

# Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council

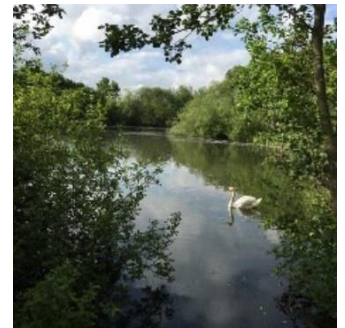
Annual Report  
Financial Year 2019-2020

Community events



Singleton  
Environment  
Centre

Singleton Lake



Great Chart

# Contents

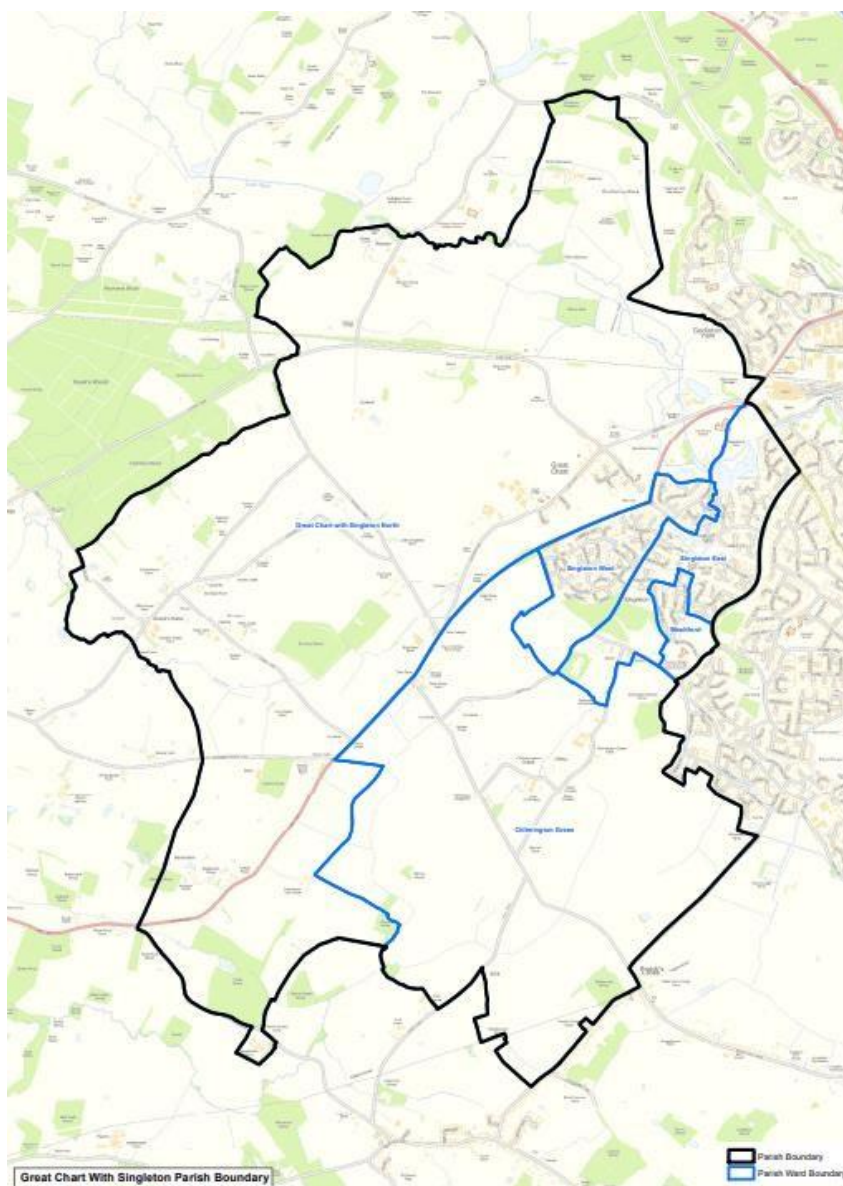
<b>FOREWORD.....</b>	
<b>CHAIR'S ANNUAL REPORT .....</b>	
<b>CLERK'S ANNUAL REPORT .....</b>	
<b>CLLR BILL BARRETT .....</b>	
<b>CLLR KALYSHA HOWARD-SMITH .....</b>	
<b>CLLR JESSAMY BLANFORD .....</b>	
<b>CLLR CHARLIE SIMKINS.....</b>	
<b>ASHFORD COMMUNITY WOODLAND.....</b>	
<b>GREAT CHART SCOUTS &amp; EXPLORERS .....</b>	
<b>PILGRIMS FOOTBALL CLUB .....</b>	
<b>SINGLETON ENVIRONMENT CENTRE .....</b>	
<b>GREAT CHART CRICKET CLUB .....</b>	
<b>HILLCREST ALLOTMENTS.....</b>	
<b>ANNUAL REPORT FROM PCSO 59869 STEVENS.....</b>	
<b>FINANCE REPORT .....</b>	
<b>INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S COMMENT .....</b>	
<b>GRANTS ALLOCATED IN 2019-2020 .....</b>	
<b>EARMARKED AND RESERVED FUNDS .....</b>	
<b>YEAR-END ACCOUNTS .....</b>	
<b>GREAT CHART WITH SINGLETON PARISH COUNCIL.....</b>	
<b>PARISH COUNCIL STAFF CONTACT DETAILS.....</b>	

## Foreword

Located on the south-west side of Ashford, Great Chart with Singleton Parish is home to 6801 residents (2011 Census)<sup>1</sup>. The parish borders several other parishes; Betersden to the west, Hothfield to the north, Kingsnorth to the south and Shadoxhurst to the south west. On the east is South Ashford which is currently an un-parished area. The Parish Council works in close partnership with neighbouring parishes as well as Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council to improve the area for its residents.

The Parish Council is proud to report that 2019-20 has been a successful year. To better manage the council's green spaces the parish council invested in ground maintenance equipment. This will allow the parish stewards to carry out their role efficiently and to make the local area tidy.

This report is a good opportunity to look back on the past year's activities, starting with the Chairman's and Clerk's report, followed by the local Councillor's reports. The report will include an overview of the parish's financial



accounts. It will also provide a summary of some local clubs, societies and organisations.

You can view the large [map](#)

### 1 GREAT CHART WITH SINGLETON PARISH

<sup>1</sup> Ashford Borough Council Year Book

## Chair's annual Report

This is probably the strangest Annual Report I have ever had to write, as we are in the midst of a global pandemic which has affected our Parish, County, Country and the World like nothing any of us has known before! We are in lockdown in order to prevent the spread of this virus.

Until earlier in the year, legislation only allowed Parish Council (PC) to only make a decision whilst attending a face to face meeting. Thankfully this has now changed and we are able to hold virtual meetings online, enabling the council to meet without the risk of spreading the virus. Prior to this, we made a decision via email to devolve the day to day running of the PC to the Clerk and enable her to make payments on behalf of the PC, with just an email confirmation – as I said very strange times.

Our Annual Meeting for 2020 was cancelled and therefore the advice is that we postpone the vote to select a Chair, Vice-Chair and the appointment of members to our Committees until 2021 – so I guess we will have consistency in one way until then. Due to the cancellation of both of our May meetings, our usual reports from the organisations within the parish will only be presented in our Annual report collated by the Clerk.

Now for some 'normal' stuff – despite things, our Parish Council has had yet another busy year and our new Members have settled in very well and have proved to be a great team. We submitted our PC's application for a Quality Award Scheme and were delighted to be granted official 'Quality' status. The new website was launched in readiness for the KCC supported version to be removed in September.

