the office.

Docking Parish Council Website: www.dockingparishcouncil.gov.uk

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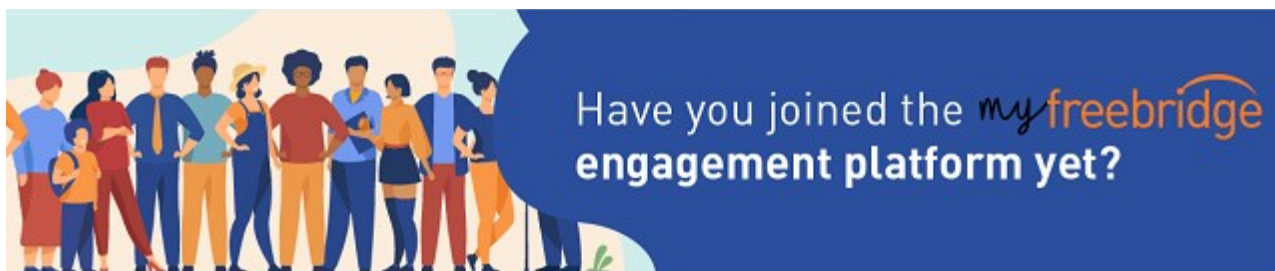
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