



FAO The Review Officer (Brighton & Hove)

Please find attached our submission (and supporting annexe) in response to the consultation on warding arrangements, in relation to the current electoral review of Brighton and Hove City Council.

We hope you find our proposals helpful as you consider your draft recommendations, and we look forward to engaging in the next stage of consultation in due course.

Should you require any further information from us at this stage, please do let me know.

Kind regards



LGBCE Electoral review of Brighton & Hove City Council 2021/22: Brighton and Hove Green Party warding arrangements proposal

Submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England by Brighton and Hove Green Party on 1 November 2021

Summary

Brighton and Hove Green Party is making a proposal based on 55 councillors and 23 wards, comprising a mix of 2-seat and 3-seat wards.

In developing our proposals, we noted that St Peter's & North Laine ward has for many years (since the development of the New England Quarter north-east of Brighton station) had enough electors within its boundaries to warrant the addition of an extra councillor. We believe a good solution in the central Brighton area would be simply to add an extra councillor to the existing Regency ward and transfer the residential areas to the west of Queens Road from St Peter's & North Laine to Regency.

In considering various configurations, we found that solutions with 54 councillors were less able to meet electoral equality across the city and retain coherent community boundaries. We have therefore based our proposal on 55 councillors, adding an extra seat in the area covered by the existing Regency and St Peter's & North Laine wards, redistributing seats in the eastern parts of the city, and proposing less substantial changes elsewhere.

Given that the city's residents retain strong affiliations to the former towns that make up the city, we have respected existing boundaries between Brighton, Hove and Portslade.

Our detailed proposals are explained below, and should be read in conjunction with the attached annexe (Excel spreadsheet) which contains:

- The current warding pattern with current (2021) and projected (2027) elector numbers;
- Our proposed warding pattern with estimated current and projected elector numbers;
- Electoral information by street (provided by Brighton & Hove City Council) showing details of any polling district splits where proposed;
- Estimated numbers for the polling district splits we propose.

North Portslade and South Portslade

Portslade, including the suburb of Mile Oak, was historically a separate urban district, and the eastern boundaries of the two wards follow the historic boundary between Hove and Portslade (Boundary Road and Station Road to the south and the A293 to the north).

We believe this historic separation from Hove is still reflected in the current community identity, reinforced by Portslade having its own postal district within the post town of Brighton (rather than the neighbouring post town of Hove).

As both wards are projected to have good electoral equality, we do not feel there are any compelling arguments to change the external boundaries of the two wards and the representation of the area in a configuration of two 2-seat wards.

No change proposed: two 2-seat wards.

Wish and Westbourne

The northern boundaries of both these wards are formed by the West Coastway railway line, and we feel this is a sensible boundary.

Many of the boundaries running between the Hove seafront wards – forming as they do a continuous conurbation - are arguably arbitrary. However, the western boundary of Wish follows the historic Portslade/Hove boundary (see *North Portslade and South Portslade* above), while the eastern boundary of Westbourne is an A-road. These existing outer boundaries seem sensible, and as both wards have good electoral equality, we propose no change to the outer boundaries of the wards taken together.

However, the Poets Corner area of the city is currently split between Wish and Westbourne wards - specifically the roads west of Tamworth Road are in Wish, while the roads east of Tamworth Road are in Westbourne.

We suggest that it would be preferable to unite the Poets Corner community within one ward, while maintaining broadly equal numbers of electors in each of the two wards.

Therefore, we propose that the boundary between Wish and Westbourne is adjusted to run (north to south) along School Road, east along a short section of Portland Road, south along Hogarth Road (as currently), then east along New Church Road and finally south between Carlisle Road and Walsingham Road.

This would then form a zig-zag boundary down to the seafront - as now, but in the opposite orientation to the current boundary.

Proposal: Retain outer boundaries, names and councillor representation of the existing wards (two 2-seat wards) but with a revised boundary between the two wards so that the Poets Corner area of the city is wholly within Westbourne ward (Westbourne to gain part of polling district HWID and Wish to gain part of polling district HWEA).

Central Hove and Brunswick & Adelaide

As noted above, given that the Hove seafront wards cover a continuous built-up area, any boundaries are arguably arbitrary. Given that these current wards have good electoral equality, we do not see any strong arguments for change.

We so however propose a minor tidying-up to move the Kingsway Court building situated on the seafront between First and Second Avenue from Central Hove to Brunswick & Adelaide.

Proposal: Retain two 2-seat wards, with a minor tidying-up of the boundary between the wards to the south of Second Avenue, moving a small section of polling district HCHA from Central Hove to Brunswick & Adelaide.

Hangleton & Knoll, Hove Park and Goldsmid

Of the Hove wards, these three have the greatest variance from electoral equality. However, collectively, a re-configuration of the existing eight seats within three wards could achieve good equality.

To rectify the imbalance in elector numbers, at minimum the boundary between Hove Park and Hangleton & Knoll needs adjustment.

We suggest that Three-Cornered Copse, situated south of the A27 roundabout with Woodland Avenue to its west and Woodland Drive to its east, forms a natural geographical boundary between the residential areas in the north of the existing Hove Park ward. We therefore propose that polling district HHPC covering the area west of the copse (Goldstone Crescent, Queen Victoria Avenue, etc.) is transferred from Hove Park ward to Hangleton & Knoll ward.

