Meeting of the Parish Council held on Monday, 14th September 2026 at Great Chart Village Hall at 7.30pm MINUTES

Councillors Present:	Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Darvill, Gathern, Mercer, Owens, Sullivan, Tate, Wiffen and McClintock (from Item 9.1)
Number of Seats	11
Number of Cllrs Present	10
Number of Cllrs Absent	1
Also Present:	Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Paula Cowperthwaite (Deputy Clerk) Stuart Lund (Parish Steward), Cllr Barrett (ABC), Cllr Blanford (ABC), Peter New (NHW) and 4 members of public.

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllrs Herring, McClintock, C Stevens (CEO), S Gathern (ABC), Wibberley (KCC)

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	**Seconded:**	Cllr Darvill
Vote In Favour: 9	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

2. Declarations of Interest

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

2.1. Disclosable Pecuniary Interests

None

2.2. Other Significant Interests

None

2.3. Other Interests

Cllr Mercer – Items 7.1, 7.3
Cllr P Barker – Items 7.1, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6
Cllr Wiffen – Items 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 21, 22
Cllr Sullivan – Items 7.1, 7.6, 7.7, 21, 22
Cllr Tate – Items 7.1, 7.4
Cllr Gathern – Items 7.7, 21, 22
Cllr Y Barker – Items 7.1, 7.5, 7.6, 7.7, 21, 22

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Monday, 13th July 2026 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed:	Cllr P Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Gathern
Vote In Favour: 9	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

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

A MOP reported that patch resurfacing that had taken place on roads around Chilmington Hamlet last year, and was being redone across a bigger area where the original patches had worn away.
Chilmington Hamlet are now also receiving approx. one postal delivery per fortnight due to system changes and short staffing at the Ashford depot. A formal complaint will be submitted.

There is a section of Running Foxes Lane, between Badgers Den and Greyhound Chase, where cars meet head on due to blind bends and parked cars and refuse to move. Some drivers then drive along the pavement causing danger to pedestrians, and arguments often escalate to physical aggression. The unsafe driving has seen residents parked cars hit multiple times. The resident will report to ABC and to the police on 101 when necessary.

Peter New gave his Neighbourhood Watch report.
He noted the successful community event at Singleton Lake in July. The summer has been very busy with increased reports of nuisance biking, catapults and anti-social behaviour.
PN has met with the new Chief Inspector for Ashford Police and has high hopes for a good working relationship going forwards.
The proposed closure of the fire stations across Kent was cancelled due to strong public and professional feeling against the idea.
The main danger of the recent dry fields and wildfires has passed, but has not gone away, despite the recent rain and residents must remain vigilant.
PN urged residents to register for water deliveries, if eligible, in the wake of the water shortages across the area over the summer.
PN will attend the CMO AGM but is not allowed to speak.
PN also noted he is against the proposed reduction in police force numbers across the country, regardless of any savings, and also against the removal of the Police and Crime Commissioner role.

4. Safeguarding
None

5. Reports from Borough Councillors and other organisations

5.1. Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward
Cllr Barrett met with Cllrs Wiffen and Gathern and a resident regarding Singleton Lake. The resident wishes to improve fishing access around the Lake and has a business proposal for ABC to consider.
The new Chilmington School bus is fairly well used on the way to school, but very busy on the way home. The walking route is still not safe for those not able to catch the bus.
Parking charges are being changed across Ashford, with the cheaper afternoon parking abolished.

5.2. Cllrs Jessamy Blanford & Alan Pickering – Weald Central Ward
Cllr Blanford noted the parking charges changes mentioned by Cllr Barrett, and that the Local Government Reorganisation process is on hold.
Cllr Blanford joined the recent Singleton Lake litter pick.

Cllr Blanford has been invited to join the CMO board. She attended a recent meeting chaired by Ben Lockwood and will attend the AGM on the 16th. A discussion took place regarding the comms of the CMO.
ABC are promoting a week of inclusion of older people within the community.
The ABC Local Plan process has restarted and Cllr Blanford will be attending a meeting about it on Thursday.

5.3. Cllr Sally Gathern- Singleton West Ward

Not present. Report received.
I have dealt with quite a few ward issues in August, including:
· pavement parking and cars parked in a way that blocks sightlines for other road users
· concerns about Buxford Meadow
· overgrown vegetation blocking footpaths and cycleways and damaging fences
· litter and fly-tipping
The house on Dragonfly Close is now on the market so, hopefully, will be occupied again soon and looked after.
The pond in Grey Willow Gardens has been de-silted and the litter removed. Aspire have further plans to improve the pond. I'm very grateful to them for the work they have done.
I facilitated a showing of the film, People's Emergency Briefing, organised by the Parish Council. I'd like to thank the PC for organising this.
I took part in a litter pick of Buxford Meadow, organised by the Parish Council. Again, thank you to them for organising it.

