

West Windsor Residents Association

To promote the interests and well-being of West Windsor residents



4th December 2017

Local Government Boundary Commission for England
14th Floor
Millbank Tower
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London
SW1P 4QP
reviews@lgbce.org.uk

Mr Kevin Chapman,
Chair,
West Windsor Residents Association,
17 Whitely,
Windsor,
SL4 5PJ

Dear Sir/Madam,

Submission of West Windsor Residents Association (WWRA) Electoral review of Windsor and Maidenhead

Preamble

This is a written response by the West Windsor Residents Association (WWRA) to the Electoral review of Windsor and Maidenhead

This is a written response on behalf of the West Windsor Residents Association (WWRA), an organisation with 1,000 member households, whose aim is to promote the interests and well being of West Windsor residents whom we have been serving for more than 50 years.

Membership of the WWRA is on a household basis and is open to all residents of Clewer Wards (North, East and South) and Park Ward, in the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, that lie to the west of the main trunk route, A332/B3173/ B3022, that link Junction 6 on the M4 with LegoLand.

In other words, it covers the historic communities of Dedworth, Clewer and the newer communities to the West of these two ancient settlements and includes The Willows, The Laing Estate, The Limes, Broom Farm and St. Leonards Hill and LEGOLAND.

However, more than 95% of our membership comes from the boundaries of Dedworth as noted below.

What is our community?

1. Proposal for wards in West Windsor
 - a. Dedworth has a greater level of population, is quite distinct and more diverse from the affluent Clewers; residents from each area draw their

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social identity and ranges of services from separate facilities, including schools, mainly only sharing the Town Centre as common ground; their socio-economic descriptors also are distinctly different

- b. Dedworth
 - i. To the East – residents on, or on roads off, Sawyers Close and Vale Road
 - ii. To the South - Clewer Hill (up to Duncroft & PerryCroft) and up to Poolmans Road
 - iii. To the West – Broom Farm Estate, The Limes, Ruddlesway, The Willows
 - iv. To the North – Windsor Racecourse
 - c. Clewer-St. Leonards (2 members)
 - i. Including all residents on, or emanating from Mill Lane, Parsonage Lane, Hatch Lane, St. Leonards Hill
 - ii. More expensive areas to the South i.e.
 - iii. The areas connected by path to St. Leonards Hill including
 - 1. Top of Wolf Lane from junction with Poolmans Road to junction with White Horse Road and Tinkers Lane
 - 2. Hemwood Road, Franklyn Close & Washington Drive and roads off these
 - 3. Ellison Close
 - 4. Kimber Close
 - 5. Sherbourne Drive
 - 6. Woodland Avenue
 - 7. Bottom end of Clewer Hill Road between Prince Albert pub and the junctions of Hatch Lane and Ellison Drive.
 - 8. Including ALL of the LEGOLAND, Windsor estate, which would be logical, ease governance and, which people and residents identify with Windsor.
 - d. The benefits would be
 - i. Clear identity
 - ii. Generating representatives from each area who will understand the distinct needs and issues of their residents, being able to focus relevant issues, including the impact of the proposed expansion and development on the edge of settlement known as HA11
 - iii. Allowing representation in an undiluted manner, in proportion to the need (number)
 - iv. Encouraging localism and community involvement; with a community taking ownership of its own governance in the decision making process
2. History of West Windsor
- a. Ancient maps show two communities West of the Castle
 - i. Clewer Village, with the oldest building in the area in St. Andrew's CofE Church – it even pre-dates much of Windsor Castle

