

Cheshire East

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About me

I am a resident in the village of Wildboarclough, a small village in the east of Cheshire East. I am clerk to my local Parish Meeting, which covers Wildboarclough and Macclesfield Forest. I am the councillor for Sutton ward in Cheshire East, elected in May 2023. I sit on the sub-committee tasked by Cheshire East Council with drafting proposals on Council size and warding arrangements to submit as part of this review.

My ward is a single member ward, covering 7 villages, a number of smaller hamlets, and 4 local parishes (two of which are parish councils, and two of which are parish meetings). It is located to the south and east of Macclesfield town, and part of the ward is within Macclesfield's green belt, which separates the town from the three villages of Lyme Green, Langley and Sutton Lane Ends. Wincle and Wildboarclough & Macclesfield Forest are within the Peak District National Park, which covers about half of the ward. The village of Rainow is located in the very north of the ward, within the national park fringe. The ward is bordered to the south by Staffordshire and to the east by Derbyshire.

Views on single member ward

The area covered by my current ward is rural in nature, with dairy and sheep farming and open moorland being significant local land uses. The 7 villages covered by the current ward vary in size, between around 50 electors (Macclesfield Forest) to around 1000 (Rainow). Because of this, I believe that a single member ward is most appropriate for the area – creating a two or three member ward would require either (a) a ward that covers urban areas in Macclesfield town and more rural areas; or (b) a geographically very large two member rural ward. In my view, a single

member, rural ward would best represent the local communities in this part of Cheshire East.

Local communities

The 7 villages have unique communities and characteristics that should be taken into account in terms of future warding arrangements.

Lyme Green, Langley and Sutton Lane Ends

Known locally as 'the three villages' and covered by a single parish council, Sutton Parish Council, the communities of Lyme Green, Langley and Sutton Lane Ends share many well developed connections. Lyme Green is a post war development on the outskirts of Macclesfield, separated from the town by the Macclesfield canal and by protected green belt land. Increasing urban sprawl to the west of the London Road is seen as a major concern by local residents, who are keen to protect their village community. There are lots of local community events, often focused around the Lyme Green community park. The village will almost double in size when two major developments west of the London Road are completed. Langley is a largely Victorian village in the foothills of the national park, Macclesfield Forest and Teggs Nose country park. It has a village pub, a village hall, cricket club, and is growing in size because of a housing development on previous business park. Sutton Lane Ends is the largest of the three villages. It has a Victorian core, with later post-ward social housing development and 1970s executive homes development. The village is home to an ex-Serviceman's club, a popular primary school and pre-school, a village pub, a post office, local shop and café. The three villages are connected by a bus route (No.14) and have been parished together for many years.

Any proposed warding arrangements for Lyme Green, Langley and Sutton Lane Ends should ensure the integrity of the parish council boundaries, and should recognise the semi-rural nature of this community.

Rainow

Rainow is a relatively large village, with older properties stretching along a main road from Macclesfield (the B5470) and a more recent, 1970s/1980s housing development around Millers Meadow. The village is surrounded by open countryside, with many local sheep and dairy farms, and it sits within the national park and its fringe. Its position between various hills means that mobile phone reception is very, very limited in the village. The village has a parish council, a pub, and a primary school. It is served by a bus route to and from Macclesfield. The village has a number of local community events, including an annual fete and civic service.

Any proposed warding arrangements for Rainow should recognise its rural nature, its links to the national park, and its connections with surrounding villages.

Windle, Wildboarclough and Macclesfield Forest

These settlements are covered by two parish meetings. While located in the Cheshire part of the national park and very close to each other, they are quite distinct communities. There is a pub in Windle, and a local brewery. The village has very poor mobile signal, and is focused around a

road into Staffordshire. Wildboardclough also has poor/non-existent mobile signal. Both pubs have closed in the last ten years or so. There is an active amateur dramatics group, and a WI (although this is closing down). There is a very popular summer fete, held at Crag Hall. Macclesfield Forest is a very rural community in and around the forest.

Any warding proposals for these villages should recognise their rural nature, and their location in the Peak District National Park.

Dr Chris O'Leary
Councillor – Sutton Ward

Sutton Ward covers the villages of: Langley, Lyme Green and Sutton Lane Ends; Rainow; Wincle; Wildboardclough and Macclesfield Forest; and the surrounding rural communities.

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