

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

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Organisation Name:

Comment text:

Submission on Future Warding of Bracknell Forest Council. The undersigned are Borough Councillors of Bracknell Forest Council representing the Harmans Water ward and wish to make the following submission. In doing so we fully appreciate that the LG BCE carries out Electoral Reviews using a blank canvass and do not have to follow current parliamentary boundaries in making their warding recommendations. We wish to comment on East Bracknell, the area to the east of the Bagshot Road and covered by the existing wards of Bullbrook, Crown Wood and Harmans Water. We note that elsewhere in Bracknell Forest the Commissioners have proposed strong boundaries such as the dual carriageways of Bagshot Road and Mill Lane and the prominent single carriageway roads of Nine Mile Ride (to the south of Hanworth) and Ringmead as a boundary for the proposed Great Hollands Ward. Indeed these strong boundaries are emphasised by your proposed Central Bracknell Ward with Skimped Hill Lane, A329, Church Road, Bagshot Road and Downshire Way as its boundaries. Compared with these boundaries it seems perverse to revert to an arcane parish boundary in East Bracknell. We note that para 26 of your publication 'Guidance on community governance reviews' states that "A review may need to be carried outfollowing a major change in the population of a community or...to redraw boundaries which have become anomalous....following new housing developments being built across existing boundaries." This, we suggest, certainly applies to the parish boundary round Martins Heron, The Warren and Forest Park and simply because Bracknell Forest Council does not appear to have followed what you suggest as good practice in conducting a community governance review does not make this parish boundary any less anomalous. The Boundary Commission for England recognised this in its recommendations that adjusted the boundary between the constituencies of Windsor and Bracknell prior to the 2005 general election by incorporating Martins Heron, The Warren and Forest Park in the Bracknell Constituency and using the strong and easily recognisable boundary of Forest Ride (plus The Warren) as the constituency boundary. We consider that it is quite extraordinary and very much a retrograde step to suggest reverting to the status quo ante and to use this anomalous parish boundary in your draft proposal for warding. In considering a northern boundary for this area of East Bracknell, the fairly obvious strong boundary is London Road that you will know is a dual carriageway from what is still known as the Met Office roundabout (at the Bracknell and Wokingham College) to the roundabout with Broad Lane and Lily Hill Drive. This would give an area bounded by the very recognisable Bagshot Road, Church Road, London Road and Forest Ride which we suggest would then contain 2 x 3 member wards of Crown Wood and Harmans Water. You recognise in para 4.37 of your Technical Guidance for Electoral reviews that community identity is not easy to define or, indeed, to quantify. In our experience we find that electors in Martins Heron, The Warren and Forest Park identify themselves as residents of Bracknell and are dismayed to find that you propose hiving them off to a Winkfield ward consisting largely of Swinley Forest to which they have no direct road access. Culturally, all residents of East Bracknell look towards the facilities in Bracknell for theatre such as South Hill Park and for cinema. They use Bracknell for GP surgeries and for the Brant's Bridge medical centre on Broad Lane, for religious purposes residents use Bracknell churches and, of course shopping be it at supermarkets or in the Lexicon shopping centre. Societies and clubs are pan Bracknell based making all of East Bracknell an integral and essential part of the Bracknell community. The 2025 estimate for elector numbers for the Bracknell are

made up of the existing wards of Crown Wood 6,414, Harmans Water 7,705 and the part of Bullbrook south of London Road of approximately 500 electors making a total of 14,619. Your proposed ratio of electors/councillor of 2,475 would give an allocation of 5.9 say 6 councillors or 2 x 3 member wards. In conclusion we believe that the existing boundaries between Harmans Water, Bullbrook and Crown Wood should stay. We draw attention to the evidence we have already provided demonstrating the links between Harmans Water, Martin's Heron and The Warren, in terms of use of doctors' surgeries and pharmacists, and where residents' children attend primary and secondary schools. We also place importance on the community identity and travel patterns of residents. Yours faithfully, Isabel Mattick
Ash Merry Chris Turrell Councillors Harmans Water Ward Bracknell Forest Council

Uploaded Documents:

https://consultation.lgbce.org.uk/download_document?file=draft%2F1599206809_0309+Harmans+Water+LGBCE+Submission.docx

Local Government Boundary Commission for England
1st Floor Windsor House
50 Victoria Street
London
SW1H 0TL

Dear Sirs,

3rd September 2020

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We wish to comment on East Bracknell, the area to the east of the Bagshot Road and covered by the existing wards of Bullbrook, Crown Wood and Harmans Water. We note that elsewhere in Bracknell Forest the Commissioners have proposed strong boundaries such as the dual carriageways of Bagshot Road and Mill Lane and the prominent single carriageway roads of Nine Mile Ride (to the south of Hanworth) and Ringmead as a boundary for the proposed Great Hollands Ward. Indeed these strong boundaries are emphasised by your proposed Central Bracknell Ward with Skimped Hill Lane, A329, Church Road, Bagshot Road and Downshire Way as its boundaries. Compared with these boundaries it seems perverse to revert to an arcane parish boundary in East Bracknell.

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In considering a northern boundary for this area of East Bracknell, the fairly obvious strong boundary is London Road that you will know is a dual carriageway from what is still known as the Met Office roundabout (at the Bracknell and Wokingham College) to the roundabout with Broad Lane and Lily Hill Drive. This would give an area bounded by the very recognisable Bagshot Road, Church Road, London Road and Forest Ride which we suggest would then contain 2 x 3 member wards of Crown Wood and Harmans Water.

You recognise in para 4.37 of your Technical Guidance for Electoral reviews that community identity is not easy to define or, indeed, to quantify. In our experience we find that electors in Martins Heron, The Warren and Forest Park identify themselves as residents of Bracknell and are dismayed to find that you propose moving them off to a Winkfield ward consisting largely of Swinley Forest to which they have no direct road access.

Culturally, all residents of East Bracknell look towards the facilities in Bracknell for theatre such as South Hill Park and for cinema. They use Bracknell for GP surgeries and for the Brant's Bridge medical centre on Broad Lane, for religious purposes residents use Bracknell churches and, of course shopping be it at supermarkets or in the Lexicon shopping centre. Societies and clubs are pan Bracknell based making all of East Bracknell an integral and essential part of the Bracknell community.

The 2025 estimate for elector numbers for the Bracknell are made up of the existing wards of Crown Wood 6,414, Harmans Water 7,705 and the part of Bullbrook south of London Road of approximately 500 electors making a total of 14,619. Your proposed ratio of electors/councillor of 2,475 would give an allocation of 5.9 say 6 councillors or 2 x 3 member wards.

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Yours faithfully,

Isabel Mattick

Ash Merry

Chris Turrell

**Councillors Harmans Water Ward
Bracknell Forest Council**