



Review Officer (Bracknell Forest)
LGBCE
1st Floor
Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

13th March 2020

Dear Sirs

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION: BRACKNELL FOREST COUNCIL ELECTORAL REVIEW

Winkfield Parish Council (WPC) has been established for 125 years to provide effective local government to residents in the East of Bracknell Forest, securing and maintaining the best possible services and environment to the community, and welcomes the opportunity to provide a response to the consultation on your review of Bracknell Forest Council's electoral boundaries.

WPC is well embedded in local communities, providing consistent, visible and pro-active representation to residents, community hubs, numerous recreational facilities and practical guidance to the communities which it encompasses. It operates to a high level, having amongst the most well-equipped facilities in the region and four Green Flag awards. The communities which fall into the remit of WPC have a strong sense of place and identity. The division of these communities would have an adverse personal and practical impact on residents.

WPC notes that LGBCE is minded to recommend that Bracknell Forest Council should have 40 councillors in the future with electoral estimates for 2025 of 101,484 giving an elector/councillor ratio of 2,537. WPC has had sight of a draft proposal being submitted by Bracknell Forest Council, and notes that the working party which devised this proposal contained no representation at all from Winkfield. We have reason to believe that there has been no consultation with any Borough members outside of that working party in the formulation of the BFC response.

Whilst WPC notes the draft BFC proposal incorporates defined physical boundaries, it does not appear to take into account the identities and needs of individual communities. Any review of boundaries should take heed of the connections between communities as opposed to being a 'number crunching' exercise to possibly implement a political gain. The draft BFC proposal of one ward with three members covering virtually the whole of Winkfield from north to south is impractical and unbalanced.

There appears to be no perceptible understanding within the draft BFC consultation response of the relationship between Martins Heron and The Warren. These areas have been intrinsically linked



since they were built in the 1980s and community ties remain strong both with each other and Winkfield Parish Council. The communities utilise shared resources and facilities and this is reflected in the establishment of Martins Heron & The Warren Community Centre in the late 1980s, until recently run by the Martins Heron & The Warren Residents' Association.

Whilst the areas of Martins Heron and The Warren currently sit within the Harmanswater ward, there is a distinct natural boundary between them and the Harmanswater area (Allsmoor Lane). It is noted that although residents of Harmanswater could be minded to traverse this boundary into Martins Heron to access facilities including the Tesco supermarket and railway station, there is very little in Harmanswater to encourage reverse movement. However, there is a strong link between the communities of Harmanswater and Crown Wood, both having direct access from Ralph's Ride, Harmanswater Road and Opladen Way with well-used residentially connected routes.

There is also a strong community link between Martins Heron and The Warren with Forest Park (currently warded with Crown Wood). The three areas are connected by well used walkways and recreational areas such as Bog Lane play area (currently in the process of being transferred to WPC management) and Savernake Park. Forest Park has few links with the Crown Wood area, with its own parade of shops, community centre and public house. These facilities are mirrored less than half a mile away in Crown Wood and therefore the communities have very little cohesion.

Historically, Winkfield Parish Council has found it difficult to engage with Bracknell Forest Council Ward members representing Crown Wood, despite regular attempts to do so and this has led to a feeling of under representation for this significant section of Winkfield Parish residents.

WPC seeks to maximise electoral equality and minimize overall change whilst focusing on the existing strong community and neighbourhood connections.

WPC therefore suggests two Borough Wards covering the Winkfield area: Winkfield North and Winkfield South as detailed below and identified on the attached maps, the delineation between each ward being the natural boundary of the A329 London Road. Each area has shared interests, common access to and use of facilities which provide a sense of community.

The electoral number of these two wards requires the representation of three Borough Councillors in Winkfield North and two in Winkfield South. This proposed warding arrangements reflects community identities and interests, and secures effective representation of the constituent communities.



Winkfield North: This area includes the boundary of the existing Winkfield and Cranbourne Ward to the north, east and west, and extending into part of the current Ascot Ward down to the A329 London Road in the south, encompassing the following community groups and WPC facilities:

- Carnation Hall – a community hub which is built in the site of the former Carnation Factory which is the historic hub of the area, Carnation Hall is host to a pre-school, numerous fitness and recreational classes, children’s activities and meetings of community groups.
- Locks Ride
 - Splashpad – one of three in the authority area, the splashpad is used through Spring and Summer months by local families and is an important and popular meeting point.
 - Locks Ride Cabin – a refreshment facility which diversifies the site’s usage and provides employment to local residents.
 - Sensory and accessible play area – amongst the best appointed and well maintained within the authority, this facility provides a range of play experiences to local children.
 - BBQ area for local families.
 - Local Cricket teams.
 - Local Football teams.
- Cranbourne Allotments – 43 plots available to Winkfield Parish residents.
- Chavey Down Allotments - 64 plots available to Winkfield Parish residents.
- King George V Playing Field – used by members of the public and by Winkfield St Mary’s School for sport lessons.
- Asher Recreation Ground.
- Chavey Down Residents Association.
- Maidens Green Society.
- Winkfield Row Residents Association.
- Parish Council Offices – visited regularly by members of the public seeking advice or to express concerns arising in the local area with which staff can provide information and support.
- Ascot Jubilee Recreation Ground is used by residents recreationally but is also an important facility in maintaining amenities to residents and by providing car parking and access to Licensed Victuallers School (LVS). The facility further provides playing areas to LVS students.
- Community Café used by local families.
- Fernbank Road Play Space.
- Cranbourne School – rated Outstanding by Ofsted.
- Ascot Heath Primary School – rated Outstanding by Ofsted.
- Winkfield St Mary’s School – rated Good by Ofsted.
- Blackmoor Close Play Space.



