

## COMMENTS ON THE BOUNDARY COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS

The review has 3 aims

To achieve electoral equality across the Borough

To promote effective governance

To reflect local communities

We assume that, as there is no information to say otherwise, these criteria all have equal weighting. The recommended proposal fails in this aspect as it gives much greater relevance to numbers rather than community and governance.

Due to the geographical constraints of the areas potentially affected we would respectfully urge you to reconsider the number of councillors required across the borough to enable the communities of the Windsor area to be most effectively served by their councillors.

We are proposing that Old Windsor ward is extended towards the castle (but not the castle itself) to include all Crown Land that is under the remit of The Crown Estate office (The Deputy Ranger).

Currently there is a cohesive situation where Old Windsor councillors work closely with Old Windsor Parish Council to achieve the best outcomes for all our residents, this proposed fragmentation would make that extremely difficult. The working relationship between Old Windsor Parish Council and the Borough Ward councillors has always been very strong and productive.

### ***Why we reject the commission's recommendations***

1. **Historical** – The Great Park has always been associated with Old Windsor as it was the hunting grounds from Kingsbury Palace (Saxon Royal Palace, precursor to Windsor Castle) located in Old Windsor, on the banks of the Thames. Maps show the whole area has been known as Old Windsor and The Great Park is part of the Old Windsor History.
2. **Community** – Old Windsor village is home to many ex-employees of The Great Park who retire to Tyle Place ( Crown Estate owned) based in Old Windsor.
3. **Community** – The Royal School in the Great Park is part of the East Windsor Cluster of schools along with Kings Court School and St Peters School based in Old Windsor. Many children from Old Windsor Village attend the Royal School. There is a bus route to allow Great Park children to attend St Peters Middle School. The Royal School enters a float into the Old Windsor Carnival every year. Children from The Great Park attend Old Windsor Groups such as Scouts, Guides and Football Club

4. **Community** - Runnymede Medical Practice is based in Old Windsor & Englefield Green and is used by the majority of Great Park residents. Old Windsor has a targeted elderly provision. This benefits all Old Windsor Parish residents and is provided by the Parish through the Royal Borough.
  
5. **Community** - In the current recommendations Old Windsor Cemetery is within the Sunninghill and Ascot Ward. Houses within the Great Park (Bears Rails Gate - not Bears Rails Park) are within walking distance of Old Windsor and have no access to Ascot or Sunninghill.
  
6. **Governance** - Due to the geographic proximity of the Great Park to Old Windsor and the fact that lands within Old Windsor are owned by the Crown Estate (of which the Great Park is part), discussions are had with the relevant personnel concerning flooding (ground water flowing from the great Park through Old Windsor into the Thames), trespassing/poaching as access is usually via the village, illegal parking on Crown Estate land in Old Windsor village.
  
7. **Community** -Great Park residents consider themselves part of Windsor area and have little affiliation with Sunninghill and Ascot.
  
8. **Community** - Ascot Gate is now closed to residential vehicle movements and therefore a 2 mile detour to access Ascot would be required.
  
9. The only reason the Boundary Commission gives as a reason for including The Great Park in Sunninghill and Ascot is that it increases the numbers in the Ascot area to nearer equality. We cannot support a recommendation that splits our community just to make the 'numbers of electors per councillor' look better in another area.

### **'The Boltons'**

The area we will call 'The Boltons' has no community links with Old Windsor. Residents in this area identify with urban Windsor.

1. Trevelyan Middle School in 'The Boltons' is accessed mainly by children living in Windsor and it does appear 'overload' to allocate 2 of the 4 middle schools in the Borough to one rural ward.
2. None of Old Windsor's facilities are accessed by residents from 'The Boltons'.
3. There is no reason for Windsor residents to use the transport links to Old Windsor
4. The Boltons are part of Urban Windsor and therefore have completely different issues from that of a Rural Village like Old Windsor.

Unfortunately the number of councillors being suggested as 43 seems to have been plucked out of thin air, to enable a soundbite of a 25% reduction, and the recommendations prepared to meet this target.

The reason given for asking for the review was that Maidenhead had a ward that was outside the equality limits and with planned development central Maidenhead would soon be significantly outside the limits. The consequences of this are that the rest of the Borough is significantly, negatively affected and communities disrupted even though the developments in Maidenhead are only proposed at this stage.

SUBMITTED BY OLD WINDSOR RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION – MAY 2018