

# ANNUAL REPORT

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council

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2022

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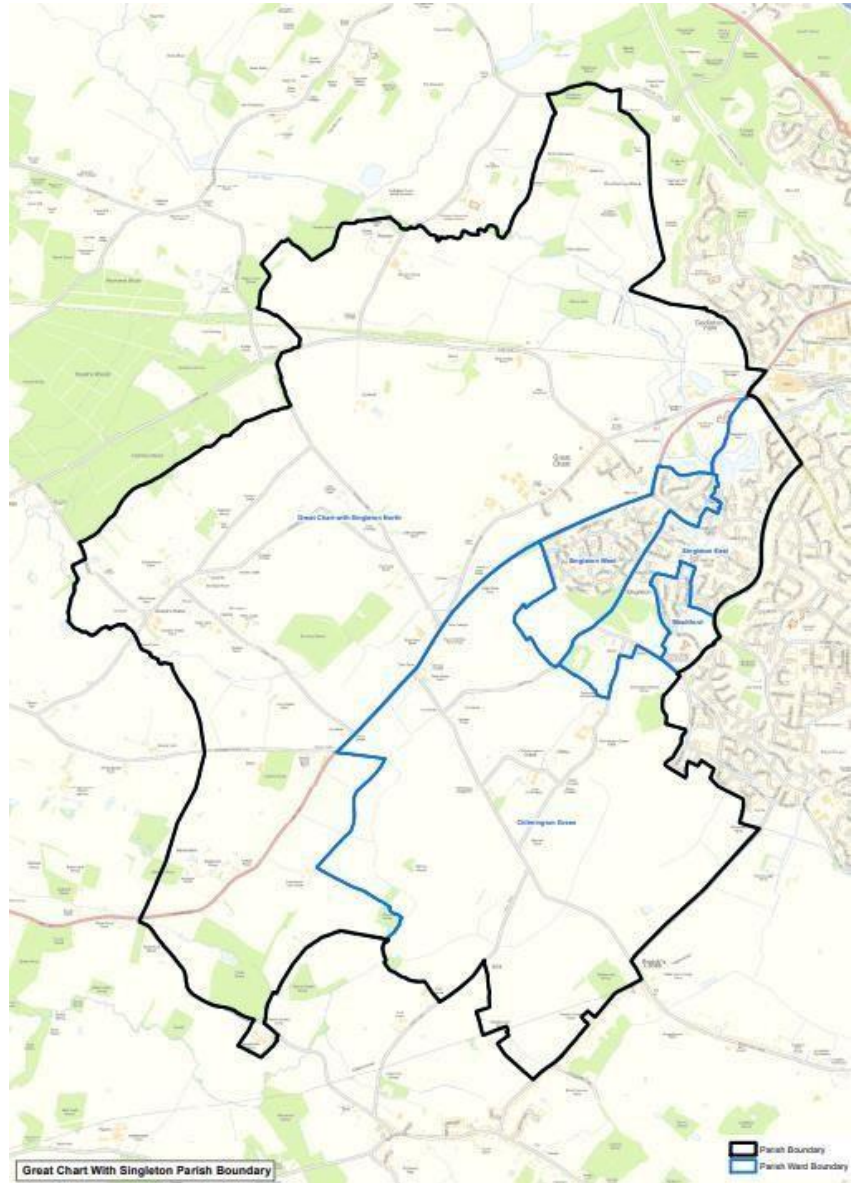
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# Foreword

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 southwest. 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 2022-23 has been a productive year. The parish stewards continued cutting the grass on parish owned open spaces, as well as maintaining our play areas, planters and the meadow areas. The parish council held several community events to bring the community together. Some of these events are familiar to you as they are a regular fixture on the Parish Council's events calendar. The council is also pleased to have been able to resurface under the new outdoor gym in Cuckoo Park and the basketball court.

This report is a good opportunity to look



back on the past year's activities, beginning with reports from the Chair and Clerk. This report will include an overview of the parish's finances and provide a summary of the activities of some of our local clubs, societies, and organisations.

You can view the large [map](#)

## 1 GREAT CHART WITH SINGLETON PARISH

<sup>1</sup> Ashford Borough Council Yearbook



## Chair's Annual Report

2022-2023 has been another busy year for your parish council, with many projects undertaken.

The most obvious of these was the refurbishments to Cuckoo Park, with the replacement of the gym equipment (which was showing its age), the creation of an all-weather playing surface, and most recently the renewal of the gym area surface.

Also renewed was the footpath that runs behind Singleton Village Hall, with remedial repairs and a new tarmac surface, to improve the safety for residents.

Reacting to the cost-of-living crisis, the council has undertaken two specific projects, firstly, In conjunction with Lily's Social Kitchen CIC to provide a 'warm room', a space open at no cost, for the public to spend their weekdays in a warm space away from the home. The second is the recently introduced Community Fridge, based in Singleton Village Hall and set up to reduce food waste by providing a free source of both fresh and ambient food that is nearing its 'use by' date, or is just past its 'best before' date. Parishioners are welcome to share in this food to reduce their weekly shopping bill. The fridge also welcomes donations of food from members of the public – please check the parish website for more details of what can and can't be donated. This particular project is in its early stages and would welcome some additional volunteers! If you think you may be able to help, please contact Paula, our deputy clerk.

Working with KCC, re-routing a footpath has provided extra space for allotments at Hillcrest, with the management taken on by a new, revived Barrow and Spade Brigade committee. The council also provided part funding to help provide a new boundary fence.

