

Swindon

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Comment text:

Related subject: South Swindon Parish and neighbouring parishes.

File attached with submission.

Attached Documents:

- boundary-submission-18-march-2024-final.pdf

SWINDON BOROUGH WARDS FOR SOUTH SWINDON PARISH AND NEIGHBOURING AREAS

1. SCOPE

This proposal primarily considers South Swindon Parish, which is the largest and most populous part of the proposal, Nythe Eldene & Liden Parish, Covingham Parish and parts of Liddington Parish and Stratton St Margaret Parish.

I hope to make clear that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to create wards that meet the three main criteria of the Boundary Commission if we do not take account of the fact that the A419, Great Western Way, the M4 and the railway line act as physical boundaries which we need to consider against the following guidelines:

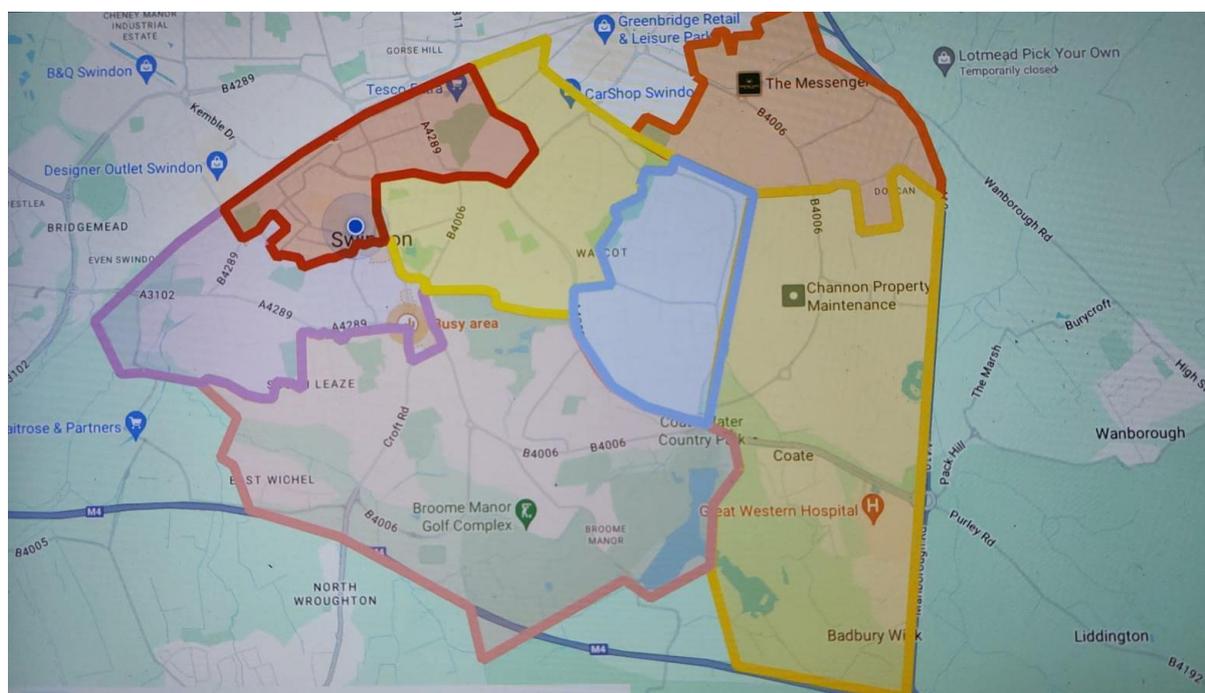
- “to deliver electoral equality: where each councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the borough;
- that the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities;
- that the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.”

In following existing parishes my boundaries of West Swindon, South Swindon bar 30 voters, Covingham, Wroughton, Chiseldon, Wanborough and Bishopstone can fit. Nythe, Eldene & Liden doesn't fit the numeric parameters required and there is another parish issue with Stratton St Margaret in the east. Liddington Parish is a key area in this proposal being split to resolve the Badbury Park/ A419/ Commonhead issues while keeping the portion east of the A419 together.

Swindon's projected electorate in 2029 is 177,732. So split by 57 seats it is 3,118 per councillor. 10% tolerance is 2,806 to 3,430 per seat. Two member ward target is 6,236 with a low of 5,612 and high of 6,860. Three member ward target is 9,354 with a low of 8,419 and high of 10,290.

Changes to population density across Swindon since the last review mean some wards are significantly over or under represented. This issues grows by 2029 with existing and planned development in Central, Wichelstowe, Badbury Park and other places in the area under this plan. The New Eastern Villages will lead to some of that new housing in Wanborough Parish by 2029.

2. MAIN PROPOSAL



2.1 EAST SWINDON

Nythe, Eldene & Liden (NEL) Parish with 8,237 voters is just too small for three seats meaning other options are needed in the east.

