

Kilpeck Group Parish Community Governance Review

Phase 1 Consultation response

From 13 February to the 6 April, Herefordshire Council conducted a parish wide consultation with the community in the Kilpeck group parish on their community governance review proposals. The community were asked to provide their views on whether Kilpeck group parish should merge into a single parish council. In essence, the proposal is that parishes of Kilpeck, Kenderchurch, St Devereux, Treville and Wormbridge merge and form one single parish.

The consultation was made available on-line for anybody to respond to via Herefordshire Council website. Hard copies were made available on request. The consultation was also promoted using social media, local newsletters and the parish council web-site.

Consultation response:

One response to the consultation was received which was not supportive of the proposal. The principal evidence offered in support of that view was a concern that merging the parishes may lead to some of the parishes within the group having no representation. A further view was offered that if the merger was to go ahead all of the parishes within the group should have at least one representative.

While this does not indicate positive support for this proposal, it does not indicate that there is strong opposition to the proposals. It is important to note that all five of the parishes within the Kilpeck group have indicated their support for this change.

In addition, the Government's guidance also states that 'section 91 also requires a review to consider the electoral arrangements of a grouped parish council or of a parish council established after a parish is de-grouped. Each parish in a group must return at least one councillor. This requirement, therefore, addresses the condition advocated by the respondent that all parishes should retain representation if the group parish was to merge.

National government guidance also notes that 'In some cases, it may be preferable to group together parishes so as to allow a common parish council to be formed. Such proposals are worth considering and may avoid the need for substantive changes to parish boundaries, the creation of new parishes or the abolition of very small parishes where, despite their size, they still reflect community identity. Grouping or de-grouping needs to be compatible with the retention of community interests. It would be inappropriate for it to be used to build artificially large units under single parish councils.

Recommendation: The balance of evidence indicates that there are sufficient grounds to progress to formally proposing that the parishes of Kilpeck, Kenderchurch, St Devereux, Treville and Wormbridge merge and form one single parish.

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Phase 2 Consultation response

From 11 May to 29 June, Herefordshire Council conducted a parish wide consultation with the community in the Kilpeck group parish on their community governance review proposals. This followed a first wave of consultation where the community were asked to provide their views as to whether the Kilpeck group parish should merge into a single parish council. This proposal if supported would provide the grounds for consulting on a possible merging of Kilpeck, Kenderchurch, St Devereux, Treville and Wormbridge parishes to form one single parish.

Based upon the above recommendations, a phase 2 consultation was undertaken to test levels of community support or opposition for merging the group parish into a single parish. The consultation was open to anyone to respond to on-line via Herefordshire Council website. Hard copies were made available on request. The consultation was also targeted and promoted using social media, local newsletters and the parish council web-site.

The metrics from the social media campaigns indicate that 4,400 people received details of the Kilpeck community governance review consultations and fact sheets. This generated 116 'clicked links' through to the consultation pages.

Consultation response:

Ten responses to the consultation were received. Eight of the responses received were supportive of the recommendation to merge the Kilpeck group parish into a single parish. Two responses were opposed to this proposed change. This represents 80% of respondents in favour of the proposed change, with 20% of respondents opposed.

Those in support of the proposal to create a single parish:

The principal evidence consultees offered in support of the proposed change related to a belief that merging into a single parish would reduce the costs of local parish elections and that it makes administrative sense to bring the group together as one parish. That support was caveated by some respondents who wish to ensure that a merging of the five parishes takes place all of the parishes within the group will maintain representation on the newly created single parish.

- *I agree that it is a good idea providing that the number of parish councillors remain the same to represent all the individual postal parishes*

(Individual from Kilpeck Community)

Support was also contextualised in relation to cost savings that could be realised during election periods and the opportunity to reduce administrative processes by operating as one parish as opposed to five grouped parishes.

