



Meeting of the Environment Committee

Wednesday, 03rd September 2025 at Singleton Village Hall, Parish

Office starting at 16:00

Present: Cllrs Peter Barker, Dave Gathern, Steve Herring, Barry Mercer, and Malcolm Wiffen

Also Present: Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Cllr Sally Gathern (ABC) and 1 MOP

The meeting started at 16:00

1. Election of Chair

Cllr Peter Barker was nominated by Cllr D. Gathern and seconded by Cllr Wiffen and elected chair of the Environment Committee.

Proposed: Cllr D Gathern	Seconded: Cllr Wiffen	In Favour: 5
Vote against: 0	Vote Abstain: 0	Motion carried

2. Apologies for Absence

None

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 18th June 2025 were duly approved.

Proposed: Cllr Wiffen	Seconded: Cllr Mercer	In Favour: 5
Vote against: 0	Vote Abstain: 0	Motion carried

5. Parish Walkabout

Members of the committee, accompanied by the Clerk, carried out a parish walk to identify and assess any environmental and maintenance issues within the parish. The walk began at the Singleton Environment Centre and followed a route through Colemans Kitchen to the Barretts side of the Chilmington Green Development, to Chilmington Hamlet, and then returned to the Environment Centre. It was noted that the green space under the pylon has been put to good use. It was encouraging to see the area and the new community forming. It was also noted that the route to Chilmington Green Secondary School is not safe, as it does not have any streetlights.

6. Allotments

The Barrow and Spade Brigade have submitted an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a compostable toilet. The committee noted that it was encouraging to see the allotment committee exploring various funding options.

7. Heron Walk

The area will be rotavated and a rockery will be created, allowing for easy maintenance while still supporting flowers that benefit pollinators. One of the Front Garden participants has offered to assist with the project and the upkeep of the raised bed.

8. Tree trail

The final two posts that form the trail will be installed shortly. To blend in with the existing environment, the posts will be painted grey. Suggestions for enhancing the current trail or creating a new one are welcome.

9. Singleton Lake & Buxford Meadow

Aspire have been on site clearing overgrown vegetation. Residents have reported anti-social behaviour around Singleton Pond (Buxford Meadow), which has been swiftly addressed. Cllr Barrett walked around the lake and identified several tasks to improve the area. It was noted by a resident that the new tarmac path, without any side support, can be dangerous for those in wheelchairs and mobility scooters. This will be investigated. The committee also noted that there has been no communication from the Angling Society.

10. Ashford Community Woodland

An electric fence had been set up in the woodland, but this was removed by ABC as it was installed illegally. The Clerk and Parish Steward recommended planting raspberries in the orchard. The Ashford Community Woodland group will discuss this idea; however, Cllr Mercer noted that the ground must be dry and free of vegetation in order for the raspberries to thrive.

11. Gardening Competition

The first Best Front Garden competition was a great success. The committee enjoyed visiting and judging the gardens, which provided an excellent opportunity to learn more about the area and appreciate the gardens in their full glory. The winners of each category, as well as the overall winner, received gardening vouchers during a celebration ceremony at the Singleton Environment Centre. The event received very positive feedback and, based on this success, will be held again in 2026. At the next meeting, the timeline and categories will be agreed upon.

12. Items for information or agenda for next meeting

- Allotment
- Heron Walk Community Garden Project
- Singleton Lake and Buxford Meadow
- Tree Trail
- Gardening Competition- Best Front Garden
- Roundabout on A28 (To discuss decoration)

13. Date and venue of next meeting.

The date of the next scheduled meeting is **22nd October 2025** starting at 16:00
The meeting closed at 16:35