Add in Badbury Park polling district CLC with 1,914 voters and just too small for three councillors. Also including polling district RWF covering the hospital and some houses behind the hospital, off Homington Avenue, makes it work. RWF is part of Liddington Parish. It is a small, and fairly new, electoral district with 254 people living there. RWF residential housing in particular has no contiguous connection to anywhere other than Badbury Park, so I submit Badbury Park polling districts CLC and RWF must be in the same ward.

Existing Covingham & Dorcan polling districts without the Liden polling district of CDE has 6,719 planned voters for two councillors. Polling district CDA Lower Coleview with 1,530 voters is a relatively small part of Stratton St Margaret Parish which also contains parts of the current borough wards of St Margaret & South Marston, Gorse Hill & Pinehurst and Penhill & Upper Stratton.

Given NEL Parish on its own, and linked with Covingham Parish, does not fit the numbers required a slightly revised Covingham & Nythe ward represents community continuity. Liden and Eldene will link with Badbury Park.

2.2 REMAINING SOUTH SWINDON PARISH AREA

Central ward will exceed the permitted numbers even more than it does now by 2029. There are options in the town centre but given the high level of casework I propose a three member ward. It includes the Broadgreen and town centre areas. I have added in the Crombey Street/ Commercial Road area for greater coherence and the lower Shrivensham Road area that leads onto The Magic Roundabout next to County Road. Means should be found to split the CEC polling district so those residents can vote as readily in person as other polling districts.

Current Eastcott at 8,189 projected voters is too small for three seats and current Old Town at 8,233 is also too small for three seats. Lawn is just too small for a one member. Lawn and Badbury Park is too small for two councillors.

There needs to be at least a third coherent ward covering the current Old Town/ Central/ Eastcott area apart from successors for Central and Old Town. Given Eastcott and Old Town have not grown that significantly there is an eastwards shift in my proposed wards. I have sought keep coherent local communities together in setting the boundary between Old Town successor and Eastcott successor around Bath Road and that between Eastcott and Central new wards around Crombey Street.

So I propose a redrawing of the boundary between Old Town and Lawn involving Okus Road and Bath Road. I have also linked Walcot with York Road/ Drove Road and Old Town with Lawns. I have aimed for three member wards wherever possible so that ward teams can better maintain representation and supporting residents.

Park North at 3,325 voters and Park South at 3,498 voter numbers comes to 6,823 for two councillors covering the Parks community.

2.3 IMPACT ON PARISH BOUNDARIES

I completely recognise that the requirement to keep parishes together and not split them across wards is serious and important – but it's one of a set of guidelines all of which need to be balanced against each other *as well as possible*.

For the reasons outlined above, it is proposed here that a balanced view of electoral equality, community cohesion and effective representation would tend to view the few cross-Parish wards as an acceptable solution.

The large majority of residents in and around South Swindon Parish will be in wards that are within their parish boundaries. I estimate less than 10% in the main area of the proposal and a significantly lower proportion including neighbouring areas.

3. Summary of numbers of councillors and associated existing polling districts for main proposal

Central 3 councillors

Central CC - CEB 2,199

Broadgreen CC- CEC 5,374

MST Centre- CED 304 as follows

Lower Shrivenhan Road

Marsh Farm Lane

Farmhouse Lane

Pavilion Close

Part of Friends Meeting House Eastcott ETB 1,100 as follows.

Commercial Road

Crombey Street

Cross Street

Curtis Street

Deacon Street

Dowling Street

Dryden Street

Morse Street

Newhall Street

Stanier Street

Whitehead Street

Whitney Street

TOTAL 8,977

All South Swindon Parish.

Covingham & Nythe 2 councillors

Coleview CC - CDA 1,530

Nythe CC - CDB 1,974

St Paul's Covingham - CDC 2,794,

St Paul's Covingham - CDD 421,

Nythe SMG 0.

TOTAL 6,719

Parts of Stratton St Margaret and NEL Parishes with all of Covingham Parish as now.

Liden, Eldene & Badbury Park 3 councillors

Eldene CC LEC 2,759

Liden CC LED 1,909

Badbury Park CC - RWF 254

Badbury Park CC - CLC 1,914

Liden CC - CDE 1,595

TOTAL 8,431

South Swindon with parts of both Nythe Eldene & Liden and Liddington Parishes.

Eastcott & Kingshill 3 councillors

Robert Le King - CEA 2,414

Clifton Street - ETA 1,724

Part Friends Meeting House - ETB 475 as follows

Byron Street

Dixon Street

Eastcott Hill

Edmund Street

Leighfield Close

Rolleston Street

Savernake Street

Warwick Road

Victoria Road

Moose Hall - ETC 2,001

Ashford Road ETE 751

Part Commonweal OTA 1,649 as follows

Bacon Close

Bankside

Celsus Grove

Chain Court

Curie Avenue

Florey Court
Galen View
Okus Road
Pasteur Drive
Portland Avenue
Sarsen Close
Seacole Crescent
St Helens View
Tithe Barn Crescent
Tuke Walk
Withering Road
Yersin Court

Part Lethbridge Road OTC 217 as follows.

