



Meeting of the Environment Committee

Thursday, 10th September 2026 at Buxford Hall, Buxford Pavilion

starting at 16:00

Present: Cllrs Peter Barker, 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. Apologies for Absence

Apologies received and approved from Cllr Dave Gathern.

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

2. Declarations of Interest

None

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Environment Committee meeting held on 16th July 2026 were duly approved.

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

4. Allotments

The Committee received an update on allotment activity. Members noted that the compost toilet is progressing well and nearing completion. The container remains an issue, although the tools are being organised. A request has also been made for the woodchip to be swept up.

5. Heron Walk Community Garden

The project is progressing well. The heron feature and rockery garden are now in place, and the outer area has been weeded. The raised bed has been tested for accessibility, confirming that residents using wheelchairs can access it, making the site inclusive. Volunteers and community groups will be involved in planting the outer area of the raised bed. The Committee noted that this has been a very positive community project.

6. Tree Trail

Cllr P Barker and the Parish Steward have arranged to walk the route and confirm the exact locations for the information boards.

7. Singleton Lake & Buxford Meadow

The Singleton Community Day, organised by the CEO, was a great success, with most groups invited to attend next year's event. Since then, two litter picks have taken place, one around Singleton Lake and one at Buxford Meadow. Both areas were found to be relatively tidy, although some rubbish could not be reached as it was too far into the water.

Cllr Wiffen reported that he and Cllr Gathern had attended a meeting with ABC representatives and a resident who has developed an app to support the management of fishing at Singleton Lake. ABC expressed interest in the proposal, and a business plan will be prepared by the resident. The app would use QR codes to record fishers and rod licences, enabling fishing activity around the lake to be monitored. It was noted that Ashford Angling Society appears to hold the fishing rights, preventing others from managing the lake.

Night fishing continues to be reported. It was noted that residents are reluctant to call 999, as they do not consider it an emergency. A resident also advised that reporting incidents via 101 has not been effective, as fishing does not appear to be treated seriously. The online reporting system was also considered complicated.

A resident has also raised concerns about ongoing anti-social behaviour and issues around Buxford Meadow.

8. Ashford Community Woodland

The Committee noted that the stewards continue to maintain the community orchard. The meadow area has been mowed. There were no further matters to report.

9. Signs

This item has been postponed until the next meeting.

10. Front Garden Competition

Members agreed that next year's judging date should be brought forward, although it was noted that this may be affected by the weather. A longer judging window will also be allowed, as some flowers bloom at different times. Members felt that this more flexible approach may encourage more residents to enter the competition and hoped to see an increase in entries in its second year.

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
- Signs
- Front Garden Competition

12. Date and venue of next meeting.

The date of the next scheduled meeting 5th November 2026 starting at 16:00 at Buxford Pavilion.

The meeting closed at 16:45

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