Winkfield South: This area incorporates the remainder of the existing Ascot Ward south of the A329 London Road, incorporating Martins Heron, The Warren and Forest Park, and encompasses the following community groups and WPC facilities:

- Allsmoor Field – leased to WPC from BFC.
- Kings Ride Residents Association.
- Bog Lane play area (currently in the process of being transferred to WPC management).
- Savernake Park.
- Martins Heron & The Warren Community Centre. Activities carried out by regular hirers range from Dance Schools, pre-school, exercise activities and mental health classes. WPC has been managing this community Centre for 18 months and utilisation (time and diversity) and satisfaction levels have both increased dramatically in that time.
- Situated directly adjacent to Martins Heron railway station, The Warren is linked to Martins Heron by numerous footpaths, shared community facilities, and a single community identity. From Martins Heron & The Warren there is a footpath with direct access to Harmanswater Shops. However, as previously noted, this link is not widely used by residents from Martins Heron and The Warren. There are two points of access to Crown Wood via Farningham and Nuneaton, but otherwise all access is via the main spur road of Opladen Way. Forest Park and Crown Wood are otherwise not well connected. Crown Wood and Forest Park have their own shops, public houses and community centres, and the link between the two is incidental rather than indicative of a shared community identity.
- There is a pedestrian route linking Forest Park via Savernake Park to The Warren.
- Tesco and adjacent shops on site - WPC has built a strong cooperative relationship with Tesco and facilitates community events organized by Tesco wherein support is provided to elderly members of the community. These are also the preferred shops for residents in the north of the Parish.
- Although under separate management, operation of Martins Heron & The Warren Community Centre and Forest Park Community Centre are linked by way of common staff and function well in tandem to serve a wide range of community needs.
- This ward proposal retains unification of Martins Heron and The Warren and retains strong links between Martins Heron, The Warren and Forest Park, which utilize joint amenities and facilities.



WPC has assessed the boundaries within the remainder of the Borough; however it is difficult to ascertain compliance with the LGBC statutory criteria without access to interactive electorate maps and data. To this end, WPC would suggest the following ward boundaries, with finer detail of appropriate electorate being ascertained by the LGBC:

Ward Name	Estimated Electorate 2025	No. of Ward Cllrs	Existing BFC Ward indicators
Binfield	7438	3	BA, BAC, BB, BI
Warfield & Whitegrove	8066	3	WE, WG, WM, WQ
Priestwood & Garth	6420	3	BG, BP
Great Hollands North & South	10703	4	BC, BH, BJ, BQ
Easthampstead & Wildridings	7174	3	BM, BT, BW
Hanworth & Birch Hill	9453	4	BD, BK, BN
Harmanswater & Crown Wood	9344	4	BF, BL (south of rail line), BLP
Bullbrook	5867	2	BE, BL (north of rail line)
Crowthorne, Sandhurst, Wildmoor, Owlsmoor, College Town	23170	9	CN, CS, SJ, SO, SP, SQ
Winkfield North	8574	3	WN, WP, WS, WX, WY (north of A329), WZ
Winkfield South	5275	2	WV, WX, WY (south of A329)
	101484	40	

WPC is greatly concerned that merging the communities of Martins Heron, The Warren and Forest Park with Crown Wood, Harmanswater or Bullbrook would be detrimental to the Parish in the event of a future Parish boundary review. Historically, Parish boundaries have generally been aligned to Borough boundaries and if these areas are not secured within Winkfield Parish it would result in a future reduction of up to 50% in precept for Winkfield Parish Council. Under this arrangement, it is unlikely that WPC would be able to continue to facilitate the provision of many widely used amenities. This includes the splash pad and refreshment cabin at Locks Ride (a facility which is regularly used by residents of a vast geographic area); the maintenance of two community hubs (Martins Heron & The Warren and Carnation Hall); staff supporting development control and the Neighbourhood Development Plan; and maintaining the green spaces which are a key characteristic of the Parish. Furthermore, Winkfield is the only parish in the UK to have achieved prestigious Green Flag Awards at four of its sites. Without sufficient income, it will not be possible to maintain the current standards, resulting in a loss of amenity to the Borough as a whole.

WPC believes that its suggestion satisfies the statutory criteria, providing electoral equality, ensuring effective and convenient local government. Moreover, this proposal enforces the strong sense of place held by residents in its communities and provides access to facilities and amenities which would otherwise be eroded.

Yours faithfully



Mrs M Milsom
Clerk to the Council