



**Meeting of the Parish Council
held on Monday, 13th January 2025
at Chilmington Cabin
Starting at 7.30pm
MINUTES**

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Councillors Present: | Cllrs P Barker, Y Barker, Gathern, Heathcote, Herring, McClintock (from Item 6.4), Mercer, Sullivan, Tate, Wiffen |
| Number of Seats | 11 |
| Number of Cllrs Present | 10 |
| Number of Cllrs Absent | 1 |
| Also Present: | Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Paula Cowperthwaite (Deputy Clerk), Cllr Blanford (ABC), Peter New (NHW), and 1 member of public |

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Darvill.
Cllr Barrett (ABC), Cllr S Gathern (ABC).

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 Y Barker – Items 6.1, 6.4, 6.5
Cllr Tate – Items 6.1, 9.3
Cllr Sullivan – Items 6.1, 6.4, 6.5
Cllr Wiffen – Items 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5
Cllr P Barker – Items 6.1, 6.3
Cllr Mercer – Item 6.3
Cllr Gathern – Items 6.4, 6.5
Cllr Herring – Item 6.3

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The council resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 9th December 2024 as a true record.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Proposed: | Cllr Tate | Seconded: | Cllr Y Barker |
| Vote In Favour: 9 | Vote Against: 0 | Abstain: 0 | MOTION CARRIED |

4. Reports from Borough Councillors and other organisations

4.1. Cllr Bill Barrett – Singleton East Ward

Not present. Report can be read at Appendix One.

4.2. Cllrs Jessamy Blanford – Weald Central Ward

The planning application for a fitness studio on Sandy Lane will be on the ABC planning committee agenda for 15th January. Cllr Blanford is in favour of the application but the Officer's recommendation is to refuse.

The 2025/26 Council Tax proposal is to increase the amount by £5.62 for the ABC portion. This would be an 11p per week increase for a Band D property. The Devolution White Paper is prompting a lot of discussion and there will be a number of changes affecting the county and district councils.

4.3. Cllr Sally Gathern - Singleton West Ward

Not present. Report can be read at Appendix One.

4.4. Cllr Clive Hallett - Washford Ward

Not present. No report received.

5. Reports from County Councillors (when in attendance)

5.1. Cllr Charlie Simkins

Not present. No report received.

6. Reports from Committees/Groups

To receive reports from committees

6.1. Planning Committee

Planning comments and decisions can be read at Appendix Two.

Two new Hodsons reserved matters applications have been received and will be discussed at the next planning committee meeting.

The S106 appeal will start on 19th February 2025.

6.2. Singleton Spaces

The Singleton Spaces charity report will be publicly available before the end of the month. A quiz will be held this weekend.

6.3. Environment Committee

No meeting held.

6.4. Stronger Communities

The Deputy Clerk explained that there has been an issue with getting a quorate amount of councillors to attend meetings, and that now the fridge has been successfully scaled back, there has not been a large amount of work being carried out between meetings. A number of alternative options to running as a committee were discussed.

A proposal was made to maintain the committee and to meet at least once a year. A counter proposal was made and the council resolved to change the committee to a working group, to allow a greater voice for volunteers. This will only meet when necessary and any decisions will be made at Full Council.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Proposed: | Cllr P Barker | Seconded: | Cllr Tate |
| Vote In Favour: 10 | Vote Against: 0 | Abstain: 0 | MOTION CARRIED |

6.5. Staffing Committee

Meeting was held and minutes are available.

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

The East Lodge wall has been dismantled and rebuilt one metre back from where it originally stood, so that KCC can progress plans for the dualling of the A28.

The planning application from the former grain store at Great Chilmington Farmhouse needs an archaeological survey carrying out underneath a wall. This will be an expensive addition to the building costs for a single dwelling application.

Peter New (NHW) has sent out his annual plan for 2025, and it is available on the parish council website. His discussions with Kent Police are ongoing regarding their service to residents.

He noted the family that suffered the fire over the Christmas period, and the positive community response to it.