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- ii. Dedworth
 - iii. Areas of green belt in between and to the South
 - b. See attached maps
 - i. [Dedworth.Org.Uk Map of Dedworth 1880](#)
 - ii. [Dedworth.Org.Uk Map of Dedworth 1913](#)
 - iii. [Dedworth.Org.Uk Map of Dedworth 1938](#)
 - iv. [Vision of Britain Dedworth C19th Map](#)
 - c. These two communities are effectively, and historically, served by St. Andrew's Church (Clewer) and All Saints Church (Dedworth)
- 3. West Windsor today
 - a. The population of Windsor expanded in the 1950's and 1960's with many estates starting to be built to the West (e.g. Laing Estate), it was during this time the WWRA was established as the growing settlement in this area saw it self as distinct from Windsor town centre, with its own community and identity. As further expansion to the south of Dedworth Road continued with the Deans development and the MOD housing in the 1970s these residents were also seen as part of this community. Historically the military families have been transit, but now with new government policy these families will remain as permanent residents for the duration of service, and as they access the same services as the rest of the community should be considered a valued part of this community known as Dedworth
 - b. CO's were resident on much larger residences on St. Leonard's Hill
- 4. Community assets, whose usage reflect the embedded identities include
 - a. Churches – see above
 - i. All Saints Church serving Dedworth
 - ii. St. Andrews serving Clewer and probably St. Leonards Hill
 - iii. All Saints Church's congregation also include people from Sawyers Close and Vale Road
 - b. Schools
 - i. Dedworth
 - 1. Dedworth Green First School
 - 2. Dedworth Green Middle School
 - 3. Homer First School and Nursery
 - 4. Hilltop First School
 - 5. Alexander First
 - ii. Clewer
 - 1. Clewer Green CE School
 - 2. St Edward's Catholic First School
 - 3. St Edward's Catholic Middle School
 - c. Surgery
 - i. There is just one surgery in Dedworth, the Dedworth Medical Centre on Vale Road

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- ii. Their CCG Boundary map officially includes all of the West Windsor Residents Association membership area
 - d. Youth Centres – there are two, serving distinct areas
 - i. Manor Youth Centre serving Dedworth including Sawyers Close and Value Road. The proposed boundary change would put both youth centre into the Dedworth and Clewer East ward taking all governance away from many user groups.
 - ii. Clewer Youth & Community Centre, serving the Clewer area
 - e. Pubs
 - i. Dedworth
 - 1. The Black Horse
 - 2. Sebastapol
 - ii. Clewer
 - 1. Prince Albert
 - 2. The Swan, now closed down
 - f. Shops/Tesco
 - i. Dedworth
 - 1. Tesco Superstore
 - 2. Esso Garage
 - 3. Charity Shops
 - 4. News agents,
 - 5. Convenience Shops
 - 6. Fast Food & other restaurants
 - ii. Clewer
 - 1. Tesco Express
 - 2. Shell Garage
 - 3. Small Parade of shops near the Shell Garage on Clarence Road.
 - 4. BP Garage
- 5. 2011 Census data of West Windsor
 - a. Maps based on 2011 Census data show a strong correlation between the identity of people in the geographic areas I have identified as Dedworth or Clewer-St. Leonards and such socio-economic factors
 - b. See attached maps from
 - i. [ONS 2011 Census DataShine Map on Deprivation](#)
 - ii. [ONS 2011 Census DataShine Map on Fair Health](#)
 - iii. [ONS 2011 Census DataShine Map on Good Health](#)
 - iv. [ONS 2011 Census DataShine Map on Qualifications](#)
 - v. [ONS 2011 Census DataShine Map on Professionals](#)

Concerns about reducing the number of Councillors

- 1. We would support minimizing the reduction to the number of Councillors at no less than 47 to ensure that the chances of good representation and scrutiny is maximized.

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2. Our elected member of council reports back to us that his caseload is extremely high, and often hindered by lack of response from officers, “Officer support capacity is largely limited to servicing the Committees with papers, which are frequently not as timely as they should be. The prescribed timescales are on occasion (approximately 10% of the time in 2017), not met, leaving the council exposed to risk, which officers are aware of, and needs correcting to meet statutory timescales.” (LGA Corporate Peer Challenge Sept2017) bearing this in mind it would be preferable to have a ward that reflects a community that does not contain polar opposites.
3. LGA Peer Review Report has been critical of governance and scrutiny in the Borough and, this needs to be resolved before further changes threatening scrutiny are considered
 - a. RBWM is pushing forward with many outsourcing programs included via more complex Joint Ventures, which have separate legal personas i.e. reduce influence, information flow and, more convoluted and time consuming management and control pathways
 - b. The recent LGA Peer Review suggested that in the face of this rapid change that the Borough Pauses, Embeds (and digests changes) and Explains (engages with residents)
 - c. Further change in the face of helpful criticism the extent of the problems including
 - i. “The council’s governance is out of date”
 - ii. “We were concerned to see evidence of...disproportionate and uneven treatment by senior colleagues, of both members and officers...(using)... heavy handed instrument to keep ‘members and officers incheck’.”
 - iii. A need, “to clarify lines of accountability”
 - iv. “Lines between the Executive and scrutiny (are) blurred”
 - v. “Scrutiny not realising its potential” – how polite.
 - vi. “Officer support capacity is largely limited... leaving the council exposed to risk”
 - vii. “Businesses not feeling valued as a partner”
 - viii. Questions the ability, “to deliver on its capital programme and regeneration plans.”
 - ix. Asks the council “to carefully plan for the provision of any future transformation costs”
 - x. Notes a “need to invest more time and capacity in equipping your organization”
 - xi. Earnestly urges the Council to “Invest more time in understanding what your residents value” & “engage positively with residents and community groups.”
 - d. You can download the full report at <http://www.wwra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/RBWM-Corporate-Peer-Review-Sep-2017.pdf>
4. Effect on residents of Councillor workload & lack of support from officers

