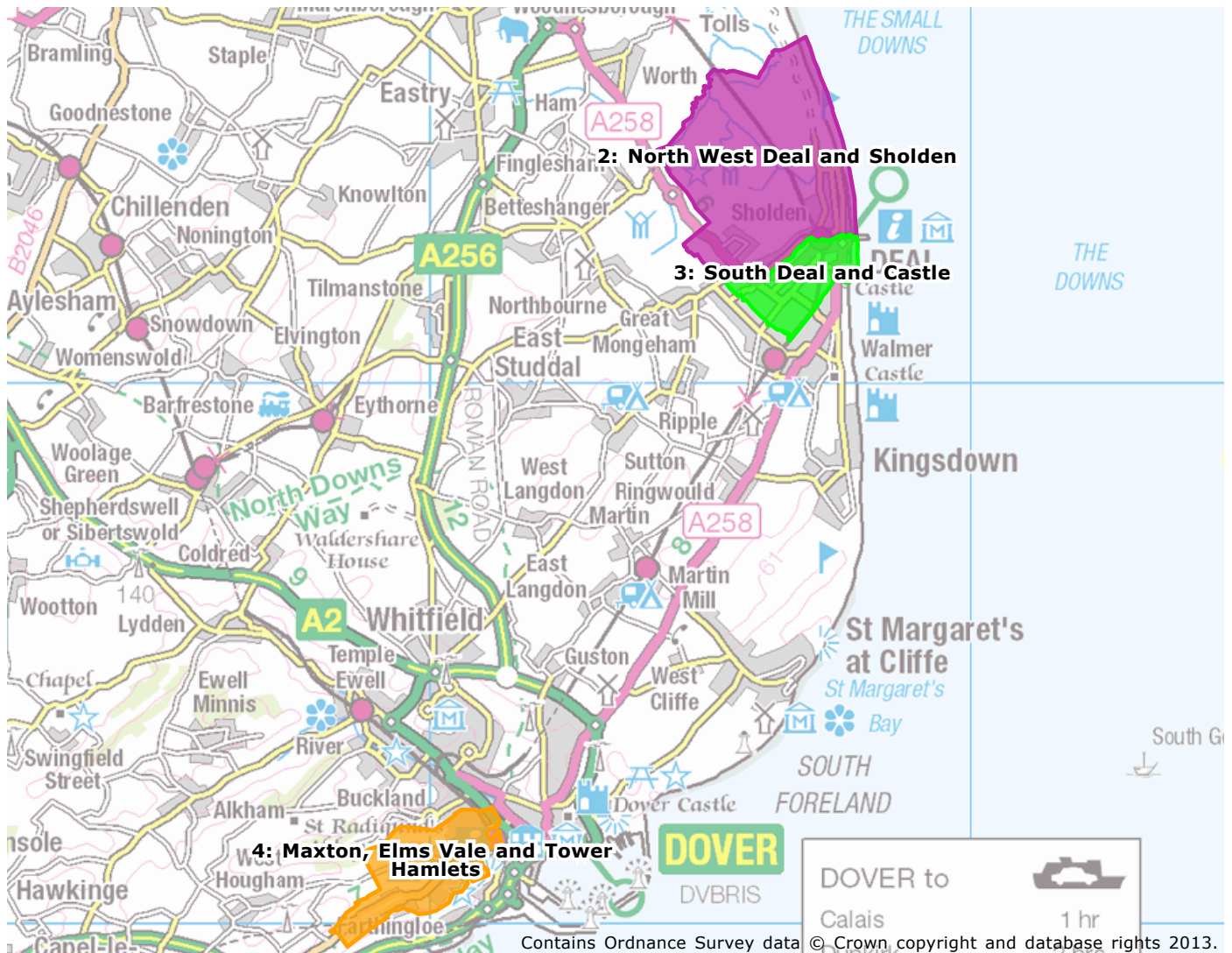


Dover District**Personal Details:**

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Organisation Name: Dover and Deal Conservative Association

Feature Annotations**Map Features:**

- Annotation 2: North West Deal and Sholden
- Annotation 3: South Deal and Castle
- Annotation 4: Maxton, Elms Vale and Tower Hamlets

Comment text:

Dover and Deal Conservative Association largely supports the proposal submitted by Dover District Council but makes different proposals in some wards and submits additional evidence. In Dover, we concur that it would be inappropriate and unnecessary to have wards which cross the external boundaries of the Dover Town Council area as electoral equality can be maintained without diminishing the delivery of convenient and effective local government that cross border wards might cause. We considered a ward encompassing all of the seafront area and the activities of the Port of Dover but the electors in that area have no significant interaction with port operations there being no concentration of employment in maritime trades which instead draw their workers from across Dover District and beyond. Instead we support the inclusion of all town centre activities in one ward which will enable members representing that ward to better understand the specific issues such an area generates. To create a ward that includes the somewhat separate community of Aycliffe with enough electors to form a ward we support its combination with the distinctive, concentrated and cohesive Clarendon area. Before doing so we carefully considered the interactions between Clarendon and its neighbouring areas and concluded that Westbury and Winchelsea are as likely to associate themselves with Maxton as with Clarendon. We recognise that Dover communities are defined by their valley topography but their elector numbers don't match or readily combine into wards that don't cause electoral divergence. In determining which combinations best matched the statutory criteria we looked at and rejected other options and support the inclusion of those furthest from the town centre, namely Buckland and St. Radigund's, into one ward. That leaves Maxton, Elms Vale & Tower Hamlets to which we