Other projects with KCC have been the introduction of the 20mph limit in Hoxton Close and Running Foxes Lane, and the crossings outside Askes Court and in Bucksford Lane, and the painting of additional yellow lines around John Wesley School.

There have been a couple of events held in conjunction with the Singleton Environment Centre with two free barbeques and assorted activities last Summer. We also had 'The Big Lunch' at Great Chart, an event that will be repeated this year on 17th June.

We have supported the installation of a bee-box in Ashford Community Woodland.

We have a 'Community Heroes' initiative, centred around cleaning-up the parish, with the council providing the equipment needed to those prepared to take on some litter picking.

With the celebration of the Queen's seventieth year on the throne, one parishioner applied to have an unnamed pathway running from Knoll Lane behind Manorfields towards Tithe Barn Lane as Platinum Jubilee Way. This was agreed by Ashford Borough Council and the sign was unveiled last Autumn. We also arranged for a bench, the 'Jubilee Bench' to be installed at the viewing point.

Sadly, we lost the Queen last year and I was surprised by how affected I was personally, by her death.

The council does its best to support projects within the community and we have a grant pot available to residents to bring ideas to fruition. As a couple of examples, we helped Aske's Court purchase a greenhouse and provided a tree for the small roundabout in Red Tree Orchard.

It is worth saying that your council is lucky to have four excellent officers – Ani, our clerk, Paula, our deputy clerk and our two stewards Peter and Rob. They are the beating heart of your council and



ensure that things run smoothly.

As always, your parish council is there to serve you. If there is something you think we should be doing, please let us know. Monthly parish council meetings are open to the public and you are welcome to come along to put your point of view.

**Malcolm Wiffen, Chair**

## Clerk's Annual Report

### Welcome

Welcome to the Clerk's annual report. I hope you will enjoy reading it and finding out what the Parish Council has been up to in the past year. In this report we will look back at some of the highlights of the year and celebrate the Parish Council's achievements. Before dwelling into it in more detail, I'd like to start the report with a review of the council and council's team.

### The Council

In May residents took to the polls to cast their votes at the local elections. This was the first time that voters had to present a photographic ID before being able to vote. The Parish Council is made up of 11 elected members. At the time of the election 9 councillors were re-elected unopposed, leaving two vacant seats on the council. Those seats were filled by co-option at the May meeting and we welcomed Cllrs Steve Herring and Matthew Peach as new members.

### The team

The Parish Council employs a small team to carry out its services and statutory duties and to maintain the local area and amenities. Currently the Clerk, Deputy Clerk and two Parish Stewards make up the team. For a brief period, a Youth Worker joined the team, but after a short time it was felt that the role did not fulfill the council's objectives and decided to terminate it. The funds allocated for the Youth Worker role have been relocated to fund the employment of the Education Team at Singleton Environment Centre. This allows the council to support varied activities across all age groups.

Since last year's annual report Kent Police has reshaped the way they are policing, abolishing PCSO roles and replacing them with police officers on the 'beat'\*. This model has only just started, and we have yet to see if it is effective. This new way of policing means that the Parish Council no longer has a dedicated PCSO but a police officer instead. I would like to thank PCSO Catherine Stevens for all her hard work in the past years and supporting our residents and the many community events held by the Parish Council.

\*Although this implies neighbourhood foot patrols, officers will be mobile.

### Improvements around the parish

The Parish Council is responsible for Cuckoo Park, Great Chart Play Park, The Viewing Point, and several small street furniture including benches and dog poo bag dispensers in the parish. Over the past year the Parish Stewards have been working hard maintaining the play areas, including painting the benches, and treating wooden structures to increase their longevity. In addition, on several occasions the team repaired noticeboards which had been vandalised and required parts to be replaced.

Cuckoo Park has undergone a major improvement and the surface under the new outdoor



gym equipment has been replaced. The basketball/five-a-side area has benefitted from the installation of an all-weather playing surface so ball games can be played on it all year round. In addition, the Parish Council has installed a bike rack and a scooter pod so visitors can safely secure their scooters and bikes.

As a continued ambition to improve the biodiversity in the parish the Parish Council works with partners including The Bumblebee Conservation Trust who drew up a management plan and identified potential sites for 'meadow' areas in the parish. As part of this plan and with the help of Ashford Borough Council two areas were identified and designated as 'meadow' areas. These areas are cut just once, at the end of the season, with all the cuttings collected and removed. To enhance the areas the Parish Stewards have sown Yellow Rattle in one area and a wildflower mix in the other. The Yellow Rattle has been well established and thrived during the growing season. The meadow area patch will require more seeding to establish.

To support the meadows the Parish Council have installed planters around the parish, with bee friendly plants. The planters bring colours and supports the pollinators as well.

Continuing on a similar theme, the Parish Council was pleased to support the expansion of the allotments at Great Chart. With the support of grants new fencing has been erected around the allotment area and an addition of 8 plots created. This helped to reduce the ever-growing waiting list. A new committee has taken on the responsibility of managing and overseeing the allotments and has had an excellent start. The Parish Council continues to be involved by supporting the committees' work and carrying out the plot inspection.

In response to the cost of living crisis the parish council helped to fund the Warm Room during the winter at Lily's Café in Singleton Village Hall. The additional funding meant that Lily's were able to offer a Pay as You Feel service, helping those in financial hardship to have a hot drink and keep warm during the cold period.

