

Epping Forest District Council

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WALTHAM ABBEY AND HIGH BEACH WARD

I would like to place on record my thoughts and concerns with reference to the above High Beach ward in the parish of Waltham Abbey.

This particular ward is unique and has exceptional circumstances.

The current High Beach ward is wholly within the Waltham Abbey Parish boundary.

There are three settlements being Upshire, High Beach village and Sewardstonebury. The settlements are nestling within Epping Forest which forms a natural boundary separating the area from Epping and Loughton.

Therefore the 2000+ residents of the ward associate themselves as part of the forest community plus residents of Waltham Abbey for the following reasons.

There are two places of worship, St Thomas's in Upshire and the Holy Innocents Church in High Beach, these two places of worship are key community hubs and closely linked with our main church situated in the Town of Waltham Abbey, also known as the "The Abbey" dating back to 1066. Along with this there are two village halls closely linked with each church adding very close links to each community.

As for schooling, High Beach has its own primary school located within the village, many local children attend this. Most children in Upshire village attend Upshire primary school or one of adjacent primary schools within Waltham Abbey. Most children living in Sewardstonebury attend other primary schools within Waltham Abbey. Many of the children move onto Waltham Abbey or Epping secondary schools. In some cases this age group attend private school.

It is my understanding following many years in local politics that Waltham Abbey residents consider themselves very isolated from the rest of the District due to the geography of the forest and feel we have no links with Loughton, a few links with Epping, mainly because the Civic Offices are there.