

## Telford and Wrekin Borough Council

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### Comment text:

The Telford and Wrekin Council Liberal Democrat Group wish to comment on a number of the current proposals for Telford and Wrekin Borough.

**NEWPORT** We fully support the Commission's proposals for Newport being divided into four single member wards which we believe is far preferable to the current two member wards that exist.

**SHAWBIRCH AND DOTHILL** We object to the proposal to join Shawbirch and Dothill into a single two member ward. Shawbirch is a distinct community with its own shopping centre complete with Doctors and Dentist. Although on a map it may appear adjacent to Dothill, in fact there are no roads that directly link Shawbirch to Dothill – and to drive from Shawbirch to Dothill requires a journey of nearly two miles, including some travel through the adjoining parish of Hadley and Leegomery. Single member wards allow communities and electors to identify more closely with their councillor and should be adopted wherever possible. In the event that retaining single member wards leaves Shawbirch with low numbers, this may be addressed by moving a small area from the existing Dothill ward to Shawbirch: the new development at the Charlton School site will increase the size of Dothill ward.

**APLEY CASTLE AND LEEGOMERY** We object to the current proposals for a new two member Apley Castle and Leegomery ward. Apley Castle ward was formed in 2003 when the then boundary commission recognised it's specific identity and created it as a separate ward. Apley Castle and Leegomery are formed from different demographics and remain two distinct communities. Apley Castle has grown in size and identity and now has a separate Apley postal address which cements its identity. Residents in Apley Castle look towards Wellington and Shawbirch for their local shopping and community interests and in the main send their children to Apley Wood Primary School, while for Leegomery, Hadley is the local shopping and community hub and children attend Millbrook Primary School in Leegomery. There has been strong support from the local residents and councillors to retain Apley Castle ward, believing that merging Apley Castle with Leegomery would be a backward step bringing no benefit to either community. We propose that Apley Castle is retained as a single member ward and that Leegomery remains as part of a combined 3 member Hadley and Leegomery ward, with a possible transfer of electors from the area around Berberis Drive which is on the opposite side of Leegate Avenue to the majority of Apley and was previously part of Hadley and Leegomery until more recent boundary changes.

**KETLEY AND KETLEY BANK** We object to the proposals to create a single two member ward for these two communities. Although Ketley and Ketley Bank adjoin one another and partly share the same name, they are in fact very distinct communities and share little in common. Ketley Bank has a much closer connection to Okengates. We propose that Ketley Bank is united with Okengates in a borough ward and that Ketley is created as a one member ward.

**MADELEY AND SUTTON HILL** We object to the current proposals to split the communities of Madeley and Sutton Hill. There is a strong historic link between the two communities with many residents having family living across the two communities. While we would normally argue for single member ward arrangements in general, the current representation arrangements appear to work well and we propose that Madeley and Sutton Hill be reunited in a single ward.

**HORSEHAY COMMON / HORSEHAY POOL** We have concerns about merging the Horsehay Common and Horsehay Pool area into Dawley and Aqueduct. This area is very much part of the Horsehay community, and includes Horsehay village hall. Dawley has an urban character (reflected by its Town Council), whereas Horsehay is very much a village. Residents are likely to have very different interests and concerns. We realise that it would be difficult to include this area within a single-member Horsehay & Lightmoor ward without significantly surpassing the preferred 10% threshold for equality of representation. If this cannot be achieved, consideration should be given either to splitting the area between Lawley and Horsehay & Lightmoor, or including it within Lawley ward (which we believe can incorporate the area without surpassing the 10% threshold). Lawley historically has a similar rural character to Horsehay. Although there is now substantial development in Lawley, it has a more suburban than urban character and shares the local concerns typical of a village (such as relatively

poor public transport links). Lawley is the natural shopping centre for residents of this area, due to the A5223 (it is linked to Dawley only via minor roads).

**Uploaded Documents:**

None Uploaded