

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council



Ambition Plan 2024 – 2028

Introduction

Welcome to Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council's Ambition Plan for 2024 to 2028. This document sets out how, over the next four years, the Parish Council will continue to work for the benefit of the parish on issues that have been identified. The ambitions within the plan, shown as Appendix A, detail what is requested to address community needs. Delivering the actions will mean improvements to the quality of life for residents.

Aims

The aim of the Ambition Plan is to give residents a clear understanding of what the Parish Council is trying to achieve and how it intends to deliver this. It details the Parish Council's values, objectives and key priorities for the next four years.

Monitoring

This is a working document and evaluation of progress against the list of activities, which make up the Ambition Plan, will take place on a quarterly basis.

Review

The Ambition Plan will be reviewed annually, as part of the budget process, and be updated every four years to ensure that it continues to be relevant to residents and that the actions within it are reasonable, feasible and achievable.

Consultation

To ensure the Ambition Plan truly represents the current wishes of parish of Great Chart with Singleton, the residents will be invited to comment on the draft Ambition Plan document.

Wish List

Parish Councillors were invited to consider 'if money were no object' to enable creative thinking, with no preconceptions or limits. Their responses can be seen as Appendix B.

An Overview

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council is a statutory body and is the first tier of local government. It works towards improving community well being and providing better services at a local level. Our activities fall into three main categories: representing the local community; delivering services to meet local needs; striving to improve quality of life and community well being.

Through an extensive range of discretionary powers Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council can provide and maintain a variety of important and visible local services including allotments, commons and open spaces, community transport schemes, community safety and crime reduction measures, events and festivals, footpaths, leisure and sports facilities, litter bins, planning, street cleaning, traffic calming measures, and youth projects. These existing powers were recently strengthened by powers contained in the Localism Act including the extension of the General Power of Competence to eligible local councils.

Staff

The Parish Council employs a full time Parish Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer and a part time Deputy Clerk. There is also a part time Parish Steward and an Assistant Steward. The administration of the Parish Council is carried out by a qualified Parish Clerk who is appointed by the Parish Council. The Parish Clerk carries out the functions required as the Parish Council's Proper Officer and issues all statutory notifications.

Finance

The Parish Council is funded through a precept, which is a local tax levied by the Parish Council and collected on its behalf by Ashford Borough Council as part of the Council Tax bill. On average, £118.22 per year (Band D property) of residents' council tax (ie £2.27 per week) contributes to the Parish Council Precept (2024-25).

Financial Objectives

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council aims to be professional, competent, open and transparent in all it does and to ensure the sound financial management of the parish council's resources.

Areas of Responsibility

The Parish Council is responsible for:

- The provision of allotments at Hillcrest
- The provision of community grants
- Submitting comments on all planning applications
- The management and maintenance of the Viewpoint behind Singleton Village Hall
- The maintenance of the raised flowerbed on Singleton Hill
- Representing the residents with regards to Singleton Lake and to act as the eyes and ears of the community and to liaise with other members of the Steering Group for the benefit of the residents and the lake.
- The management and maintenance of Cuckoo Park
- The management and maintenance of the outdoor gym in Great Chart
- Leaseholder at Singleton Environment Centre
- Maintenance of both the Great Chart and the Singleton village signs
- Representation on numerous charity trusts and organisations such as Singleton Spaces, Great Chart Playing Fields, Singleton Village Hall and Great Chart Village Hall, some ex-officio via the Parish Council Chair
- Maintaining the Parish Council office within Singleton Village Hall
- Custodian Trustee of the land on which Singleton Village Hall is built
- War Memorial Great Chart
- The Parish Council has representatives on the committees of the following charities:
 - Singleton Spaces
 - Singleton Village Hall
 - Great Chart Village Hall
 - Great Chart Playing Fields Association
 - Bean Fund (Ex-officio)
 - Kipper & Morecock Trust
 - Alms House Trust
 - The Great Chart War Memorial Trust (Ex-officio)
 - The Elizabeth Strouts & Barbara Garton Memorial Trust (Ex-officio)
 - Chilmington Management Organisation (Chilmington Green development is now part of Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council area)

APPENDIX A

Amenities and Open Spaces

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Work with and support the Friends of Singleton Lake	Ongoing		Taking part in activities	
Create a community garden area to grow an orchard, vegetables and herbs. To be tended by the community and for the community to use the produce.	Long term		Contact SEC to discuss existing provisions.	
Create a wildflower meadow or use verges along roadsides to encourage pollinators	Mid-term		Plant up appropriate areas that fall under Parish responsibility. Approach KCC about planting up road verges.	
Plant more trees around the Parish	Mid-term			
Install climbing/play equipment and replace vandalised benches on the Viewing Point.	Mid-term			
Speeding/parking issues in The Street to be reduced	Ongoing	£400	Traffic Survey to be carried out	Traffic Survey completed in October and results sent to KCC.
PC to become trustee of the Playing Fields	Short term		Become a trustee and landowner at next AGM.	
Install benches on Imperial Way green				
Install sports/youth equipment on Imperial Way green				
Improve sports equipment and play equipment provision at Cuckoo Park.	Long term			

Install more bike stands around the parish	Mid term			
Improve car park at Singleton Lake				
Sensory garden	Long term		Look at land between De Montford Park and Chilmington developments, or Cuckoo Park	
WiFi provision at GCVH and Buxford Pavilion	Short term			

