



Meeting of the Environment Committee

**Wednesday, 14th January 2026 at Parish Office, Singleton Village Hall
starting at 16:00**

Present: Cllrs Peter Barker, Dave Gathern, Barry Mercer, and Malcolm Wiffen
Also Present: Aniko Szocs (Clerk), Cllr Sally Gathern (ABC) 1 MOP

The meeting started at 16:10

1. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Steve Herring

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 26th November 2025 were duly approved.

Proposed: Cllr Wiffen	Seconded: Cllr Mercer	In Favour: 4
Vote against: 0	Vote Abstain: 0	Motion carried

4. Allotments

Cllrs Wiffen and P Barker carried out a plot inspection and are pleased to report that, except for one or two plots, all were in good order. Ashford Borough Council has S106 funds available for allotments; this information has been shared with the Barrow and Spade Brigade so that they can apply for funding towards the compost toilet.

5. Heron Walk Community Garden

The raised bed has been covered with a weed suppressant and secured, ready for planting in early spring.

6. Tree Trail

The committee considered the development of the next Tree Trail and proposed that the tree beside Buxford Pavilion, as well as a tree in the orchard, could be added to the route. The Clerk and Cllr P Barker will plot the trees on a map.

7. Singleton Lake & Buxford Meadow

Cllr Bill Barrett and the Clerk walked around the lake to check the condition of the paths following reports of inaccessibility. Photographs and details of potential maintenance work have been submitted to Aspire for action. During the walk, they spoke to a fisherman who was fishing in a no fishing zone.

The chair of Friends of Singleton Lake has invited the engineer who designed the lake to a meeting to better understand how the lake operates.

A short discussion took place about the maintenance of the lake, how the fishing is managed, and what arrangement, if any, Ashford Borough Council has with the angling society. It was noted that the island needs to be managed to improve the wildlife habitat, as currently there are fallen trees that make nesting for birds difficult. The Clerk will contact Cllr Barrett to seek clarification on the current arrangement with the angling society and to find out if there is a water steward patrolling the area and checking tickets. It was also mentioned that signs informing fishermen where day tickets can be purchased would be helpful.

8. Ashford Community Woodland

Nothing to report.

9. Roundabout on A28

Nothing can be done until the roundabout is adopted by Highways. It has also been suggested that items related to this should be referred to as placemaking features, rather than decorating the roundabout.

10. Reports

Cllr Sally Gathern gave a presentation to the committee containing information on environmental matters relating to Kent, which highlighted concerns regarding species decline within the county.

Cllr Sally Gathern met with the Community Engagement Officer to discuss possible projects.

11. Items for information or agenda for next meeting

- Allotment
- Heron Walk Community Garden Project
- Singleton Lake and Buxford Meadow
- Tree Trail
- Ashford Community Woodland

12. Date and venue of next meeting.

The date of the next scheduled meeting is **4th March 2026** starting at 16:00

The meeting closed at 17:25