Catapults have raised their heads again, and he will attempt to resurrect a petition to change the law with regards to the use of catapults in residential areas as Kent Police can be powerless under the law to take action.

7. Review of Policies

To approve policies and procedures (if applicable)

7.1. Standing Orders

A discussion took place regarding an earlier start time for Full Council meetings so that they can finish earlier. The council resolved to start future Full Council meetings at 7pm.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Proposed: | Cllr Gathern | Seconded: | Cllr Heathcote |
| Vote In Favour: 8 | Vote Against: 0 | Abstain: 2 | MOTION CARRIED |

8. Grant applications

None

9. Finance

9.1. Items for Payment

Queries were raised and answered on payments for RAC recovery, Mazars and Christmas lunch.

The council resolved to agree the items for payment in January and acknowledged the bank reconciliation. The list of items was checked and signed prior to approval.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Proposed: | Cllr P Barker | Seconded: | Cllr Sullivan |
| Vote In Favour: 10 | Vote Against: 0 | Abstain: 0 | MOTION CARRIED |

Items for Approval January 2025

| Method | Items for Approval for Payment | Description | VAT | Total payable |
|-----------|--------------------------------|--|--------------|---------------|
| Bacs | Kent Pension | Pension Contribution | | £ 2,345.80 |
| Bacs | HMRC | Employer | | £ 2,784.08 |
| Bacs | Salaries | January Salaries | | £ 7,312.28 |
| Bacs | Uprising | Churchyard maintenance | | £ 720.00 |
| Bacs | RAC | Roadside assistance | £ 21.00 | £ 126.00 |
| Bacs | Fareshare | Fridge delivery | | £ 163.35 |
| Bacs | Footprints Café | Xmas lunch | | £ 613.25 |
| Bacs | Lister Wilder | Chainsaw glove, small first aid kit | £ 7.55 | £ 45.31 |
| Bacs | ADM Computing | Monthly support contract | £ 52.58 | £ 315.50 |
| Bacs | Lister Wilder | Chainsaw oil, and grease | £ 2.88 | £ 17.28 |
| Bacs | Medash Signs | Information sign for Great Chart Play Park | £ 7.20 | £ 43.20 |
| Bacs | Mazars | Limited assurance review | £ 168.00 | £ 1,008.00 |
| Bacs | The Play Inspection Company | Annual inspection of play parks | £ 54.15 | £ 324.90 |
| Bacs | Singleton Spaces | Education team | | £ 1,500.00 |
| Bacs | Kalkwik | Tree trail guide printing | | £ 141.00 |
| Bacs | Rialtas | Training on Reports | £ 14.00 | £ 70.00 |
| DD | Hosted | Telephone line and internet | £ 10.89 | £ 65.34 |
| DD | RAC | Van Recovery insurance | | £ 16.42 |
| Comments: | | SUBTOTAL | | £ 17,591.67 |
| | | | TOTAL | £ 17,591.67 |

PREVIOUS PAYMENT FOR INFORMATION

| DATE OF PAYMENT | PAYMENT METHOD | AMOUNT | DESCRIPTION |
|-----------------|----------------|----------|-------------|
| 2024-12-13 | Bacs | £ 726.88 | Projector |

INCOME PAYMENT FOR INFORMATION

| DATE OF PAYMENT | PAYMENT METHOD | AMOUNT | DESCRIPTION |
|-----------------|----------------|--------|-------------|
| | | | |

