

## Proposed Warding Arrangements

### Introduction:

**This submission has been prepared by the Leader of Swale Borough Council, Andrew Bowles. It has the full support of the Swale Borough Council Cabinet Members, and the Conservative Group on the Council, and is also supported by the Sittingbourne and Sheppey Conservative Association and the Faversham and Mid Kent Conservative Association.**

### Principals used –

- The Borough Council desire to maintain as far as practicable the current number of 47 councillors in order to retain areas and electorate of a manageable size to encourage the widest range of candidates.
- To recognise the diversity of the Borough whilst keeping recognisable communities, Parish Council, Town Council, County Divisions and Parliamentary Constituency intact.
- To take account of major physical barriers such as 'A' roads and waterways in settling ward boundaries namely the Swale tidal waterway, Sheerness canal, A249 and A2 roads.
- To take account of LGBCE guidelines.

### Main considerations:

- Swale Borough Council comprises the mainland communities of Faversham and Sittingbourne and the Island of Sheppey which is separated by a tidal waterway known as The Swale. The A2 runs west to east through the Borough and the A249 south to north.
- The mainland area of Faversham and its rural parishes without is a heritage market town, whilst Sittingbourne is a largely industrial, commercial and residential area surrounded by rural parishes.
- Sheppey is an Island which is largely industrial to the west ie Sheerness and Queenborough; residential in the centre ie Minster-on-Sea Parish; rural to the east with many holiday parks and a large prison cluster ie the parishes of Eastchurch, Leysdown and Warden.

Of all the natural barriers, the one that would make least sense to cross is the tidal salt water stretch of the Swale. Based on the 2017 anticipated electorate of 101,366 if you divide this by 47 it gives the Isle of Sheppey an entitlement of 13.5 councillors, however if one was to increase the total number of councillors to 48 this would give 2014 electorate per councillor, this would entitle Sheppey to 13.8 Councillors. The increase to 48 members in total would also make it easier to deal with the current under-representation of the Sittingbourne area, therefore the following submission is based on 48 councillors, 14 on the island and 34 on the mainland.

The table below shows how the proposed warding arrangements reflect the three statutory criteria of:

1. Equality of representation
2. Reflecting Community Interests and Identities
3. Providing for Convenient and Effective Local Government

Please note:

The spreadsheet forecasts have been prepared using the mapping information provided by the GIS officer. This has been prepared by using the current electoral register (each property has a UPRN (unique property reference number)) which is matched against the LLPG. Please note that these figures may not match exactly with the spreadsheet previously provided with the Council Size submission as this is using the current electoral register, and also the

figures do not reflect elector franchise. In addition, the forecast calculation differs in that the estimate of dwelling increase has been multiplied by 1.8 and added to the existing electorate figure, to give the electorate forecast figure. This gives a total estimated electorate in 2017 of 101,817.

Maps and variance calculations are also submitted as part of this submission.

Ward Name	Number of Councillors	Forecast Electorate in 2017 based on new boundaries	Forecast Electoral Variance in 2017	Evidence and Rationale that the proposals meet the three statutory criteria
Abbey	2	4182	-1%	<p><b>Abbey Ward</b></p> <p>Abbey Ward has a 2017 projected electorate that is above the Swale average in a 48-seat council. The proposals <b>(a)</b> and <b>(b)</b> are suggested to reduce variance and rationalise boundaries.</p> <p><b>(a)</b> Abbey Ward's variance could be remedied by restoring the boundary between Abbey Ward and St Ann's Ward to the middle of Preston Street, thus transferring to St Ann's Ward:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) the part of Stone Street that is not already in St Ann's Ward (the eastern part from Bank Street to Preston Street). <b>ELECTORS: 18</b></li> <li>2) Bank Street <b>ELECTORS: 3</b></li> <li>3) Cross Lane <b>ELECTORS: 15</b></li> <li>4) Dorset Place <b>ELECTORS: 30</b></li> <li>5) Forbes Road (ie the Abbey Ward part of Forbes Road south of the railway line) <b>ELECTORS 3</b></li> <li>6) Hugh Place <b>ELECTORS 2</b></li> <li>7) Union Street <b>ELECTORS 35</b></li> <li>8) Victoria Place <b>ELECTORS 19</b></li> <li>9) The west side of Preston Street (including Limes Place) <b>ELECTORS 34</b></li> </ol> <p>These roads total 159 electors and their transfer from Abbey to St Ann's would reduce Abbey's Swale variance.</p> <p>The effect on St Ann's Ward would be to reduce its variance.</p> <p>The proposed change would restore the boundary between Abbey and St Ann's to what it was before the 2000 boundary review, in which big alterations to end the extreme over-representation of Davington Priory Ward had knock-on effects in the other three Faversham wards.</p>

