

Community of Chepstow

Current Community Format

1. The current community arrangements in Chepstow consist of five wards, Thornwell, Larkfield, St Christophers, St Mary's and St Kingsmark. The community has a total electorate of 9430 and is represented by 15 town councillors. The electorate per ward and number of councillors is as follows:

Community Ward	Electorate	Number of Councillors
Larkfield	1581	3
St Christophers	1892	3
St Kingsmark	2336	3
St Mary's	1522	3
Thornwell	2099	3

Natural Boundaries / Key Features

2. The working group consider a number of roads within Chepstow that act as natural boundaries between wards. These include; Thornwell Road, Bulwark Road, Wye Valley Link Road and Newport Road.

To the east of the community of Chepstow is the River Wye which is the local authority boundary that cannot be amended as part of this review.

The working group also discussed the representations it had received in relation to New Farm Industrial Estate and Chepstow Racecourse.

Electorate Forecast

3. The electorate of the current St Mary's ward will increase from 1522 to 1860 due to new developments at the Fairfield Mabey site.

Representations Received

4. Chepstow Town Council submitted representation requesting the following amendments:
 - All of New Farm Industrial Estate to be included in the Chepstow Council area due to clarity and ease of administration. Additionally, the factory outside their area will be occupied by Fairfield Mabey who has strong historic and economic links with the Chepstow area.
 - Chepstow Racecourse be included in the council area. It is assumed that the racecourse falls within the boundary of the community of Chepstow and it is the Chepstow area that is greatly impacted upon by racecourse activities.

- Incorporate all the business and residential properties on High Beech Lane into the Larkfield ward.

4.1. A number of representations were received from vice-chair of Mathern Council and councillor for Mounton ward Carolyn Ovenden regarding the arrangements for the community of Mathern. In relation to the community of Chepstow it is recommended that properties at the upper end of Mounton Lane should be incorporated into the Mounton ward and that properties of High Beech Lane be incorporated into the Pwllmeyric ward.

Mathern council submitted additional representation in response to Chepstow Town Councils submission requesting that all of New Farm Industrial estate be incorporated into Chepstow. Mathern state that noise and light pollution from the estate greatly affect the properties in Mathern and the council ensured that a bund was erected to protect its residents from the estate. Mathern council request that the current boundary remains in its current format.

Recommendations

External Boundary

5. The working group consider the boundary to the west of Chepstow that currently follows the Wye Valley Link Road to be a suitable boundary to divide the community of Chepstow to that of its neighbours. The group however considered the positioning of the properties of High Beech lane adjacent to the Wye Valley Link Road. The current boundary between the communities of Chepstow and Mathern follows High Beech Lane splitting the properties north of the road to the community of Chepstow and the south to Mathern. The working group believe that given the properties of High Beech Lanes' close links with Chepstow and direct access to the Wye Valley Link Road that these would be best suited to the community of Chepstow. The group therefore propose the new boundary should incorporate all of the properties of High Beech Lane in to the community of Chepstow.
 - 5.1. The group considered the amendment to the south western boundary put forward by Chepstow Town Council to incorporate all of the New Farm Industrial Estate into the community of Chepstow. The group believe that incorporating all of the industrial estate into one community would provide clear, easily identifiable boundaries which in turn would improve administration processes for the area. The group however accept Mathern Community Councils comments regarding the site and propose that the new boundary follows the bund erected by the council which would prohibit further expansion of the industrial estate without consultation with Mathern Community Council.
 - 5.2. The working group considered the representation received from Chepstow Town Council in relation to Chepstow Racecourse. Chepstow town council believe that Chepstow Racecourse should be incorporated into the community of Chepstow as it is commonly assumed that the racecourse falls within the community of Chepstow and the town council receive a number of enquiries regarding the racecourse. Additionally, the town council believe that the activities of the racecourse impact the greatest on the residents of Chepstow with visitor access by car,

coach and train all necessitating travel through the community of Chepstow. The working group agree with the representation of Chepstow Town Council and propose that the racecourse, and as a consequence the Piercefield Park area, are incorporated into the community of Chepstow. It is proposed that the boundary of Chepstow is extended to follow the edge of Bishops Barnet Wood, Cockshoot Wood and Fryth Wood and incorporate all properties within this area including Woodalde, Frythwood and Goldenhill. The boundary will then follow the edge of the overflow car park for the racecourse and north along the A466 and follow the edge of Piercefield Park where it will join the external community boundary of the River Wye.

Internal Boundaries

Larkfield, Maple Avenue, St Christophers and Thornwell

- 5.3. The group reviewed the current community arrangements for these three wards and queried why the wards run east to west across the community when all road access and natural lines of communication run north to south. The group also identified a number of roads where the boundary splits a street which is contrary to the Terms of Reference for this review.

The group considered the community of Chepstow and the area covering these three wards and highlighted that the area south of Newport Road, Hardwick Hill and Mount Pleasant as being a natural divide between the area north and south of the community given its direct links with the town centre and the Wye Valley Link Road.