propose adding those streets west of the railway to better preserve to community cohesion of the Tower Hamlets area. Priory Hill and The Abbots sit on a ridge above the Tower Hamlets valley with the easiest route therefrom being directly into the town centre so they are retained in a Dover Central ward. This adds 149 electors to the proposed Maxton, Elms Vale and Tower Hamlets ward which remains within the target 10% variance and reduces the proposed Dover Central ward by 149. In the Deal urban area which currently has four 3 member wards it would be easy to assume that the solution is to reduce each of them to 2 member wards. But they have and are experiencing varying rates of change in electoral numbers both between themselves and compared to the district average. That would leave the area significantly under represented with 8 members or over represented with 9 members. Also, with housing developments on the edge of Deal spilling over from Church Lane into Sholden parish, merely removing Sholden into a rural ward results in a large number of electors with no internal road connection other than through a Deal ward. Politicians are susceptible to assuming that existing wards represent established and settled communities because they only deal with them on a political level. Reflecting on, for example, how electors in Sydney Road, Sholden Bank and Fiveways Rise relate in their daily lives to a "Mill Hill" community debunks that assumption with most only entering the area when they are forced to a polling station on election days. We therefore support the approach of treating Deal as blank canvas. Given that removing Sholden creates issues that challenge LGBCE's technical guidance we support the proposal to include Kingsdown village in the Deal urban area to increase the electorate to a level which justifies 9 members and allows division into three 3 member wards. Before reorganisation Kingsdown was included within the Municipal Borough of Deal and is served only by Deal town buses. Given that it abuts part of the built area of Walmer it is logical to include it in a predominantly Walmer ward. We recognise that a solely Walmer ward would score well on delivering effective and convenient local government but less well on electoral equality and make it difficult to meet the statutory criteria in neighbouring areas. We therefore support the configuration of the proposed Walmer and Kingsdown ward except that we propose excluding a small number of houses at the top of Mill Hill reducing the electorate by 81. In addition to Sholden having new estates with no internal road connection to the core village the parish also has a coastal population with no internal road connection to either of the other parts, only to a different part of Deal. We therefore support a ward that incorporates all the parts of Deal that abut Sholden. To best achieve that we propose a somewhat different boundary between the other two Deal wards compared to the Council's proposal. Given that the northern ward includes parts of Deal that are in the existing North Deal ward but excludes other parts and includes parts of Deal that were not in the current North Deal ward we propose that it be given the name of a different compass ordinal point that also better reflects elector perceptions of the part of Deal they reside in; North West Deal and Sholden ward. Compared to the Council's proposed North Deal & Sholden ward our version has 618 fewer electors and South Deal & Castle ward 618 more electors plus the 81 from Walmer and Kingsdown totalling 699. Given that future housing growth is most likely to be around Sholden this gives the new warding arrangements a greater chance of longevity before electoral inequality exceeds guidelines. We considered a 2 member Capel and River ward including the easier road access between Alkham and River compared to Alkham and Capel. However the route of least resistance between Capel and River would involve using main roads through Dover wards. We therefore support the Council's proposed single member Capel, Hougham & Alkham ward. We also considered combining River with the existing Lydden & Temple Ewell ward but are persuaded that Temple Ewell electors in particular have sufficient concerns that their interests would become subservient to those of the more populous River. We therefore support the Council's proposed single member River ward which, being coterminous with River parish council boundaries, has effective and convenient local government delivery benefits. We therefore also support the proposed 2 member ward which includes the existing Lydden & Temple Ewell ward and most of Eythorne and Shepherdswell ward but propose that the name should be Temple Coldred ward to reflect the Knights Templar heritage in the area. We strongly support the inclusion of Elvington village in an Aylesham ward as the only solution for a ward including Aylesham that comes close to meeting the statutory criteria. With the increase in average electors per councillor Little Stour & Ashstone ward would readily split into two single member wards. However that would leave the member for a Wingham ward with 5 parish councils to keep in contact with while the member for Ash would have only one. We consider that in this situation convenient and effective local government will be better served by members sharing parish council duties as they do now and support the proposed 2 member ward. We note that with new developments the existing Sandwich ward will have too many electors for 2 members while Sandwich town on its own will have too few. Of the two neighbouring villages currently in the ward, the Sandwich Bay part of Worth only has internal road connections through Sandwich so we support the removal of Woodnesborough into a different ward. It could be included in Little Stour and Ashstone but electoral equality would demand that Staple and Goodnestone be warded elsewhere. Doing so would mean that the statutory criteria would fit less well for Staple in particular with its close links to Ash and Wingham than warding Woodnesborough with Eastry as proposed and this has our support. Eastry and Woodnesborough alone have too many electors for a single member ward so we can support the inclusion of 4 additional small parishes to the south to justify a 2 member ward. Despite the large number of new houses allocated in the Local Plan, Whitfield parish is not forecast to have enough electors by 2023 to meet electoral equality tests for 2 members on its own. We have examined the options of combining Whitfield with Guston parish or Langdon and Ripple parishes and Ringwold village as the Council proposes. With Guston also having a large amount of new housing allocated we see the marginal benefit in keeping Whitfield and Guston apart to increase the longevity of the new ward arrangement should the pace of housing completions accelerate and support the Council's proposals for a 2 member Whitfield Rural ward and a single member St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe ward except that we would propose it be called St. Margaret's and Guston.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded