

Coventry

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Comment text:

Related subject: Finham, Stivichall and Green Lane (Wainbody Ward, Earlsdon Ward, Cheylesmore Ward)

I strongly object to the proposed boundary changes for Finham and Stivichall and would recommend any boundary changes to ensure that Finham (parish council boundaries and the area between Kenilworth Road and the railway line) and Stivichall (the area around St James Church, Styvechale Grange, Baginton Road and Stivichall Primary School) should be within the same ward. I agree with the LGBCE's proposal to contain all of Stivichall within a singular ward however I do not understand why Finham has been included with Tile Hill, Canley and the University of Warwick owing to distances and a lack of cross-community ties between Finham and the area around the University campuses. Stivichall and Finham both have strong local ties to one another and both are reliant on similar infrastructure.

I have attached a document with this which outline my objections and proposal in detail detailing the proposed area I believe, a summary is below:

- The area covering the residential areas of Finham, Stivichall and the War Memorial Park should be contained within a single ward together and not be split up as per your draft proposal within three separate wards.
Inclusion of Finham and Stivichall is based upon historical precedent and to ensure consistency for local representation.
- Containing both Finham and Stivichall together accounts for physical boundaries containing the area such as woodland along Kenilworth Road, the War Memorial Park and the A444 Cheylesmore Bypass which separate Finham and Stivichall from the rest of Coventry.

- Finham and Stivichall have a long history as a continuous area stretching from the Domesday Book and Anglo-Saxon hundreds through to the postwar period with their development outside the city of Coventry and incorporation into the city of Coventry.
- Finham and Stivichall cover a continuous urban area and so share local amenities across the residential boundaries such as churches, the main pub, the main secondary school, primary schools, shops, and access to green spaces.
- Finham and Stivichall are both residential areas with a reliance on the same transport and service infrastructure in contrast with other parts of Coventry, splitting up the areas into separate wards will undermining representation on those issues on Coventry City Council with Earlsdon ward focused on the adjacent area around Earlsdon High Street and Wainbody ward focused on issues around the University of Warwick.

I would also like to point out the error in your justification for the proposed changes to Earlsdon ward, you state in your draft recommendations that:

"We propose to include the Green Lane area in our proposed Earlsdon ward but given the limited evidence we have received so far for this area we are eager to hear if this proposed change reflects community identities."

As someone who currently lives off Green Lane and used to both live on Green Lane and attend primary school at Stivichall Primary School, and should therefore be considered someone from the "Green Lane" area, the Finham part of Green Lane remains inside Wainbody ward under your proposals. A correction to ensure that the "Green Lane" area is included into the same singular ward would require the boundaries of the Earlsdon ward to at least extend to St Martins Road.

Attached Documents:

