



Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 13th July 2026 at Chilmington Cabin at 7.30pm **MINUTES**

Councillors Present:	Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Gathern, Herring, McClintock, Mercer, Wiffen
Number of Seats	11 (1 vacancy)
Number of Cllrs Present	7, 8 from Item 2
Number of Cllrs Absent	3
Also Present:	Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Paula Cowperthwaite (Deputy Clerk), Catherine Stevens (CEO), Stuart Lund (Parish Steward), Cllr Hallett (ABC), Cllr Blanford (ABC), Cllr S Gathern (ABC), Peter New (NHW) and 11 Members of public.

1. Co-option

The Parish Council resolved to co-opt resident Jane Owens as a parish councillor.
Cllr Owens took a seat at the meeting table.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Sullivan. Cllr Barrett (ABC). Cllr Wibberley (KCC), Cllr Eustace (KCC)

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

3. Declarations of Interest

To hear declarations of interest on this agenda, relating to:

3.1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

3.2. Other Significant Interests

Cllr P Barker – Item 11.1

3.3. Other Interests

Cllr Y Barker – 8.1, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 17.1

Cllr Gathern – 8.1, 8.2, 8.3, 8.7, 17.1

Cllr Wiffen – 8.2, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 17.1

Cllr P Barker – 8.1, 8.3, 8.4, 8.5, 8.6

Cllr Mercer – 8.1, 8.3

Cllr Herring – 8.3, 8.5

Cllr McClintock – 8.4, 8.7, 9.1

Cllr Owens – N/A

4. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 08 June 2026 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed:	Cllr Herring	Seconded:	Cllr Mercer
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

Public Participation: There will be 15 minutes of the meeting to hear public questions and comments.

Peter New (NHW) reported that children have been swimming in Singleton Lake. If you see this happening call 999 as it is a dangerous lake to swim in. He noted that the empty house on Dragonfly Close is a fire risk and he is reporting it as so.

Catapults and nuisance bikes remain an issue and will become more so over the school holidays.

On 25th June Kent Fire and Rescue announced the closure of a number of fire stations across the county, and deployment of units to other stations. A 6-week delay has been put on the 12-week consultation period which will allow parish councils to comment should they wish.

5. Safeguarding

None.

6. Reports from Borough Councillors and other organisations

6.1. Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward

Not present. No report given.

6.2. Cllrs Jessamy Blanford – Weald Central Ward

The Local Plan process will be restarted as per government guidance.

The Local Government Reorganisation announcement is expected later this week.

A new survey has been started to get Eurostar trains back through Ashford, based on journeys that people would be making.

Cllr Blanford has been appointed to the CMO.

6.3. Cllr Sally Gathern - Singleton West Ward

Cllr S Gathern noted that the back gate has been broken down at the Dragonfly Close property and that she had contacted the solicitor but had heard nothing back.

Cllr S Gathern witnessed children swimming in Singleton Lake and was reported it to the police but was under the impression it was the first report they had received, despite Facebook posts to the contrary. She then contacted the Ashford CSU and the safeguarding officer at ABC and communications were sent to the Parish Councils for further dissemination. She would like the signage around swimming in the lake to be shorter and more to the point.

A broken utility box on Swaffer Way has been reported to Virgin Media. In Ribston Way one of three trees has fallen due to the weather. Cllr S Gathern reported it to KCC and a feasibility assessment will be carried out.

Cllr S Gathern has received vegetation complaints about Grey Willow Gardens.

A recent bin lorry fire in Singleton was caused by a vape. These should be disposed of in the same way as batteries. Shops that sell vapes are legally obliged to take in your old ones, but you may need to ask.

6.4. Cllr Clive Hallett - Washford Ward

Cllr Hallett reported that dirt bikes continue to be a problem around the end of Langney Drive. He asked that people call 999 if they see the bikes as a response is more likely.

Cllr Hallett has also received reports of overgrown hedges and verges, especially with brambles, along Langney Drive.

7. Reports from County Councillors

7.1. Cllr Jeremy Eustace – Ashford Rural West

Not present. No report received.

7.2. Cllr Nick Wibberley – Ashford South

Not present. No report received.

8. Reports from Committees/Groups

To receive reports from committees

8.1. Planning Committee

8.1.1. To receive reports on planning decisions.

A planning meeting was held, and the minutes are online. The planning comments and decisions can be seen at Appendix One.

8.1.2. To agree on planning application process

The process document explains the tasks involved for staff and councillors. The Paris Council resolved to approve the document.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

8.1.3. Intention of closing AW219 Public Footpath

The closure notice was noted.

8.1.4. Proposed new footpath from Great Chart to A28

A number of Great Chart residents were in attendance at the meeting and raised concerns about existing flooding and drainage issues being exacerbated by more concrete being laid over grassy areas.

Cllr Gathern noted that a number of alternatives have been explored for safe pedestrian access to the secondary school, all of which have been rejected by KCC. It was generally accepted that the footpath is not an ideal solution, but at the moment it is the best solution there is.

The Great Chart residents were encouraged to sign the petition currently running to provide a paid for bus route to the school as this will reduce the number of journeys taken on foot. They were also encouraged to contact their MP and the KCC representative as KCC are the only organisation who can effect change with this issue.

The Parish Council resolved not to support the proposed footpath as it remains an unsafe route.

Proposed:	Cllr McClintock	Seconded:	Cllr Y Barker
Vote In Favour: 6	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 2	MOTION CARRIED

8.2. Singleton Spaces

The AGM was held last month and the minutes are on the SEC website.

The Parish Council rep for Singleton Spaces has now joined as a Trustee so a new representative can be elected at the September Parish Council meeting.

8.3. Environment Committee

The garden competition judging took place on 25th June and the presentation event will be held on 14th August.

A meeting is due to be held this week.

8.4. Finance Committee

To be covered under later items.

8.5. Devolution Working Group

There has been no real progress due to lack of engagement from other organisations.

8.6. Parish Building

No progress to report at this point.

8.7. Staffing Committee

To be covered under later items.

9. Grant Applications

To consider and approve grant applications

9.1. Great Chart Cricket Club

A grant application has been received for the purchase of new mowers. This has been prompted by noise complaints from residents on Ninn Lane. There was a discussion around the financial information supplied by the Club. The Parish Council resolved that a quote for the current mowers to be reconditioned should be obtained first.

Proposed:	Cllr Owens	Seconded:	Cllr Mercer
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

10. Review of Policies

To approve policies and procedures (if applicable)

10.1. Business Plan

The Parish Council resolved to accept the Business Plan.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

11. Finance

11.1. Items for Payment

The Parish Council resolved to agree items for payment in July and acknowledge, credit card payments in June, bank reconciliation and earmarked reserves. The list of items was checked and signed.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr Gathern
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

Method	Items for Approval for Payment	Description	VAT	Total payable
Bacs	Kent Pension	Pension Contribution		£3,766.09
Bacs	HMRC	Employer		£4,523.95
Bacs	Salaries	July Salaries		£11,744.24
Bacs	Lister Wilder	Grease gun	£7.65	£45.93
Bacs	Phoenix Health and Safety	Dynamic Risk assessment course	£69.93	£419.58
Bacs	A.Szocs	Travel expense		£19.25
Bacs	Ashford Borough Council	SEC Building Insurance		£1,929.63
Bacs	ADM Computing	Monthly support contract	£62.59	£375.54
Bacs	Medash	Tree Trail information boards	£18.20	£109.20
Bacs	SLCC	Internal audit	£179.18	£1,075.08
Bacs	Simia Circus School CIC	Big Lunch Performance		£180.00
Bacs	Andrew Broughton	Big Lunch DJ/games		£525.00
Bacs	MKM	Disks and rafters	£9.87	£59.21
Bacs	Integrating Solutions Limited	Photocopier printing charge	£10.14	£60.86

Bacs	Midas Waste	Bins for Big Lunch	£64.00	£384.00
Bacs	Voucher Express	Garden vouchers for competition winners	£0.99	£485.95
Bacs	CandyTan Events	Costume Hire		£60.00
Bacs	The East Malling Trust	Pesticides course		£1,220.00
Bacs	The East Malling Trust	Basic Tree Inspection Course		£430.00
Bacs	Express Toilets	Toilet hire - Big Lunch	£42.00	£252.00
Bacs	Cllr B Barker	Travel expense		£100.60
DD	RAC	Van Roadside and at home recovery		£21.33
DD	Three	Broadband	£13.78	£82.68
Comments:		SUBTOTAL	£400.75	
		TOTAL		£27,870.12

PREVIOUS PAYMENT FOR INFORMATION

DATE OF PAYMENT	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
01/06/26	BACS	£435.00	Brushcutter course
24.06.26	BACS	£52.50	Bales of hay for Big Lunch

INCOME PAYMENT FOR INFORMATION

DATE OF PAYMENT	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
06/02/26	Bacs	£17,334.73	VAT Claim 2025-26
07/01/26	Bacs	£750.00	Music lab
06/19/26		£70.56	Credit note

Credit card payment items for Information	Description	VAT	Total Paid
Account Numbers:19079376 & 55882568			
The Works	Paint pallet mixers for events	£0.33	£2.00
Hobbycraft	Acrylic paint	£3.33	£20.00
Morrisons	Refreshments		£10.65
Riverside Café	Refreshments		£7.00
Riverside Café	Refreshments		£9.40
Voipfone	Landline	£3.00	£18.00
Sainsbury's	Refreshments		£5.79
Classic Trophies	Medals for basketball tournament		£90.00
Booker	Refreshments	£31.97	£208.31
Temu	Memories card, plastic corners	£2.92	£17.48
Dunelm	Metal Heron décor		£30.00
EspressoBros	Refreshments	£1.57	£9.40
EspressoBros	Refreshments	£1.57	£9.40
Morrisons	Refreshments		£0.85
The Swan and Dog	Refreshments	£1.07	£6.40

The Swan and Dog	Refreshments	£1.12	£6.70
EspressoBros	Refreshments	£0.83	£5.00
EspressoBros	Refreshments	£0.83	£5.00
Google Play	Life360 application		£9.99
Bizay	Parish Council logo stickers	£5.83	£35.00
Sainsbury's	Diesel		£130.00
Sainsbury's	Cleaning products		£2.85
Sainsbury's	Petrol	£2.75	£16.49
The Range	Cleaning products		£4.18
Singleton Barn	Refreshments	£1.04	£6.25
The Range	Bedding		£6.00
The Range	Bedding		£12.00
B&Q	Wood Screw	£2.04	£12.24
Speedy Hire	Rotovator hire	£12.75	£76.48
B&Q	Hand fork and trowel	£3.47	£20.83
Sainsbury's	Petrol	£5.03	£30.19
Sainsbury's	Diesel	£21.17	£127.00
Amazon	First Aid Kit	£6.75	£40.50
Fixings Warehouse	Washers and shorts	£14.40	£86.35
Google Play	What3Words		3.49
Amazon	Emergency masks	£3.40	20.42
Amazon	Eye Wash for First Aid box	£5.72	£34.27
Amazon	Large medical bag, ice packs, tourniquet key, eye wash	£11.18	£65.78
Total:		£123.77	£1,201.69

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 May 2026

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances			
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>			
31/05/2026	Metro Bank Current Account	15,230.02	
31/05/2026	Metro Bank Instant Access	6,482.93	
31/05/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 6934	-150.72	
31/05/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 8589	71.57	
31/05/2026	NatWest Current	100.00	
31/05/2026	NatWest Reserve Account	95,126.76	
31/05/2026	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed	199,143.52	
31/05/2026	Dudley	125,725.78	
31/05/2026	Barclays	26,999.67	
31/05/2026		100,000.00	
31/05/2026		190,004.40	
			758,733.93
<u>Receipts not on Bank Statement</u>			
			0.00
Closing Balance			758,733.93
<u>All Cash & Bank Accounts</u>			
1	Metro Bank Current Account	15,230.02	
2	Metro Bank Instant Access	6,482.93	
3	Metro Bank Credit Card	-79.15	
4	NatWest Current Account	100.00	
5	NatWest Reserve Account	95,126.76	
6	Nationwide Business 95 Day	199,143.52	
7	Dudley Building Society	125,725.78	
8	Barclays	26,999.67	
9	RedWood Bank	100,000.00	
10	Barclays Saver Account	190,004.40	
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00	
	Total Cash & Bank Balances		758,733.93