5.4. Cllr Clive Hallett -Washford Ward

Not present. No report received.

6. Reports from County Councillors

6.1. Cllr Jeremy Eustace – Ashford Rural West

Not present. No report received.

6.2. Cllr Nick Wibberley – Ashford South

Not present. Cllr Wibberley reported that "I have been working with the local policing team with regards to anti-social behaviour in Victoria Park. Although that isn't strictly Singleton, I have built up a good relationship with the local policing team so if there are any issues within Singleton & Great Chart, please let me know."

7. Reports from Committees/Groups

To receive reports from committees

7.1. Planning Committee

7.1.1. To receive reports on planning decisions.

The planning comments and decisions were shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix One.

7.1.2. To receive updates on the planned amendments to the NPPF

A note will be circulated tomorrow summarising the relevant changes.

7.1.3. To acknowledge planned changes to National Scheme of Delegation for planning decisions

Changes include that planning applications will no longer be able to be 'called in' by Borough Councillors.

7.1.4. To acknowledge Temporary Closure Byway to all traffic AW245 between Chilmington Green Road and its junction with Public Footpath AW220 from the 26th September 2026

The temporary byway closure was noted.

7.2. Singleton Spaces

A meeting held last week. One trustee resigned and a new one was appointed.

7.3. Environment Committee

A meeting was held last week, and the minutes are available online. The gardening competition was another success and will be re-run next year with a few small changes.

The tree trail will be extended slightly over the next couple of months.

7.4. Finance Committee

A meeting was held in August, and the minutes are available online. A mini audit was carried out and no grant applications were received.

7.5. Devolution Working Group

With regards to potential asset transfers, with or without Local Government Reorganisation, if an asset is requested from ABC with a strong business case, then it will be fairly assessed.

7.6. Parish Building

The three location options were discussed in terms of potential services, access and costs. It was noted that this is just to look at a preferred site in the first instance. It is not a legally binding decision, and full consultation will take place with residents in due course. Location two, on the Viewing Point land, was the preferred site of eight of the present councillors.

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

7.7. Staffing Committee

To be discussed under later agenda items.

8. Grant Applications

None

9. Review of Polices

To approve policies and procedures (if applicable)

9.1. Resident WhatsApp Community Group Policy

The various technical options available within Whatsapp were discussed and further work will be carried out on the details. The Parish Council resolved that the Resident WhatsApp group was a good idea and to look into the logistics further.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 6	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 4	**MOTION CARRIED**

9.2. Resident WhatsApp Community Privacy Policy

The Parish Council resolved to approve the Resident WhatsApp Community Privacy Policy, with the addition of ‘remove yourself from the group’ to be added to ‘your user rights’.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Mercer
Vote In Favour: 6	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 4	**MOTION CARRIED**

10. Review representatives on Outside Organisations

Cllr P Barker was nominated to become the Parish Council representative for Singleton Environment Centre and the Parish Council resolved to approve this.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 10	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

11. Review Committee Members

Cllr Owens will join the Planning Committee, Staffing Committee and the Environment Committee.
Cllr Gathern will leave the Environment Committee.

12. Crime Prevention

The proposal to investigate installing CCTV at the Singleton underpass towards Great Chart was discussed. Issues such as visibility, power supply, vandalism and land ownership were explored.
The level of police reporting of the group hanging around the underpass and nearby areas was queried. Peter New stated that CCTV is never a bad idea and can discourage youths from carrying out intimidating behaviour.

Proposed:	Cllr McClintock	**Seconded:**	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 10	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

13. Finance

13.1. Items for Payment

The items for payment were approved for September, disregarding the first three items as they will be covered under the Closed Session. The August payments, credit card payments in July and August, bank reconciliation and earmarked reserves were all acknowledged. The list of items was checked and signed by Cllr P Barker.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	**Seconded:**	Cllr Sullivan
Vote In Favour: 10	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