				<p>The proposed change would reunite in one ward (St Ann's) the whole of Stone Street and various roads off it and create an understandable boundary running down the centre of Preston Street, which is Faversham's main shopping street and which has relatively little residential occupancy, and along the centre of Market Street (similarly little inhabited) to rejoin the existing Abbey/St Ann's boundary running down the centre of pedestrianised upper West Street.</p> <p>That the present Abbey/St Ann's boundary running down Dorset Place and Bank Street becomes unclear as it crosses the Central Car Park is indicated by the discovery during this 2011 review that there has for a decade been variation between the boundary map and the electoral registers. The St Ann's register includes Bedlington Square, Hugh Place, Leslie Smith Drive's sole residence and the south side of Market Street (a total of 23 people). These places were put into Abbey by the boundary map drawn in 2000, but appear never to have been switched from St Ann's to Abbey on the register.</p> <p>The proposed move of the St Ann's boundary eastward to Preston Street provides a clearer marker that should avoid confusion as well as improving variances.</p> <p><b>(b)</b> Abbey Ward can be brought closer to the target size by means of a further boundary change with Watling Ward.</p> <p>It is proposed that the boundary between Watling and Abbey, which in 2000 became the London-Canterbury railway line, should revert to being the London-Whitstable railway line, as it was before the 2000 review. This places the homes of more than 400 more electors back in Watling, virtually all of them on the Love Lane Estate with addresses in Love Lane (nearly 70), Ambleside (30), Buttermere (81), Ennerdale (69), Les Spicket Close (15) and Windermere (131).</p> <p>This reduces Abbey Ward's variance and would have an impact on Watling Ward's variance. The change would reunite Love Lane in one ward, Watling. The biggest element of housing in Love Lane, which is the Love Lane estate, facing Love Lane and extending along Windermere, is better related physically with the A2 or southern end of Love Lane, already in Watling Ward, than it is to the nearest part of Abbey Ward, from which it is separated by the large Faversham Cemetery.</p>
Borden	1	1979	-7%	<p>Borden is a village situated southwest of Sittingbourne, separated by a small area of rural land. The village centre is focussed around the church, dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul. A short distance is also the Church of England primary school, the local inn (The Maypole) and the soon-to-be finished Community Centre at the old</p>

				<p>forge. Within the parish are several hamlets, including Heart's Delight, Chestnut Street and Oad Street. Farming in the area is the main industry, although this has been in decline for many years due to the removal of most of the cherry and other fruit orchards and, more recently, building of new homes on the Dental Close and Maylam Gardens estates for example. Development in this part of the ward has grown the ward's ties with Sittingbourne, but its residents identify the ward as remaining largely rural and being separate from the main town.</p> <p>Based on the 2017 projected electorate, the ward is expected to be below the Swale average in a 48-seat council, which is permissible by the Boundary Commission. It is therefore proposed that the ward remain a one-member ward with the existing boundary not materially altered.</p> <p>The proposal below helps to reduce the variance and rationalise boundaries.</p> <p>1. Part of Maylam Gardens estate not currently in Borden Ward moved from Grove Ward to Borden Ward. Electors: <a href="#">55</a></p> <p>The transfer of the above properties reduces Borden ward's variance. The proposed change would result in the whole of the Maylam Gardens estate being included within Borden Ward (about 90% of the estate falls under Borden Ward under existing boundary arrangements). It would also remove the anomaly whereby those Maylam Gardens properties currently in Grove Ward can be accessed only through Borden Ward, contrary to the Commission's best practice when determining ward boundaries.</p>
Boughton and Courtney	2	4450	5%	<p>No changes proposed, the 6 parishes which form Boughton and Courtney Ward fall very close to the target figure as a 2 member ward. It has been a 2 member ward since 2001 and there are close ties within the villages. The boundary between the two largest parishes ie Boughton and Dunkirk is already very confused and poorly understood by many residents. Boughton, Dunkirk and Hernhill all share a vicar and many village societies operate across the three parishes. Selling and Sheldwich fall within the same ecclesiastic cluster and likewise share some village groups and societies.</p>
Chalkwell	2	4152	-2%	<p>It is proposed that the following streets be moved from Grove to Chalkwell Ward:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cavell Way</li> <li>2. Ashington Close</li> <li>3. Bourne Grove</li> <li>4. The east side of Staplehurst Road from the junction with the A2 extending north to where it crosses the railway line.</li> <li>5. The north side of the A2 from the junction of Staplehurst Road with the A2, extending east to the Coniston Hotel.</li> </ol>