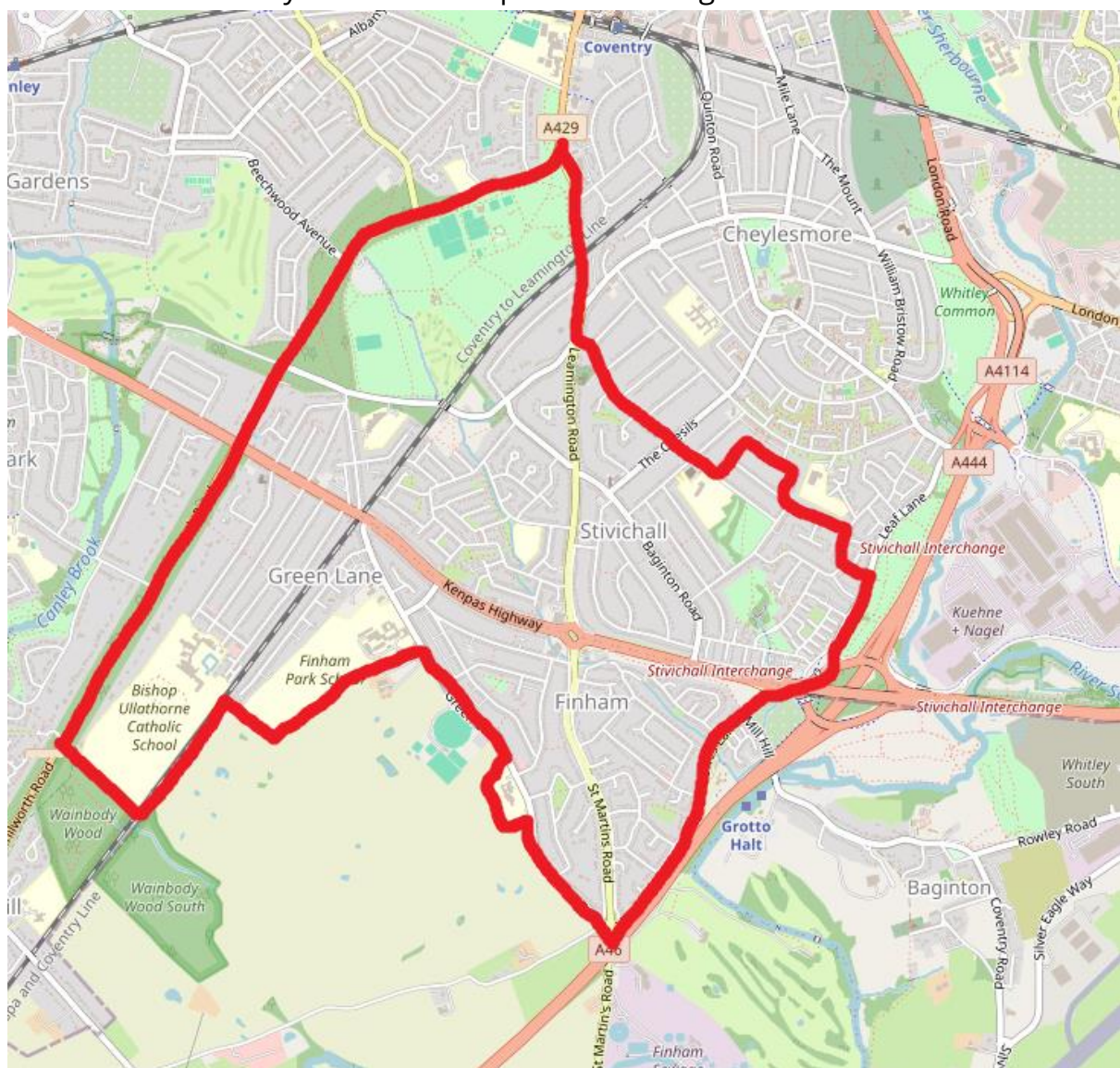
- Boundary of Finham and Stivichall.png
- Proposed Changes for Finham and Stivichall.pdf

Proposed Changes for Finham and Stivichall

As a resident of Finham and a former resident of Stivichall, I am deeply concerned about the proposed changes and believe they will undermine the representation of both Finham and Stivichall on Coventry City Council as the gravity of issues will be centred around the University and Earlsdon owing to their precedent. Finham and Stivichall share many residential issues, and both are historically and physically intertwined with each other.

Proposed Area

Below is my proposal for the area to be wholly contained within a single ward based on community and historical precedent in figure 1:



1. Proposed continuous area of Finham and Stivichall

This covers both the entirety of Stivichall and Finham and ensures that the Green Lane areas of both are within the same ward. The proposed boundaries encompass the boundary of Finham Parish Council before travelling along the Coventry-Leamington Spa railway line up to the boundary between Bishop Ullathorne School and Wainbody Wood. The boundary then follows Kenilworth Road up to the junction with Leamington Road to the north – covering the Stivichall side of Stivichall Common and the War Memorial Park – at the point where the former Stivichall Grove toll booth used to inhabit. The boundary then travels down the Leamington Road where it meets Knoll Drive and travels along Knoll Drive until it meets Ivybridge Road, following Ivybridge Road until the intersection with Babbacombe Road. It then follows Babbacombe Road to the intersection of Exminster Road before moving south and meeting Stivichall Leaf Lane. It follows Stivichall Leaf Lane towards Stonebridge Highway – travelling along where Howes Lane used to extend – before joining the remnants of Howes Lane to meet with the area of Finham Parish Council.

This area was chosen to consider the natural and physical boundaries surrounding Finham and Stivichall (woodland adjacent to Kenilworth Road, the River Sherbourne and the A444) and separate the community to the north of Knoll Drive which is more closely linked with Cheylesmore and centred around Daventry Road.