Communication

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Improve communication outside of social media. Produce a useful parish newsletter and canvass for other communication ideas.	Short term Mid term		Conduct a survey in the next newsletter for content ideas. Canvass for ideas of other communication methods.	
Create a leaflet showing all open spaces and local walks in our parish for people to enjoy particularly between GC and Singleton				
Liaise with Chilmington CMO to provide local information for new residents	Short term		Include any leaflets produced, latest newsletter, latest Annual Report etc	
Better signposting of SEC, Village Halls and other popular areas of the parish.			Research signage options with KCC and the venues themselves. Also as part of the 'You Are Here' signs	

Maintain an email circulation list to notify of newsletters, road closures, important events etc	Short term			
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Community

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Organise regular community litter picks	Short term then ongoing			
Maintain a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	Ongoing			
Closer working with organisations within the parish				
Control car parking/ traffic flow outside of primary schools	Long term		Regular PCSO attendance. Speak to the schools directly.	
Gardening Club (shows, social, speakers)			Speak to SEC in the first instance	
Community Cinema			Look at licensing requirements	
Defibrillation user/awareness training			Look at providers	
More speed watch	Ongoing		Continue to use SID around the parish and analyse data	
Parish Council Awards - to celebrate local people	Mid term			
Provide 'You Are Here' signs around the Parish	Mid term			
Subsidise craft workshops at SEC	Short term			

Events

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Organise an Annual Big Lunch – include an intergenerational project (WI/Scouts)	Mid-term then ongoing	£2000		

Regular boot fairs at Great Chart Playing Fields	Mid-term then ongoing		Find volunteers	
Support an environmental day at SEC	Mid-term then ongoing		Promote the day, provide information and support.	
Relaunch the youth club	Mid term		Scope out volunteers and suggested activities	
Front garden competition	Mid term			

Finance

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Adopt a risk-based approach to long term reserved funds	Ongoing			
Ensure people understand the purpose of taxation and the importance of public funding	Ongoing		Introduce a Did You Know feature on social media	

Maintenance

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Work towards achieving a graffiti free parish				
Work towards achieving a litter free parish				
Maintenance of road signs, including repair, cleaning and visibility				
Maintenance of parish noticeboards		£7500	Replace all current noticeboards	
Regularly report fly tipping and ensure its control				
Continuous maintenance of public areas, hedge cutting, dog fouling and street furniture, lighting				
Overgrown footpaths cleared				

Ensure proper maintenance of the wooded area adjacent to the allotments				
Ensure pot holes are properly reported and filled in a timely fashion				
More seating in Cuckoo park	Short term			
Improve playing fields car park	Mid term		Raise funding	
Lower the hedge next to the playing fields outdoor gym for security			Add to caretaker task list	Job will be completed in November
Play park contact signs, for fault reporting purposes	Short term		Design and place signs	
Tidy up/ make safe trees on path alongside SVH towards Normandy Way and Strouts Road	Short term		Gather quotes for work	
Improve the appearance of land outside Great Chart School	Short term		Raise the funding	

Parish Council

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
To build a multipurpose parish council building, with office, meeting room and community space				
Produce a public document detailing what the PC is responsible for and who we employ to carry out our responsibilities				
Ensure retention of a proactive Clerk and any other staff	Ongoing			
Gain a wide and balanced representation of the PC on various charity and organisation boards				
Achieve and retain Quality	Ongoing			

Status and other performance measures				
Achieve Quality Gold Status	Mid Term			
New computer equipment where needed in Parish office	Short term			
Renew Parish Website (before Sept 2020)	Short term			

Planning

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Confidently deal with Chilmington Green planning and the new challenges it may bring	Ongoing			
Chilmington Green CMO and the PC working together to ensure all our community assets have good quality disabled access so all members of the community can enjoy				
Electric car charging points (with a meter?)	Mid term			
SVH car park extension	Mid term			
Ensure environmental items are included in Chilmington plans i.e. hedgehog holes, bike racks, solar panels	Ongoing		Feedback given on planning applications	

Training

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Ensure parish councillors attend regular training	Ongoing			Most councillors have now attended Dynamic Councillors training

OUTSIDE OF PARISH REMIT

Singleton Oast Park re-vamped. Request for single swings alongside baby swings, and another request for buddy swings.				
Better connected cycle routes				
Stop sign/speed bumps approaching Singleton Hill roundabout.				
Automatic barrier to close The Street to all but buses, farm and emergency vehicles				
Install more litter bins around the parish				
Crossing/ crossing signs between woodlands, across Singleton Hill				
Parking lines in singleton centre car park			Liaise with private owners	
CCTV and improved lighting around Singleton lake			Approach KCC	
'Slow down for horses' signs in Great Chart			Contact KCC	
Repaint faded road markings			Approach KCC	
Resolve travellers' annoyance (horses)				
Some form of gating along The Street in order to close off the road when required				

APPENDIX B

Wish List

Parish Councillors were asked to consider 'if money were no object...'

Ambition	Timescale	Budget Required	Action	Outcome
Install free tennis courts and basketball courts for community use				
Run a monthly local farmers' market				
Install better lighting at SVH and re-plant the trees to provide a sight and sound barrier for Windsor Court				
Ensure trees that have died or been removed on new housing developments are replaced with a tree of equal size				
Public toilets				
Splash play area				
Increase sports provision at SVH				
Safe, fenced dog walking area				
Add a wind turbine to SEC				
Extend SEC main building and café area. Extend the kitchen into the current toilets and relocate the toilets.				
Performance area				
Add land drains to large Playing Field				
Web app for news and events				