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- a. Currently, our experience of communication with Conservative Councillors is that;
 - i. It is very difficult to get some Councillors to reply to residents
 - ii. More often than not after the 10 working days period has past you have to chase them up.
 - b. We understand that the workload on officers is already very high, with a high staff turnover
 - c. We are concerned that that with fewer Councillors, with low levels of support from officers, that engagement between Councillors ad residents will be intolerable.
5. Illogical wards destroy communities
- a. Requiring fewer Councillors means that boundaries have to be recast to sometimes include wards that include many distinctly different communities which
 - i. This hamper effective representation of individual communities, and so democracy,
 - b. This frustrate localism as, a resident from one community will not understand, or be recognized and voted for by other communities
 - c. This further distances the people we are supposed to represent from the process of governance.

Concerns about the underlying figures being provided by RBWM

1. Given that electoral numbers are likely to materially unreliable until 2023, the exercise should be abandoned and revisited after 2019
2. The principle of electoral equality can only be achieved if the figures for resident, and voter numbers, are accurate but, the figures being presented by RBWM are incomplete, inaccurate and speculative
3. The Borough Local Plan, upon which much of the growth is predicated is flawed in many aspects and facing serious challenge.
 - a. It is likely that the Inspector will require substantial revisions
 - b. Given the thousands of comments from ordinary residents, which need organizing, this will not be presented to the Inspector until Q1 or Q2 in 2018 which will extend the timeline of implementation
 - c. It is possible that a final Local Plan, if amendments are requested, will not be start to implemented until 2023, after modifications have taken place, applications submitted and, building commences.
 - d. This would suggest that reliable figures might not be available until then which would mean maps could not be re-considered until 2023
4. Missing planning applications and developments: there are many substantial developments which seem not to have been included in the growth including
 - a. Teradyne flats
 - b. Squash Club retirement homes
 - c. Sandown House

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- d. It is likely tha
5. In conclusion, we suggest that;
 - a. You delay the ward changes until 2023 at the earliest
 - b. Stipulate that a more thorough set of research be conducted by RBWM

Short term inequalities

1. Whatever their accuracy, the 2017 and 2019 figures presented will be substantially different from 2023 which will result in electoral inequalities at least between 2019 and 2023
2. These inequalities will be exacerbated if
 - a. Boundaries do not represent communities
 - b. The actual development profile of these areas is materially different from the figures being presented by the Council
3. However, this can be mitigated if the number of Councillors remains the same of differs little in Windsor
4. To ensure equality, identity and effective local governance, we suggest that this exercise should be revisited from first principles after 2019

Summary

1. We propose two wards to cover West Windsor; Dedworth; Clewer & St. Leonards Hill
2. We would support minimizing the reduction to the number of Councillors at no less than 47 to ensure that the chances of good representation and scrutiny is maximized.
3. We suggest that;
 - a. You delay ward changes until 2023 at the earliest
 - b. Stipulate that a more thorough set of research be conducted by RBWM
4. We suggest that this exercise should be revisited from first principles after 2019

Yours faithfully,

For and on behalf of the 1,000 household members of the WWRA



Mr Kevin Chapman Eng Tech, MICE, MCMi, MIHIE, MCIWM
Chair, West Windsor Residents Association