				<p>This area forms a "corner" bounded by Staplehurst Road, the A2, and the existing Chalkwell ward.</p> <p>The proposed move of Cavell Way in to Chalkwell benefits those voters because Cavell Way is well connected to Chalkwell though a walkway in to Well Winch Road.</p> <p>Voters in Cavell Way can easily reach the New House polling station in Chalkwell Road, which is closer to them than Grove Park School where they currently go.</p> <p>On the south-side of the A2, it is proposed that Walnut Tree Drive and Lydbrook Close are included within the Chalkwell ward (previously in Grove).</p>
<p>Davington Priory</p> <p><b><i>Proposed name change to Priory</i></b></p>	1	2069	-2%	<p>Apart from the minor boundary adjustment (Faversham Creek/Stonebridge Pond) proposed under the St Ann's Ward heading, no change is proposed for Davington Priory Ward.</p> <p>This single-member ward's 2010 variation of -7% is forecast to shrink to -2.7% in 2017 through an increase of 136 in the electorate, reflecting a 62-unit residential development at the former Thomas Seager foundry site for which detailed planning consent was being sought at the end of 2011.</p> <p><b>Davington Priory Ward as proposed</b></p> <p>Priory Ward already has distinct boundaries. After the minor tidy-up suggested, these would be even clearer and would run from the confluence of Oare Creek and Faversham Creek, at Hollowshore in the north, up the middle of Faversham Creek, creating a boundary with Boughton &amp; Courtenay Ward, Abbey Ward and St Ann's Ward. Where the Creek meets Stonebridge Pond, the boundary would run along the north and west banks of the pond to join the existing boundary at the junction of Dark Hill and Davington Hill. From here, it would run westerly, as at present, taking in all Dark Hill and Bysing Wood Road houses and going on to meet the town's western boundary and to follow it north to run along the centre of Oare Creek to Hollowshore.</p> <p>At the heart of its urban area are Davington Primary School and Davington Church, bookending Priory Row, where a convenience store provides a further local focus. Between Priory Road and Faversham Creek is the Brents or North Preston former council estate, with a playschool next to the old Brents Church in Upper Brents and two nearby pubs.</p> <p>Countryside areas north and west of the ward's residential area are valued by ward residents as places to walk.</p>

				<p><b>Revision of the name of Davington Priory Ward</b></p> <p>Davington Priory Ward was originally known simply as Priory Ward when Faversham was first warded in 1966 and it is suggested that the shorter name be restored. It is unfortunate that this was not done in the 2000 redrawing of wards, when this ward lost a lot of the ecclesiastical parish of Davington.</p> <p><b>Drawbacks of the name Davington Priory Ward:</b></p> <p>1) Davington Priory is the name of an important historic house in the ward, the home of Bob Geldof, which is attached to Davington Church. Having a ward named after a private residence is unfortunate. The former name of Priory Ward acknowledged the house, and its visible presence on high ground, in a less direct manner and matched the themed naming of the other Faversham wards (Abbey, which includes the site of the former Faversham Abbey; Watling, which is centred on the old Watling Street, now the A2; and St Ann's, which includes the former St Ann's House and Park).</p> <p>2) The ecclesiastical parish of Davington, as well as including part of Davington Priory Ward, takes in nearly half of St Ann's Ward, this being the part of the ward approximately bounded by Stonebridge Way, Hazebrouck Road, the ward's western boundary and the ward's Bysing Wood Road boundary. This area of St Ann's includes the site of the former Davington Court (off Old Gate Road) and the Davington Cricket Club ground in Alexander Drive.</p> <p>3) The ecclesiastical parish of Davington also stretches out beyond Faversham town to take in much of the civil parish of Oare in Teynham and Lynsted Ward.</p> <p>4) Davington Priory Ward includes a large area that is not part of Davington. This is The Brents, or North Preston, which is the part of the ward between Priory Row and Faversham Creek. Dropping "Davington" from the ward name to leave a more general "Priory Ward" would be more inclusive towards The Brents.</p> <p><b>Name proposal</b></p> <p>It is proposed that the name of Davington Priory Ward revert to Priory Ward.</p>
East Downs	1	2120	0%	No change proposed. Any attempt to amalgamate into a two member ward would form a ward geographically too large. There are already close working relationships