| Credit card payment items for Information | Description | Total paid | VAT |
|---|--|------------|---------|
| Account Number:19079376 | | | |
| Amazon | 100 LED lights | £9.99 | £ 1.67 |
| Amazon | 3 pack fairy lights, Dalugo fairy lights | £22.76 | £ 3.79 |
| Amazon | Duracell Plus AAA and AA | £28.98 | £ 4.84 |
| SP PVC Safety Signs | 20 mph speed limit sign | £202.20 | £ 33.70 |
| Amazon | Numbered tags | £12.98 | £ 2.16 |
| Amazon | Duracell Plus AAA | £18.04 | £ 3.01 |
| Amazon | 3 pack fairy lights | £19.98 | £ 3.33 |
| GiffGaff | Mobile Phone top up | £6.00 | £ 1.00 |
| Waitrose | Refreshments | £26.30 | £ 1.66 |
| GiffGaff | Mobile Phone top up | £10.00 | £ 1.66 |
| Lily's Social Kitchen | Pop Up Café | £13.25 | £ 2.21 |
| GiffGaff | Mobile broadband top up | £10.00 | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------|----------------|
| Google Plays | Life360 tracking app | £9.99 | |
| GiffGaff | Mobile Phone top up | £10.00 | |
| Amazon | Lakeland Semi skimmed milk pots | £11.60 | |
| Amazon | Computer mice*5 | £49.90 | £ 8.30 |
| Account Number: 24056805 | | | |
| Fixings Warehouse | Cable ties to fix 20 mph signs | £5.86 | £0.98 |
| Halfords | Ess gauge twin pack and Fblitz 1 kg ABC fire | £27.00 | £4.50 |
| MFG Beaver Services | Diesel for van | £65.00 | £10.83 |
| Giff Gaff | Mobile phone top up | £8.00 | £1.33 |
| Tesco | No transaction details | £17.00 | |
| MFG Beaver Services | Diesel for van | £55.00 | £9.17 |
| Halfords | AA tow rope and Warning triangle | £18.99 | £3.16 |
| Tesco | Van hoovering | £6.00 | |
| MFG Beaver Services | Unleaded for equipment | £17.00 | £2.83 |
| Dobbies | Gardening equipment | £19.99 | £3.33 |
| Brewers Ashford | Green paint for outdoor gym | £6.19 | £1.03 |
| Total: | | £708.00 | £104.49 |

Great Chart with Singleton Parish NEW

Bank - Cash and Investment Reconciliation as at 30 November 2024

Confirmed Bank & Investment Balances

Bank Statement Balances

| | | | |
|------------|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| 30/11/2024 | Metro Bank Current Account | 1,602.49 | |
| 30/11/2024 | Metro Bank Instant Access | 83,978.95 | |
| 30/11/2024 | Metro Bank Credit Card 6934 | 275.26 | |
| 30/11/2024 | Metro Bank Credit Card 8589 | -319.49 | |
| 30/11/2024 | NatWest Current | 100.00 | |
| 30/11/2024 | NatWest Reserve Account | 384,287.71 | |
| 30/11/2024 | Nationwide Business 1 Yr Fixed | 184,670.64 | |
| 30/11/2024 | Dudley | 114,730.00 | |
| | | 0.00 | |
| | | 0.00 | |
| | | | 769,325.56 |

Receipts not on Bank Statement

0.00

Closing Balance

769,325.56

All Cash & Bank Accounts

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Metro Bank Current Account | 1,602.49 |
| 2 | Metro Bank Instant Access | 83,978.95 |
| 3 | Metro Bank Credit Card | -44.23 |
| 4 | NatWest Current Account | 100.00 |
| 5 | NatWest Reserve Account | 384,287.71 |
| 6 | Nationwide Business 95 Day | 184,670.64 |
| 7 | Dudley Building Society | 114,730.00 |
| 8 | Barclays | 0.00 |
| 9 | RedWood Bank | 0.00 |
| | Other Cash & Bank Balances | 0.00 |
| | Total Cash & Bank Balances | 769,325.56 |

9.2. Asset management software

The Clerk explained the Civicy software she has been trialling at a previous meeting. She has since explored the paid version of Maintain X of which the council currently use the free version.

