

Gillingham Town Council

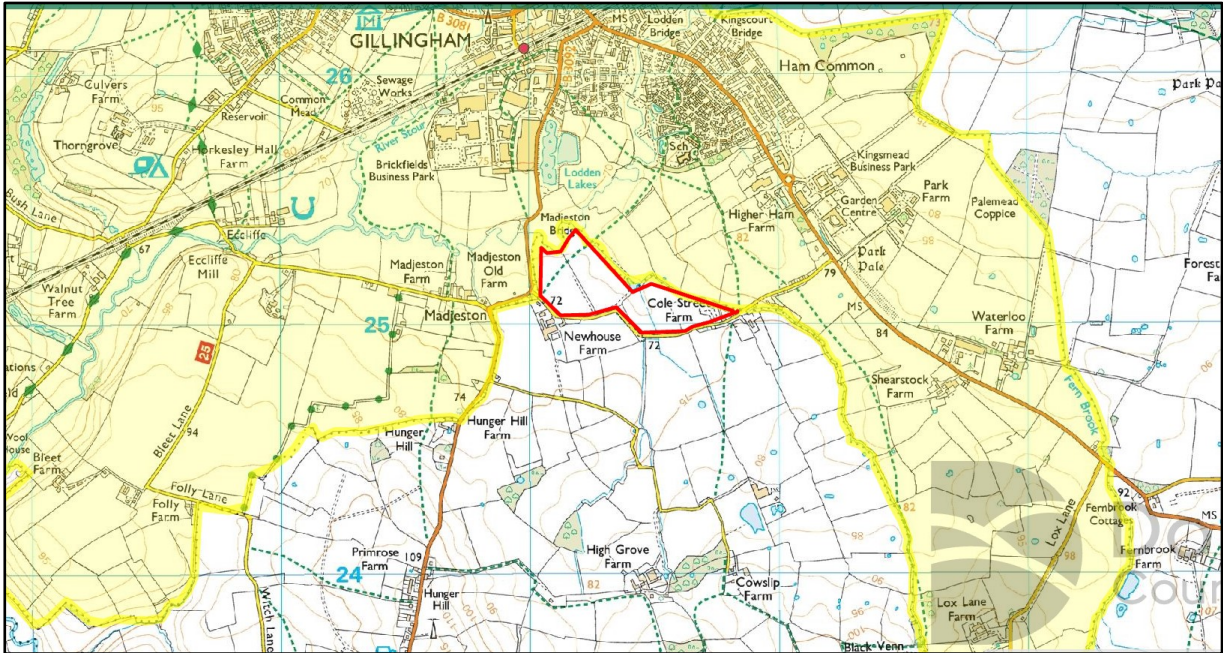
Community Governance Review Task and Finish Group

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Extension of Existing Boundary

There is a proposal for 1800 new homes on the Southern Strategic Site at the edge of Gillingham. A percentage of these homes – when built, will come within the Stours Parish Council boundary.

It is felt that these proposed homes should be included in the Gillingham Town Council Ham Ward.



Report to Increase the Number of Councillors.

The task and finish group have explored the ratio of electors to GTC councillors both now and the expected increase in numbers over the next 5 years.

We have established that the main population increase to electors will occur in the GTC Ham ward, although there will be an increase in other wards also. The task and finish group does not believe that the increases in these other wards are of sufficient numbers to justify additional councillors in these wards.

Ratio of Councillors to Electorate

Parish Ward	Number of Councillors in 2021	Electorate 2021	Electors per Councillor 2021		Projected Electorate 2026 Electors	Electors per Councillor 2026
Ham	2	1212	606		1870	935
Milton	1	347	347		358	358
Rural	1	192	192		198	198
town	9	4701	522		5356	595
Wyke	4	2551	637		2527	632

Using the above figures, the task and finish group feels that the ratio of councillors to electorate only increases by a small number in Milton, Rural, Town wards and decreases by a small number in Wyke ward; therefore, it would be reasonable to continue with this ratio. No additional councillors would be required, and the electorate will be well served with this combination of councillor to elector.

However, In the Ham ward, there is a large increase in the ratio from 606 electors to a projected figure of 935 electors per councillor - an increase of 329 electors per councillor. This increase will mean that the Ham ward councillors would be serving 303 electors more than those in Wyke ward who will be serving 632 per councillor (the nearest number of electors to Councillor).

It is felt that to achieve a fair division of electors per councillor across the Parish of Gillingham, there should be an additional seat created in the Ham ward. This would mean that each councillor in the Ham ward would serve 623 electors and be comparable to the nearest number of councillors per elector in Wyke Ward and within a reasonable difference of 37 electors per councillor in the Town Ward and the same would apply to the number of electors per councillor in Milton Ward.

The task and finish group accepts that the ratio in the rural ward is considerably lower. The group felt that this lower figure is justifiable due to the nature of this ward and the electors that it serves.

There is a need for good community cohesion across the Parish of Gillingham. It is also important that the councillors who serve the town have good division of responsibility, to ensure that the electorate of all wards get equal representation.

Recommendations:

- **That the number of councillors for Gillingham Ham Ward is increased by no. 1 to no. 3 in total.**
- **That the current Gillingham boundary to the south of the town is extended to Cole Street Lane to enable the new southern extension strategic site to fall within one parish.**