04/11/2025

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

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15:02

Earmarked Reserves

Account	Opening Balance	Net Transfers	Closing Balance
305 Contingency Reserves	115,000.00		115,000.00
320 EMR - Cuckoo Park	118,999.87		118,999.87
321 EMR - The Viewing Point	32,288.00		32,288.00
330 EMR-PFA Play Park	20,000.00		20,000.00
340 Yellow Land Play Equipment	18,000.00		18,000.00
350 Parish Building	15,000.00		15,000.00
	319,287.87	0.00	319,287.87

11.2. County Square Advertising Budget

The Parish Council resolved not to approve this spending.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr Owens
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

11.3. Community Lunch Project Support

The Parish Council resolved to spend up to £4.5K on this project and any other grant funding obtained could extend the project.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	Seconded:	Cllr Herring
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

11.4. The Viewing Point Maintenance work

A discussion was held on the potential works needed, their location and where responsibility lies. The Parish Council resolved to accept the quote for the smaller works to be carried out. A full tree survey will be discussed at the September meeting.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	Seconded:	Cllr McClintock
Vote In Favour: 7	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 1	MOTION CARRIED

12. Community Engagement Officer

The CEO report was shown to the room and be seen at Appendix Two. A community gardening group is to be set up, and a Mature Drivers course is coming up.

13. Clerk's Report and Update on Issues not Listed Elsewhere on the Agenda

The Clerk's Report was shown to those present and can be seen at Appendix Three. Great feedback has been received from the recent basketball course.

14. Correspondence

None

15. Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting

None

16. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Council Meeting will be held on Monday, **14th September 2026** at **Great Chart Village Hall** starting at 7.30 pm.

Closed session

To Resolve that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following items of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. It was moved by the Chair that in pursuance of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the following item on the grounds that it is exempt information as defined in the Act.

17. Staffing

17.1. To consider the redesignation of the Parish Steward role and approve job description

The Parish Council resolved to defer to September the proposal that the Parish Steward will be named as Operations Lead and increase two points on the pay scale according to the job evaluation spreadsheet and following the completion of the current appraisal process and agreement with the new job description. Any pay award will be backdated to the date of this meeting.

Proposed:	Cllr Gathern	Seconded:	Cllr Barker
Vote In Favour: 8	Vote Against: 0	Abstain: 0	MOTION CARRIED

The meeting ended at 9:55pm

Signed as a true record by:

Cllr Wiffen _____

Date: _____

Planning Comments

May, June, July

[PA/2026/0719](#)

8, Old Orchard, Singleton, TN23 4PY

Lawful development certificate - proposed - construction of an outbuilding for use as a dog grooming business

Although it is not part of the process of a Lawful Development application, concern was raised over the parking for cars using the business as the site plans are not representative of the parking area. As it will be for a dog grooming business, drainage should also be considered.

The committee resolved to make a representation as above.

[OTH/2026/0814](#)

Land at Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Great Chart

Details submitted pursuant to Condition 2 (Hard Landscaping) of Planning Permission 21/00840/AS

As there was little information included in the application, the committee resolved to object to the application due to the lack of specific information, as per requirements of Condition 2.

[PA/2026/0872](#)

25, Bull Bridge Way, Chilmington Green, TN23 8AH

Single storey side extension

The committee had no planning related concerns and resolved to support the application.

[PA/2026/0817](#)

Former Grain Store north-west of Great Chilmington Farmhouse, Chilmington Green Lane, Great Chart, Ashford

Lawful Development Certificate - Existing - Confirmation of commencement works and a material start to Planning Permission PA/2024/2321

The committee had no planning related concerns and resolved to support the application.

[PA/2026/0608](#)

35 Manorfield, Singleton, TN23 5YW

Extension of existing 1.8m fence to the front of the property

Concerns were discussed in relation to the impact on the street scene, and pedestrian safety, particularly in relation to women and girls. The committee resolved to object to this application.

PA/2026/0969

Land North East of Nellen Farm, Sandy Lane, Great Chart, Ashford.

Proposed dwelling with associated amenity space to provide essential farm worker accommodation.

The applicants read a statement to those present.

The committee noted that the application is for a thriving farm that needs someone to work on site. It would also reduce vehicle movements to and from the farm if the worker was on site. The Council requests that an agricultural condition is applied to restrict it to farm work accommodation and not to be sold separately without planning permission.