The council resolved to pay for the Premium version of Maintain X for up to 3 users, at the end of a free trial period.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Proposed: | Cllr P Barker | Seconded: | Cllr Wiffen |
| Vote In Favour: 10 | Vote Against: 0 | Abstain: 0 | MOTION CARRIED |

9.3. Financial review

A review of income and expenditure to 30th November 2024 was shown to the room. The Clerk spoke about some items which were noteworthy, such as increased training costs for the Clerks Masters course, office supplies increased to purchase the recent branded clothing, and grants funding included the contribution to the raised path around Singleton Lake, A number of the overspends will balance out by the end of the financial year without using any reserves and the finance committee have no issues with the review.

The council resolved to accept the financial review.

| | | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Proposed: | Cllr Wiffen | Seconded: | Cllr Tate |
| Vote In Favour: 10 | Vote Against: 0 | Abstain: 0 | MOTION CARRIED |

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

The report was shown to the room and can be seen at Appendix Three.

11. Correspondence

- Thank you card and photos from 1st Singleton Scouts regarding grant.
- Email from KCC explaining that in the long term absence of Cllr Dirk Ross, the grant funding the parish council applied for in the current financial year is not accessible and will be subsumed into KCC general funds.
- Email from Kieran Doble, KCC Highways regarding costs of materials and installation for the Great Chart build out on The Street. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

12. Items for Information or Agenda for Next Meeting

To receive items of information from members and/or for inclusion on next agenda.

- KCC Highways work to be carried out on The Street.

13. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next scheduled Council Meeting will be held on **Monday 10th February 2025 starting at 7.30pm at Great Chart Village Hall**

The meeting ended at 20:40pm.

Signed as a true record by:

Cllr Wiffen _____

Date: _____

Appendix One

Cllr Barrett's Report

Firstly let me wish you a great 2025 and I hope, unlike the pensioners who won't be getting their winter fuel allowance, you get through the last two months of winter in good health and stay relatively warm. If ever there was a daft political decision by a new government, then this is without question it. And what really gets my goat is that many of the MP's claim for heating expenses for their second homes, which just shows a lack of disregard for elderly people beyond belief. But I feel the elderly will forget this slap round the face very slowly as we move forwards!

I read in the paper today that this cold spell which began around 2nd January was the coldest start to January for 16 years, so I do feel for our elderly residents in Singleton and Great Chart. Thankfully we not only have Lilys Café, but a raft of local measures to help those in need, in particular the KCC grants monies, which information on is located on the Parish Website.

In regards myself I am currently unwell, and adjusting my lifestyle as I feel both long hours at work, and, well, too many good times, have led to recurring illnesses throughout the winter period, and there is a point to realise I am 48 now, and not 28 anymore!

OK, enough twaddle. My Ward has been quiet, as it usually is this time of year with no obvious contact from residents. Cllr Gathern contacted me about the Oast Play area, and Aspire have assessed and will do some minor remedial works there. I have also today requested a full litter pick of the site from David at Aspire, and I hope the same regime under Biffa continues with Suez, whereby these litter picks occur quickly. The land adjacent to the park is Dr Settys, and like a lot of land is earmarked for development. Due to Stodmarsh this has been delayed but I very much imagine that now we have the newly created credit swap system with Canterbury Council about to go live in the spring, we may see movement on this area, alongside many others, which should help to end the dereliction and litter dropping due to its non-use.

I continue my work to aid and improve the Singleton Environment Centre and this year my focus will again be on renewables, namely a battery storage system to collect all excess and unused electricity from the main roof array, and the second roof array on the Brisley Centre. At present all unused electricity flows into the grid at no benefit for the centre or Singleton Spaces, and this is something I wish to alter and get every last drop of power from these arrays. I have asked John Alexander to look into this for me, and once we have a rough idea of the excess power in its totality, then options like a small wind turbine to compliment this new idea, could be considered.

At present the electricity bill of the centre per year is around £1400. And if ever there was a place to try to make as self-sufficient as possible, I believe this is the place.

In regards my Portfolio Holder work at the Port Health in Sevington, our work there continues to go from strength to strength, and I very much anticipate that soon to be implemented cost saving measures will increase the roughly £300,000 per year the Port sends to ABC coffers ever upwards, but also make a better experience for the many thousands of lorry drivers that use the Port each week.