In the interests of better electoral equality and community coherence, we further propose moving a small section of district HGOD which is near the southern edge of Hove Park itself, namely Hove Park Villas and roads to the west, from Goldsmid ward to Hove Park ward. This area is next to the currently industrial area around Newtown Road where substantial residential development is planned.

Proposal: To retain the existing warding structure for the three wards, two 3-seat and one 2-seat ward, but - to better balance the ward while keeping disruption to community links to the minimum - move polling district HHPC from Hove Park to Hangleton & Knoll, and part of polling district HGOD from Goldsmid to Hove Park.

Regency and St Peter's and North Laine

St Peter's and North Laine has the greatest existing and projected deviation from equality.

The existing boundary along North Street – a main thoroughfare in the centre of the city, is a sensible boundary between the Lanes area, characterised by its narrow streets, older buildings and

predominantly commercial character, and the North Laine with its distinctive mix of residential, shopping and light industrial properties.

However, the West Hill and St Nicholas areas of St Peter's & North Laine, south-east of Seven Dials and west of Queens Road, are largely residential and similar in character to northern parts of the existing Regency ward.

Therefore, we propose that these areas (polling district PSPC and the western part of polling district PSPB west of Queens Road) are moved from St Peter's & North Laine ward to Regency ward. This would move all the area covered by the West Hill Community Association into Regency. We propose that this amended Regency ward becomes a 3-seat ward.

We propose that the remaining parts of St Peter's & North Laine are retained as a 3-seat ward. All the area covered by the North Laine Community Association would remain in the ward. This configuration would also ensure that the various urban communities based in the New England quarter, around the Old Market, Park Crescent and the Round Hill areas of the city are all retained in the amended ward without breaking any existing community links.

Proposal: Retain outer boundaries and names of existing wards but adjust the boundary between the two wards to move the West Hill area and the roads around St Nicholas Church into Regency (polling district PSPC and part of polling district PSPB). Increase the number of councillors representing Regency to make it a 3-seat ward and retain the smaller St Peter's & North Laine as a 3-seat ward.

Withdean and Preston Park

These wards take in various urban and suburban communities. Together, the western boundaries follow the Hove/Brighton boundary, the eastern boundaries along Ditchling Road separate the wards from Hollingdean, and the north-eastern boundaries separate the wards from the Patcham and Hollingbury suburban areas. While we recognise that the southern boundaries are less well defined, they do broadly separate the wards from the city centre.

The boundary between the two wards is not so well defined. We considered alternative configurations, but we did not identify any alternative arrangement which produced better community links overall. Both wards have good electoral equality and so we did not find any strong arguments for change.

No change proposed: two 3-seat wards.

Patcham

This ward has reasonable electoral equality and contains the two suburban communities of Patcham and Hollingbury which are adjacent to each other, on the northern edge of the city, with shared community utilities. Hollingbury Park to the east of the ward forms a natural boundary between Hollingbury and other areas of the city. We therefore felt there were strong arguments to retain the existing boundaries of the ward.

No change proposed: one 3-seat ward.

Hollingdean & Stanmer and Moulsecoomb & Bevendean

Hollingdean & Stanmer ward is a large ward containing disparate communities, rather disconnected given the location of Hollingbury Park golf course and Wild Park in the centre of the ward. This green space is more of a dividing feature than smaller city parks elsewhere in the city. The Coldean suburb, Stanmer village and the University of Sussex campus are distinct smaller areas to the north of the ward and on the fringe of the city, whereas Hollingdean to the south is relatively close to the city centre.

We also consider that the Bates Estate (polling district PHSC) which lies between the railway line and the A270 has better local links with the rest of Moulsecoomb.

Moulsecoomb & Bevendean ward similarly stretches out along the A270 corridor taking in various communities from just outside the city centre to the fringes of the city.

As a result of planned developments both wards are projected to have a high variance above electoral equality by 2027.

Taken together, these two wards warrant representation by 7 councillors overall. We propose an alternative configuration of three wards – two 2-seat wards and one 3-seat ward.

Hollingdean itself is a densely populated area, situated relatively close to the city centre. Considerable development is planned in the Saunders Park area. We propose the creation of a 2-seat ward called Hollingdean, comprising polling districts PHSD, PHSE, PHSF and PHSG.

We propose a 3-seat Moulsecoomb & Bevendean ward, to include the Bates Estate, comprising polling districts KMBA, KMBB, KMBC, KMBD, PHSC and part of KMBE. Unfortunately we could not find a good solution which kept the whole of Moulsecoomb within one ward.

We propose to combine Coldean, Stanmer Village, the University of Sussex campus, the University of Brighton campus at Falmer and the northern parts of Moulsecoomb on the fringe of the city in a new 2-seat ward called Stanmer (Polling districts PHSA, PHSB, KMBF, KMBG, KMBH and part of KMBE).

