



GREAT CHART
with **SINGLETON**
Parish Council

Parish Office,
Singleton Village Hall,
Hoxton Close,
Ashford,
Kent, TN23 5LB

Kent County Council
County Hall
Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ

14th May 2025

Dear Haroona Chughtai and Christine McInnes,

Subject: Urgent Action Required to Ensure Safe Walking and Cycling Access to Chilmington Secondary School

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council (GCWSPC) wishes once again to raise with Kent County Council (KCC) the increasingly urgent issue regarding the lack of safe walking and cycling routes to the newly constructed Chilmington Secondary School.

As you may be aware, this Council has previously corresponded with KCC in relation to the inadequate access to Chilmington Green Primary School. While there have been some improvements, progress remains slow due to the ongoing development in the area. Of particular concern is that the primary access for children not residing within the development continues to be via Mock Lane — a single-track, partly national-speed-limit road frequently used by HGVs serving the nearby quarry.

However, of even greater concern now is the lack of safe access to Chilmington Secondary School. As has been previously highlighted, a secondary school serves a wider catchment and naturally attracts older children who are more likely to travel independently and from further afield.

In your most recent correspondence to this Council, dated July 2023, several proposals were made to ensure safe access would be in place in time for the school's opening. Regrettably, the expected pace of the Chilmington development has not materialised, and the supporting infrastructure—particularly footpaths and cycleways—has not been delivered. Additionally, the ongoing Stodmarsh issue has continued to delay planning permissions in the area. Although progress is being made on the Wastewater Treatment Works, this will not be operational in time for the school's full opening in September 2025, and key applications such as Parcel K (21/02248/AS) remain undecided.

As of May 2025, students offered places at the school are being informed that it will be fully operational from September. Yet, there are still no accessible footpaths, no safe cycling routes, and no public transport options serving the site from surrounding areas.

This situation leaves students—many of them unaccompanied 11–14-year-olds—facing extremely unsafe journeys to school via:

- Mock Lane, Bartletts Lane, and Chilmington Green Lane: all single-track country roads, lacking footpaths, with limited visibility and 60mph speed limits.
- Chilmington Green Road: similarly hazardous with no footpath, poor surface conditions due to

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construction traffic, and flanked by deep ditches.

- The A28: fast-moving and heavily trafficked, especially at peak times.
- Routes through Great Chart village: the village footpath ends short of the school and students are left to cross the A28 without any pedestrian crossing facilities.
- Public Rights of Way from Coleman's Kitchen Wood: likely to be unsuitable during winter and unable to offer a safe crossing over Chilmington Green Road.
- Open fields awaiting development: while not intended for pedestrian use, they may be used by children seeking to avoid dangerous roads.

By the criteria set out in Annex 5 of the [Transport Policy for Children and Young People aged 4–16](#), these routes are clearly hazardous. The Parish Council strongly believes that until safe infrastructure is in place, free home-to-school transport should be provided for all students within walking distance of the school.

While we understand that the immediate vicinity of the school is currently classed as hazardous—and that eligible students will receive transport on that basis—this does not address the situation for those who are technically closer to other schools, such as the John Wallis Academy, yet are placed at Chilmington and cannot reach it safely on foot or by bicycle.

To address this situation, we request serious consideration of the following solutions:

- A dedicated student shuttle service running from Singleton Hill to Chilmington School, allowing those outside the immediate transport eligibility zone to complete their journeys safely.
- Creation of a footpath across the currently undetermined Parcel K land. This would provide a vital link between the De Montfort Park estate and the Hodson Development section of Chilmington, enabling students to travel safely through the estate towards Chilmington Green Road. Additionally, there is a parcel of land adjacent to Chilmington Green Road which houses the Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS). If a footpath could be constructed to connect Public Right of Way AW240 to Chilmington Green Road at this point, it would integrate with existing plans for a safe pedestrian crossing over Chilmington Green Road, providing direct and secure access to the school. This proposed route could also be designed to incorporate sections of National Cycle Route 18, further enhancing connectivity. The Parish Council believes this would be the most cost-effective and practical long-term solution, whilst actively supporting sustainable and healthy modes of travel for students.

The Parish Council requests a swift and detailed response outlining:

- The concrete actions that will be implemented between now and September 2025 to ensure safe access.
- What interim provisions (e.g. transport services) will be in place to protect students in the short term.
- A clear commitment from Kent County Council that resolving this issue is now a top priority.

We appreciate your attention to this matter of serious concern and look forward to your urgent reply.

Yours sincerely



Paula Cowperthwaite
Deputy Clerk
Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council