My disappointment at ABC at present is that the Housing Tenant Satisfaction report has just been relayed to Cabinet members, and it doesn't make for good reading. A drop from 63% to 59% as an overall score, with all areas going the wrong way bar ASB, indicates that a lot of the measures the Chief Executive implemented in 2024 have had little if any impact.

This was something I repeatedly told her and the Cabinet (to no avail), with my preference being to focus on complaints, customer service and making sure the new inhouse repair service got up and running properly. But instead they wrote to the regulator

and told them Housing was awful. They wrote to all 5200 council tenants and told them Housing was awful. They dismissed the Head of Housing and the Head of Planned Repairs, and spend hundreds of thousands on new staff, which, if you read the Tenant Satisfaction Report, has all added up to a decrease in tenant satisfaction!! I would say I told them so. But I did! Again and again. And I was the Portfolio Holder for Housing! Anyway, have a good rest of the meeting and see you next month. Bill Barrett

Cllr S Gathern's Report

1. I seconded a motion at full council which was passed unanimously. It means ABC will change the way it handles abandoned trolleys, emulating a system already in place in Canterbury. The plan is for ABC to remove trolleys ourselves and charge shops for doing so. Hopefully this will speed up the process for dealing with abandoned trolleys.
2. I had a tour of International House, the new home for ABC. The conversion has been very well done, providing comfortable and flexible working spaces.
3. I have been helping organise events for International Women's Day which is on March 8th. We're hoping to have a whole weekend of events this year.
4. I donated 16kg of cans to a local recycling company. I worked it out that this equated to roughly 1,067 cans that I have litter-picked from the Singleton area. As I litter pick, I often discover fly-tipping. I have reported about 6 lots of fly-tipping in our area, ranging from single items such as carpets and blinds to bigger loads of builder's waste or household items.
5. I attended an information session on Local Government Reorganisation. What this means for us is yet to be determined- there are several options- but KCC have voted to fast-track our area for moving to the unitary authority model with an elected mayor, as is currently the case in Manchester. KCC have, with Medway Council, submitted a request to central government to convert to a unitary authority model. We will know more when we receive their response.

Appendix Two

Planning Comments

December

[Planning Application PA/2024/2276](#)

Little Black Dog, The Street, Great Chart, TN23 3AN

Temporary change of use of the ground floor and basement from former public house to flexible class E use (excluding E(d) and E(f))

The application is unclear as to what the end plan will be so it is difficult to make specific comments without plans of the layout. Whatever the plan, it would prevent the building remaining vacant whilst the application for housing remains on hold due to the Stodmarsh issue. The committee had no planning related concerns and resolved to support the application.

[Permit Application: EPR/DB3745KA/A001](#)

Chilmington Green WRC, Chilmington Green Road, Stubbs Cross Ashford. Kent TN26 1HH

The Environment Agency has received a new bespoke application for an environmental permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 from Severn Trent Services (Water & Sewerage) Ltd.

Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council object to the Environment Agency granting a permit for this application for the following reasons:

- Discharging into what is currently a dry ditch is against the EA recommendation that treated water should only make up a percentage of the water present. As the river at the proposed discharge point is usually dry, any discharge would be 100% of the water present and therefore not permissible under EA guidelines.
- Current calculations for the permit only take into account phases 1 and 2 of the Chilmington development. Now that the Possingham development has been given permission to go ahead, but not until the Waste Water Treatment Works (WWTW) are operational, then the Possingham housing MUST be included in the calculations.
- The Parish Council supports comments made by the Shadoxhurst Drainage Team
- There is nothing included in the plans for any onsite storage of excess water or any irrigation systems.
- The Beult is a rare clay stream, which should be protected, and is already in a poor state.
- The discharge point is actually into a tributary of the Beult, not the river itself.
- There are administrative inaccuracies included throughout the paperwork.
- There appears to be discrepancies between the figures given to different teams of people.
- There is a history of the developer reneging on signed agreements.
- The new Government is undertaking a review of planning regulations which is likely to impact this application and the related Stodmarsh issue.