The group considered the existing arrangements of the Thornwell Ward and identified an anomaly in the boundary in the Warren Slade area. The current boundary of the community intersects the new area of housing splitting properties with common links, and in the same street, between two wards. Similarly, with the boundary currently following Burnt Barn Road, a number of properties with common links and channels of communication are split between wards, particularly in the Holly Close & Western Avenue area. To that end, and taking account of the terms of reference criteria of not splitting streets between wards, the group propose a new boundary for the Thornwell ward which follows the Wye Valley Link Road incorporating the area east and south of this road within the Thornwell ward. The boundary will also follow Conwy Drive and Beaufort Park Way utilising the main southern entrance into Chepstow as the boundary before following Thornwell Road northwards to the rear of properties on Middle Way. The boundary will then follow the rear of properties on Middle Way eastwards to the external community boundary. The working group consider this boundary more suitable than the existing arrangements as it ensures that properties with similar links, channels of communication and shared interests are incorporated into a single ward as well as resolving the issue of properties being split between separate wards. The area of Middle Way and Raglan Way have been incorporated into the Thornwell due to the access to these roads off Warren Slade which has direct footpaths to Heather Close directly linking the areas with each other.

The group considered the remainder of the area and created a new Bulwark ward which incorporates the housing to the west of Thornwell Road up to the rear of properties on Chartist Way and Channel View not including Bulwark Community Centre. The boundary will follow the

rear of Channel View up to Mathern way where it will follow the rear of properties on Queens Road and the edge of Pembroke Junior School as well as the properties on Alpha Road utilising the industrial estate as the boundary for the ward. The group consider this new ward resolves the issue of streets being split between wards whilst ensuring boundaries are clear and follow easily identifiable boundaries. The new ward also has regard to the various stages of housing development within the Burnt Barn Road area which incorporates much of the original housing development.

The working group propose a new ward of Maple Avenue that will incorporate the area of housing to the west of the original burnt barn development up to Mathern Road. The layout of the houses within this area mean all channels of communication are centred around Maple Avenue with access to other areas of the community only available via Mathern Road and Rowan Drive providing little link between this area and the rest of the community to enable it to be combined to another ward. Whilst the working group acknowledge that the electorate of this ward will be relatively low compared to the other wards in the community, the number of electors is sufficient to require its own representation within the community and ensures that natural boundaries are utilised in setting the community wards.

The final ward, Larkfield, incorporates the area north of, and including, Pembroke Junior School and Bulwark Business Park up to the rear of properties of Hardwick Hill and Newport Road. The ward also includes properties accessible off Mathern Road including Beech Grove, High Beech Lane and Fair View. The northern boundary of the Larkfield ward will follow the rear of properties on Newport Road and Chepstow Town AFC playing fields before following the rear of the properties on Gwentlands close. The western boundary will be similar to the existing ward boundary in following the area that divides Garden City and Bulwark Road.

St Mary's

- 5.4. The group considered the existing arrangements for the St Mary's ward and concluded that much of the ward is suitable and fit for purpose other than bringing the boundaries of the ward in line with the terms of reference and in particular the issue of splitting streets between wards. To that end the boundary has been amended near Mount Pleasant and Welsh Street to ensure the boundaries are in line with the terms of reference and to better divide the town centre area between the housing of Welsh Street. The working group proposed a new name for this ward of Chepstow Castle given its prominence within the ward.

St Kingsmark

- 5.5. The working group considered the St Kingsmark ward and felt that due to the high electorate within the ward, and amendments to the external northern boundary of the community, that the existing St Kingsmark ward could be divided.

One of the wards, to be known as Mount Pleasant, will incorporate the area north of the proposed Larkfield ward including Newport Road, Hardwick Hill and Mount Pleasant as well as

St Lawrence Road and Mounon Road with the northern boundary following the rear of properties on Hale Wood and Castle Wood.

The second ward to be named Crossway Green incorporates the area of housing north of the town centre area along Welsh Street and north of St Lawrence Road from the proposed boundary of the Mount Pleasant ward. The Crossway Green ward will also incorporate the proposed changes to the external community boundary near the racecourse roundabout and Chepstow Racecourse.

Proposed community and community ward names

6. The working group propose no change of name to the community of Chepstow but propose a number of changes to the ward names due to amendments in the boundaries. The six wards of Chepstow will be Thornwell, Bulwark, Larkfield, Mount Pleasant, Chepstow Castle and Crossway Green. The working group welcome representations as to more suitable alternative names for the wards of the community.

Proposed Electoral Arrangements

7. The working group consider the Chepstow community to fall within the urban category for elector/councillor ratio resulting in an ideal ratio of 500 electors per councillor. The above changes to the community boundaries will result in the following electoral arrangements for the community.

Community Ward	Electorate	Number of Councillors
Larkfield	1095	2
Bulwark	1902	4
Mount Pleasant	1571	3
Chepstow Castle	1644	3
Crossway Green	1541	3
Thornwell	1436	3
Maple Avenue	609	1

Working Group Individual Member Comments

8. All members of the working group approved the proposals for the community of Chepstow.