



**LGBCE REVIEW OF ASHFORD BOROUGH
DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS
NWCF RESPONSE**

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INTRODUCTION

This document is North Willesborough Community Forum's (NWCF) response to LGBCE's Draft recommendations on the new electoral arrangements for Ashford Borough Council. This document specifically deals with the areas covered by, and adjacent to, the NWCF Area (shown below).



NWCF Area

COMMENTS

Obviously, we are disappointed that our warding proposals were not adopted as they provided a better appreciation of community identity and coterminosity with the pending parishing arrangements; we understand, however, that the warding arrangements in the Draft Recommendations do provide a better representational balance.

We are also disappointed still to have 2 member wards, as experience shows that 2 member wards require a cooperation that isn't always forthcoming, as mentioned in our previous response.

We are also disappointed that there is still one "White Line" boundary (along Hunter Avenue), but very pleased to see that all others have been satisfactorily reconciled.

We also have the following specific comments:

"NORTH WILLESBOROUGH" WARD

The name of the ward should **not** be "North Willesborough", for the following reasons:

- As we mentioned in our consultation comments, the title of this ward conflicts with the name of the Forum and causes confusion with residents.
- It was originally named "North Willesborough" to differentiate it from "South Willesborough" - since the South Willesborough ward will no longer exist (being part of the new Aylesford & East Stour ward) this differentiation is no longer required.



- The North Willesborough Community Forum is called such to differentiate it from the soon to be established South Willesborough and Newtown parish south of the railway.

We believe that this review is a good opportunity to tidy things up and since many wards are getting new names we feel “North Willesborough” ward should too. Whilst we have no great preference (other than **NOT** “North Willesborough”) we would suggest the following:

- Simply “Willesborough” - As the ward covers most of the oldest parts of Willesborough this would be appropriate.
- “Willesborough Windmill” - Celebrates the ward’s biggest landmark.
- “Willesborough and Willesborough Lees”.
- “Old Willesborough”.

In fact, anything but “North Willesborough”!

BLAKE COURT

Blake Court is shown on the online map (<https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/node/8512>) to be part of Aylesford & East Stour ward. Given that Blake Court is a turning off Osborne Road, and that it is essentially part of the Twelve Acres community, we believe that it should be part of the “North Willesborough” ward. According to the last information we received Blake Court contains only 21 households with 44 electors - we feel that this would not upset the representation balance too much (it would actually reduce the 2022 variance for Aylesford & East Stour ward) but would better reflect community identity. We would therefore suggest that Blake Court be part of the “North Willesborough” ward.

DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS - SECTION 64

This section states:

“We have based our Highfield ward on the current ward in this area, with the exclusion of electors south of the railway line to make a more identifiable boundary. We have also included residents of Church Road, Millstream Green and Twelve Acres, as suggested by the Council following a member consultation. We consider that this will better reflect community identity.”

However, the map shows that:

- Millstream Green is in the new Aylesford & East Stour ward.
- Twelve Acres is in the “North Willesborough” ward.

Which is correct?

CONCLUSION

Whilst generally happy with the Draft Recommendations we would like to see the following modifications:

- Blake Court to be part of the “North Willesborough” ward.
- The “North Willesborough” ward to be called anything other than “North Willesborough”.

We hope that these can be accommodated.