- *I believe that providing that individual parishes are represented by a local parish councillor within the single named parish is a good idea and will save potential costs at election times*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

- *Makes great sense. Less red tape and expense during elections*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

- *Will make administration simpler without having to produce paperwork for each parish*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

Those in opposition to create a single parish:

The principal evidence offered in the two objections to the proposed change related to a belief that the sense of community spirit would be lost by merging the group parish in to one. This view was substantiated by highlighting that the individual parishes have their own voice and heritage which would be threatened if those parishes were to disappear. A view was offered that each parish has its own traditions linked to both community connections and local distinctiveness.

- *Totally disagree on the 5 parishes becoming one parish, the community spirit would be lost, a sense of individuality will be lost, our voices will not be heard and the traditional of past years will all be forgotten, I disagree that the parish should be one, we all have our individual village names, our own places of worship, a community to be proud of.*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

Concerns were also raised that if a single parish is to be created it may lead to imbalance of local democracy whereby representatives from some of the smaller parished may be over ruled by the representatives from the bigger parishes. There was also some scepticism that creating a single parish would bring any benefits above and beyond the current arrangements.

- *You state that we would have our own representative, but being under one parish that representative may be over ruled by Kilpeck, we are all in our own little community , our own village sign our own churches named for a reason, keep tradition alive don't kill it.*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

- *What are the benefits?*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

National Guidance on creating a single parish from a group parish:

The Government's guidance states that 'section 91 also requires a review to consider the electoral arrangements of a grouped parish council or of a parish council established after a parish is de-grouped. Each parish in a group must return at least one councillor.

National government guidance also notes that 'In some cases, it may be preferable to group together parishes so as to allow a common parish council to be formed. Such proposals are worth considering and may avoid the need for substantive changes to parish boundaries, the creation of new parishes or the abolition of very small parishes where, despite their size, they still reflect community identity. Grouping or de-grouping needs to be compatible with the retention of community interests. It would be inappropriate for it to be used to build artificially large units under single parish councils.

The phase 2 consultation also invited respondents to consider what the name of a newly created single parish should be. The consultation proposed that a new parish be called 'Kilpeck Parish Council' on the basis that it retains a familiarity to the current group name and therefore would most likely maintain existing local identity. Six responses to this question were received. Four of those responses were broadly in agreement that Kilpeck Parish Council would provide a satisfactory new name for the single parish. Two of the responses in favour of this new name also indicated that a

possible alternative name could be to name the newly created single parish as Wormbridge parish Council or Wormbridge and Kilpeck Parish Council.

- *Keeping the Kilpeck makes sense for continuity*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

- *As the present name of the group is Kilpeck I see no reason not to call it Kilpeck parish Council*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

- *Using the Kilpeck name makes sense to me. If an alternative was needed I would suggest Wormbridge*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

- *Wormbridge Parish Or Wormbridge and Kilpeck Group Parish*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

Of the two responses received from those in opposition to the group parish becoming a single parish there was also no agreement to the proposed name change. A concern was also raised as to why this proposed change was being considered at all.

- *No I disagree on this question see previous answer to disagreeing on becoming one parish!*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