You probably have seen our new style noticeboards being installed around the parish, a survey done by the Clerk during the Winter months found that many of the old ones were falling apart and no longer fit for purpose – it seems a few of them have been around longer than I have been on the

PC (so over 20 years) – our new ones are constructed from aluminium, making them long lasting and requiring little maintenance. Each features the PC's name, and all have a section (on the right-hand side) available for the use of parish organisations. The left-hand side will remain locked for the use of the PC – I am sure you will notice them!

Chilmington construction has slowed and it is not known how the Covid-19 virus will affect the aspirations of the Developers, nor at this time when work will start again – consequently, the Chilmington Management Organisation (CMO) growth has slowed too, although the first premises are onsite, there is no date for them to be occupied.

Singleton Environment Centre (SEC) was going great guns and not only did they manage to obtain planning permission to duplicate the Container building to form not only a large meeting room, but also an educational viewing room on top, together with more storage and toilet for users in this area and a much-needed office for the Centre Manager. I am sure there will be more information about this from the Chair of the Trustees later in this report – but I am sure you will understand things can only progress once we come out of this period of lockdown.

Most of 2019 seemed to be just our normal busy PC, with loads of successful events put on by the PC, including monthly Coffee meetings in Great Chart village hall including a special feature each month and our first Film Club event run for the younger members of our parish and their parents attending Singleton Village Hall to watch Toy Story 4 in.

We still have 2 very successful village halls within the parish and as usual, I must thank the Trustees for running them as well as they do – my thanks also go to the Trustees of the Playing Fields Association for our playing fields and welcome Pilgrims Football Club as our long-standing club for the parish. The Singleton Spaces Trustees, who run the SEC on behalf of the PC have done a sterling job too over the year, so I thank them too. We remain, despite a deadly virus, a vibrant and busy Parish and although I think it will be a long time before we get back to any sort of 'normal' – whatever that may be for the future, we will continue to work for our Parishioners and Parish.

To that end I must also thank my fellow Councillors for their hard work on the many committees of the PC and the many organisations they represent too as the dynamics after an election can sometimes be difficult, they have surpassed themselves as usual. I must also thank our two Parish Stewards, Peter and his assistant Rob, who are working hard keeping our Parish tidy and taking on many tasks. They are about to undergo training in the use of the new mower we agreed to purchase – so please say hello to them if you see them around the Parish. Their name has been changed to Parish Stewards as they are more than just Caretakers!

I must welcome a new member of staff this year, our Clerk has been needing some assistance as her job continues to grow week by week, so we now have an Assistant, Paula Cowperthwaite. You may have seen her picture in the parish magazine, Paula is working towards her CiLCA qualification and is a great help to our Clerk, so I thank her for her hard work. BUT my biggest thanks must go to our Clerk Aniko because not only has she been keeping the PC going with very little support from us during the pandemic (as we can only communicate

via email and telephone), but she has been working hard supporting our more vulnerable parishioners by organising a team of volunteers to get shopping and medical supplies to them. As you can imagine coordinating all of this takes a huge amount of time. I must thank a couple of Borough Councillors for funding these efforts.

So we are back to where I started by saying that we are in strange unknown times. I hope you all will manage to stay well and safe during the pandemic and I hope you will continue to contact the PC if you have an issue or problem you think we can help with and I can only say I hope my annual report next year will be able to report that some sort of normality has returned.

**Ian McClintock**  
**Chair – Great Chart with Singleton PC**



### Photos

1. Remembering the Battle of Britain 80<sup>th</sup> years ago at Great Chart War Memorial,
2. The Parish Council Chair test driving the new mower
3. The Chair at the Pop-up Café event

## Clerk's annual Report

Since 2019 was an election year, I would like to welcome all our new and returning Parish and Borough Councillors. I hope those of you who have only just joined the Parish Council have settled in and finding your way around the world of local government. Those who have returned, I hope you are still enjoying the role and find it rewarding.

Between the elections in May 2019 and March 2020 a lot has happened in the parish and indeed in the world. Early in 2020 due to a pandemic caused by the Coronavirus the world we have known changed completely and with that, normality has vanished. This report is a summary of the most notable events and achievements of the Financial year 2019-2020.

The Parish Council is very pleased to have achieved the prestigious Quality Status award as part of the Local Council Award Scheme. This achievement recognises that the council achieves good practice in governance, community engagement and council improvement.

In November 2019, all members of the Parish Council and council employees received a tablet device. This is to minimise the paper usage for council business and to aid the Councillor's role. The device enables Councillors to communicate more effectively and to be more efficient. In April we were also in the position to hold a remote meeting thanks to the technology being available.

The Parish Council launched its new website. The new website meets the accessibility requirements and it also allows users to browse the site using all devices, including smart phone, tablet, and laptop.

## The team

In July 2019 Paula Cowperthwaite joined us as an assistant to the clerk on a part time basis. Since joining she has successfully completed the Introduction to Local Council Administration and is now working towards the Certificate in Local Council Administration Qualification. She is a great asset to the council.

The Parish Council reviewed the Caretaker's title and felt it did not adequately reflect the actual role. The staffing committee recommended to change the title to Parish Steward which was accepted by the full council.

Kent County Council Community Warden Scheme sadly came to an end in our parish in the past year. One warden had to be relocated and another terminated their employment on health grounds. Kent County Council decided not to appoint another warden in the parish for the time being.

Catherine Stevens is the local Police Community Support Officer. She is actively engaging with local matters and supports community events. Those events provide an opportunity for residents to ask questions or to raise concerns in a friendly environment. Her dedication and hard work make a huge difference in the parish.

## Improvements around the parish

The Parish Council was pleased to see the installation of the new crossing on Tithe Barn Lane. Many residents contacted the council expressing concerns over crossing safely during busy times especially during school pick up and drop off times. The site was assessed, including the volume of vehicles and pedestrians, then the data analysed. The data gathered confirmed

a high volume of traffic using this site to cross. Thanks to Kent County Council a scheme to improve safety was approved and installed. The new crossing was completed in November 2019.

The Parish Council replaced part of the sandy surface at Cuckoo Park. The replacement is made of soft rubber, which will require less maintenance and will last longer. Sadly, part of the surface under Great Chart outdoor gym was subject to vandalism and had to be replaced.

The Parish Council purchased a ride on mower, a push mower, and a trailer. The new equipment will enable the Parish Council to maintain larger green spaces effectively and to a high standard. The parish stewards received training and have already done their first cut.

The Parish Council replaced the old wooden noticeboards with modern aluminium ones. The number of noticeboards has been increased from nine to thirteen, which will enable more residents to read the latest announcement from the council and from local clubs and groups.

The Parish Council as part of their aim to support the local environment and biodiversity, planted over 300 saplings around the edge of Cuckoo Park to form a hedge. The Parish Council is committed to support the environment and as part of this commitment signed up to be part of the crisp packet recycling scheme. The scheme was an instant success and residents started to recycle enthusiastically including the pupils of Great Chart Primary School. With several collection points residents can drop off their recycled crisp packets. Since the scheme started residents recycled and diverted from the landfill thousands of crisp packets,

raising vital funds to the Kent and East Sussex Air Ambulance. While collection has stopped during the pandemic the scheme remains popular and will hopefully return soon.

Thanks to Ashford Borough Council several new bins were installed in the parish. We hope the addition of new bins will help residents to dispose of their litter appropriately.

### **Community engagement events**

The Parish Council held and supported several events throughout the year. The Parish Council was very pleased to participate for the first time in the national The Big Lunch event. Residents were invited to come along with a picnic and to take part in craft activities. The feedback we received was very positive. Another first was the Community Movie afternoon event in February half term. It was another popular event.

One of our regular events is bike marking; residents can bring their bicycle and have it security marked. The event is supported by the



PCSO and last year we were lucky to have the Police Cadets helping too.

The Parish Council in partnership with Ashford Borough Council's Waste and Education Recycling Officer held an event titled 'Let's talk rubbish'. The event was organised for residents to ask questions about items they were unsure of how to recycle.

The Pop-Up Café is a monthly event for residents to enjoy a slice of homemade

cake along with a nice cup of tea! This is the second year the Pop-Up Café has run and it has continued to grow in popularity. The event is not just a social occasion but an information hub where residents can find out about local services available to them. Previous sessions have been themed, with speakers invited to discuss specific topics which have included the Fire Services, Neighbourhood Watch, and talks about how to avoid Scams and Fraud and how to save money on energy bills. Our PCSO and the Community Warden were always present so residents could ask questions or raise issues. I would like to take this opportunity and thank everyone who supported this wonderful project. The Parish Councillors for attending, the PCSO and Community Warden, and most importantly to the wonderful volunteers who helped in setting up the café and the WI ladies for the delicious cakes they donated for each event. The Pop Up Café is also recognised by the National Association of Local Councils as a good way to engage with the community and featured it in one of their national publications.

### Thank you

I would like to also thank all the members of the Parish Council for their hard work during the past year. Every Councillor brings different skills and qualities that helps the council achieve its objectives. I would also like to thank the Council employees for their hard work and dedication.

**Aniko Szocs**

**Parish Clerk & RFO**



### Photos from top to bottom

1. New noticeboards, 2. Pop up Café, 3. New Crossing Tithe Barn Lane, 4. Bookstop make over by Repair Café, 5. Litter pick by Parish and Borough Councillors, 6. New trailer, 7. New bins provided by Ashford Borough Council



## Cllr Bill Barrett

As we now emerge from the Covid 19 crisis into a world that does feel both the same and different I wanted to give you an appraisal of what my year has been like.

Well, firstly last May I was asked to undertake the Portfolio of Housing and from day one it was obvious that there was a lot of work ahead of me. Not only a national social housing crisis, but a large department and a waiting list of 1400 people all asking to be housed!

Thus, from day one I decided on two things. Firstly, to increase the levels of housing stock at Ashford Borough Council as quick as possible, as time was imperative. And to try to reduce, by all means possible the numbers of homeless we as a council are paying for in overnight accommodation. Both of these have proved to be difficult but achievable tasks and we will from 2021 onwards be building in the region of 50 to 70 council properties per year and purchasing upwards of 100. So, all in all, I am happy with the way things have gone. Regarding my Ward business it has been a year when thankfully Singleton Lake has been mercifully relatively quiet. The PSPO (Public Space Protection Order) renewed in March and we thus, thankfully, have another 3 years of oversight of the lake and some form of enforcement powers to deal with rogue fishermen and anti-social behaviour. The weekly angling report from the Ashford Angling Society indicates clearly the things that need to be done, and this is picked up by Terry Jones at ABC and Aspire, who will respond and try to remedy.

It is a shame that Covid 19 came along as ABC had earmarked £30,000 for the lake complex for path and furniture renewals, but alas I fear we will now wait upwards of two years for this money to be released once the Budget is back to more healthy footings. The main point though is that ASB and littering have reduced drastically compared to what it was like in 2015 when I took over, and the Ashford Angling Society report that fishermen, both old and young, have returned to the lake with gusto and it appears to be functioning well.

The other main area of human traffic and involvement in my Ward is the Singleton Centre and one that I have now turned my attention to to try to rectify. In early July I walked the centre with Ian and Ani and took photos and assessed what needed refurbishing. An email was sent to the centre manager, informing him of the unloved, and unkempt state of the façade of the centre, from overgrown vegetation, to woodwork rotten in need of replacing. The Centre Manager subsequently within days ordered a vegetation trim and weed pick and has informed us that a sequence of renewals is in the pipeline. Whilst this is good to hear, I demanded a walkabout with him, Aniko and Ian at a date soon to press home the point that the way the centre looks isn't up to scratch. This walkabout will occur in the near future.

I also, had a second walkabout with the Crime Support Unit (CSU) from ABC, and we analysed the broken CCTV system in the centre, as well as creating a map of the existing private CCTV's systems in the centre, which the Police could approach if an incident occurs. We agreed that the Singleton Centre really needs some sort of CCTV oversight, and thus the CSU officers will come back to me with an overview of the centres current capabilities and will be speaking with the Manager to ascertain when the current CCTV system broke, and whether he intends to fix it.

If the answer is no, I will be applying a lot of pressure from ABC to try to make them change their minds on this as not being able to record the various anti-social Behaviour that occurs is difficult without recording systems.

Aside from the normal day to day business of helping residents with various concerns it has been a busy but enjoyable year, and I want to extend my thanks as ever to the Parish Council for everything you do for our community and wish you all well moving forwards.

Keep well,

e:[Bill.barrett@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:Bill.barrett@ashford.gov.uk)

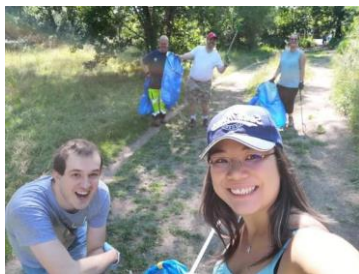
**Bill Barrett**  
**Singleton West Ward**

## Cllr Kalysha Howard-Smith

Dear Residents

First off, I would like to thank all the volunteers and key workers who have been working throughout this pandemic. Your efforts are truly appreciated, and your work has been priceless in the slow return to a new normality.

The council has been very busy these past few months – supporting residents who are shielding, delivering small businesses grant schemes, and recognising volunteers across the borough via the Ashford Applause scheme. More recently, they have been spearheading a campaign to help tackle dog fouling, which is a very problematic issue in Singleton & Great Chart. You may have spotted spray tags around the area, along with signs and posters reminding dog owners to clean up after their dog and dispose of it properly.



On a more personal note, I have been busy assisting residents with personal issues such as inconsiderate parking, rubbish collection, and housing issues. I recently joined some of our volunteers in a litter pick around Buxford Meadow and the Fish Pass. We then cooled off at the Singleton Environment Centre, another invaluable community asset, whose catering is out of this world! If you haven't tried it already, I'd highly recommend the Chorizo Beef burger! I look forward to supporting future ongoing at the Environment Centre, as events slowly start to take place again.

As always, if you ever need help with any council-related issues (waste collection, council tax, littering, fly-tipping), please do get in touch! I look forward to hearing from you.

e:[Kalysha.howardsmith@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:Kalysha.howardsmith@ashford.gov.uk)

**Kalysha Howard-Smith**  
**Singleton East Ward**

## **Cllr Jessamy Blanford**

This has been a strange year. May 2019 saw the end of my year as Mayor of Ashford: a year full of activities, openings, charity events, 1<sup>st</sup> World War commemorations and parties. It also saw the local government election in which Cllr Alan Pickering and I won for the Weald Central Ward which, for the first time, included Gt Chart, Chilmington, Bethersden and High Halden. And 2020 also, of course, saw the arrival of the coronavirus.

Most activity in my part of the parish has been within the Chilmington Green red line. Several applications have been accepted under “permitted development”. The Grange in Mock Lane involving the demolition of the existing dwelling and erection of a 39 block of flats has been granted after improvements requested by the PC were included. Covid 19 caused a setback in the progress of the development but I now understand about 40 houses are completed and sales are at the expected level. Unfortunately, although it is in place, it has not been possible to open the First Premises – an office and meeting area for Chilmington. I have funded a defibrillator for this building from my Members’ Grant. Work has started on the primary school: the foundations are in place.

Planning has been hit to some extent by Covid 19. Officers are working from home and not able to make site visits or talk face-to-face with applicants. However, every effort is being made to keep things moving as it would be disastrous if no decisions could be made during this period. Virtual Planning Committee meetings have taken place allowing applicants or their agents to speak and members of the public to follow the process of the meetings.

The roundabout on the A28/Tithe Barn Lane has been improved – a tangle of weeds and brambles turned first to a bleak scene of pebbles now, as I requested, to a floral development. Many thanks to Aspire, ABC’s land management team.

Finally, I would like to thank the Parish Council, particularly Ian and Ani, for their work in keeping everything going and responding to residents needs and requests.

e:[Jessamy.Blanford@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:Jessamy.Blanford@ashford.gov.uk)

**Jessamy Blanford**  
**Weald Central Ward**

## **Cllr Charlie Simkins**

Over the past year I have been in ever frequent contact with your Chairman and clerk regarding a range of issues. These include addressing the speeding problems on the A28 adjacent to the Pig and Whistle (where road narrow warning signs and ‘slow down’ signs will shortly be erected) to improving white linings on The Street, concerns about parking in residential streets in Singleton and improving road surfaces and street lights in the parish.

Since lockdown all of us have had to become used to a new way of working. County Council Members and officers use Microsoft Teams for meetings and we have held two full Council meetings both of which were well attended and where important issues were discussed and resolved.

The lockdown has involved me and my fellow councillors in discussions relating to a far wider range of problems than I would normally encounter. For example, the supply of Personal Protective Equipment was extremely hazardous throughout April and early May and involved all of us understanding the problems so that we could reassure anxious residents. The lockdown happened just as I was about to begin attending the annual meetings of the ten parishes in my division. As these were all cancelled, I distributed a 'round robin' letter drawing attention to the steps the County Council has taken to safeguard residents, particularly those vulnerable and shielding. My experience has been that leaders of commercial organizations, individuals, charities, and council officers have been enormously resourceful in finding solutions to the problems brought about by the pandemic.

We all wonder what the 'new normal' will look like and at County Hall discussions are going on around how to deal with the evolving situation.

e:[Charlie.Simkins@kent.gov.uk](mailto:Charlie.Simkins@kent.gov.uk)

**Charlie Simkins July 2020**

**Kent County Council Member**

## Ashford Community Woodland

Ashford Community Woodland received a grant for £250 from GCWSPC. This was to purchase two bee boxes for the woodland. These are natural habitat boxes and not conventional hives. The bees are left alone with no human interference, so the honey is not harvested but left to sustain the bees over the winter.



Two boxes were installed last year, and a swarm of bees was transferred to one of the boxes. Unfortunately, they did not stay. This year two swarms of bees have arrived naturally and now occupy both boxes. The fact that they have chosen these boxes indicates that they are likely to stay. This grant has enabled ACW to increase the variety of natural habitats within the woodland and has also benefited the bees which are in decline.

Singleton Spaces was awarded a grant of £150 from GCWSPC. This enabled Singleton Spaces to purchase all of the basic equipment required for card upcycling workshops. This was to encourage the re-use of old Christmas and other greeting cards, rather than them being discarded or recycled. These workshops proved very popular and many participants remarked on the fact that they all had their own "workstations".

Unfortunately, several workshops planned for this year had to be cancelled because of the coronavirus lockdown, but we plan to resume these workshops as soon as we are able.

The money raised from the sale of cards at the Environment centre has been used to purchase the blank cards and other embellishments, meaning that the card upcycling is now self-funding.

**Jenny Tippen**

**Ashford Community Woodland**

## Great Chart Scouts & Explorers

Just a short note on a short year for Great Charts Scouts & Explorers. Numbers remain steady with 8 Explorers and 20 Scouts.

Highlights for explorers would be a sea swim in September and a beach BBQ in January. The latter was not the choice of the leaders but of the young people, who seemed to enjoy it despite freezing temperatures. Dancing on the beach while eating a burger was clearly their idea of fun. The Parish Council gave us the funds to get a semi portable BBQ for the explorers which we got late February, just in time for the lock down so it has not yet been christened, hopefully the Autumn will give us an opportunity. The Explorers also entered 3 teams in the district Ready, Steady, Cook where they all did very well, coming 2nd, 3rd and 7th from a field of 14 teams.

Scouts also spent a lot of time outside, with hikes, visits to Hothfield Common, a games evening at The Warren and fire lighting and backwoods cooking at Kingswood Forest at Challock. In the hall they had a couple of sessions around food, 1 being tasting unusual foods not normally in their diet, and 1 session with a food challenge evening with chillies, hot sauces, strong blue cheeses, roll mop herrings etc. Most fully entered into it, some finding they liked food they had never even heard of, and some just enjoying watching their friends torment their taste buds.

**Dave Gathern**

**Leader- Great Chart Scouts & Explorers**

## Pilgrims Football Club

This season (2019/20) has been one of much disruption, firstly due to the extremely wet weather we experienced towards the end of 2019 and then, of course, Coronavirus, which has changed the way we live our lives, hopefully for the short term but for now, the effects of this horrible virus are clear to see. We were unable to complete our season as they were curtailed due to Coronavirus and were also forced to cancel our annual summer tournament in June, which is a huge fundraiser for us.

“I am very pleased to announce that some ‘normality’, if you can call it that, has been restored and our teams have been back training throughout July and are now able to participate in friendly matches. We are very lucky to be located in such a fantastic parish and have the full support of the Parish Council and Great Chart Playing Fields Association. We are very happy to such a big organisation in the parish, over 70% of our members live within Great Chart with Singleton, it is fantastic to engage with the local community, especially parishioners.



Unfortunately, due to Coronavirus, we have seen a decline in sponsorship opportunities, in previous years, we have had some fantastic sponsors on board but due to the current economic climate, these have been few and far between, which is understandable.

We benefited from a grant from the Parish Council for 50% of the cost of two boot brushes for Great Chart which have been sited outside the pavilion. These have been a great help in reducing the amount of mud brought into the pavilion.

Take care all,

w:[www.pilgrimsfc.co.uk](http://www.pilgrimsfc.co.uk)

e:[kyran@pilgrimsfc.co.uk](mailto:kyran@pilgrimsfc.co.uk)

**Kyran Wilford**

**Chief Operating Officer - Pilgrims FC**

## Singleton Environment Centre

Singleton Spaces is the charity that runs the Singleton Environment Centre (SEC) on behalf of Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council, who lease the Centre from Ashford Borough Council (ABC).

### Impact of COVID-19

Like many organisations, the SEC has felt the impact the virus has had on its operations. At the very start of lockdown when cafés were allowed to stay open, but the public was encouraged not to visit them, there was a significant reduction in footfall. Having tried, with initial success, to remain open selling fresh produce, the Centre was ultimately forced to close.

Taking advantage of the government's furlough scheme has enabled us to retain all of our staff and at the beginning of June, as lockdown started to ease, we started to bring back staff members to make the necessary preparations for re-opening the Centre. A word of thanks to all those who assisted in that process. The Centre re-opened on 4<sup>th</sup> July, with a slightly re-vamped menu and new layout to accommodate social distancing. There are still some elements yet to return – bookings for conferencing are currently reduced and the KCC Driver's Courses have been postponed until at least the end of 2020.

