

Solihull

Personal Details:

Name: Richard Wilson

Email: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name: Berkswell Parish Council (Representative of parish/town council)

Comment text:

Dear Sirs

Please see attached Berkswell Parish Council's response to the review of the number of councillors, wards and ward names for Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.

Yours faithfully

Richard Wilson (Clerk to Berkswell Parish Council)

Tel: [REDACTED]

Attached Documents:

- Letter re Local Government Boundary Review - Berkswell PC Response.docx

Berkswell Parish Council

Clerk to Berkswell Parish Council – Mr Richard Wilson

PO Box 6379, Coventry CV6 9LP

Email: clerk@berkswellparishcouncil.org.uk

Tel: [REDACTED]

LGBCE,
PO BOX 133
Blyth
NE24 9FE

Emailed to: reviews@lgbce.org.uk

4 October 2023

Dear Local Government Boundary Commission

Local Government Boundary Review – Solihull, Meriden Ward

Balsall Parish Council and **Berkswell Parish Council** have worked together to respond to the current Local Government Boundary Review.

The village of Balsall Common falls within both Parishes due to the historic nature of the Parish Boundaries. Balsall Common has grown over recent years and is set to grow further with an additional c2000 houses planned within the draft Solihull Local Plan. There is an interdependency between the parishes which form one larger community, as a result.

Residents cross the parish boundary daily and share resources:

- **Schools.** There are 3 primary schools within the two Parishes and one Secondary school. Children from Balsall and Berkswell Parishes attend all three primary schools, the secondary school, Heart of England School, lies within Balsall Parish.
- **The Doctors Practice** is off Hall Meadow Road in Balsall Common and is the Balsall Common and Meriden Practice which serves the residents of Balsall, Berkswell and Meriden.
- **Worship.** There are 5 formal churches within the 2 Parishes which residents choose to attend and there is a close working relationship between them through the local Churches Together group.
- **Clubs and Societies.** Many of the local sports clubs' names reflect the closeness between the two parishes, e.g., Berkswell and Balsall Rugby Club, Berkswell and Balsall Cricket Club, Berkswell and Balsall Tennis Club, Berkswell and Balsall Hornets Football Club. There are also clubs such as local amateur dramatic society Centre Stage, the Women's Institute, the Horticultural Society and U3A which serve residents from both Parishes. The Balsall Common Village Residents' Association is a long standing organisation which also covers the concerns of residents from the parishes of both Balsall and Berkswell.
- **Parks** – there are 4 local parks which are regularly used by residents, in particular the largest - Lavender Hall Park, within Berkswell Parish, is used by residents from all over Balsall Common and the surrounding area.
- **The Shopping Centre** within Balsall Common is mainly within Balsall Parish but partly within Berkswell.

- **Public Transport.** The station, Berkswell station is within Berkswell Parish and the line forms the boundary for Balsall Common, this is a service well utilised by residents from both parishes. Bus services are limited but the on-demand service operates across the whole of the two parishes and there are services from the centre of Balsall Common to Coventry and Solihull, albeit limited.

Collaborative Working

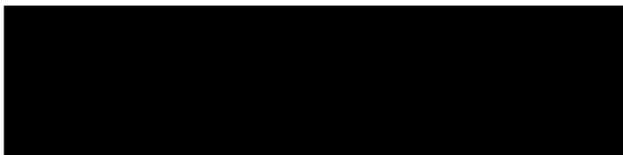
The draft Solihull Local Plan shows substantial growth for Balsall Common village, the majority of which will be within Berkswell Parish Council boundary. When major planning applications are submitted, a working party comprised of councillors from both Parish Councils is formed to consider the papers in detail and drafts a response for consideration and approval at the next Council meeting.

The Parish Councils also work together on issues such as Christmas lights for Balsall Common, the Balsall Common Village Centre Master Plan and more recently applications relating to HS2. We share concerns about the construction of HS2, its impact on the local community and have collaborated on responses regarding construction traffic routes and the design for the Balsall Common Viaduct.

The Birmingham Airport Consultative Group is attended by representatives from both Parish Councils as given its proximity and the flight paths of the aeroplanes, there is a shared interest by all of the residents.

Both Parishes have rural areas and we work hard as Parish Councils to ensure they feel listened to, included and not forgotten. **We therefore ask that the whole of Balsall Parish and Berkswell Parish remain within the same ward for the reasons of community cohesion detailed above.**

Yours faithfully



Mr Richard Wilson (Clerk to Berkswell Parish Council)