Method	Items for Approval for Payment August	Description	VAT	Total payable
Bacs	Kent Pension	Pension Contribution		£3,766.09
Bacs	HMRC	Employer		£4,523.96
Bacs	Salaries	August Salaries		£11,744.23
Bacs	MKM	Line Marking	£28.39	£170.35
Bacs	JRB	Economy dispenser dog glove	£50.10	£300.60
Bacs	Rock Awnings	Gazebo with sides& pringing	£95.50	£572.98
Bacs	Tylers workwear	T-shirt for new Cllr and a cap	£4.77	£28.60
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education activities		£1,500.00
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education activities		£1,500.00
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education activities		£1,500.00
Bacs	Cllr Wiffen	Travel and BBQ supplies		£390.42
Bacs	Ashford Concert Band	Entertainment at Big Lunch		£100.00
Bacs	Candytan Events	Mascot hire		£60.00
Bacs	Kallkwik	Foamex Boards- Gardening comp	£44.80	£268.80
Bacs	M Harrington Tree surgery	Removing dead branches from Ash tree		£1,600.00
Bacs	Whizzbang	Face painting at Big Lunch		£200.00
Bacs	ADM Computing	Monthly contract	£59.88	£359.27
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Garden Awards Evening		£416.90

Bacs	Lister Wilder	Gloves	£2.08	£12.48
Bacs	Lister Wilder	Gloves	£2.08	£11.44
Bacs	ADM Computing	Monthly contract	£60.93	£365.60
Bacs	Cllr Wiffen	Gas for BBQ		£175.04
Bacs	Zurich	Policy Amendment fee		£56.00
DD	RAC	Van Roadside and at home recovery		£21.33
DD	Three	Broadband	£13.78	£82.68
:		**SUBTOTAL**	**£283.82**	
		TOTAL		**£29,726.77**

Method	Items for Approval for Payment	Description	VAT	Total payable
Bacs	Kent Pension	Pension Contribution		£4,574.33
Bacs	HMRC	Employer		£6,005.03
Bacs	Salaries	September Salaries		£14,086.12
Bacs	MKM	Rapid set fence post concrete	£10.22	£51.11
Bacs	University of Birmingham	MPA program year 2 module		£1,205.00
Bacs	Lister Wilder	New Blade	£21.28	£127.68
Bacs	Common Works	Project Management April-Aug	£432.00	£2,592.00
Bacs	Singleton Spaces	Education team		£1,500.00
Bacs	Candytan Events	Bouncy castle at Big Lunch Event		£780.00
DD	RAC	Van Roadside and at home assistance		£21.33
DD	PWLB Lending	Singleton Village Hall extension repayment		£2,614.74
:		**SUBTOTAL**		
		TOTAL		**£33,557.34**

DATE OF PAYMENT	PAYMENT METHOD	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
12/07/26	BACS	£120.00	ID cards

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**

Credit card payment items for Information	Description	VAT	Total Paid
Account Numbers:19079376 & 55882568			
Sainsbury's	Air freshener		£2.70
Amazon Business	Floral cards/envelops - Garden Competition	£1.83	£10.98
Sainsbury's	Diesel	£21.67	£130.00
Amazon Business	First Aid and Fire Extinguisher signs	£0.32	£1.94
Amazon	Thyme Creeping red plant		£36.30
Longacres	Flower mix and soil ph testing kit	£7.16	£42.95

Sainsbury's	Petrol for machinery	£5.53	£33.18
Screwfix	Red and White tape	£1.84	£11.01
Chart Fencing	Post and timber gravel	£2.03	£12.18
Sainsbury's	Diesel	£21.67	£130.00
Thanet Tool Supplies	Security bit set	£1.15	£6.90
Google Play	What3Words subscription		£3.49
Google Play	Life360 app		£9.99
Voipfone	Office landline	£3.00	£18.00
Morissons	Sweet Jelly for Music Club		£4.50
Electrical Counter	Outdoor light	£2.00	£12.00
Ringo app	Parking - meeting at International House		£3.00
Amazon	Smartphone, laptop case, rechargable mice, phone tripod	£63.49	£380.99
Amazon	Microphone for mobile phones	£2.69	£16.14
Bilby Plastics Ltd	Clear polycarb	£15.25	£91.51
B&Q	Black paint and cable	£4.02	£24.10
	Total:	**£153.65**	**£981.86**

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 30 June 2026

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances

30/06/2026	Metro Bank Current Account	14,960.40	
30/06/2026	Metro Bank Instant Access	5,897.25	
30/06/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 6934	-27.75	
30/06/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 8589	-213.17	
30/06/2026	NatWest Current	100.00	
30/06/2026	NatWest Reserve Account	95,175.61	
30/06/2026	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed	199,143.52	
30/06/2026	Dudley	125,725.78	
30/06/2026	Barclays	18,412.05	
30/06/2026		100,000.00	
30/06/2026		190,425.17	
			749,598.86