The committee resolved to support this application.

PA/2023/1019

Beult Barn, Ashford Road, Great Chart, Ashford, TN23 3DH

Demolition of existing general storage, warehousing and workshop and replacement with new buildings for E(g) Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity, and Storage and Distribution (Class B8) use with associated parking.

Concerns were primarily raised about the proximity to an ancient monument. It will be an over-intensification of the area and there will be large buildings that will be visible above hedge lines, therefore affecting the streetscene.

There are no turning points or parking shown for the lorries that will use the site, and it should be noted that lorries should not travel through the village, they should access the site from the A28.

However, the committee recognise that the site does need to be improved from its current status.

The committee also requested that Cllr Blanford call in the application.

PA/2026/0095

Barn At, Little Singleton Farm, Goldwell Lane, Great Chart, TN26 1JS

RECONSULTATION Conversion of barn to single dwelling - Self build and hardsurfacing to the existing access

The committee resolved to support this application and to note that the previous comments still stand.

PA/2026/0121

Barn At, Little Singleton Farm, Goldwell Lane, Great Chart, TN26 1JS

RECONSULTATION Listed Building Consent for the conversion of barn to single dwelling

The committee resolved to support this application and to note that the previous comments still stand.

PA/2026/0753

Land at 10 Eggringe, Singleton, Ashford, TN23 4XT

Proposed detached two-storey, four-bedroom dormer bungalow and two single garages; one for the existing and one for the new building, following the demolition of the existing garage at 10 Eggringe.

This site has had previous planning applications submitted that have either not been successful, or not carried out.

The committee resolved to object to this application as it has concerns that the parking is not sufficient for the proposed dwelling. There will also be access issues where there is no turning space for the three parking spaces, and a long access route to reverse along. The plan will also overdevelop the plot.

PA/2026/0750

57 Highwood Drive, Chilmington Green, Ashford, TN23 8AA

Conversion of garage to habitable space and changes to fenestration.

There are currently doors on the double garage, these need to be removed to create 2 parking spaces as per TRA3. Otherwise there will be no off street parking for this dwelling. The committee resolved to object to the application and to ask Cllr Blanford to call the application in.

Planning Decisions

May, June, July

OTH/2025/1360

Land at Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Great Chart – Details submitted pursuant to conditions 7 (Street Lights), 8 (Landscaping Scheme), and 9 (Planting Plans) for planning permission 21/00840/AS

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000002juXxIAI>

PC: Support

ABC: Agree to discharge

OTH/2025/1423

Land at Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Great Chart – Details submitted pursuant to condition 5 (Biodiversity Enhancement and Management) of Planning Permission 21/00840/AS

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000002oNDBIA2>

PC: No comment made

ABC: Agree to discharge

OTH/2025/1424

Land at Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Great Chart – Details submitted pursuant to condition 4 (Biodiversity Enhancement and Management) of planning permission 21/00839/AS

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000002oNGPIA2>

PC: No comment made

ABC: Agree to discharge

OTH/2026/0712

Land at Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Great Chart, Ashford – Non-material amendment to planning application 17/01170/AS for “Layout, Access, Scale, Landscaping and Appearance of development at Chilmington Green for the 346 residential dwellings, which

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000004bX4LIAU>

PC: No comment made

ABC: Approve

OTH/2025/2154

Land Between The Pig And Whistle Farmhouse And Minden Cottage, Ashford Road, Great Chart, TN23 3UW – Details submitted pursuant to Condition 30 of planning permissions 21/01315/AS & PA/2022/2030 and Condition 26 of planning permission ref: PA/2023/1635 (D

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000003tDXZIA2>

PC: No comment made

ABC: Agree to discharge

OTH/2026/0195

Land between the Pig and Whistle Farmhouse and Minden Cottage, Ashford Road, Great Chart – Details submitted pursuant to conditions 3 (materials), 6 (hard and soft landscaping), 9 (bicycle storage), 11 (Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan), 12

(biodive

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000004FjqXIAS>

PC: No comment made

ABC: Refuse

PA/2026/0307

12 Imperial Way, Singleton, Ashford, TN23 5HB – Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed loft conversion, with rear dormer and roof windows to front and rear.

