

Thanet

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Related subject: RAMSGATE

I would like to propose that the review for Ramsgate, within Thanet District Council. takes into account three overarching factors:

- 1) The need for councillors to be able to focus on the most important priorities for their wards in Ramsgate.
- 2) The topography of the wards in Ramsgate.
- 3) The importance of acknowledging and celebrating the heritage and history of Ramsgate – including for the choice of ward names.

The aim of the application of these factors is to mitigate the reduction in the number of councillors and the risk of councillors being spread too thinly on a very wide range of issues. The second factor also aims to call attention to the effect of the proximity to the coastline for many marine wards, and especially in Ramsgate, that tends to heavily influence the types of issues different wards face.

The third factor highlights the opportunity to promote and engender civic pride through ward naming in a town with significant heritage assets. For example, Ramsgate has the only Royal Harbour (in the world, not just the UK) and yet the existing ward around that area is called Central Harbour (which could be anywhere)... so why not call this ward, Royal Harbour?

Ramsgate has undergone considerable change since the last review of ward boundaries in 2001. In particular, this includes the recognition of the

key role of the town's history and heritage in its regeneration and economic growth. The once derelict seafront now hosts the Royal Sands apartments. JD Wetherspoon, following a £5 million renovation in 2017, opened its largest site at the Royal Pavilion, a Grade II Edwardian concert hall on the seafront, previously on the Heritage At Risk register.

Also in 2017, Ramsgate was the first of ten towns, and the first in the south east, to be designated a Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). In 2019 Ramsgate became one of only six out of 82 towns to also have a High Street Heritage Action Zone. The Ramsgate Conservation Area covers most of the historic town, "It extends to 12.2 km² and is the largest conservation area in Kent...with more than 200 listed buildings, in the vicinity of the harbour,... the largest concentration for a town in the south east." Ramsgate has 451 listed buildings and structures in total, together with a Registered Historic Park and an Anglo Saxon Scheduled Monument (all figures from Historic England).

The town has become home to three museums of national significance and international importance: The National Pugin Centre (The Grange restoration was completed by The Landmark Trust in 2010); Ramsgate Tunnels have now been open for ten years, and the 5.41 meridian Clock House is being restored as a heritage centre for the Royal Harbour, which will cover the town's maritime history and its relationship with the Channel and Goodwin Sands. The Royal Harbour has recently been awarded National Heritage Harbour status and over the next two years will host the 85th anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuation and the Tall Ships Regatta.

This is all very positive and despite some very difficult challenges, Ramsgate's situation has measurably improved since 2001. However, behind the conservation and marine areas that have attracted many well-off out-of-town residents (especially during the pandemic), the town still has significant areas of deprivation, with a number of LSOAs which are in the most deprived quintile in Kent.

The proposed new wards aim to address this 'split' in the town. Where possible, ward boundaries should separate the more prosperous areas from those that are more deprived, allocating more councillors per population measure to the latter. This is will become all the more important as the number of members is reduced, with the risk of councillors being spread too thinly on a very wide range of issues becoming even greater than before.

Taking into account the three factors, I have attached a proposed map of roughly outlined boundaries [PROPOSED WARDS 2024.pdf](#)>. These do not take into account the actual population figures (current or future projected) of the areas, but aim to show how the proposed points could be applied.

The number of wards has been reduced from seven to five, and the total number of ward councillors from 16 to 12.

East Cliff Montefiore (2 councillors)
St Lukes and Hereson (3 councillors)
Royal Harbour (2 councillors)

St Lawrence and Pegwell (2 councillors)
Newington and Northwood (3 councillors)

NEW WARDS: East Cliff Montefiore (2 councillors); St Lukes and Hereson (3 councillors)

Unlike almost all other parts of Thanet, the current Eastcliff (2 councillors) and Sir Moses Montefiore (2 councillors) wards divide continuous stretch of coastline in Thanet, which at the seafront is also one of Ramsgate's Conservation Character Areas (CCA): Ramsgate East Cliff. This CCA also 'fronts' an area inland of significant deprivation.

Since 2001, the Ramsgate East Cliff CCA has become increasingly prosperous, with the opening of a boutique hotel, multiple premium holiday lets, and increases in the number of listed buildings and properties, including a rare upgrade to Grade II*. The most prevalent issues appear to concern beach management, parks, street cleaning and conservation and planning. This has inevitably distracted councillors from deprivation issues.

The new East Cliff Montefiore marine ward would cover the coastal sections of current Eastcliff (3 councillors) and Sir Moses Montefiore (2 councillors) wards. The inland area of these two wards would form another new ward, St Lukes and Hereson (2 councillors) – so effectively turning the two existing wards 90 degrees, so they are 'landscape' rather than 'portrait' to the coastline. The East Cliff Montefiore ward name, reflects the heritage of the two areas and provides a unique moniker. St Lukes and Hereson (2 councillors) recognises the long-standing strong parish community and the 17th century village of Hereson, now marked by the main road between Ramsgate and Broadstairs.

NEW WARD: Royal Harbour (2 councillors)

The existing ward, Central Harbour (3 councillors) focuses on the marina and extends a long way back into the town. A new marine ward, Royal Harbour, would extend west along the coastline to include the Ramsgate West Cliff CCA. As with East Cliff Montefiore, this area has become increasingly prosperous, despite countryside-common town centre issues. It is also important that Ramsgate port matters are not separated from those for the harbour and marina to ensure operational effectiveness and efficiency. The new ward name reflects the status of the harbour as the only Royal Harbour, not just in the UK, but in the world.

NEW WARDS: St Lawrence and Pegwell (2 councillors); Newington and Northwood (3 councillors)

The new St Lawrence and Pegwell ward would roughly combine two existing wards: Cliffsend and Pegwell (2 councillors) and Nethercourt (2 councillors). The new name would reflect the ancient precedent of the parish of St Lawrence, and that of Pegwell Bay – the historic landing place of Julius Caesar, St Augustine and the Anglo Saxon invaders.

The new Newington and Northwood ward would combine two existing wards: Newington (3 councillors) and Northwood (2 councillors). Although these areas have been mainly developed since the Second World War, they both have very strong identities and share common issues – more recent housing and new builds, limited local amenities.

Attached Documents:

- ramsgate-five-new-proposed-wards-2024.pdf

RAMSGATE FIVE NEW PROPOSED WARDS 2024