Receipts not on Bank Statement

	0.00
Closing Balance	**749,598.86**

All Cash & Bank Accounts

1	Metro Bank Current Account	14,960.40
2	Metro Bank Instant Access	5,897.25
3	Metro Bank Credit Card	-240.92
4	NatWest Current Account	100.00
5	NatWest Reserve Account	95,175.61
6	Nationwide Business 95 Day	199,143.52
7	Dudley Building Society	125,725.78
8	Barclays	18,412.05
9	RedWood Bank	100,000.00
10	Barclays Saver Account	190,425.17
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
	Total Cash & Bank Balances	**749,598.86**

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 31 July 2026

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances

31/07/2026	Metro Bank Current Account	14,582.67	
31/07/2026	Metro Bank Instant Access	4,850.99	
31/07/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 6934	-229.36	
31/07/2026	Metro Bank Credit Card 8589	-239.24	
31/07/2026	NatWest Current	100.00	
31/07/2026	NatWest Reserve Account	95,222.63	
31/07/2026	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed	204,329.52	
31/07/2026	Dudley	125,725.78	
31/07/2026	Barclays	20,944.76	
31/07/2026		100,000.00	
31/07/2026		155,239.17	
			720,526.92

Receipts not on Bank Statement

	0.00
Closing Balance	**720,526.92**

All Cash & Bank Accounts

1	Metro Bank Current Account	14,582.67
2	Metro Bank Instant Access	4,850.99
3	Metro Bank Credit Card	-468.60
4	NatWest Current Account	100.00
5	NatWest Reserve Account	95,222.63
6	Nationwide Business 95 Day	204,329.52
7	Dudley Building Society	125,725.78
8	Barclays	20,944.76
9	RedWood Bank	100,000.00
10	Barclays Saver Account	155,239.17
	Other Cash & Bank Balances	0.00
	Total Cash & Bank Balances	**720,526.92**

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

Earmarked Reserves

	Account	Opening Balance	Income	Expenditure	Closing Balance
305	Contingency Reserves	115,000.00	0.00	0.00	115,000.00
320	EMR - Cuckoo Park	124,185.87	0.00	0.00	124,185.87
321	EMR - The Viewing Point	32,288.00	0.00	0.00	32,288.00
330	EMR-PFA Play Park	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
340	Yellow Land Play Equipment	18,000.00	0.00	0.00	18,000.00
350	Parish Building	15,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00
		324,473.87	**0.00**	**0.00**	**324,473.87**

13.2. Metro Bank

As the process for approving payments from the Barclays account is unnecessarily burdensome, the Parish Council resolved to move day to day payments back to Metro Bank.

Proposed:	Cllr Wiffen	**Seconded:**	Cllr Darvill
Vote In Favour: 10	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

14. Parish Steward

The Parish Steward report on recent or ongoing activities was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix Two.
It was noted that the apprentice is performing well, and that the Parish Steward is doing well at overseeing her work.

15. Community Engagement Officer

The Community Engagement Officer report on recent or ongoing activities was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix Three.
Thanks were given to the CEO for organising the recent events.

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

The Clerk's report on recent or ongoing activities was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix Four.

17. Correspondence

None.

18. Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting

None.

19. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Council Meeting will be held on Monday, **12th October 2026** at **Singleton 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.

20. Staffing

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

The paper presented highlighted the changes involved in the role that the Parish Steward initially took on, compared to the one he currently carries out.
The Parish Council resolved to change the Parish Steward role to Operations Manager, and to provide an appropriate increase in pay scale.

Proposed:	Cllr Y Barker	**Seconded:**	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 10	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

20.2. To approve recommended Local Government Pay increase and associated backdated payments.

The Council resolved to approve the Local Government pay increase and backdated salary payments to 1st April 2026.

Proposed:	Cllr McClintock	**Seconded:**	Cllr Wiffen
Vote In Favour: 10	**Vote Against**: 0	**Abstain**: 0	**MOTION CARRIED**

The meeting ended at 9:30pm

Signed as a true record by:

Cllr Wiffen _____

Date: _____

Appendix One

Planning Comments

July, August

OTH/2023/0020
Play Space 1, Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Ashford, Kent
Reserved Matters application, pursuant to planning permission 12/00400/AS, for appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and access for the construction of Play Space 1 / Chilmington Square

The committee resolved to comment that the Parish Council's previous objection comments on the application are still valid, and the change of applicant was noted.

