

## Community of Mathern

### Current Community Format

1. The current community arrangements in Mathern consist of three wards, Mathern, Mounton and Pwllmeyric. The community has a total electorate of 874 and is represented by nine community councillors. The electorate per ward and number of councillors is as follows:

Community Ward	Electorate	Number of Councillors
Mathern	471	5
Mounton	77	1
Pwllmeyric	326	3

### Natural Boundaries / Key Features

2. The community of Mathern is intersected east to west by the M48 and A48. The community also includes St Pierre wood and Great Barnets Wood to the north with the River Severn south of the community.

### Electorate Forecast

3. There are currently no developments planned within the community of Mathern that would significantly alter the current electorate.

### Representations Received

4. Community Councillor for the Mounton Ward Carolyn Ovenden submitted representations regarding the Mounton ward stating that the Mounton area has its own unique history but is closely linked to the other wards of the community. She also stated that the properties at the end of Mounton Road should be included in the Mounton Ward with Wellhead Lodge removed into St Arvans ward.
  - 4.1. Councillor Ovenden also submitted a response on behalf of the council in her capacity as vice chair. Councillor Ovenden stated that:
    - The three wards within Mathern are each distinctive but historically linked and there is a thriving community life involving all three villages
    - All three villages are either rural or semi-rural and are geographically separate from similar areas nearby.
    - The community is part of the Wye Valley AONB and conservation area reflecting the individual character of the area
    - The community is well balanced with all wards working together frequently towards a common goal providing the publication of local walks materials and safer conditions on the A48 as examples.

- The community and its residents are to devise a community led plan in collaboration with Adventa
  - Recommendations for amendments to the internal boundaries included Hayesgate and Broadwell Farm from Mathern to Mounton, Mounton House from Mounton to Pwllmeyric, High Beech Lane into Pwllmeyric.
- 4.2. Councillor Ovenden submitted a secondary response following the publication of the initial representations to object to the proposal put forward by Chepstow Town Council to incorporate the remainder of New House Farm Industrial estate into the community of Chepstow.
- 4.3. County Councillor Graham Down submitted a representation regarding the community arrangements for Mathern broadly agreeing with the representation submitted by Mathern Community Council.

## **Recommendations**

### **External Boundaries**

5. The working group considered the current boundary of New Farm Industrial Estate alongside the representations submitted for the area and concluded 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 industrial estate 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.
- 5.1. The working group also considered the current boundary between the communities of Chepstow and Mathern near High Beech Lane which splits 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.
- 5.2. The working group also considered the arrangements to the west of the community up to the Parkwall roundabout. Whilst the group understood the that the current boundary between Caerwent, Mathern and Portskewett utilised the easily identifiable boundary of the M48, they felt that splitting the properties east of Caerwent along the A48 between Mathern and Portskewett did not lead to effective and convenient local government and it appeared that those properties were more closely associated with the Crick area of Caerwent than the communities that they are currently situated. The working group therefore propose to extend the eastern boundary of Caerwent up to, and including the properties on Parkwall Roundabout incorporating all properties adjacent to the A48 into the Caerwent area. The boundary will then follow the A48 up to the flyover of the M48 and return west along the M48. From there the

boundary will follow the drain northwards just south of Lavender Well Farm, where it will join and follow the edge of St Pierre Wood. All properties within this area including Runston Farm, Broadwell and Green Meadow Farm will be included in the Crick ward of Caerwent.

### **Internal Boundaries**

#### **Mathern**

5.3. Amendments to the Mathern ward include the changes as stated in 5. 5.1 and 5.2 above.

#### **Pwllmeyric & Mounton**

5.4. The working group considered the proposal from Mathern Community Council to incorporate Mounton House into the Pwllmeyric ward rather than the Mounton ward. The group agree with the proposal being forward and therefore propose that the boundary between the two wards is amended to follow the northern edge of Bigs Wood from St Lawrence Lane and follow the boundary of Mounton House. The boundary will return south following the stream to the rear of 'The Dene'.

### **Proposed Community and Community Ward Names**

6. The working group propose no change to the community and community ward names for Mathern but welcome representations as to more suitable names for the area.

### **Proposed Electoral Arrangements**

7. The working group consider the Mathern community to fall within the rural category for elector/councillor ratio resulting in an ideal ratio of 150 electors per councillor. The above changes to the community boundaries will result in the following electoral arrangements for the community.

Whilst the amendments to the internal boundaries result in a very low electorate for the Mounton ward, given the representations received from the local community councillor, the working group believe that the ward should retain its own representation in the community.

Whilst the working group understand that the community of Mathern is slightly less than the ideal 1,000 electors for a community as per the terms of reference for this review, the group consider the natural geography and channels of communication within the area lend itself to requiring its own community.

As per the Terms of Reference, it was agreed that a community must be represented by a minimum of seven councillors in order to conduct their business effectively. To that end, the Usk community will be represented by seven councillors rather than four as per the above ratio.

<b>Community Ward</b>	<b>Electorate</b>	<b>Number of Councillors</b>
Mathern	456	3
Mounton	27	1
Pwllmeyric	376	3

### **Working Group Individual Member Comments**

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

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