The Parish Council also set up a Community Fridge, which is in the hall area of Singleton Village Hall new extension. The project's aim is twofold, one is to help reduce food waste, the second is to help people to access food. The Fridge has been running since March and the council has received positive feedback.

The number of Community Heroes who help keep the parish area clean and litter free is growing steadily. The Parish Council is pleased to support residents who wish to give back to the community.

After a long process the path without a name between Harvest Way and Butt Field Road has been named the Platinum Jubilee Walk to mark the Queen's special year. A small unveiling ceremony took place followed by drinks at Lily's café.

As a result of a successful design competition the Parish Council's new bookstop is now boosting with a colorful design. The bookstop can be found on Kirk View and is an excellent addition to the parish. A small unveiling ceremony took place with the design winner present.

### **Community engagement events**

Community engagement events are an integral part of the Parish Council's role. It gives the

council an opportunity to learn more about the community and their needs/wants, helping the council to shape the services they offer. It also allows the council to bring people together, forging a cohesive community.

Bike theft is still an issue, to tackle this the Parish Council organise regular bike marking events; residents can bring their bicycle and have it security marked.

The Pop-Up Café is a monthly event for residents to enjoy a slice of homemade cake along with a nice cup of tea! The Pop-Up Café is in its fourth year now. The event is not just a social occasion but an information hub where residents can find out about local services available to them. We have introduced a double session to reach out to a wider audience and to ensure residents in Singleton also have the opportunity to access information. As part of this initiative the second session is being held at Lily's Café, to encourage attendance we have started to introduce craft activities, these proved to be highly popular. I would like to take this opportunity and thank everyone who supported this wonderful project, including parish councillors and Singleton Environment Centre for providing delicious cakes for each event.

We have seen the return, due to popular demand, of the Halloween Scarecrow Trail. This event gives residents the opportunity to create and display a Halloween Scarecrow for the community to enjoy. A trail links the scarecrows, and residents can follow and vote for their favourite. The winner receives a small prize!

To encourage residents to explore the parish, we introduced seasonal photo competitions. Entries are invited to showcase the parish in its many beauties. After a public vote, the winning photo is then displayed at Singleton Environment Centre as a reward.

The Parish Council in conjunction with Singleton Environment Centre held two activity days. Residents can take part in fun craft activities and enjoy a free barbeque provided by the Parish Council. Flora the Singleton Giant is a regular attendee at those events.

The Big Lunch event at Great Chart Playing Fields was held for the second year. Lessons were learned and we made this event even bigger and better. Apart from the bouncy castle for kids, we had more stalls, performances and activities for the children. We had an inflatable pub too, serving soft and alcoholic beverages and ice cream on site. Thanks to the quick thinking of the councillors BBQ was also available on the day. Would like to thank Paula, our Deputy Clerk for organising yet another fantastic event and to all the councillors and volunteers who helped on the day.

### **Thank you.**

I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council for their hard work during the past year. Every Councillor brings different skills and qualities that help 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**









# SINGLETON COMMUNITY FRIDGE



Provided by  
Great Chart with  
Singleton Parish Council



## LILY'S SINGLETON WARM ROOM



## Great Chart Village Hall

It is pleasing to be able to report that the hall is back in full swing with many regular hirers returning to the hall for their meetings and social activities. The kitchen has proved to be very popular with hirers requiring catering facilities for weekend party bookings, helping to maintain and increase the number of weekend bookings. This has had a beneficial effect of allowing the trustees to maintain very reasonable hiring fees for local community groups using the hall.

During the course of the year the trustees were busy tackling maintenance and updating tasks to ensure the hall was welcoming for all users. The boundary fence on the car park side of the hall was in a poor, sad state and after several quotes we have had it replaced with a good picket fence, making it secure for children's activities/parties. The old florescent lighting in the main hall was replaced with more efficient LED lighting.

The major task and expenditure has been a new fireproof front stage curtain as the existing curtain, which has been repaired several times, was starting to disintegrate. We also took the opportunity to replace the main and secondary stage curtain tracks which had become worn and prone to jamming. The secondary curtains were washed and fireproofed to bring them up to standard.



Another expensive project was to have the hall floor renovated again as it appeared to be suffering from dampness. On investigation it would appear to be a combination of trapped moisture aggravated by the use of a cleaning/antibac solution being used during the pandemic. The surface was stripped back and wax finish applied that will allow the wood to breath and be cleaned with a special product to maintain its appearance, though this may require more maintenance with a recoating once a year.

The finances are looking secure, so we are starting to be able to build up some reserves. As with any old building repairs tend to be more expensive to rectify. Though we are in the process of purchasing a large notice board to meet the needs of groups using the hall to display their work.

I would like thank my fellow Trustees, the parish council and ABC, along with the local community for their continued support to allow this Great Chart Village Hall to be so successful.

**Paul Tate**  
**Chairman GCVH**

## Great Chart Playing Fields Association

The PFA is a Group of Trustees that manage the large playing field & pavilion along the Ashford Road in Great Chart and the small field at the end of Singleton Road, also in Great Chart. In total there are 11.5 acres of Green land that will remain for the use of the Parish all the time the Trust keeps going.