Finham and Stivichall have a distinct and historical relationship in the histories of Coventry and Warwickshire with evidence of this relationship extending at least as far back as the Domesday Book. As of the 11th Century both areas were within the Anglo-Saxon hundred of 'Stanlei' (centred on the modern village of Stoneleigh - just south of Coventry) which was later absorbed into the later Knightlow Hundred alongside the hundreds of Brinklow and Marton. Stivichall was within a distinct parish centred on the Church of St James whereas Finham was held within the parish centred on the Church of St Mary in Stoneleigh – however the historic boundary between Stoneleigh and Stivichall was the modern Green Lane with the northern side being within Stivichall and the southern side being within Finham. This is evidenced by the historical centre of Finham being located at the junction between St Martins Road and Coventry Road, adjacent to the medieval Finham Bridge that crosses the Finham Brook (on the site of the modern Finham sewage works managed by Severn Trent Water) and the naming of historical landmarks in modern Finham as per the 1886 map for Warwickshire (Stivichall Wood was located in modern-day Finham, covering both sides of what is now Crossway Road, extending over the Kenpas Highway and into what is now Styvechale Grange). The area of the historic parish of Stivichall is represented below in figure 2 from *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 6, Knightlow Hundred*:



The County of the city of Coventry was created in the mid-15th century to separate it from the administrative county of Warwickshire and the Knightlow Hundred. The county boundary between the city of Coventry and Warwickshire went through Stivichall with the boundary extending to the River Sowe west of Baginton. As shown by the OS *Warwickshire Sheet XXVI.NE* map published in 1886, Stivichall Grange (still extant within the modern residential area of Styvechale Grange) was located outside the city of Coventry with access to the Grange from Green Lane, along what is now Bathway Road in Finham. This highlights that the area of what is now Finham as being together with parts of Stivichall as a contained area outside of the city of Coventry for almost 400 years until 1842 when Coventry was re-incorporated into the county Warwickshire.

As the development of suburban Coventry progressed into the 20th century a housing development centred on Green Lane began in both Stivichall and Finham, this is highlighted by the similar architectural styles of the houses on Green Lane both north and south of the railway line as well as the roads off Green Lane (Gregory Road in Stivichall, Gretna Road in Finham). This continued into further development of the area - the Church of St Martin-in-the-Fields in Finham was established within the parish of St James Styvechale as responsibility of the area was given over to for the area around Green Lane. To this day St Martins-in-the-Fields is still the local church for both the Stivichall and Finham sides of Green Lane. The land used for this development was purchased by the Coventry Corporation (now Coventry City Council) from the Gregory-Hood family of Stivichall further highlighting the historical links between Stivichall and Finham.

Representational Justification

To accommodate the historical links between Stivichall and Finham, Styvechale Grange is contained alongside Finham in the ward of Wainbody. I propose this should be extended to cover the entirety Stivichall, including the War Memorial Park (formerly included within the Gregory-Hood estate) and this area should be held within a singular ward, ideally alongside Earlsdon or Cheylesmore. Currently your draft proposal consolidates the entirety of Stivichall into Earlsdon ward but severs the link between Stivichall and Finham.

Ensuring Finham and Stivichall are together in the same is key to ensuring fair representation of the area within Coventry City Council. Local amenities and hubs cover residents in both Finham and Stivichall, St Martins-in-the-Fields, Finham, is the local church for the Green Lane area of Finham and Stivichall, the Burnt Post is the local pub for residents of Finham and the two primary schools in Stivichall, Stivichall Primary School and Grange Farm Primary School, are within the catchment area of Finham Park School. In addition, the area covering Stivichall is included in a continuous built-up area within Coventry which is broken up from Earlsdon by the woodland around Kenilworth Road and the War Memorial Park and constrained on the eastern side by the River Sowe and River Sherbourne.

This also addresses the issues within the draft proposal to contain Stivichall within Earlsdon and extend Wainbody to include parts of Tile Hill. Including Stivichall in Earlsdon will marginalise representation in Stivichall due to the distinct identity of Earlsdon with a dominant high street well away from Stivichall. Including parts of Tile Hill will ensure that the predominantly residential area of Finham will be dominated by issues in and around the University of Warwick which centres around that side of Kenilworth Road while being largely irrelevant to issues in Finham.

Having Finham and Stivichall together ensures that cross-community issues are not overshadowed by other parts of Coventry and strengthens the voice of the two areas owing to the similarities of issues with both being residential areas, both sharing local amenities and both sharing transport access for both cars and public transport (both rely on access to Leamington Road, Kenilworth Road and the A45 for transit and residents share the same bus routes – the Numbers 9, 24, 24A, 25 and 60 which travel through Finham and Stivichall to connect the residential areas and the numbers 87, 87A, 12X and X17 which offer direct access to Coventry city centre, Kenilworth and the university of Warwick). In addition,

both areas are covered by the same internet exchange (Highway), access to services (Alvis Sports and Social Club, Trinity Guild rugby club, Finham Library, primary school allocations for Finham Primary School, Grange Farm Primary School and Stivichall Primary School) and parkland/green spaces (War Memorial Park, Finham Green, woodland adjacent to Kenilworth Road and Coat of Arms Bridge Road).