### Moving Forwards

At his relatively early stage, it is hard to calculate the full impact that the Covid-19 pandemic will have on the Centre, but we remain optimistic.

Those that visit us regularly may have noticed that the car park lights have been replaced, courtesy of ABC and the start of the project to add additional space at the bottom of the site. Thanks to some soon to expire S106 funds, we



are adding a two- storey structure to provide a large, dividable space downstairs, with a smaller room and terrace on the upper storey. Our thanks to ABC Councillor Heather Hayward who assisted with the release of funds for this project. We hope to host a grand opening for the new rooms sometime in October or November. We also hope to see the return of “Mini- Professors” later in the year and the return to a full programme of events going forwards.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff and volunteers that make the Centre the success it is and a special mention to the Trustees, who give their time for free. I should also mention Ian McClintock, Chair of the Parish Council whose help has been instrumental in helping the extension come to fruition and Angus Willson for his sterling work behind the scenes.

**Malcolm Wiffen**

**Chair, Singleton Spaces August 2020**

## **Great Chart Cricket Club**

It has proven to be another challenging year for the cricket club with dwindling interest in playing the sport (at least at an adult level) despite England winning the World Cup in such dramatic fashion in 2019.

The club is still operating with only 1 Saturday Friendly XI and 1 Sunday League XI although both teams had their share of good performances and results in 2019. On a more heartening note, the Colts continues to thrive with up to 20 children (both boys and girls) enjoying their Sunday training sessions and midweek matches. Hopefully, we can retain some of this enthusiasm when they are old enough to play for the adult teams, but it is encouraging that the interest in cricket still appears to be there, at least with the youngsters.

Off the field, it is fair to say we have struggled a little financially. We held two highly successful boot fairs in 2019 and these now form a large proportion of the club's income. However, we were forced to cancel the fireworks event in November

and then Covid 19, of course, put paid to the first 3 months of the season in 2020.

We also had the familiar off-field issues to deal with in terms of vandalism, this time including someone driving through the main gates, smashing them to pieces and then setting the vehicle alight. Although it is true that we were able to claim most of the damage from insurance, it has, of course had a negative impact on the premiums (and of course, on the volunteers who have to clean up afterwards)!

Fortunately, in terms of Covid, the club was able to secure some funding in the form of emergency grants from both Sport England and the local council which will keep us financially viable in the short to medium term. This was desperately needed as we will almost certainly have no opportunity for any fundraising activities in 2020. We were also extremely grateful to the Parish Council for their incredibly generous donation of equipment for the pavilion which has helped to improve the facilities enormously. Thank You!

We have now been able to recommence some cricketing activities, albeit under strict ECB guidelines in terms of how the game is played under the Covid restrictions.

Needless to say, though, the small group of volunteers who maintain the club will keep plugging away at trying to increase the membership and hopefully we will have some more encouraging news to report next year.

**Paul Arnup Honorary Secretary  
Great Chart Cricket Club**

## Hillcrest Allotments

As with every other organisation in the parish, Hillcrest Allotments was impacted by Covid-19 in 2020. However, in our case, the effect was mostly positive.

With many workers effectively furloughed, those that had plots were able to spend more time at the allotment, given that the possibility of contracting a coronavirus while outside is somewhere in the region of 0.3%. Indeed, government minister Michael Gove even went on television actively encouraging people to continue visiting their allotments. The result is that the overall upkeep of the site has been better than ever, especially given the glorious spring weather, which tempted many to spend much more time outdoors than has been the case in previous years.

The 2019-2020 winter, however, had proved a challenge, with endless downpours over many months leaving the site effectively waterlogged, especially at the end nearest the A28. On a plus note, this allowed us to fill up our entire 8,000- litre water capture system, which is fed by guttering fixed to the false roof of our container storage facility.

Unfortunately, once the winter rains relented, the allotment has experienced one of the driest springs and summers on record, meaning that all our water reserves have been all but exhausted, forcing many plot holders to bring water from home, since the Hillcrest site has no mains water connection.



Uptake of plots has nevertheless remained at 100%, with a waiting list at the time of writing (early August) consisting of 15 people. This is an all-time high, although reflects current fears about food security brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.



From experience, similar surges of interest were reported post 9/11 and during the 2008 economic crisis. However, encouragingly, there does seem to be an increased long-term appetite among many residents to grow their own fruit and vegetables, which is to be welcomed.

Sadly, the pandemic has made it impossible for the Beavers to cultivate their small plot this year, although we are hoping they will come back next spring. Similarly, our environmental manager has had to spend most of the year working abroad, allowing little progress to be made on further developing our environmental area. However, the one really major negative has been an increase in vandalism experienced by some plot holders. This has consisted of several sporadic mindless attacks on structures, prompting the allotment committee to install CCTV coverage in some areas and the parish council to agree to look into ways of funding higher fencing around the site in future to deter unwanted intrusions.

**Barry Cross**  
**Barrow and Spade Brigade**

## **Annual Report from PCSO 59869 Stevens**

Obviously, the last six months have been dominated by coronavirus. This has been a very challenging time for many of us.

However, during this period, the officers and staff of Kent Police have continued to work hard in order to keep the public safe. I personally would like to thank all the residents and the Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council for their assistance and support over this time – I am very grateful.

Over the last few months, my workload has been dominated by neighbour disputes, nuisance vehicles and anti-social behaviour. I have been working closely with a number of agencies such as Ashford Borough Council, a variety of housing associations, private landlords and the parish council itself as well as different teams within Kent Police to help solve these issues. I have also continued to carry out patrols in the area especially around Singleton Lake as this has become a very popular spot since COVID-19 started. In March, the Public Space Protection Order was renewed there for another three years so hopefully this will help keep any anti-social behaviour to a minimum.

Over the last few months, Kent Police have introduced digital surgeries where police community support officers and police constables can be contacted online. This gives Ashford residents the opportunity to pose questions and have a discussion via live chat. I would encourage you to use this facility if you have any issues that you would like to bring to our attention. Of course, I can always be contacted via 101 or through Ani Szocs, the parish clerk. Please be reassured, whatever the future brings, Kent Police will continue to deliver the best service that it can in order to serve and protect the people within our communities.



**Catherine Stevens PCSO 46059869 Community Safety Unit| Ashford Police Station | East Division**

## Finance Report

### Finance Officer's Report

The financial year 2019-2020 has been another productive year for the Parish Council. This short report will highlight some of the main achievements.

The Parish Council improved its ability to maintain Parish Council owned green spaces better by investing in ground maintenance equipment. The Parish Council also upgraded its IT infrastructure by providing tablet devices for the councillors. This hopefully will help the councillors to be more efficient and will also save paper, helping the environment.

The Parish Council continues to provide financial support to a number of local organisations and the established grants application procedure seems to work well, giving Councillors adequate information to assess each request without being too onerous for applicants to complete. A small contribution from each household provides a substantial 'pot' from which to support a variety of organisations and amenities within our community.

### Independent Auditor's comment

The Parish Council accounts, and governing documents are reviewed annually by an internal auditor and an external auditor. The internal auditor's comments can be read below:

"My conclusion is much as last year. It again proved impossible – or at least, it would be extremely time-consuming – to create a monthly bank reconciliation to

test the figures, nor even an annual one. However, since I am satisfied that:

- All the expenditure and income items, as presented were valid,
- That these figures went into the system,
- That the bank accounts were operated property, and
- That the system is reporting that the books balance,

then I am content to accept that the accounts are correct. I couldn't confirm all the detail of the VAT recovery, although, again, I am happy that, by-and-large, VAT is being properly accounted for. In the scheme of things, any overall error is likely to be minor, and it is unlikely that any correction would merit the time and effort required to do so. (The exception would be the invoice for the iPads, but here to, it is probably only worth doing something about it if it becomes an issue.) For next year, it would probably greatly assist the internal auditor if the accounts system could produce a transaction listing showing who charged for what, listing the amount ex-VAT, the VAT and the total value. If the invoices could then be filed in the same order, then this would greatly simplify the task of checking the transactions."