In the last year there have been some significant changes of the make up of the PFA Trustees, at the recent AGM, two more Trustees have volunteered to join us from Pilgrims Football Club, Gavin the new Chair of Pilgrims and Anthony. Also from Pilgrims FC, Chris Hind remains a Trustee. To Balance this we still have Michael Hutton, whose garden backs on to the large field, also myself and the current Chair of the PC, Malcolm Wiffen. At the AGM I was elected as Chair, although this is my second period as a Trustee, I was Secretary & Treasurer last time, so it seems I have been promoted after 35 years!

I remembered the land was still in the names of the original two Trustees, who both passed away many, many years ago – we sought advice and our Solicitor advised that we should make the PC a Trustee, then the Land can be transferred over into the name of the PC, in order that this issue does not arise again – so last year the PC agreed to act as Custodian Trustee for the PFA and the land transfer is being sorted and hopefully should be complete shortly.

Paula stepped down as principal organiser behind the scenes, but she has agreed to see out a few hirers that will still have bookings for this year – so I must thank Paula very much for her hard work for the PFA.

Pilgrims FC have renewed their lease for another 3 years as this was the way it was set up to be done for the length of their renting the Field & Pavilion – it is hopes that by extending their existing lease possibly to 25 years will enable them to access many more grants for the ground and pavilion.

The PFA funds remain healthy. I have arranged to have the pavilion deep cleaned in readiness for the Summer, the damage caused to the roof last year has finally been fixed, at the second attempt and all the leaks have dried up, the whole joint that was an issue has been re-sealed in order to prevent such a leak happening again! But we will have to get the area redecorated before the Big Lunch in June – I hope we can do this!

We did have a break-in last year via the kitchen window, which was broken, every door in the place was broken by kicking it in and the net result of this was them getting away with absolutely NOTHING, but they did cut their hand thus leaving vital DNA behind which has enable the Police to catch up with the culprit – again many thanks to Paula's diligence!

Pilgrims have recently marked out 2 small pitches on the small field, and we will be putting up two sets of goals for this field shortly, to enable more youngsters from the Parish to play football with proper goals and not wear out the pitches on the large field.

Pilgrims also got some funding for a Public Defibrillator and this too will go on the outside of the pavilion once I have managed to get an electrician to sort out the security lights on the outside, so they are more of a deterrent and also costing us much less electricity usage.

I will leave Pilgrims to update everyone on their changes, but I must thank my fellow Trustees for their help and support over the last year and also to the Parish Council for the financial support and for giving Paula time to organise things and I look forward to creating a better working partnership with all of us and what seems to be an exciting year ahead.

**Ian McClintock**

**Chair – Great Chart Playing Fields Association**

## **Toke and Streeters Almshouse Charity - Chairman's Report 07/2023**

There are not any current reports of issues from our tenants and they seem to have been happy since our last AGM.

The Trust has paid for a structural engineer to review the cracks in the porch area of No 3. The recommendation was to remove the hedge adjoining the field entrance. The work to remove the hedge has now been undertaken and a new fence installed. I would like to thank Paul Tate and Tony Tolhurst for their assistance in arranging quotations and the actual works. They also assisted me in installing a temporary fence to keep any livestock contained within the field whilst the works were ongoing.

I have since taken some scrap metal from the field along with 8 bags of rubble, to the council refuse facility. The council charged us £40 for the privilege.

The window at the rear of No 3 has been assessed again following the remedial work undertaken by Barry in No 2. It was felt that Barry made a good job of this and that no further action is currently required.

Following a discussion with Alan from No 1, Bill, the chap cutting the grass, he has decided to quit the role. We have not received any formal notification of this. Bill had refused to use a strimmer on the long grass. His justification was that he was only allowed 2 hours per week to undertake the work. The role of cutting the grass has now been taken on by Barry in No 2. I have advised Barry that we would pay extra hours to get the gardens back into a semblance of order. I had previously given the same offer to Bill but he clearly did not want to continue the work.

We have been unsuccessful in obtaining a copy of the key for No 3. I would have thought that the Church would need these type of keys for their own buildings but as yet we do not have a tradesperson to undertake this.

A water leak was reported by Sue in No 3 from the roof at the back of the property. On inspection this appears to have stopped so no further action at this time.

The field continues to be rented and we have seen both a pony and sheep in the fields. The sheep were removed last week to be shorn. They should be making a return appearance soon. The hedges to the field still need to be cut. The water supply to the field has finally been cut. The water company were rather petty in actually removing the stop cock in the pavement but then they have paid for this work. We finally are not receiving any bills from them.

I would like to thank the Trustees for their work since our last AGM and hope that they will all continue in their roles.

**Garry Perry**  
**Chair**

## **Friends of Singleton Lake**

Friends of Singleton Lake (FOSL)

Report to Annual Meeting of the Electors 22 May 2023

FOSL has not run the type of public events it had in the years prior to the Covid pandemic. Members have continued with the monitoring and reporting role and individual litter picking sessions.

With other organisations, FOSL was a consultee when Ashford Borough Council (ABC) re-visited the Public

Space Protection Order (PSPO). We are delighted that the PSPO has been extended for a further three years from 31 March 2023. Residents are asked to be vigilant and report incidents which contravene the PSPO to the Police. Details of the Singleton Lake PSPO may be found at

<https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/x44fxvmy/psps0-2-of-2023-singleton-lake.pdf>

It has been noted that the water-bird population has become reduced and this may be related to avian flu. The photo records of Paul Stone on Facebook show the diversity of wildlife on and around the lake.

A planned walkabout with an ABC / Aspire officer and Bill Barrett, Borough Councillor, was postponed due to ill-health but will be re-arranged.