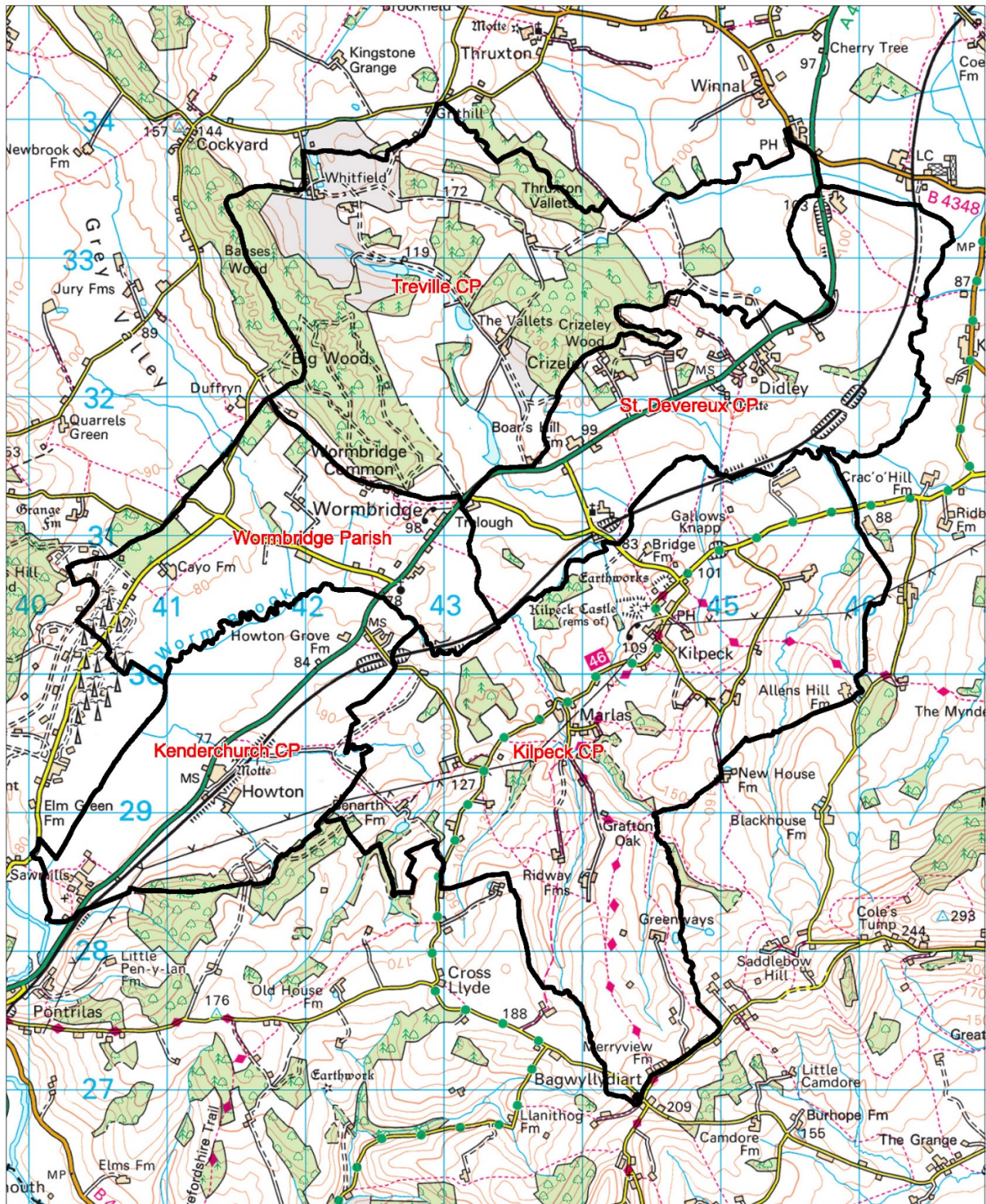
- *Why is this being proposed?*

(Individual from Kilpeck Group Community)

Recommendation 1: *The balance of evidence indicates that there are sufficient grounds to progress to formally proposing that: The existing parish councils of Kilpeck, Kenderchurch, St. Devereux, Treville and Wormbridge that make up the existing Kilpeck group parish council shall all be dissolved; the existing parishes of Kilpeck, Kenderchurch, St. Devereux, Treville and Wormbridge that make up the existing Kilpeck group parish council shall all be abolished; and to form a new parish as shown on the map in appendix C and that the new parish shall be represented by a Parish Council;); the name of that new parish council shall be 'Kilpeck Parish Council, and that the electoral arrangements will remain unchanged in all other respects*

Resource Implications: There are no financial implications if these recommendations are accepted. There are no plans to change the number of parish council seats as a result of this change. A small amount of staff time will be required to update the electoral register if these changes are taken forward.

Map 1: Kilpeck Group parish Council.



Herefordshire Council

PLAN - KILPECK PARISH GROUP inc. INDIVIDUAL PARISH BOUNDARIES
SCALE 1:25000

NORTH

 Parish Boundary

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