Planning Application [PA/2024/2365](#)

14, Chilmington Oaks, Chilmington Green Lane, Chilmington Green, TN23 8AL

Proposed detached outbuilding.

There were no planning related concerns, the committee resolved to support the application.

Planning Decisions

December

Planning Decisions

PA/2024/1943

30, Harvest Way, Singleton, TN23 5WP – Garage conversion (Retrospective)

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000000jPThIAM>

ABC: Approve **PC:** Support

PA/2024/1982

St Johns Methodist Church, Singleton Road, Great Chart, TN23 3BB – Changes to fenestration of rear elevation and the insertion of 4No. roof lights.

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000000lKg1IAE>

ABC: Approve **PC:** Support

PA/2024/2030

7 Bartlets Lane TN23 8AB – Proposed two-storey side extension and garage enclosure

<https://ashfordboroughcouncil.my.site.com/pr/a0hTw000000nlwflAE>

ABC: Approve **PC:** Support

Appendix Three

Clerk's Report – January 2025



Happy New Year!

Events:

This year, we've made some changes to the location and timing of the Pop-Up Café to help boost attendance. Instead of two sessions, we'll now have one extended session running for three hours.

The first session will take place at Singleton Village Hall from **10:00 AM to 1:00 PM on Thursday, 16th January**.

We'll review the Pop-Up Café's progress in six months and welcome your feedback in the meantime.

We will be both out of the office on Wednesday, 15th January and Monday 20th of January attending a paediatric first aid course.

We will be attending the SLCC Practitioner Conference and will be out of the office between 29th-30th January.

Parish Steward: The Steward's workorder list for December is attached to this report as an appendix. You will note the stewards have had another busy and productive month.

Training:

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

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

Community Heroes:

The number of Community Heroes are stagnating. 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](#). We are also looking for volunteers to help with the **Community Fridge**.

If you know anyone who might be interested, please ask them to contact us for further information.

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.

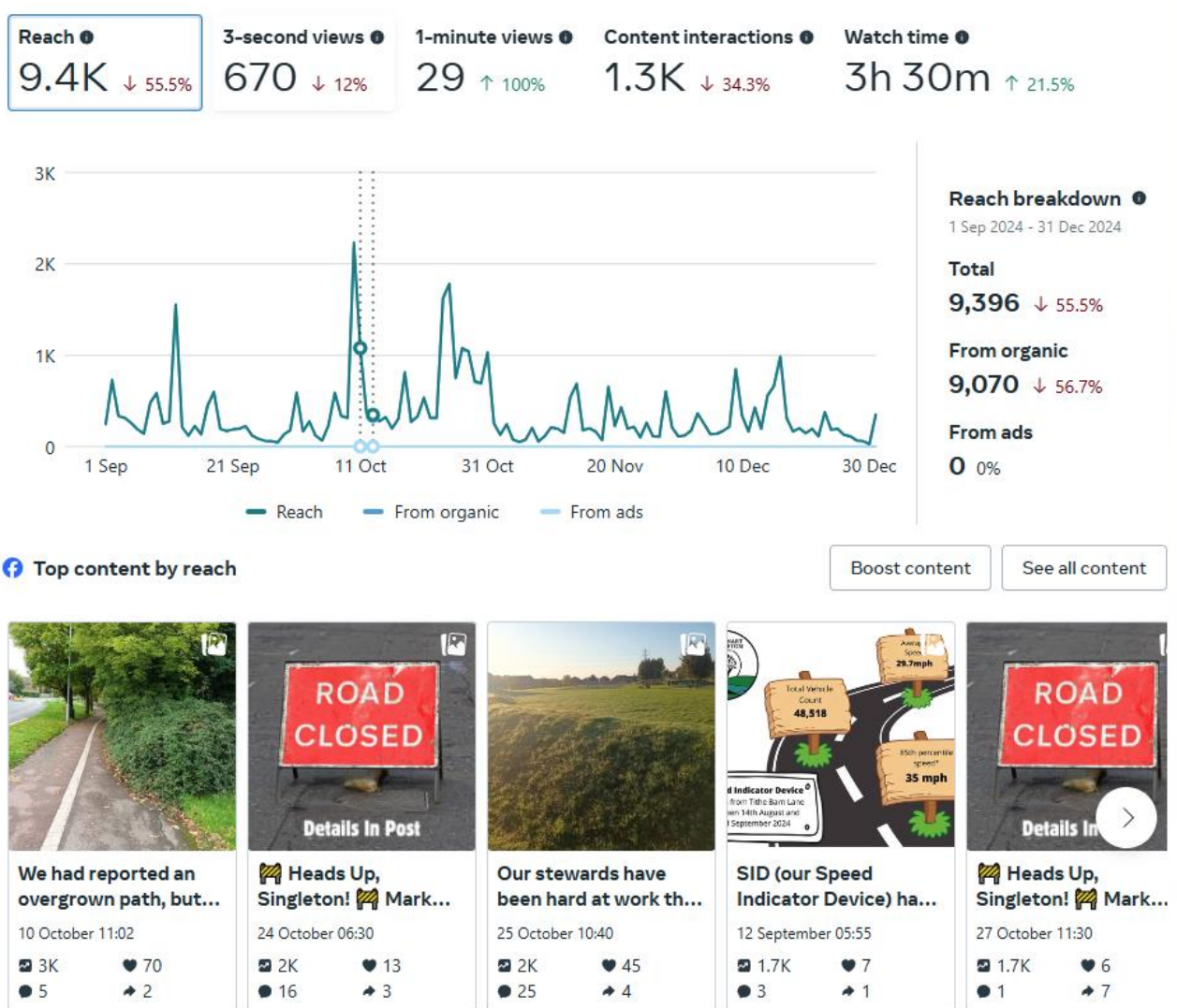
Reporting: It is very important that if you see a fault, it is reported to the relevant authority immediately so works can be arranged. It is often confusing to know who to report to so if in doubt you can check the Parish Council [website](#) where all the information you need to know is available. 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.

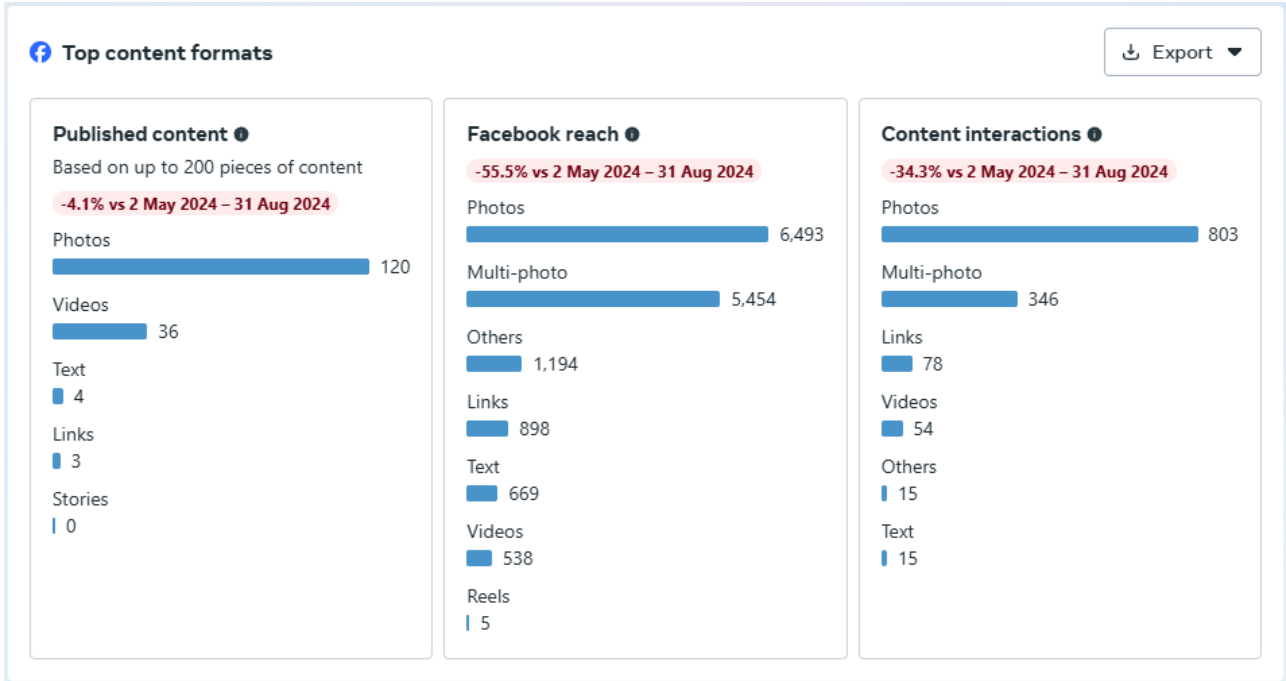
Social Media: Please like and share our posts on social media so it can reach a wider audience. If you are on Facebook or Instagram ensure you give us a like and follow us 🤝

Social Media Engagement Report

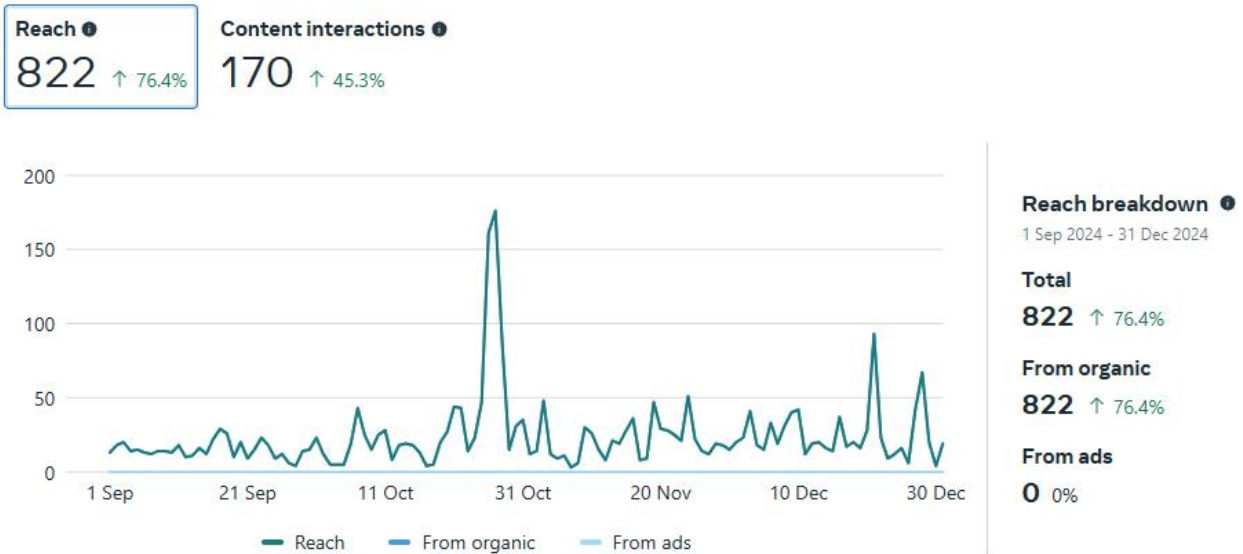
Between September - December 2024

Facebook:





Instagram:



Top content by reach

Boost content

See all content

25 October 10:45

378 likes, 7 hearts, 0 shares

27 December 05:50

121 likes, 0 hearts, 0 shares

20 December 05:00

112 likes, 1 heart, 0 shares

19 November 11:01

76 likes, 2 hearts, 0 shares

27 October 11:30

64 likes, 0 hearts, 3 shares