FOSL plans to be represented with a table at the PC's Big Lunch on 17 June.

**Angus Willson**  
**Secretary, FOSL**

## **1<sup>st</sup> Singleton Scout Group**

The group continues to thrive and alongside the Beavers and Cubs sections there is now a newly formed Scout Troop. Numbers of young people remain steady with a group of committed leaders and supportive parents.

Over the year the young people have gained a wide variety of badges from artist to water sports, camp craft to navigator. Many beavers and cubs have achieved their bronze and silver awards which is the highest achievement for their section.

As well as attending weekly meetings the young people have been to the snow rings at Folkestone, canoeing at Conningbrooke and camping. Beavers took part in the district activity day, advent service, coastal chaos at Samphire Hoe, Brookhill park activities and Mediaeval Madness. Cubs camped with District at Godinton and the sixers/seconders spent a night learning all the basic skills and cooking their own meals. Scouts and Cubs joined Willesborough for the cardboard sleepout and raised funds to support Porchlight. The group attended the Community picnic and encouraged people to get security markings for their bikes.

We have welcomed various visitors to our meetings both human and animal. Money was raised for the Guide Dog Association when a guide dog and their owner spoke to the young people. The Thorne Hedgehog Sanctuary came with some rescue hogs and left with donated cat food from the group. Traffic officers visited talking about road safety and the local museum curator enthused the Scouts on Ashford's local history. Beavers and Cubs were joined on a walk around Newtown by the Tales from the Tracks who took them back to life in Victorian times.

Our young people have been encouraged to look after the local area by completing litter picks and as a group we aim to become more involved within the community over the coming years.

Looking forward the group will continue to provide our young people with a range of experiences, skills and memories. We provide opportunities for adventures, making friends, helping others and becoming independent young people.

We would like to thank John Wesley school for their continued support and the wider community. If anyone feels they can help in any way or would like to find out more about the group please contact us. We always welcome new members, volunteers and support with fund raising.

## Great Chart Cubs

We have had another very busy year at 1st Great Chart Cubs. In the summer term of 2022, the Cubs painted pebbles to help Great Chart Church raise funds for their new footpath, did their Athletics badge at Great Chart Playing Fields, visited the Singleton Environment Centre to do den building and a scavenger hunt, made photo frames to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee and went to Lower Grange Farm (LGF) to do their Naturalist badge.

In the Autumn term the Cubs returned to LGF to do the cave bus and pedal karting, learnt how to prepare for a hike, use a compass and do simple map reading before going on a hike to earn their Navigator badge, did a variety of activities to earn their Astronomer and Artist badges, learnt to make and use ballistas and enjoyed a board games night. We also did a 'dark walk' taking the Cubs through local woodlands in the dark and getting them to note the differences between woodlands on a summer day and woodlands on a winter's night. We then played wide games in the dark by torchlight.

As every year, we took part in the Remembrance Sunday parade and service at Great Chart Church. We also took part in the Porchlight Sleepout at the SEC. This involved Cubs spending a night sleeping outdoors in cardboard boxes to raise money for the homelessness charity. Thankfully the weather was kind to us and we only had a few spots of rain early in the evening! The Cubs raised over £300! The Autumn term was rounded off with an evening of activities related to firework night, a challenge night and a Christmas party.

The spring term was dominated by the Cubs practising and then performing a play about fair trade to parents and other members of the public. They did so incredibly well in their performance, combining it with a cake sale which raised over £40 for the Fairtrade Association.

Other meets we celebrated Chinese New Year, did the Personal Safety badge, had a construction challenges night and an Easter party. The Cubs also made 4 wooden bird boxes as part of their DIY badge. We are very grateful to the Parish stewards for putting these up for us and to an anonymous donor who gave us a very generous donation towards the cost of the boxes. Thank you.

We returned to LGF to do a climbing session which the Cubs loved and where they impressed the leaders with their courage and agility.

A highlight of the spring term was a hike through Bethersden, following tracking signs left by local Scouts, followed by wide games on Bethersden Green and then songs around a campfire back at the Scout hut. This term we started with a visit from the hedgehog lady – Lisa Steward – which the Cubs absolutely loved. We are very grateful to Lisa for giving up her time. The Cubs are keen to raise funds for this project and are thinking about ways to do this. They also made posters to inform the public of the importance of hedgehogs and ways to help them which you will see around the parish on the noticeboards.

Saint George's day fell on a Sunday this year and so we decided to revive our flag parade and attendance at Singleton Community Church. The event was well attended by Cubs who formed a very orderly and impressive parade through Singleton and then took part in the service by doing the readings and prayers, acting parts of the St George story and renewing the Cub Scout promise. We are grateful to Singleton Community Church for accommodating us.

On 5th May we held our own coronation party and last week the Cubs did their air activities badge, designing and making paper aeroplanes and seeing whose flew the furthest. They also designed and made flying machines out of junk which were fantastic - literally letting their imaginations take flight! Other plans for this term include doing the Road Safety badge, Athletics badge, a football night, the 2nd stage of the Navigator badge, a woodland walk with Jenny Tippen through the Millennium Wood, and backwoods cooking at Woodchurch. This weekend we are going to Conningbrook Lakes to do water sports and we are desperately trying to organise a camp for the end of the summer term.

None of what we do would be possible without the fantastic team of volunteers who give up so much of their time to plan and deliver these activities. To all my leaders, and to all those who support us through their committee roles, thank you.