**Mike Cuerden**

**Independent Internal Auditor**

## Grants allocated in 2019-2020

The parish council was pleased to support the following groups with grants:

ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
Singleton Giant	£741.45
Ashford Community Woodland	£250
Singleton Spaces	£150
Pilgrims Football Club	£200
St Mary's in Great Chart and Singleton	£842.80
Great Chart Playing Fields Association	£2000
Great Chart Scouts & Explorers	£250
Singleton Giant	£691.45
Great Chart Cricket Club	£4100
Great Chart Cricket Club	£392.58
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£9618.28</b>

## Earmarked and Reserved Funds

Some of the PC's reserves are earmarked for various projects: -

Cuckoo Park is now open for all to enjoy and the PC took over responsibility for the maintenance and upkeep of the park. This is an ongoing project as, in addition to general maintenance, a fund for replacement of the equipment is required for when it reaches the end of its usable life (approx. 20 years).

The "Yellow Land" funds refer to monies designated for the maintenance of The Viewpoint and land to the rear of Singleton Village Hall.

Cuckoo Park 10 yr maintenance fund	£36,599
Cuckoo Park 20 yr maintenance fund	£39,461
S106 Funds for Cuckoo Park	£118,000
Yellow Land s 106 funds	£33,877
Contingency reserves	£30,000
General reserve	£31,826
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£289,763</b>

## Year-end accounts

A copy of the year-end accounts for 2019-2020 will be posted to our website: [www.greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](http://www.greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

# GREAT CHART WITH SINGLETON PARISH COUNCIL

## FINANCIAL YEAR 2019–2020

**£206K**

Precept is the main source of income for all Parish Councils.

**6801 RESIDENTS**



**PLAYPARKS**

**2**



The Parish Council is responsible for two play areas, Great Chart Play Park and Cuckoo Play Park

**£9,618**

The Parish Council financially supported nine local groups.

**GRANTS**



**COMMUNITY ASSETS**

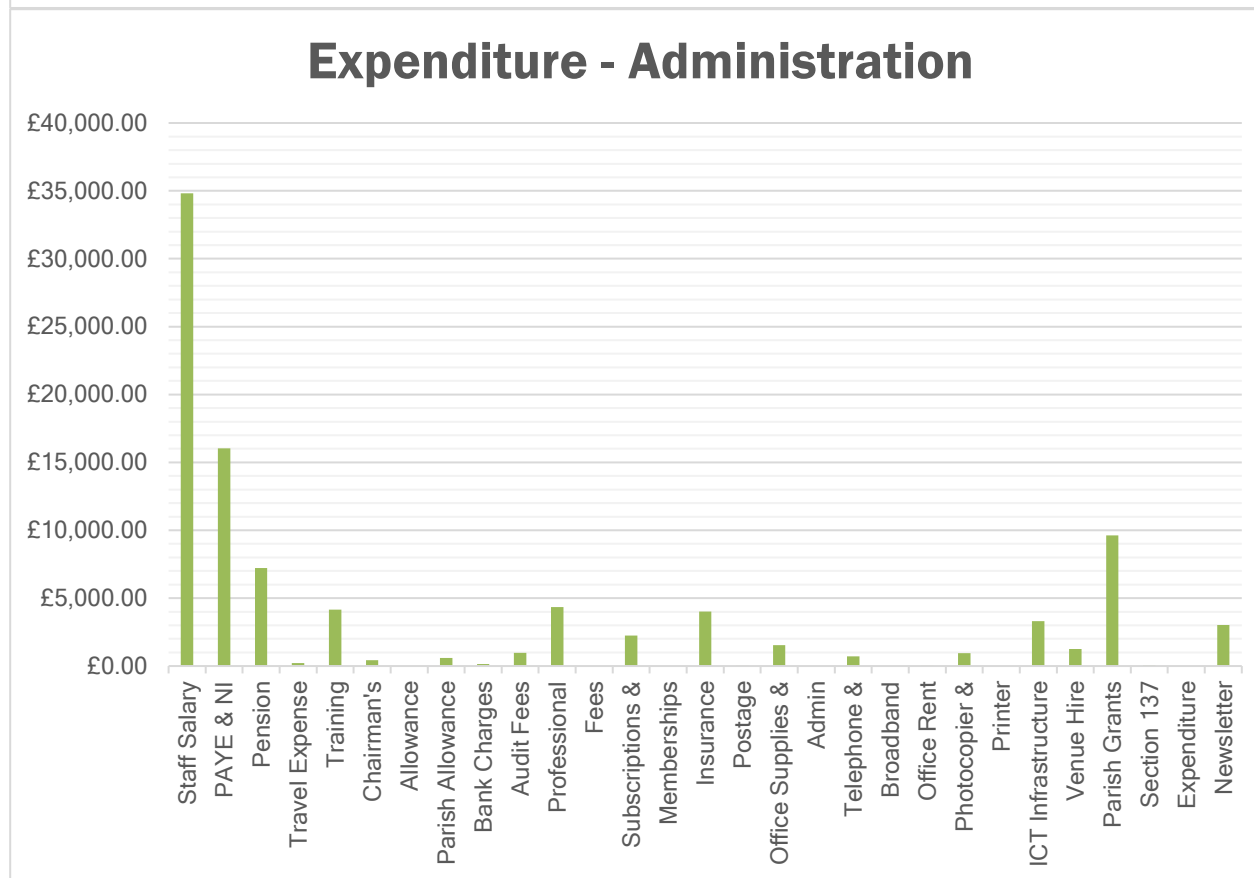
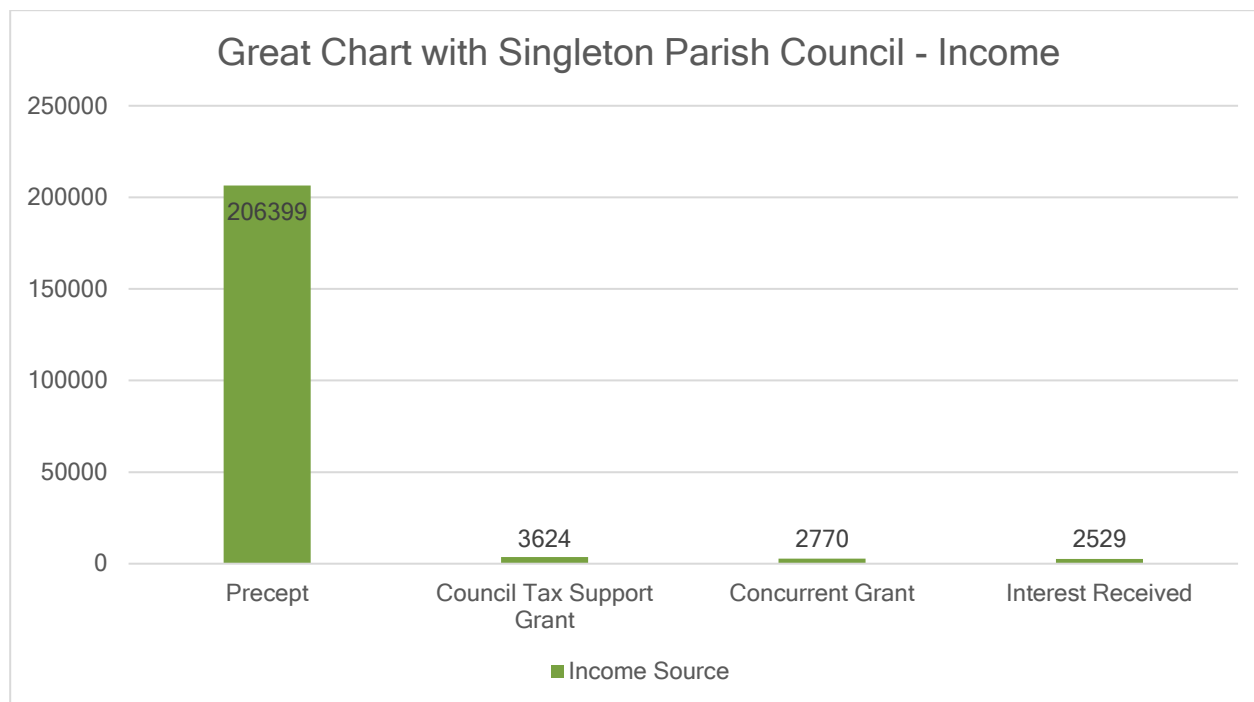
**£15,000**