Bath Road
Oxford Gardens

TOTAL 9,231

All South Swindon Parish.

Old Town, Lawn & East Wichel 3 councillors

Part Commonweal OTA 1,130 as follows

Belmont Crescent
Commonweal Road
Field Rise
Goddard Avenue
Mill Lane
Roman Crescent
The Mall
The Marlestons
The Quarries
Westlecot Road
Wichelstok Close

Part Lethbridge Road OTC 1,651 as follows

Ambrose Road

Avenue Road

Bowling Green Lane

Bradford Road

Croft Road

Devizes Road

Fitzroy Road

Glenwood Close

Grovelands Avenue

Homeleaze

Lethbridge Road

Linley Close

Louviers Way

Nicholas Court

Penfold Gardens

Pleydell Road

Quarry Mews

Quarry Road

Ripley Road

Riverdale Close

Riverdale Walk

Springfield Road

The Shearings

Tismeads Crescent

Wyvern Close

Stowaway Wichelstowe - OTB 1,300

Croft Sports Centre - OTD 2,286

Lawn CC - CLA 2,664

Lawn CC - CLD 3

TOTAL 9,034

All South Swindon Parish.

Walcot & Queen's Park 3 councillors

Immanuel Upham Road- WPA 2,413

St Andrew's Walcot East - WPB 1,754

St Andrew's Walcot East - WPC 1,793

Drove Road - ETD 2,138

Part MST Centre – CED 1,063 as follows

Briar Copse

Copse Avenue

Culverhouse Road

Eddleston Road

Farriers Close

Ocotal Way

Pitt Close

Selwood Close

Upper Shrivenham Road

Stratton Road

Wheatcroft Way

Wills Avenue

TOTAL 9,161

All South Swindon Parish.

Parks 2 councillors

Goddard Park- WPD 3,325

Park South CC - LEA 2,151

Park South CC - LEB 1,347.

TOTAL 6,823

All South Swindon Parish.

4 NEIGHBOURING PARISHES

The current Wroughton & Wichelstowe ward including West Wichel has 8,749 projected voters in 2029 and therefore fits three councillors. It's boundaries match those of Wroughton Parish. I have worked with following the parish boundary in this area while recognising the links across Wichelstowe. All current Wroughton & Wichelstowe polling districts would remain in the same unaltered ward going forward.

The Ridgeway and Chiseldon polling districts south of the M4 and east of the A419, with 7,124 planned voters, is just too large for two councillors. There isn't public information at the level needed to propose a small boundary adjustment between Wanborough and South Marston within the planned Eastern Villages. There is significant projected growth in Wanborough, rather than existing voters, that is making the numeric parameters fail. Wanborough RWC polling district goes from 1,532 to 3,876 voters and South Marston Parish comprising BHJ, BHK, SMD and SMJ from 787 to 2,833 voters. Chiseldon Parish, with or without the whole of Liddington Parish, is too small for one seat and Wanborough Parish linked with Bishopstone Parish is too big. RWE is part of South Swindon Parish but is east of the A419 and allows connectivity between the villages using the A419 and Medbourne Road. I have worked on the basis there will be a two member ward for Ridgeway and Chiseldon comprising polling districts east of the A419 and south of the M4.

West Swindon qualifies for 6.22 councillors with 19,380 projected voters. Extending the existing Lydiard & Freshbrook ward to cover all, rather than some, of Toothill and the Shaw ward to cover all, rather than some of Westlea, creates two wards of three councillors each. The two proposal wards match the entire West Swindon Parish area and represent a simple extension of existing arrangements.

Rodbourne polling districts MWA and MWB are in North Swindon Parish and are taken to be part of those proposals.

5 Summary of numbers of councillors and associated existing polling districts in neighbouring wards

Freshbrook, Toothill & Grange Park. 3 councillors

LFA 1471, LFB 1765, LFC 1471, LFD 1608, LFE 1773, MWC 1739.

TOTAL 9827

All West Swindon Parish.

Shaw & Westlea. 3 councillors

SHA 1420, SHB 1322, SHC 1638, SHD 1877, SHE 631, SHF 1103, MWB 1562.

TOTAL 9553

All West Swindon Parish.

Wroughton & Wichelstowe 3 councillors

WWA 36 WWB 2296 WWC 2770 WWD 2793 WWE 355 WWF 502

TOTAL 8752

Complete Wroughton Parish.

Ridgeway & Chiseldon 2 councillors

CLB 1941, RWA 99, RWB 376, RWC 3876, RWD 548, RWE 30.

TOTAL 6878

Chiseldon, Wanborough and Bishopstone Parishes with parts of Liddington and South Swindon Parishes.

Rodbourne is assumed to be part of North Swindon Parish proposals.

MWA 1993, MWD 2272.

TOTAL 4265