We are also very grateful to the village hall who have agreed to put up a new noticeboard for us and a flag pole which will stop me having to use my rusty netball skills throwing the flag over a pole each week! When the pc receives a grant application, they always ask how many people a project will benefit. The answer for Cubs is just 24. However, I cannot even begin to describe the positive impact those 24 children derive from Scouting.

We are currently full as a pack and we have a fairly long waiting list but we are always willing to add children to it and will do our best to accommodate them. Equally, if anyone thinks they might want to join us as an adult volunteer, we are always looking for new leaders.

## Great Chart Primary School

Great Chart Primary School had a busy year and some special events to celebrate. The foundation for the school was laid in 1991 and opened on the 15th of March 1993 by Mrs. Janet Court, Vice Chair of the Education Committee at the time. To remember the special occasion, a time capsule was placed in the wall. The school has set up a School Council to demonstrate what a democratic community is and to help children build their confidence and learn responsibility. In addition, encouraged to play an active role as a citizen by being part of the decision making process. It also allows them to learn about differences between people and helps them to have a voice and share their opinions. The Council has developed a questionnaire to gather information and listen to pupils' ideas. The results were analysed, and an action plan was drawn up. As a result, there is a noticeboard to provide information.

Children from Year 5 worked on a Local Environment Project with Sustrans. As part of this project, they talked about their local area and journey to school. Learnt about lichens and their importance to understanding air quality, and litter picked collecting sacks of rubbish. Improving the local area is everyone's responsibility, and can be done by putting litter in the bin and encouraging others to do the same, thinking about walking, cycling or scooting to school.

## Bean Fund

The Bean Fund is quite an old charity, set up by the Bean family many years ago, for the benefit of Retired Agricultural Workers, when I first became a Trustee there were 9 recipients, but we are down to only two now, with another being added since January this year.

The Trustees are all Ex-officio by way of the Office they hold – they are:

The Chair of Kingsnorth Parish Council  
The Chair of Great Chart with Singleton PC  
The Mayor of Ashford  
Vicar of Kingsnorth  
Rector of Great Chart  
Vicar of Ashford  
Representative of the local NFU branch

The PC has left me in as the Trustee as I am a signatory on the bank account and it was thought it would be a waste of time changing the bank mandate for two years while I take a sabbatical. We rarely get an attendee from the NFU and the Mayor was busy on the date of our meeting and the Church centralising everything into one parish has just confused things a bit – but we manage to keep going, just!

The Trustees meet annually, usually in October, to decide on the dividend to pay out to our beneficiaries and they get a cheque in readiness for Christmas every year.

The Trustee's are not allowed to touch the capital investment, most of which is shares in the COIF Charities Investment Fund, we are only able to spend any interest on these shares. Last October, because of the rise in Interest Rates over the year we were able to pay a dividend of £250 to both of our beneficiaries.

I would like to thank the Trustees that turned up to the meeting last October, but most of all I need to thank our Clerk to the Bean Fund, Mrs Gill Tate who keeps the finances and the Charity on the straight and narrow!

**Ian McClintock**  
**Chair – Bean Fund Charity Trust**

## **The Repair Café**

The Repair Café ethos is to help reduce emissions and stop items from going to landfill. We also return often, much loved items back to their owners in working order and looking much better!

We continue to be successful, taking in over 400 items in the last year, repairing roughly 80% of them.

Most items are still electrical, but this year we have had more broken ceramics, a few dolls and toys, garden tools, clocks and furniture. We are currently repairing a full size ceramic dog with a broken paw. The most satisfying repair of the year was a wind-up gramophone.

We have been in contact with several other people interested in setting up their own Repair Cafes. We have also visited Canterbury Repair Café, to share skills, especially in repairing ceramics, and in how to run an outreach Café, something we are considering as an occasional event when asked.

We are fortunate enough to have enough volunteers still, who have a wide range of skills between them. New members have joined when others have left or moved away. We meet two full days a week for repairing, although members of the public are encouraged to come on Wednesday afternoon to drop items off and collect them. 20 volunteers over the two days in the last year.

Our volunteers continue to learn and share new skills, including, how to fit arms and legs back on to a doll, repairing a stool with woven seat and repairing clocks. Our most useful tool is YouTube - we learn a lot from watching others online.

As well as repairing items, it is good to socialise with like-minded people, whilst having fun with tea and biscuits. Donations of biscuits are always welcome.

**Len Chittenden**  
**Repair Café Ashford**

## **Singleton Environment Centre**

Singleton Spaces completed five years in March this year and started to see significant improvement now the effects of COVID have diminished. The biggest change has seen the introduction of Helen King, our Educational Officer, increasing engagement with schools.

We also have in the making a project to provide Carbon Literacy commercially, to appeal to businesses, and offer them the opportunity for sponsorship. At the centre this year we have been fortunate enough to be the subject of the Mayor of Ashford's charity and this has been of significant benefit to the centre. We are yet to learn what the result will be (in terms of funds raised), but some of the events we have held will become a regular feature of our calendar.



As part of working towards being sustainable the lighting has been changed to LED and the pathway lighting has been renewed. This project has been achieved by working together with Ashford Borough Council with the support of Cllr Bill Barrett.



**Malcolm Wiffen**  
**Chair, Singleton Spaces**

## Flora the Singleton Giant

Flora the largest member of the parish and is a traditionally built, wicker framed giant. Over the last year Flora has been slowly getting around more and has attended many events in support of the Parish Council. With highlights being the PC's Big Lunch.