				within the ward between Doddington and Newnham Parish Councils and in some cases also including Eastling Parish Council. The boundary between East Downs and both West Downs and Teynham and Lynsted is currently the parliamentary boundary and is recommended to stay so under the currently underway Parliamentary Boundary Review.
Grove	2	4189	-1%	<p>Grove Ward wraps conveniently around the Westlands secondary school and Grove Park Primary School in the Gadby Road area, and includes the whole of the Meads Estate north of the railway line.</p> <p>Both of the schools are well attended by children in all parts of the ward. The Meads is extensively joined with the southern half of the ward, with children attending the two schools and residents frequenting the Gadby Road shopping area via the "cattle arch" bridge under the railway line.</p> <p>The proposed western boundary follows the significant barrier of the A249 dual carriageway. The northern limit falls in the open fields to the north of Quinton Road.</p> <p>There are also some changes proposed that would move some roads from Grove to the Chalkwell and Woodstock wards, and these are set out in the text for those wards.</p>
Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch	2	4492	6%	No changes proposed.
Iwade and Lower Halstow  <b><i>Proposed name change to Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow</i></b>	2	4063	-4%	This ward becomes a 2 member ward by taking the rural part of what is currently Grove Ward which forms a large part of Bobbing Parish. This would recognise the A249 as a natural boundary to the east.
Kemsley	2	4484	6%	Reduced in size back to approximately 2001 boundaries by removing those roads to the south of Atlee Way back into Milton Regis. (Roads moving out of Kemsley Ward: Foxgrove, Phillippa Court, Esther Court, Burnham Close, Clement Close, Hambrook Way, Vectis Drive, Whimbrel Close, Western side of Grovehurst Road up to the Atlee Way junction)
Leysdown and Warden  <b><i>Proposed name change to Eastern</i></b>	2	4011	-5%	To be renamed as Eastern Ward as it was prior to 2001. ie by re-amalgamating with Eastchurch Parish. The three parish councils to the east of the island ie Eastchurch Leysdown and Warden Bay have a long tradition of working together and Eastchurch has always felt itself to more akin to Leysdown and Warden than to Minster Parish.
Milton Regis	2	4109	-3%	See Kemsley above, return to its historical northern boundary by additions from Kemsley.

Minster Cliffs	3	5816	-9%	Loses those residencies to the north and east of Plough Road to Sheppey Central, to maintain 2 three member wards within tolerances.
Murston	2	4392	4%	No changes proposed.
Queenborough and Halfway	3	5921	-7%	No Changes proposed. Note Queenborough is too large to form a single member ward on its own and Halfway too small to become a two member ward.
Roman	2	4172	-2%	Gains some 400 electors from St Michael's in the vicinity of East Street and St Michael's Road.
Sheppey Central	3	6295	-1%	See Leysdown and Warden and Minster Cliffs. Loses the parish of Eastchurch to the newly created Eastern Ward. Gains electorate in the vicinity of Plough Road and Minster Cliffs.
Sheerness East and Sheerness West amalgamated to one 3 member ward.  <b>Proposed name change to Sheerness</b>	3	7481	18%	<p>The conurbation of Sheerness town is bounded by the sea to the north, extensive marshland to the south, canals from the Napoleonic era to the east and heavy industrial sites including Sheerness deep port to the west. In all it is a very concentrated and cohesive community centred around the retail area of the High Street, train station, swimming pool, Healthy Living Centre, the County Youth Centre and numerous religious centres.</p> <p>The area of Sheerness town is considered by the residents as a single community with a single identity, clearly delineated by natural boundaries of sea, rural marshland and canals with little possibility of expansion or morphing into other areas over the next 5 to 10 years. Therefore, it is logical to combine Sheerness East and West to form Sheerness Town as one ward of 3 members. There is a clear community desire to establish a town council based on these boundaries.</p>
St Ann's	2	4100	-3%	<p>Apart from proposal (a) under the Abbey Ward heading, which improves St Ann's variation ,only one minor adjustment is proposed for St Ann's Ward, this relating to its boundary with Davington Priory Ward at Faversham Creek and Stonebridge Pond.</p> <p>The boundary between St Ann's Ward and Davington Priory Ward needs adjustment in the area of Faversham Creek and Stonebridge Pond. Before boundary changes in 2000, a boundary between these two wards ran along the centre of the Creek from the Creek bridge (Bridge Road) and continued the line of the boundary between Davington Priory Ward and Abbey Ward, which remained unaltered, running through the middle of the Creek.</p> <p>The 2000 changes took the Davington Priory Ward / St Ann's boundary along Brent Road and up Brent Hill, extending St Ann's to the other side of the water. St Ann's thus acquired a lot of non-residential land (factory car park and allotments) beside those roads even though that land was separated from the rest of St Ann's by the Creek and Stonebridge Pond.</p> <p>Only two properties are affected, 1 and 2 Brent Hill Cottages, which were switched by</p>