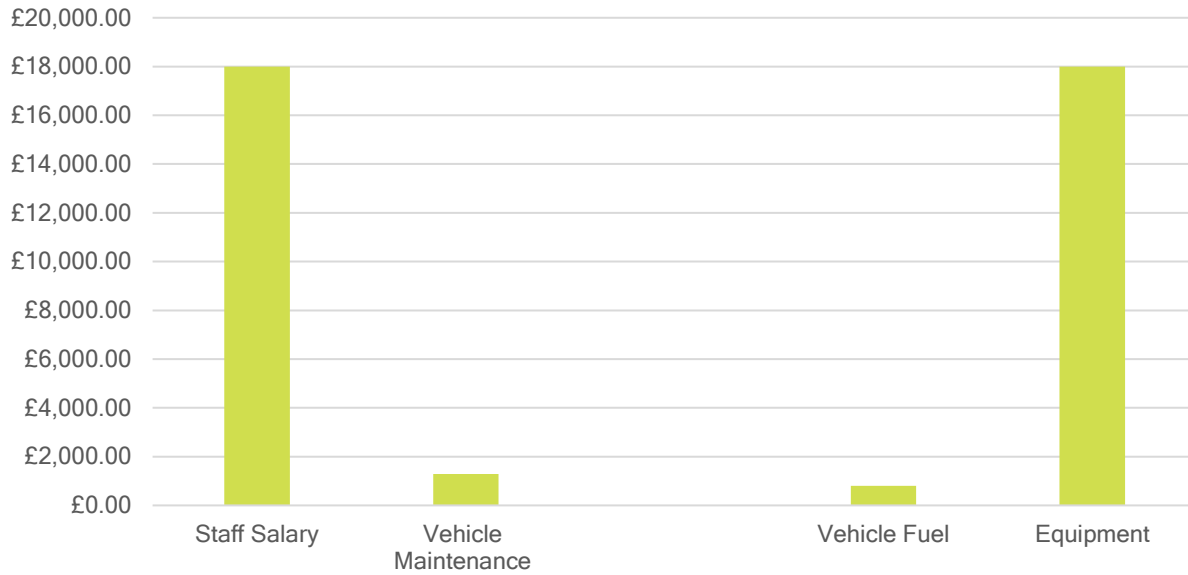
The Parish Council financially supported the Playing Field Association and Singleton Spaces - managing Singleton Environment Centre

For more information about the Parish Council finances please visit [www.greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](http://www.greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk) or contact [theclerk@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:theclerk@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

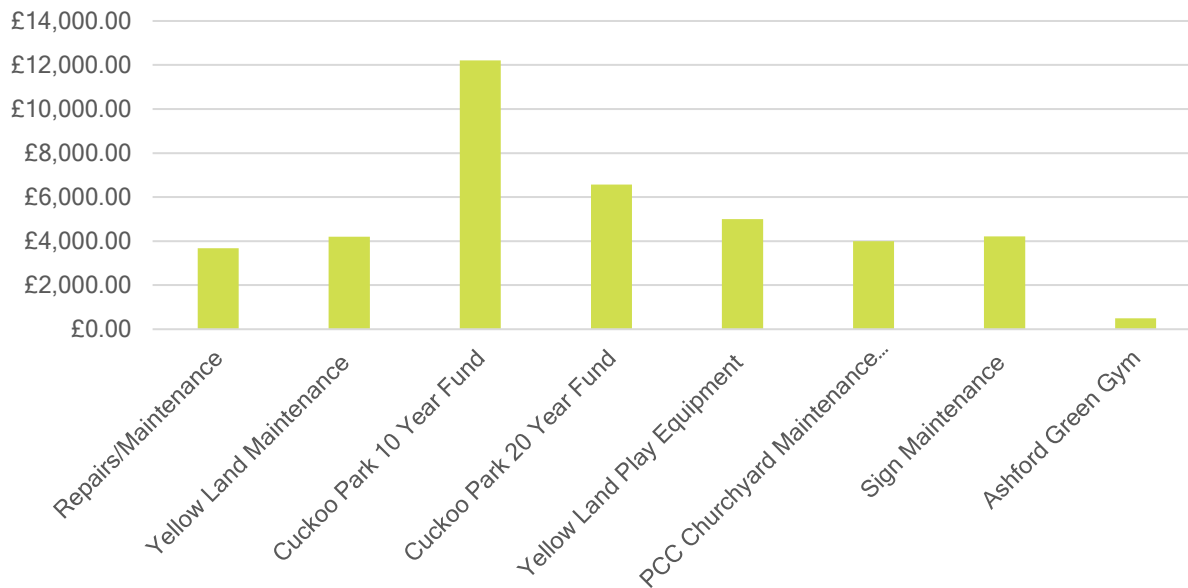
An income and expenditure summary follow here:



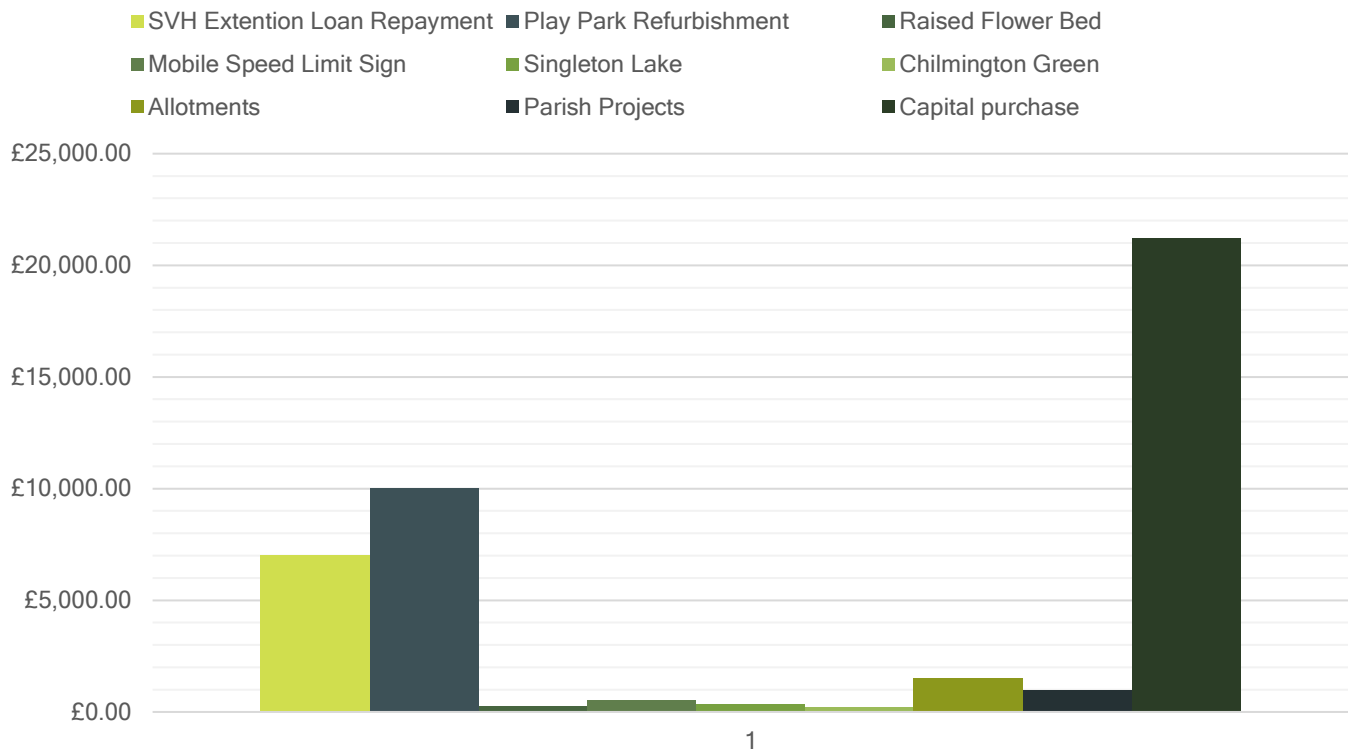
## Expenditure - Ground Maintenance



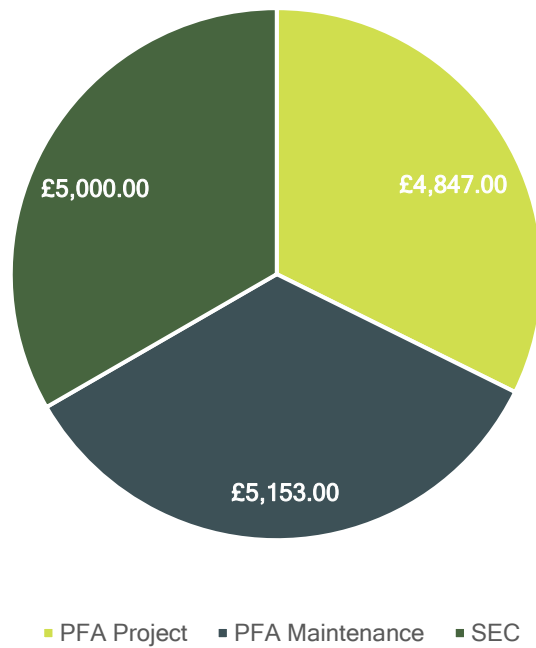
## Open Space, Maintenance and Repair



## Expenditure - Parish Council Projects



## Expenditure- Community Assets



# Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council

## Contacts

### Chilmington Ward

Cllr Ian McClintock



Tel: 07919 278828

Email: [ian.mcclintock@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:ian.mcclintock@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

Parish Council Chair also member of the following committees:

- Finance Committee
- Great Chart Playing Fields Association
- Chilmington Green Planning Working Group
- Singleton Spaces
- Complaints Committee

### Great Chart with Singleton North Ward

Cllr Paul Tate



Tel: 07850 082023

Email: [paul.tate@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:paul.tate@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

- Finance Committee
- Great Chart Village Hall – Chair
- Toke and Streeter Alms Houses Trust

### Singleton East Ward

Cllr Katrina Alexander







Tel: 07791 632493

Email: [katrina.alexander@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:katrina.alexander@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

- Amenities and Open Spaces Committee



<p>Cllr Janet Sullivan</p> 	<p>Tel: 01233 645400</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:janet.sullivan@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">janet.sullivan@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staffing Committee</li> <li>• Chilmington Green Planning Working Group</li> <li>• Great Chart Playing Fields Association – Secretary</li> </ul>
<p>Cllr Malcolm Wiffen</p> 	<p>Tel: 01233 635016</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:malcolm.wiffen@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">malcolm.wiffen@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Vice Chair of the Parish Council also member of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance Committee</li> <li>• Singleton Spaces- Chair</li> <li>• Chilmington Green Planning Working Group</li> <li>• Staffing Committee - Chair</li> </ul>
<p>Cllr Kyran Wilford</p> 	<p>Tel: 07984 352008</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:kyran.wilford@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">kyran.wilford@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilgrims Football Club- Chief Operating Officer</li> </ul>

Singleton West Ward	
<p>Cllr Peter Barker</p> 	<p>Tel: 01233 610241</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:peter.barker@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">peter.barker@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance Committee</li> <li>• Amenities and Open Spaces Committee</li> <li>• Chilmington Green Planning Working Group</li> </ul>

Cllr Yolanda Barker

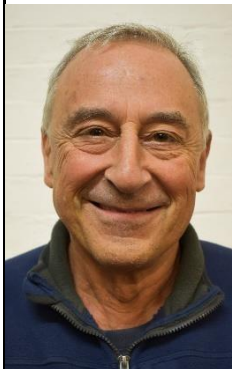


Tel: 01233 610241

Email: [yolanda.barker@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:yolanda.barker@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

- Staffing Committee
- Chilmington Green Planning Working Group – Chair
- Complaints Committee
- Great Chart Playing Fields Association

Cllr Geoff Darvill



Tel: 01233 642357

Email: [geoffrey.darvill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:geoffrey.darvill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

- Finance Committee
- Singleton Village Hall – Chair
- Great Chart Playing Fields – Chair

Cllr Sally Gathern



Tel: 07815 803862

Email: [sally.gathern@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:sally.gathern@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

- Amenities and Open Spaces Committee
- Complaints Committee

### Washford Ward

Cllr Tom Ackrill



Tel: 07780 470 668

Email: [thomas.ackrill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](mailto:thomas.ackrill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

- Singleton Spaces - Trustee

## Parish Council Staff and Contact details

<b>Aniko Szocs</b> 	<b>Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer</b> Tel: 01233 616923 Email: <a href="mailto:TheClerk@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">TheClerk@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Paula Cowperthwaite</b> 	<b>Assistant to the Clerk</b> Tel: 01233 616923 Email: <a href="mailto:paula.cowperthwaite@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">paula.cowperthwaite@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a>
<b>Peter Walkden</b> 	<b>Parish Steward</b>
<b>Robert Heath</b> 	<b>Assistant to Parish Steward</b>

# Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council would like to thank its partners

Ashford Borough Council  
Aspire  
Kent County Council  
Kent Police  
Singleton Environment Centre  
Singleton Spaces  
Great Chart Village Hall  
Singleton Village Hall  
Great Chart Playing Fields  
Ashford Community Woodland  
Pilgrims Football Club  
Chilmington CMO  
Singleton Giant  
Great Chart Primary School  
John Wesley Primary School  
Biffa  
Ashford Volunteer Centre  
WI Godinton and Great Chart  
Great Chart Cricket Club  
Great Chart Scouts, Beavers & Explorers  
Barrow and Spade Brigade  
Toke and Streeter Alms House Trust  
Friends of Singleton Lake  
St Mary's Great Chart and Singleton