Unfortunately, she did not get the opportunity to travel back in time to the age of chivalry and knights due to the annual event being cancelled but hopes to visit it again.

With the support of the Parish Council, Flora, can attend many local events held in and around the parish. As always if anyone wishes to help with flora then please get in touch with us.

You can find her on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/Florathegiant>  
Or visit her website at [www.singletongiant.org.uk](http://www.singletongiant.org.uk)



**Peter Barker**  
**Chair – Flora the Singleton Giant Association**

## Finance Report

### Finance Officer's Report

The Parish Council has carried out major improvements to Cuckoo Park, replacing the old outdoor gym, the surface underneath it as well as installing a new surface under the basketball area, making it accessible all year around. As part of the upgrade the council added bicycle and scooter racks to allow visitors to store their bikes/scooters securely. The funds covering the improvements came from the Earmarked reserves allocated to maintain Cuckoo Park.

In the past year the council has increased the number of events and activities provided for the residents, and as such a new budget line has been added to allow funding for those events.

To support our residents the parish council approved the purchase of a commercial fridge and a cupboard to create a hub where people can access free fresh and ambient food, and toiletries. The project was set up by the Stronger Communities Committee and led by the Deputy Clerk. We hope the project will continue to grow.

The Parish Council is working in partnership with Singleton Environment Centre to engage with the younger residents of the parish. As part of this the Parish Council agreed to fund the education team and allocated £18k for this purpose.

The Parish Council continues to provide financial support to several local organisations and the established grants application process 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

Given the very minor nature of the comments above, I am, once again, happy to confirm that in my view the council is being well run, and that the accounts present a true and fair picture of the council's affairs and year-end situation. I have therefore signed the AGAR Internal Audit report.

Yours sincerely,

**Mike Cuerden**

**Independent Internal Auditor**

## Grants Allocated in 2022-2023

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

Grant towards seed packs- Singleton Environment Centre	£	250.00
Grant- venue hire- Singleton WI	£	825.00
Grant to United Church	£	250.00
Grant towards insurance- Flora The Singleton Giant	£	800.00
Grant towards warm room- Lily's Café at Singleton	£	4,800.00
Parish Council grant-	£	825.00
Grant for line marker- Great Chart Cricket Club	£	250.00
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£8,000.00</b>

## Earmarked and Reserved Funds

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

Account	Opening Balance	Expenditure	Closing Balance
Contingency Reserves	35,000.00	70,000.00	105,000.00
EMR - Cuckoo Park	194,060.00	-75,060.13	118,999.87
EMR - The Viewing Point	42,332.00	-9,197.00	33135.00
EMR-PFA Play Park	20,000.00		20,000.00
Yellow Land Play Equipment	20,000.00	-2,000.00	18,000.00
Parish Office	10,000.00	5,000.00	15,000.00
	<b>321,392.00</b>	<b>-11,257.13</b>	<b>310,134.87</b>

The Finance Committee regularly reviews the budget and the Parish Council's finances to ensure spending is within the agreed budget line and reallocate funds if necessary to balance budget lines. As part of this process the Finance Committee recommended increasing the Contingency reserves to reflect the growth of the Parish Council.

Cuckoo Park 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' fund refers to monies designated for the maintenance of The Viewpoint and land to the rear of Singleton Village Hall.

As the Parish Council continues to grow so does the need for more office space. It is the council's ambition to build a purpose built building with more office space, a meeting room and a community space for residents. The Parish Office reserves will help support this ambition.

## Year-end Accounts

A copy of the year-end accounts for 2022-2023 will be posted to our website: [www.greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk](http://www.greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk)

An income and expenditure summary follows here:

### Income and Expenditure

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Income and Expenditure Account for Year		
31st March 2022		31st March 2023
	<b>Income Summary</b>	
265,938	Precept	299,738
<b>265,938</b>	Sub Total	<b>299,738</b>
	Operating Income	
11,113	Income	17,233
<b>277,051</b>	Total Income	<b>316,971</b>
	Running Costs	
114,126	Administration	159,748
7,883	Caretaker	6,002
9,745	Maintenance	115,865
16,811	Projects	33,542
5,122	PFA	3,006
30,351	Singleton Environment Centre	10,000
<b>184,039</b>	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>328,164</b>
	<b>General Fund Analysis</b>	
114,463	Opening Balance	207,476
277,051	Plus : Income for Year	316,971
391,514		524,447
184,039	Less : Expenditure for Year	328,164
207,476		196,283
0	Transfers TO / FROM Reserves	(11,257)
<b>207,476</b>	<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>207,540</b>
<b>Ended 31st March 2023</b>		

# BUDGET 2022-23

## Headlines from the budget

The precept is the total amount requested each year from Ashford Borough Council for the 6801 residents counted in the Parish at the last census.

### Precept

£299,738 ↑  
up by  
£33.8K



Covers salaries for the Clerk, Deputy, Youth Worker, and some additional hours for our Stewards who make such a difference out and about and are also hoping to work on some new environmental projects

### Staff Salaries

£120K  
up by ↑  
£15K



### Play Park Reserves

£24.3K  
↑ up by  
£0.9K



This amount is 'reserved' each year to reduce the need to increase precepts when park equipment needs replacing. There will be significant work taking place at Cuckoo Park next year - watch this space for updates!

