

From: [REDACTED]
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Boundary submission

Submission to the Commission

I've seen the local government boundary commission's draft proposals and also their further draft proposals and wish to add my comment.

I was elected to the first Brighton & Hove City Council in 2003. I became an Independent Councillor in the then Stanford Ward (Hove Park area). These were the first elections for the "City Council" as it was the Borough Council prior to that.

I went on to represent the community of this ward (which became the Hove Park Ward) until retiring in 2019 so I know the area very well indeed.

During this time I represented my community as a Councillor and lived on Hill Brow, (Hove Park) the road that adjoins Dyke Road Avenue, where I still am resident. My son also lives in Dyke Road Avenue and I have a son who lived in Westdene, then moved to Hove Park and is now moving back to Westdene, so I know the area you are looking at and considering boundaries very well indeed.

In this context I speak from a lot of experience in dealing with the residents of this area and would like to make the following observations on your report:

Hove Park and Westdene are connected. I know this because when I was a councillor, residents in my area of Hove Park used to send their children to Westdene Primary School which was the nearest school for many at the top end of Hove Park and the school of choice, (my own three sons attended the Westdene school too.) These children would later go onto Blatchington Mill senior school (Hove Park) for their secondary

education. The parents and students in my ward know both Westdene and Hove Park very well as it was an intrinsic part of the education of many. Through their schooling they would get to know the local environment and green areas surrounding them and undertake field trips there. As a map would show you, Hove Park and Westdene are highly connected and linked with green land and walking routes. The councils plans for a new secondary school at King George VI Avenue will ensure that the schooling connection between Westdene and Hove Park will continue long into the future.

The assertion in this report from the Labour Group of Councillors that Hove Park residents “don’t know where Westdene is” is thus very much misguided and incorrect – I don’t know how it has passed through and made it into your report but it needs to be corrected ASAP. Also incorrect is the assertion that people don’t or can’t cross the Avenue (Dyke Road Avenue). There would I suggest be somewhere between 10-20 crossing places down Dyke Road Avenue, used by hundreds every day, not least dog walkers or runners connecting with [‘The Green Running Route \[mypacer.com\]’](https://www.mypacer.com/). Also parents walking their children to the nurseries in Hove Park and vice versa. Also cross areas for the doctors, hove park doesn’t have a doctors practice. This doesn’t include the many more who cross the road to catch the bus service into town. Your report is just simply incorrect in saying there are no crossings and if you look at some road maps you will be able to count them.

People in Westdene regularly come across to Hove for shopping etc. Woodland Drive has a local row of shops with parking spaces that is well used, easily accessible by walking or driving, just as the residents in Hove Park use the cafe and shops in Westdene, Indeed many don’t drive but walk between these two area. Opposite Woodland Drive Shops, you will see an alleyway which takes you to the centre of three cornered copse, you can turn left to walk down to Hove Park or right to walk up to Hilltop and the green fields and open spaces by Windmill Drive and Westdene

It is all connected.

The 27 bus connects the Hove Park area and Westdene and is well used, especially by those with limited mobility. The areas are linked by the local community magazine ‘The Post’ which is delivered to both Hove Park and

Westdene. As a Councillor there were always common issues that crossed between Hove Park and Westdene published in this little brochure. The areas of Hove Park and Westdene are neighbours in every respect with a common interest and similar issues. Community events in Hove Park are well attended by Westdene residents as are the local events in Westdene are attended by the residents of Hove Park.

The Church parish boundaries include both areas.

My advice to the commission is to bring communities together with your wards. It is this that makes the most effective local government and representation and gives local people the best chance of having their voices heard. Splitting areas into smaller pieces does not do this effectively and you will often find it divides communities of similar interest along strange lines.

My recommendation is to create a Hove Park and Westdene Ward as proposed in the Draft Recommendations. Ward boundaries come and go and change over time but this would represent an improvement in this part of the city and a good basis for representation in the years to come.



Sent from my iPad