OTH/2023/0033
Land Parcel A1 and A2, Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Ashford, Kent
Reserved Matters application, pursuant to planning permission 12/00400/AS, for appearance, landscaping, layout, scale and access for the provision of allotments on Land Parcels A1 and A2.

The committee resolved to comment that the Parish Council's previous support comments on the application are still valid and that the change of applicant was noted.

OTH/2026/1238
Braeside, Padwell Lane, Great Chart, Ashford, TN23 3AU
Non-material amendment to Planning Permission PA/2025/1039 for Front single storey extension. Demolition and construction of new detached garage. Construction of Summer house; to allow changes to the proposed location of the Summer house.

The committee has no planning related concerns but requests that there is enough space left between the summer house and the hedge bordering the war memorial for maintenance. The committee resolved to support the application.

PA/2026/0985
The Wyvern School, Great Chart Bypass, Great Chart, TN23 4ER
Change of use of land for the siting of a converted horse box to be used as a coffee cart ancillary for the use of the school (retrospective)

The committee resolved to support the application but requested that any wastewater should be disposed of via foul water drainage rather than storm drainage.

PA/2026/1177
37 Green Fields Lane, Singleton, TN23 5LH
Conversion of an existing detached double garage into a home gym, including associated external alterations.

The committee resolved to object to the application due to insufficient parking under TRA3 for a 4-bedroom house as there is no space for street parking in this location. The

drainage for the shower/toilet should be drained via foul water drainage rather than storm drainage.

PA/2026/1368
27, Waddington, Singleton Road, Great Chart, TN23 3BB
Proposed front porch

The committee resolved that there were no planning related concerns and support the application.

OTH/2026/1423
Land at Chilmington Green, Ashford Road, Great Chart, Ashford
Details submitted pursuant to part discharge condition 3a (Doorstep Play Spaces - Landscaping Play Layout Plan) of planning permission 17/01170/AS. The application seeks approval to replace the previously approved drawing DO368_008 Rev B with drawing DO368_008 Rev C. in relation to the doorstep play area within Phase 1

The committee still have concerns that the area will be an ASB hotspot due to its location and the surrounding pleached trees. It requests that the trees are not allowed to grow above 4ft high.

Appendix Two

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICER REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2026

July and August were particularly busy and rewarding months, with a strong focus on bringing people together, developing new community initiatives and strengthening partnerships across the parish and beyond. Alongside delivering events and activities, considerable time was spent planning future projects, securing funding and support, and ensuring that accessibility, safeguarding and inclusion remained at the heart of everything we do. These efforts continue to help build a more connected, supportive and welcoming community for residents of all ages and abilities.

Work Undertaken in July and August 2026

Singleton Lake Community Day

A significant highlight of July was the delivery of the first Singleton Lake Community Day on 30 July. Bringing together environmental organisations, emergency services and community groups, the event celebrated the lake while encouraging residents to learn more about the wildlife, the importance of the area and how to stay safe. The day was extremely well received by residents, generated positive feedback and created valuable opportunities for organisations to connect and collaborate. A date has already been pencilled in for next year – 29th July 2027.

The Big Lunch and Family Engagement

I supported preparations for The Big Lunch at Great Chart Playing Fields, working alongside Ashford Library and Cllr Sally Gathern to develop a Very Hungry Caterpillar themed reading activity for children and families for the Year of Reading 2026. The initiative encouraged reading in a fun, accessible way, with themed activities and free books helping local families enjoy and take part in the event. I would like to thank the Parish Council and Ashford Library for funding the books.

Community Lunch Club

Now that Grow 19 is back after the summer period we are hoping to make further progress. Working in partnership, the project aims to reduce loneliness and social isolation by providing an affordable and welcoming community meal, whilst also giving Grow19 learners valuable hospitality and customer service experience. Again, I would like to thank the Parish Council, Cllr Sally Gathern, Cllr Bill Barrett and Cllr Jeremy Eustace for their kind contribution towards this project.

Community Wellbeing Garden

The Community Wellbeing Garden was a key focus during this period. I met with councillors, residents and local gardening enthusiasts to gather ideas and practical guidance for

developing the space. Work also began on establishing the Grow Together gardening group, which will launch on 25th September at 10am, to encourage wider community involvement and shared ownership of the project. A meeting has also been arranged with the Head Gardener at Godinton House to explore further ways to develop the Wellbeing Garden.