### Newsletter

£8K  
up by ↑  
4.5K



Our newsletter remains a favourite way for many residents to receive updates from us. As Chilmington grows, new homes are added to our distribution list every issue, which increases printing and delivery costs.

Previously purchased grounds maintenance equipment, and the end of a previous contract, means that grass cutting on parish land is now all carried out in house.

### Maintenance Costs

£2.5K  
↓ down by  
£1.7K



Over the last few years we have instigated a number of new environmental projects. These have been well received and with Climate Change firmly on the agenda, we want to build on what we have successfully started. *Think Global, Act Local*

### Projects

£10K  
↑ up by  
£5K



### Events

£2.5K  
↑



We have hosted a number of events recently, all of which have been well attended and received. We plan to host more in the future, so we created a budget line to prepare for them - including the Platinum Jubilee celebrations in June.

### Defibs

£500  
down by ↓  
£1.5K




By the time the next financial year starts, there will be 4 defibrillators installed across the parish. This means the budget line has reduced to just maintenance costs, such as replacement pads and batteries.

## Bank Reconciliation

	Metro Bank Current Account	15,533.21	
	Metro Bank Instant Access	120,799.54	
	Metro Bank Credit Card 6934	-148.64	
	Metro Bank Credit Card 8589	-226.85	
	NatWest Current	100	
	NatWest Reserve Account	179,294.74	
	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed	178,175.28	
			<b>493,527.28</b>
<b>All Cash &amp; Bank Accounts</b>			
1	Metro Bank Current Account		15,533.21
2	Metro Bank Instant Access		120,799.54
3	Metro Bank Credit Card		-375.49
4	NatWest Current Account		100
5	NatWest Reserve Account		179,294.74
6	Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed		178,175.28
	Other Cash & Bank Balances		100
	<b>Total Cash &amp; Bank Balances</b>		<b>493,527.28</b>

# Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council Members

## Contacts




Chilmington Ward	
Cllr Ian McClintock	Tel: 07919 278828
	Email: <a href="mailto:ian.mcclintock@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">ian.mcclintock@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance Committee</li><li>• Great Chart Playing Fields Association (Chair)</li><li>• Planning Committee</li><li>• Singleton Spaces</li><li>• Complaints Committee</li><li>• Staffing Committee</li></ul>


Great Chart with Singleton North Ward	
Cllr Paul Tate	Tel: 07850 082023
	Email: <a href="mailto:paul.tate@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">paul.tate@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance Committee</li><li>• Great Chart Village Hall – Chair</li><li>• Toke and Streeter Alms Houses Trust</li></ul>

Singleton East Ward	
Cllr Dave Gathern	Tel: 01233 616923
	Email: <a href="mailto:dave.gathern@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">dave.gathern@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environment Committee</li></ul>


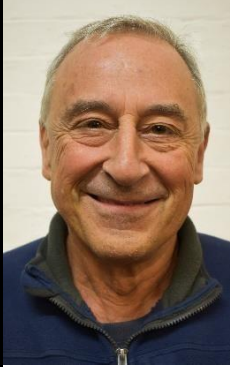




## Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council Members

<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> <p>Vice Chair of the Parish Council also member of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staffing Committee</li><li>• Chilmington Green Planning Working Group</li><li>• Stronger Communities</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>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 Katrina Alexander</p> 	<p>Email: <a href="mailto:katrina.alexander@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">katrina.alexander@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staffing Committee</li><li>• Stronger Communities – Co-chair</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> <p>Vice chair of the Parish Council also member of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance Committee</li><li>• Environment Committee (Chair)</li><li>• Chilmington Green Planning Working Group</li></ul>

## Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council Members

<p>Cllr Yolanda Barker</p> 	<p>Tel: 01233 610241</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:yolanda.barker@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">yolanda.barker@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Vice chair of the parish council also member of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staffing Committee</li><li>• Chilmington Green Planning Working Group – Chair</li><li>• Complaints Committee</li><li>• Stronger Communities – Co-chair</li></ul>
<p>Cllr Geoff Darvill</p> 	<p>Tel: 01233 642357</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:geoffrey.darvill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">geoffrey.darvill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Finance Committee (Chair)</li><li>• Singleton Village Hall – Chair</li><li>• Complaints Committee</li></ul>
<p>Cllr Sally Gathern</p> 	<p>Tel: 07815 803862</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:sally.gathern@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">sally.gathern@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Amenities and Open Spaces Committee - Chair</li><li>• Complaints Committee</li></ul>
<b>Washford Ward</b>	
<p>Cllr Thomas Ackrill</p> 	<p>Tel: 07780 470668</p> <p>Email: <a href="mailto:thomas.ackrill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk">thomas.ackrill@greatchartsingleton-pc.gov.uk</a></p>

## Parish Council Staff and Contact details

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

## List of Partners

Ashford Borough Council  
Aspire  
Kent County Council  
Kent Police  
Singleton Environment Centre  
Singleton Spaces  
The Bumblebee Conservation Trust  
Great Chart Village Hall  
Singleton Village Hall  
Great Chart Playing Fields  
Ashford Community Woodland  
Pilgrims Football Club  
Chilmington CMO  
Flora The Singleton Giant  
Great Chart Primary School  
John Wesley Primary School  
The Wyvern School  
Biffa  
Ashford Volunteer Centre  
Godinton and Great Chart WI  
Singleton WI  
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 with St Francis Church, Cryol Road