In our proposal we have split polling district KMBE into two sections. We propose that the area adjacent to polling district KMBF – Moulsecoomb Way and the roads to the north – is moved into the proposed Stanmer ward, while the rest of the district south of Moulsecoomb Way is retained within the amended Moulsecoomb & Bevendean ward.

Proposal: Create a new 2-seat ward of Hollingdean, a new 2-seat ward of Stanmer and retain a 3-seat Moulsecoomb & Bevendean ward with amended boundaries.

Woodingdean

The existing ward boundaries enclose a well-defined community surrounding by green space, and the electorate forecast is within 10% of the target electorate in 2027. We believe there is a strong argument to retain the existing boundaries of this ward, with the same councillor representation.

No change proposed: one 2-seat ward

Rottingdean Coastal

The existing ward covers several different distinct communities, from east to west:

- Saltdean (west of the authority boundary with Lewes; East Saltdean being in Lewes District and Telscombe Civil Parish)
- Rottingdean – the only civil parish within Brighton & Hove
- Ovingdean
- Roedean
- Brighton Marina
- Black Rock
- Sussex Square (Kemp Town)

The first three areas above (existing polling districts KRCA, KRCB, KRCC, KRCD) are geographically separated from the rest of the ward, whereas Roedean, Black Rock, Kemp Town and Brighton Marina are attached to the main Brighton conurbation and have good transport links to the East Brighton and Queen's Park wards to their west.

Under our proposals, a 2-seat ward covering Rottingdean, Saltdean and Ovingdean would have an electorate 6% above average in 2027.

As now, the civil parish of Rottingdean would be within one ward.

Proposal: Create a new 2-seat ward called Rottingdean from polling districts KRCA, KRCB, KRCCC and KRCD. Transfer polling districts KRCE and KRCE to either East Brighton or a proposed Kemp Town ward – see next section.

Hanover & Elm Grove, Queens Park, East Brighton

These wards cover a number of different communities in the east of the city. As noted above, we believe there is a clear geographical boundary within the existing Rottingdean Coastal ward. To the west, the A23/Old Steine provides a sensible outer boundary.

There are good road and public transport links throughout these areas, including to the Marina.

The existing East Brighton ward has the highest projected variance under electoral equality in 2027 (14%).

Polling district KEBG (Queensway and roads off) is poorly connected to the rest of the current East Brighton ward and has better connections to the area immediately south (Sutherland Road) within Queen's Park ward.

While the construction of the Marina makes it separate from the rest of the city, it is geographically closer to the main Brighton conurbation than it is to the villages on the south-eastern fringe of the city. It has good transport links (buses 21 and 7) to the rest of East Brighton.

Kemp Town is currently split arbitrarily between Queen's Park and East Brighton wards. And we would argue that there is a strong coherence between all the communities along the seafront, with good pedestrian links running along St James's Street and St George's Road and good public transport links along St James's Street, Edward Street, Eastern Road and Marine Parade.

Edward Street and Eastern Road form a main thoroughfare for traffic into and out of the city and also form a boundary between the seafront Kemp Town community and other communities further inland.

We therefore propose the creation of a new 2-seat ward called Kemp Town, bounded to the north by Edward Street and Eastern Road, including the southern side of those roads and all areas south to the seafront.

The new Kemp Town ward should comprise polling districts KQPA and KQPE and those parts of polling districts KEBE, KEBF, KQPD, KQPF and KRCE south of the proposed boundary. In addition, we propose that, to the east, Sussex Square forms part of this ward.

We propose East Brighton becomes a 2-seat ward covering areas to the north of Eastern Road and Edward Street (and including the north side of Eastern Road and Edward Street themselves), and that East Brighton should also include the Marina, Black Rock and Roedean. This proposal keeps all the Whitehawk area within the amended East Brighton ward.

East Brighton would comprise polling districts KEBA, KEBB, KEBC, KEBD, part of KEBE (north of Eastern Road), KEBH and part of KRCE (Black Rock, comprising Bristol Place and Arundel Place and roads to the east).

We propose the boundary between East Brighton and Kemp Town should run behind and to the west of Bristol Place and Arundel Place. We propose all of Sussex Square and Lewes Crescent should be kept together within the proposed Kemp Town ward.

We propose that Queen's Park becomes a 2-seat ward, including the Queensway area (KEBG) and also some roads immediately to the east of Royal Sussex County Hospital (Belle Vue Gardens, Walpole Road and Upper Abbey Road).

As now, the Queen's Park ward would contain all the Queen's Park conservation area within its boundaries.

Queen's Park would therefore comprise polling districts KEBG, KQPB, KQPC, KQPG, KQPH and those parts of KQPD, KQPF and KEBF north of Edward Street and Eastern Road.

Finally, the Hanover & Elm Grove ward contains all the Elm Grove area and the Pankhurst estate and most of Hanover within its existing boundaries. We did not find an alternative configuration which did not cause further disruption to community links in adjacent wards. It has good electoral equality and so we do not propose any change to this ward.

Proposal: Retain Queens Park and East Brighton wards as two 2-seat (rather than 3-seat wards) with amended boundaries; create a 2-seat Kemp Town ward; and retain Hanover & Elm Grove unchanged as a 3-seat ward.