Partnerships and Community Links

Partnership working remained an important part of my role throughout July. I attended the Friends of Singleton Lake AGM with the Parish Clerk and Parish Councillors where we contributed to discussions about future activities and opportunities. I also joined the Parish Clerk at a meeting to support the relaunch of the Great Chart Royal British Legion, helping to build new relationships and identify future opportunities for collaboration.

Dementia-Friendly Parish Work

I attended the Ashford Dementia Forum meeting and shared plans for the proposed community memory garden as part of our wellbeing garden. Following this, I have arranged for dementia awareness training for parish councillors and staff with a local Alzheimer's Ambassador. Supporting the Council's commitment to becoming a dementia-friendly parish continues to be a key area of development and partnership working.

Ashford Age-Friendly Communities Action Plan Workshop

I attended the Ashford Age-Friendly Communities Action Plan Workshop during August. This provided a useful opportunity to contribute to wider conversations about making communities welcoming, accessible and supportive for people as they grow older, and to consider how this work can help inform future activity within the parish.

Environmental Engagement at Singleton Lake

In August, I organised a Walk, Talk & Tidy event at Singleton Lake. The flexible format allowed residents to take part in whichever way suited them best, whether by walking, chatting, litter picking or simply spending time outdoors with others. The event encouraged community connection while supporting care for the local environment. We collected nine sacks of rubbish, compared with 27 bags at the previous event. While this is still too much, it may indicate that awareness is improving. We were particularly concerned by the amount of discarded fishing line found tangled in bushes and trees. A request has since been shared on our social media channels, encouraging anglers to retrieve snagged line wherever possible, as taking a few extra minutes can help protect the lake’s wildlife.

Mature Drivers Course

The Mature Drivers Course took place during August and provided local residents with an opportunity to refresh their driving knowledge, increase confidence and learn about changes to road safety guidance and legislation. The course was well received and highlighted the value of offering practical safety initiatives that support residents to remain independent and safe on the roads.

A new course format is due to be introduced at the beginning of next year. Following discussions with Kent County Council's Road Safety Team, I have requested that the updated version of the programme be delivered in our parish during Road Safety Week in November 2027 – watch this space.

da BASE Music Lab workshops

Two da BASE Music Lab workshops took place during August, with more than 15 young people attending. The sessions offered an enjoyable and creative opportunity for young people to take part in music-based activities, build confidence and develop their skills alongside others.

Going forward…

Over the coming months, I will continue to build on the progress made during the summer and develop projects that bring residents together, support wellbeing and encourage inclusive participation across the parish. This will also include:

Residents Needs Survey: Review and consider residents' responses now that the survey has closed, using the findings to help shape future activities, events and community projects.

Brew & Do: Develop the Brew & Do initiative as a friendly and welcoming opportunity for residents to meet, enjoy refreshments, take part in activities and build social connections.

Lamp Light of Peace: Continue planning the Lamp Light of Peace event with the Great Chart Royal British Legion, helping the community come together to mark Remembrance in a respectful and meaningful way.

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.

Appendix Four

Clerk's Report – September

Welcome to the September meeting

General update

I hope everyone enjoyed a good summer break. Welcome back to our September meeting.

Website: We have been working to improve the existing website, so it is more accessible and user-friendly. We contacted Vision ICT to discuss our plans, but it took several months before we were able to meet with them. At that meeting, we outlined our ideas and were advised that moving the site to WordPress would cost approximately £2,500–£3,000. Unfortunately, we have not yet received a detailed quotation to present to Council. The website is likely to be included on the next agenda for discussion, and we hope to have more information by then. The delay is frustrating, as we had hoped the website would have been updated by now.

Social media: We have experienced technical issues with our Instagram account, which meant we needed to open a new one. We are now working to rebuild our follower base. Thank you to everyone who has already followed us.

Events:

The Garden Competition award ceremony went well, and all winners received their prizes. The event was held at Singleton Environment Centre, which was a fitting venue.

Two music workshops were completed during August. Both were very successful, with nearly 10 young people attending the second session. The resulting music videos are excellent and can be viewed on Da Base's YouTube channel.

We also have several events coming up, so please keep an eye on our social media channels.

Training:

Please check the Kent Association of Local Councils website regularly for training updates. If you identify a course that would support your role as a councillor, please book through Eventbrite. When booking, select payment by invoice and request that the invoice is sent to the Clerk. If you have any difficulty accessing the website, please email Laura Dyer at manager@kentalc.gov.uk, who will be able to assist.

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 😊