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000004KJfJIAW>

PC: No comment made

ABC: LDC granted

PA/2026/0101

120, Lakemead, Singleton, TN23 4XZ – Single storey side extension (retrospective)

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000004CBgXIAW>

PC: Object

ABC: Approve

PA/2025/1305

Land North of, 15 Cowslip Court, Chilmington Green – Erection of two dwellings with attached garages and ancillary development including landscape enhancements.

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000002eRMvIAM>

PC: Support

ABC: Approve

PA/2026/0090

Land Northwest of The Barn, Chilmington Green Road, Great Chart – Erection of stable and tack, 1.8m high boundary fence, changes to access including additional hardstanding and new gate following demolition of previous stable and tack. (retrospective)

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000004BVivIAG>

PC: Object

ABC: Refuse

Appeal Decisions

AP-90826 (PA/2025/222)

37 Bishops Green

Fencing around property (retrospective)

PC: Object

ABC: Refuse

Inspectorate: Refusal of planning permission

Appendix Two

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER REPORT

JULY 2026



I am pleased to report that June has been another busy and productive month, with a focus on community engagement, partnership working, event delivery and planning for a busy summer programme. It has been encouraging to see continued support from residents, volunteers and local organisations, all of whom play an important role in helping us create a welcoming, inclusive and connected community.

Work Undertaken in June 2026

Volunteers' Week provided an excellent opportunity to recognise and celebrate the individuals who generously give their time to support our parish. Throughout the week, volunteer stories and features were shared on our social media channels to highlight the positive impact volunteers have within our community and to thank them for their continued dedication.

During June, I attended partnership meetings and networking opportunities, including the Ashford Dementia Forum, to strengthen relationships with local organisations and explore opportunities for future collaboration. Building strong partnerships continues to be an important part of ensuring residents can access a wide range of activities, services and support.

Our "Get in the Game for Dad" event took place at Cuckoo Park and brought together families and young people for a morning of sporting and creative activities. Alongside the culmination of six weeks of basketball coaching, participants enjoyed Father's Day themed crafts and refreshments. It was rewarding to see the young people coming together and enjoying the event in a positive and inclusive environment.

In partnership with Kent Police, I accompanied the Fraud Prevention Officer on a home visit to an elderly couple who were unable to attend one of our recent fraud awareness events. This provided an opportunity to share important crime prevention advice, discuss common scams and ensure they were able to access the same information and support as those attending the event. The visit demonstrated our commitment to reaching residents who may face barriers to attending community activities and ensuring that everyone has access to information that can help keep them safe.

I was pleased to be invited to join the Ashford Health Alliance Children and Young People Group, whose vision is that all children and young people in Ashford grow up healthy, active, resilient and emotionally supported. I attended my first meeting during June, which provided an opportunity to meet partners from across the borough and explore how we can work together to support local children, young people and families.

Going forward....

We have The Big Lunch taking place on Sunday 12th July at Great Chart Playing Fields. As part of the Year of Reading 2026, Cllr Sally Gatherern and I will be working with Ashford Library to deliver a Very Hungry Caterpillar reading session for children and families. The event will include themed craft activities, and children will receive a free book thanks to Parish Council funding and the generosity of Ashford Library. We hope this initiative will encourage a love of reading in a fun and engaging way.

Singleton Lake Community Day will take place on 30th July, bringing together a wide range of partner organisations including environmental groups, emergency services and community

organisations. The event will celebrate Singleton Lake, promote environmental awareness and encourage residents to respect and care for this valuable community asset. We look forward to welcoming residents to what promises to be an engaging and enjoyable day for all ages.

Following the success of the first da BASE Music Lab, preparations are continuing for further free summer sessions for young people aged 11–18. These sessions will provide opportunities to develop music, recording and production skills while encouraging creativity, confidence and teamwork.

Final arrangements are also being made for a Mature Drivers Course for residents aged 55 and over, which will be delivered by Kent County Council at Singleton Village Hall on 10 August. The course is designed to help drivers remain safe, confident and informed on today's roads, and I look forward to welcoming residents to this valuable session.

