

Tinkers Bridge Resident's Association



**Formal response to proposed ward boundary
changes by the Local Government Boundary
Commission.**

Consultation deadline: 24 Feb 2025

Introduction

Tinkers Bridge Resident's Association believes that the consequences of the proposed ward boundary changes will be detrimental to the estate. We therefore oppose the changes in the present form, while acknowledging that, in a growing city such as Milton Keynes, boundary reviews of all types will be needed from time to time.

Proposed new ward of Ouzel Valley

This new ward has parts of four existing wards in it (Woughton & Fishermead, Campbell Park & Old Woughton, Broughton, and Monkston). It therefore has no existing identity.

Tinkers Bridge is part of Woughton Community Council parish, which is the major parish within the existing Woughton and Fishermead ward, with two of the ward councillors being senior member of the parish council. The parish is a strong part of the identity of Tinkers Bridge, and very significant in the support given to the estate, owning the meeting place on the estate, and giving support in multiple ways to the residents. It is therefore a strong preference of local residents that Tinkers Bridge is in the same ward as the rest of the Woughton Community Council parish, and able to easily maintain that existing community.

The 2021 census map of housing Occupancy rating for rooms provides a crude guide to the economic situation of areas (a darker colour indicates a higher occupancy level), and the following figure shows the area round Tinkers Bridge, with the proposed new boundaries shown in blue, with the existing boundaries in black



It can be seen that only relatively small parts of the proposed Ouzel Valley ward have similar room occupancy to Tinkers Bridge (chiefly Ashland, Oakgrove and Monkston) with very large areas being a flood plain for the river, so with very few houses. This potentially makes raising issues concerning the economic welfare of Tinkers Bridge harder at a ward level. Other economic indicators tend to show a similar pattern.

Local boundaries:

It is desirable that administration boundaries for different purposes follow the same geographic features, especially those which form natural boundaries in the interaction of communities. In this area, the major geographic features giving boundaries are the canal, the A5 dual carriageway, the railway. The river Ouzel itself does not provide such a boundary, as it has a flood plain surrounding it, and so the whole flood plain area forms a distinct area. City roads, such as the V8 (Marborough Street) are less of a boundary where they have good crossing points (true in this area) and, as they are commonly bus routes, bus users must, of necessity, frequent both sides of the street. These users would expect the same standards to apply in both directions, which may not always happen if that road is an administration boundary. It is also noted that in the existing proposal the V8 is not an administration boundary south of the H9 (Grovelway), showing inconsistency in what features should be boundaries.

In an ideal review of all levels of boundaries in this area, Tinkers Bridge Resident's Association would suggest

- The Woughton ward should exclude Fishermead, and include the areas west of the canal – Peartree Bridge, Passmore, Tinkers Bridge, and Ashland
- The Woughton Community Council (WCC) area should include Passmore
- Consideration should be given to changing the west boundary of WCC to follow the A5, rather than the railway line. This will have the effect of moving a recent industrial development out of being lumped with the National Bowl, into being part of the Bleak Hall industrial area
- The Output Areas used by the Office of National Statistics do divide up estates, and it is appreciated that statistical consideration affect those boundaries. However, it would be useful to revisit the Passmore area in this regard, in order to respect the boundary created by the canal.

The Tinkers Bridge Residents Association meeting of 30 Jan 2025 unanimously approved submitting this statement as a reflection of the concerns of the members.

References

<https://www.lgbce.org.uk/all-reviews/milton-keynes>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/census/maps/choropleth/housing/occupancy-rating-for-rooms/occupancy-rating-rooms-6a/occupancy-rating-of-rooms-0>