

Sefton

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Related subject: Crosby/Formby (and ward names more generally)

See attachment.

Attached Documents:

- seftonnames.pdf

Comments on ward boundaries and names in Sefton

March 7, 2024

1 Introduction

This is a submission to the Sefton ward boundary review. I will make some alternative suggestions for boundaries in the Formby and Crosby areas, and also make some suggestions about ward names.

2 Alternative boundaries around Formby and Crosby

The suggestions in this section respond to some of the representations mentioned in the report, in particular to the suggestion for a north/south split of Formby and to the suggestion for a “Crosby Village” ward.

Ince Blundell

I find the inclusion of the parish of Ince Blundell in a Formby ward odd. This is a rural parish, and is not that strongly associated with Formby; rather it has more in common with the neighbouring areas in the proposed “Manor” ward such as Little Crosby, the rural parts of Thornton parish and even Sefton village, and it would make sense to include all of these more rural parts of the borough in the same ward. The electorate of Ince Blundell is low enough that it can be separated from Formby without serious consequences for electoral equality in the two Formby wards.

The Crosby area

Adding Ince Blundell to the proposed “Manor” ward, however, does make that ward have too high an electorate. To solve that problem, I propose removing the more urbanised areas of polling district N2, close to central Crosby. (See Figure 1 for my suggested split of this polling district.) This area was one of

the areas proposed for inclusion in a “Crosby Village” ward, and I suggest that modifying the proposed “Victoria” ward can produce a reasonable approximation to that suggestion and create a ward based on the core of Great Crosby. To get closer to that I propose adding areas of polling districts M3 and M4 close to the centre of Great Crosby but currently in the Blundellsands ward, while transferring areas west of College Road (as suggested by the Liberal Democrats) to Blundellsands ward and Waterloo wards: see Figure 2 for my suggested boundary.

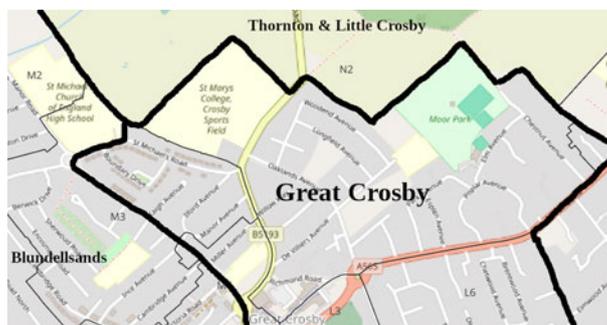


Figure 1: Proposed boundary between Great Crosby and Thornton & Little Crosby wards. This map uses Ordnance Survey data from their Boundary Line product for current polling districts and OpenStreetMap mapping.

I have also suggested some new names here, as none of the current names “Church”, “Victoria” and “Manor” actually identify the communities in the relevant wards. For my versions, I suggest, respectively, Waterloo, Great Crosby and Thornton & Little Crosby; the first and last of these at least would also be appropriate for the versions in the draft recommendations.

Formby

Within Formby, I note the suggestion for a north/south split of the town. I feel that this would make more sense, with the north-eastern part of the town a little out on a limb in its current ward.

Additionally, something curious has happened with the names here. The name Raven Meols (usually written on maps as two words) refers to an area in the south-west of Formby, with the dunes in this area being known as Raven Meols Hills. This is clearly shown, for example, on the 1946 map at <https://maps.nls.uk/view/196757045>, which also shows the then Raven Meols ward of Formby, which was based on that area. (It also appears on current mapping.) However, this area is not in the proposed (or existing) Ravenmeols ward: at some point this ward has lost the area its name originally referred to.

A possible boundary for a north-south split appears in Figure 3. Essentially this transfers polling districts Q4 and Q5 (including the Raven Meols area) back into the Ravenmeols ward which takes its name from that area, and transfer polling district P1 to Harington ward, which I suggest renaming Freshfield after the widely used name for north Formby, though I suggest departing slightly from the polling district boundaries where that produces a clearer boundary. Additionally, I’ve prefixed both names with the town name.



Figure 2: Proposed boundary between Great Crosby and Blundellsands and Waterloo wards. This map uses Ordnance Survey data from their Boundary Line product for current polling districts and OpenStreetMap mapping.

Proposed wards

To sum up, I suggest the following wards in this area. As several polling districts are split, the forecast electorates are estimated.

Thornton & Little Crosby This ward would replace the proposed “Manor” ward, including in addition Ince Blundell but excluding the area immediately north of central Crosby; the boundary is shown in Figure 1. This ward covers Hightown, Little Crosby, Thornton, some areas on the fringe of Great Crosby adjoining Thornton, and Sefton village, with Ince Blundell added in my suggestion. None of these areas has a prominent Manor and so the name “Manor” does not identify this area. My suggested name describes most of it reasonably well without being excessively long. Polling districts N1, N2 (rural parts), N3 (most), N4, N5, N6, B6, P6. Approximate forecast electorate 10173.

Great Crosby This ward would be based on central Crosby and replace the proposed “Victoria” ward, adding areas immediately to the north of central Crosby but removing areas closer to the coast west of College Road. The current “Victoria” name appears to refer to Victoria Park, which is not in my version of the ward, and even for the proposed ward is rather confusing as there are many other “Victoria” references, many of which are not in the ward, such as Victoria Road and Victoria Avenue. The ward is based on the core of Great Crosby, so that would be my choice of name. Polling districts L1 (east of College Road), L2 (east of College Road), L3, L4, L5, L6, N2 (urban

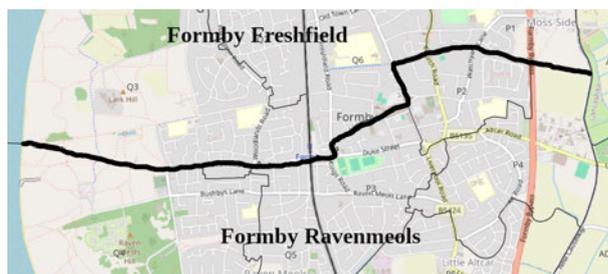


Figure 3: Proposed boundary between Formby Ravenmeols and Formby Freshfield wards. This map uses Ordnance Survey data from their Boundary Line product for current polling districts and OpenStreetMap mapping.

area in south), N3 (small part NW of Moor Lane), M3 (east of Manor Road), M4 (east of Manor Road/Islington). Approximate forecast electorate 10637.

Blundellsands This is based on the proposed ward but excludes some areas close to central Crosby and replaces them with areas in polling district L2 west of College Road. Polling districts L2 (west of College Road), M1, M2, M3 (west of Manor Road), M4 (west of Manor Road/Islington), M5, M6. Approximate forecast electorate 9815.

Waterloo This is based on the proposed “Church” ward but adds the areas in polling district L1 west of College Road. “Church” is a very generic name and, while there are of course churches here, there seems no reason to specifically use it for this part of the borough. Indeed, the name “Church” has been used in the past for a completely different area of the borough, as shown on the 1953 map at <https://maps.nls.uk/view/196757732>. Much of this ward covers the community of Waterloo, and I would suggest that, both for my proposal and the draft recommendation, that gives a much more useful and identifiable name. As in draft recommendations plus polling district L1 west of Manor Road. Approximate forecast electorate 10278.

Formby Ravenmeols This would not include Ince Blundell or north-eastern Formby, but would include the Raven Meols area in south-west Formby. Polling districts P2, P3, P4, P5, Q4, Q5 (almost all), Q3 (small area south of Kirklake Road), Q6 (small area close to Formby Library). Approximate forecast electorate 10045.

Formby Freshfield This would simply cover the northern part of Formby; it is based on the Harington ward but with the north-east of the town replacing the Raven Meols area in the south-west. Polling districts P1, Q1, Q2, Q3 (almost all), Q4 (small areas north of Kirklake Road, Q6 (almost all). Approximate forecast electorate 9982.

3 Ward names

Many of the names proposed appear to have been proposed only because of continuity, with no indication of how they describe the communities in the wards. In some cases they are so vague that they are essentially meaningless as geographical references, and in a couple of other cases there are clear original geographical meanings of the names but they do not fit the wards. This can lead to poor levels of

identification with the wards, which in my view shows up in some of the representations which have been commented on in the report. Adopting names which better describe the communities in the wards should improve understanding of the electoral geography.

I've covered the names of wards around Crosby and Formby where this applies in the previous section; in this section I'll concentrate on the south of the borough.

3.1 The Maghull area

It is noted in the report that the Liberal Democrats proposed the name **Lydiate & Maghull West** instead of "Park". I support this proposal. "Park" is a particularly poor name; there are many parks in the borough and no particular reason why it is suitable to describe the communities in this ward. The proposed name is a much better description.

In addition I support replacing the name "Sudell" with **Maghull East**, which would match the previous name and give a clearer description. It is not clear why "Sudell" is used specifically for eastern Maghull: the Sudell Brook, which forms the boundary of the borough, is mostly not in this ward, and the part of Sudell Lane which is in the borough is in the previously discussed proposed Park ward.

Finally, in this area, the proposed "Molyneux" ward also contains part of Maghull, and I would suggest that the name **Aintree & Maghull South** gives a much clearer description and refers to the very well known community of Aintree.

3.2 The Netherton area

Much of the Netherton area is in the proposed "St Oswald" ward, not the "Netherton & Orrell" ward. Indeed the original settlement of Netherton was in the Netherton Green area, in the north of the proposed St Oswald ward, and many institutions which use Netherton in their names, for example Netherton Health Centre and several others in the Marian Square area, and Netherton Moss Primary School, are also in the proposed St Oswald ward. I propose the name **Netherton St Oswald** to reflect this.

For the proposed "Netherton & Orrell" ward, I suggest **Netherton East & Orrell**, reflecting it including the Orrell area in the south and the eastern side of the general Netherton area in the north.