			<p>the 2000 boundaries map from Davington Priory Ward to St Ann's Ward even though they clearly have more to do with Davington Priory Ward. Properties on the opposite side of Brent Hill are in Davington Priory Ward.</p> <p>This is a complicated piece of territory where the tidal Creek meets the stream-fed pond, which has a maze of man-made channels between islands within it.</p> <p>It is suggested that the Priory/St Ann's boundary should be restored to the middle of the Creek until it reaches Stonebridge Pond and then should run along the northern and western banks of the pond to meet its existing point at the junction of Dark Hill and Davington Hill. That will end the illogicality of St Ann's crossing the water and annexing 1 and 2 Brent Hill Cottages.</p> <p>Granted the complicated channels within the pond and the need to avoid an inadvertent annexing into Priory Ward of Stonebridge Lodge in West Street, on the south side of the pond, this would be the clearest and safest boundary line to take.</p> <p><b>St Ann's Ward as proposed</b></p> <p>Apart from the tidy-ups between Dorset Place and Preston Street and at Faversham Creek/Stonebridge Pond, the ward would be unchanged. It would retain the achievement of the 2000 review in uniting the St Ann's Park estate, the late-1960s development including Stonebridge Way and Beech Close that was built largely in the grounds of the former St Ann's House between the Stonebridge Pond section of West Street, South Road and Lower Road, onto which three roads it presents front doors.</p> <p>St Ann's Ward is clearly delineated, largely by roads and railway lines, and the proposed adjustments would increase this clarity. The ward would have railway line as a boundary in the south between the Preston Street subway and the Ospringe Road railway bridge before the boundary runs north to include Ospringe Road north of the railway bridge and Lower Road as far as the Lower Road Play Area (the play area forming a natural break in the long Lower Road after the inclusion in St Ann's of the Lower Road southern frontage of the St Ann's Park estate and of the 1930s housing opposite it). From the Lower Road Play Area, the St Ann's line runs south of Hazebrouck Road to enclose the various housing estates south of Bysing Wood Road (which are well-linked by a network of footpaths as well as roads) as it goes westward to the town boundary west of the Western Link. It returns behind houses facing Bysing Wood Road and Dark Hill to run along the western and northern shores of Stonebridge Pond and thence along the centre of Faversham Creek until Bridge Road, along North Lane and along the centre of the shopping streets of upper West</p>
--	--	--	--

				<p>Street, Market Street and Preston Street up to the Preston Street railway subway.</p> <p>St Ann's is a cohesive ward well linked by footpaths and interconnecting roads. The boundaries encompass identifiable estates and avoid splitting them. Community services are well evidenced from the Cottage Hospital and Health Centre, Faversham Pools, The Almshouses, Faversham Youth Centre, the Gospel Mission, and the cricket club at Alexander Drive.</p>
St Michael's	2	4043	-5%	See Roman Ward.
Teynham and Lynsted	2	4210	-1%	No changes proposed. Clear community identity between those rural parishes fronting or crossing the A2 Watling Street.
Watling	2	4518	6%	<p>Apart from changes under Abbey Ward's heading to reduce Abbey's large variance, which consequently alters Watling's variance, no change is proposed for Watling.</p> <p><b>Watling Ward as proposed</b></p> <p>Watling Ward would remain based around the A2 (former Watling Street). After the proposed Abbey Ward change reuniting Love Lane in Watling Ward, the features of Watling will be as follows.</p> <p>The eastern, southern and western limits of Watling are the town boundaries.</p> <p>Watling Ward's northern boundary will for the most part be provided by the London-Whitstable railway before heading north at the Ospringe Road railway bridge, as at present, to include all of the former council estate based on Lion Field, Wallers Road and St Nicholas Road, together with the western end of Lower Road, which runs alongside the estate. The estate and the west end of Lower Road have a focal point at a small parade of shops in Lower Road at its junction with Roebuck Road. The boundary with St Ann's Ward crosses Lower Road at the Lower Road Play Area and the junction with Lion Field, a natural break in the very long Lower Road.</p> <p>Venues serving the Watling Ward community and fostering ward identity include St Catherine's Church (Preston Church) and the associated Preston Schoolroom community hall, the Ethelbert Road Junior School and the King George V Playing Field.</p>
West Downs	1	2020	-5%	No changes proposed.
Woodstock	2	4077	-4%	It is proposed that Adelaide Drive, Sydney Avenue, Perth Gardens, Hobart Gardens, Brisbane Avenue, Cryols Lane and Somerset Close are moved from Grove ward to Woodstock ward.