Work is also progressing on the development of a new Community Lunch initiative in partnership with Grow19 Café. The project aims to provide a regular opportunity for residents, particularly those who may be experiencing loneliness or social isolation, to come together, enjoy a nutritious meal and build social connections. We are currently seeking funding from a variety of sources to ensure the initiative remains accessible to all residents. I would like to extend my thanks to our Kent County Council and Borough Councillors who have already agreed to support the project through funding contributions. In addition to benefiting residents, the initiative will provide valuable hands-on experience for Grow19 students undertaking hospitality qualifications, allowing them to develop practical skills in a real community setting.

We look forward to developing our relationship with the newly established Royal British Legion group in Great Chart. Following initial discussions, opportunities are being explored to work together on activities such as the Remembrance Day Lamp Light of Peace event and initiatives that will support their members and strengthen community connections within the parish. The group has kindly invited Ani and me to attend their inaugural meeting to introduce ourselves and share information about the work of the Parish Council.

As always, residents and parish councillors are encouraged to get in touch with thoughts, ideas or questions – community input remains at the heart of everything we do.

Clerk's Report – July



Welcome to the July meeting.

General update

The past few weeks have been busy, with support provided for events alongside responding to residents' queries and complaints. Trees have again been a key concern, and these matters are being addressed as promptly as possible. Residents have also raised concerns about overgrown vegetation outside Great Chart Primary School. As the land is owned by Persimmon Homes, and neither the school nor Ashford Borough Council is able to take on responsibility for its maintenance, this remains a contentious issue and a long-term solution has yet to be found. A meeting has also been held with Ashford Borough Council to discuss the future management of Singleton Lake. This is another complex matter that is likely to require a multi-agency approach.

Cllrs Wiffen and Peter Barker met with Chilmington Green residents to discuss the possibility of forming a parish council and the potential benefits for the community. The group has agreed to arrange a residents' meeting, inviting all relevant parties to answer questions.

Events:

Although you have already received an events update from the CEO, I would like to briefly highlight a few additional activities we are running or supporting:

Bikeability: These sessions are now open for booking on KCC's [website](#)

Sustainability Awareness: This free course was held at Singleton Environment Centre and was aimed at residents who may be unsure how they can help reduce their environmental footprint. The course will be reviewed, with the hope of running it again in the future.

Get in the Game for Dads: This was another successful event. The basketball tournament went well, and the craft activity gave families the opportunity to create personalised Father's Day gifts.

We also have a number of events coming up:

- **13 July:** The Big Lunch event
- **18th July** Da Base Award Show
- **30th July** Singleton Lake Community Day
- **3-6 August** Da Base music lab
- **10-30 August** Da Base Music Lab

Please save the dates, follow us on social media for updates, and come along to support them.

Royal British Legion:

We attended the first meeting of the RBL Great Chart and Singleton branch and hope to work closely with the group by supporting its activities and helping to promote volunteering opportunities. We had the opportunity to talk about what the parish council does and the role of the community engagement officer.

Training:

Please regularly check the Kent Association of Local Councils website for updates on training. If there is anything you feel would improve your role as a councillor, please book a place using their Eventbrite website. When booking a place at an event, please do not forget to select payment by invoice and the invoice to be sent to the clerk. If you have issues with accessing the website please email Laura Dyer at manager@kentalc.gov.uk and she will be able to assist you.

Tabling a motion for Parish council meetings: If you would like to request an agenda item, please send a motion at least seven clear days before the meeting via theclerk@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk with the wording you would like to appear on the agenda. Please note, if the motion's wording is not clear, it could be rejected, or you could be requested to resubmit the motion with better wording.

Community Heroes:

As always, if you can, please promote the scheme with your friends and family. More information can be found on the parish council's [website](#).

National Association of Local Councils: If you haven't already please subscribe to [NALC's newsletter](#). It has up to date information relating to the sector as well as news about the latest events.

Reporting: It is very important that if you see a fault, it is reported to the relevant authority immediately so works can be arranged. It is often confusing to know who to report to so if in doubt you can check the Parish Council [website](#) where all the information you need to know is available. Did you know you can use What3Words to pinpoint the exact location of a fault? You can either access it via [the website](#) or download the app to your smartphone.

Social Media: Please like and share our posts on social media so it can reach a wider audience. If you are on Facebook, Instagram or Tik Tok ensure you give us a like and follow us 😊