

## Southampton City Council

### Personal Details:

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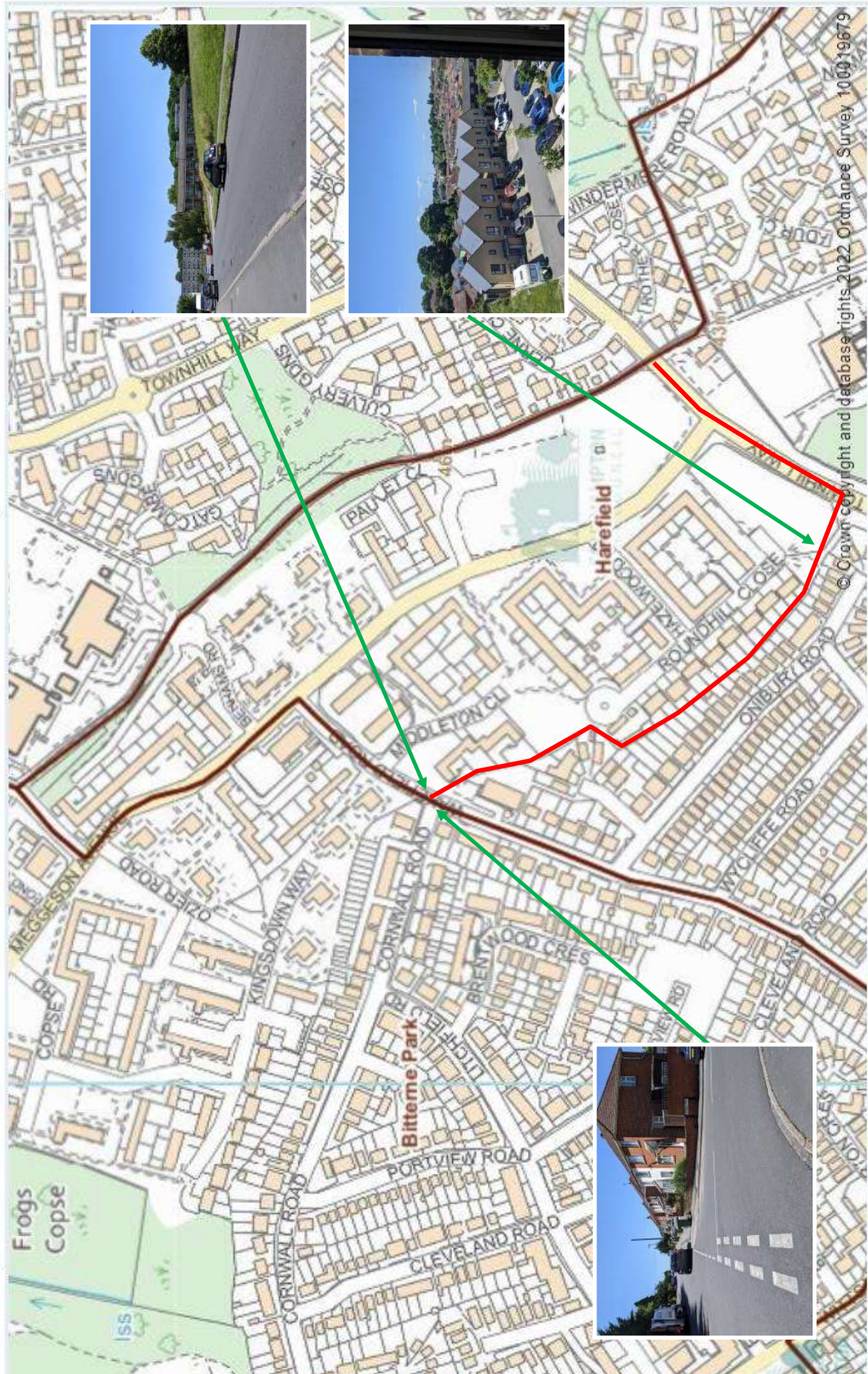
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**Organisation Name:** SO18 Big Local

### Comment text:

This response is from SO18 Big Local, which is a resident led community group in the Townhill Park, Harefield and Midanbury area of Southampton. <https://so18biglocal.org.uk/> We made a submission to the initial consultation, proposing a change to the boundary between Harefield and Bitterne Park wards so that the whole of the Townhill Park estate falls into Bitterne Park ward rather than as now being bisected in two at the junction of Meggeson Avenue with Wakefield Road and Cutbush Lane. The published draft of the new Southampton Ward boundaries recognises (para 68) that the new boundary that we proposed of Townhill Way and Mousehole Lane would give a stronger boundary, but also stated that it would result in poor electoral equality of 12% in Bitterne Park ward. We have had another look at our area and wish to make an alternative proposal, which would involve a smaller boundary change and a more acceptable difference in voter numbers. Our proposal is for the new Bitterne Park boundary to extend up the line with Eastleigh as far as Townhill Way. Then go south along Townhill Way not as far as Mousehole Lane as originally proposed but to just south of Roundhill Close, and then go north-west in a line between Roundhill Close and Onibury Road/Onibury Close joining the existing boundary along Wakefield Road opposite Cornwall Road. The homes in Middleton Close, off Wakefield Road (which were built as part of Townhill Park estate) would now be in Bitterne Park Ward, but all the homes along the easterly side of Wakefield Road would be in Harefield ward (as now). The attached plan shows the boundary, with the photos demonstrating that this is a relatively strong boundary. The land falls away between Roundhill Close and Onibury Road, there is no road or footpath link across this boundary. The photo taken from the 46 Roundhill Close flats demonstrates how the housing styles are quite distinct in the two areas. The newly built Roundhill Close houses (with pronounced triangular rooves) are in the foreground, with the red rooves of Onibury Road and the adjacent streets beyond. The homes in the Onibury Road area are mainly bungalows, in contrast to the houses and flats which make up Townhill Park. The two photos taken in either direction from the same point in Wakefield Road one looking northeast into Townhill Park, and the other looking southwest across Cornwall Road again show how the housing is distinctly different across the newly proposed boundary. This revised ward boundary would promote effective and convenient local government by putting the entire Townhill Park estate into one ward. As explained in our original submission the estate is in the midst of large scale regeneration. So far only 56 new homes have been built indicating that this is and will continue to be a long and complicated process for the Council and local residents. It is particularly important that the area has effective and convenient representation during this long term change and into the future for the new community moving in. It was for this reason that our original submission was made. In terms of community interests and identity, Townhill Park estate is one place. To repeat from our original submission the current ward boundary division is a confusing anomaly. Townhill Park has a Community Centre (corner of Cutbush Lane, just within the Bitterne Park ward), whilst 2 minutes walk away are the two Townhill Park schools (entrances in Harefield ward). The new Townhill Green park is in Ozier Road, Bitterne Park ward, but built to serve the whole of Townhill Park. Meggeson Avenue, the spine road through the estate, which has had recent traffic calming along its length, is split in two by the current boundary. The Townhill Park Regeneration Forum brings together residents' groups, senior city council officers and councillors and representatives of other local organisations, meeting every 3 months. It was established in 2015 and SO18 Big Local provides the administrative work and it has now met 24 times. Its terms of reference states that the membership includes all 6 local councillors, but for each set of councillors Townhill Park only makes up a small part of their ward. SO18 Big Local consider for Townhill Park to be effectively represented it should be included in Bitterne Park ward with which there is much more synergy than with Harefield ward, as our original submission suggests. In summary, we hope that this proposed new boundary would give all the benefits of Townhill Park being in one ward, but without creating an inequality in electoral representation between the wards.



Existing ward boundary

Proposed ward boundary