



# Bray Parish Council

20<sup>th</sup> April 2018

Jonathan Ashby  
Review Officer  
Local Government Boundary Commission for England  
14<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Millbank Tower  
Millbank  
London  
SW1P 4QP



Dear Sirs,

## **Electoral Review of Windsor and Maidenhead: Draft Proposals**

I have been requested to send the following response to the draft proposals for the Electoral Review of Windsor and Maidenhead by the Bray Parish Councillors.

We have written to you on this subject at least once before and, whilst we understand the need to comply with the Government's desire for Consultation, we have experienced far too often the situation where our very reasonably argued and evidenced submission has been totally ignored. Therefore we ask that, on this occasion, you confirm to us in writing your acceptance of our suggestions outlined below and that they will be included in your final proposal document.

We understand that you have been given guidelines within which to work and that those are generally numbers based. Whilst this may seem to work in a desk-based environment, we are making proposals that are based on what actually happens on the ground, in the community and also reflects the needs & wishes of the electors themselves.

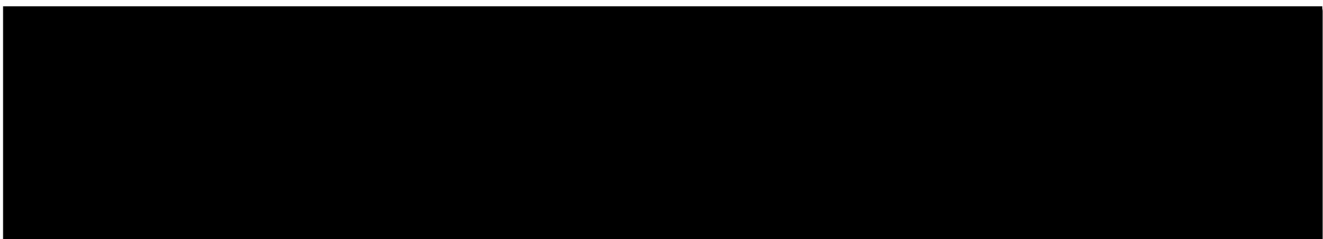
It seems logical to us that one of the objectives must be to aim for consistent boundaries at Parish, Borough and Constituency level. Only in this way can an elector understand readily who are their representatives at any particular level of Government.

There are four main topics on which we would like to make proposals around Bray Parish.

### **1. Boundary Issue at the Eastern End of the Parish**

There is an historic anomaly at the eastern end of the Parish where the Parish Boundary is not consistent with the Borough Ward Boundaries and the Constituency Boundary. The Parish has historic links to Alexander Ward to the Parish Council since 1896 and before the building of the Army Estate 50 years ago. Dedworth residents that are part of the Parish have requested that the ward boundary should be the same as the Parish Boundary and wish to be represented as Bray Ward Borough residents.

Resolving these issues would seem to make sense even if that means the "numbers" are stretched.





***We propose aligning the Parish, Borough Ward and Constituency Boundaries along the lines of the existing Parish Boundary.***

## **2. Boundary Issue at the Western End of the Parish**

The current situation is this:

- The Fisheries Residents Association wrote to Bray Parish Council asking to become part of Bray Parish.
- Bray Parish Council voted to accept the Fisheries Residents.
- Fisheries Residents Association collected significant support from within the Fisheries and within Bray Parish to submit their request to RBWM.
- RBWM undertook a review which resulted in a positive outcome including the proposal that Bray Parish Council should have an additional Councillor.
- It is agreed that the Fisheries will become part of Bray Parish from 2019.

Having gone through this process it seems bizarre to suggest that the Fisheries are not included within the RBWM Bray Ward boundary. Doing this would create yet another anomaly such as currently exists at the Eastern end of the Parish and which we wish to remove. It is clear that this is not what is needed on the ground.

It makes sense that they become a full part of Bray Parish and part of the Borough Bray Ward rather than being represented on two separate fronts by Ward Councillors and Parish Councillors.

***We propose that the Fisheries become part of Bray Parish and the Borough Bray Ward.***

## **3. The Number of Parish Councillors**

It is clear that the LGBCE do not have practical experience in Parish Councils. Parish Councillors are all volunteers who are not paid and who share roles amongst themselves. Reducing Parish Councillors does not save public funding and makes the job for the remaining Councillors more difficult. Reducing the number of Parish Councillors can only have a detrimental effect on Bray Parish Council.

It is proposed to remove one Parish Councillor from Fifield, a rural area. This is a part of the Parish where the population is less dense. This makes the work of a Parish Councillor more challenging in terms of engaging with the electorate. One might even consider allocating more resource to these areas, not less.


We believe that the change in Parish Councillor numbers does not make sense nor will it do so to local residents.

***We propose retaining the fifteen Councillors already on Bray Parish Council and adding one further Councillor for the Fisheries, making sixteen in all.***

## **4. The Impact of Building in Bray Parish**

The Government wishes to build more homes. The draft Borough Local Plan, should it be approved, proposes significant additional homes being developed in Bray Parish including:

Tectonic Place HA17 – Brown Field –	25 dwellings
Bray Lake HA18 – Virgin Greenbelt –	100 dwellings
Monkey Island Lane HA23 – Greenbelt with gravel workings –	100 dwellings
West of Windsor HA11 – Greenbelt –	450 dwellings
West of Windsor – Two garden centres up to –	200 dwellings.
Water Oakley – Greenbelt (site of old agricultural buildings)	



44 dwellings approved but developer wishes to increase this to -136 dwellings  
*TOTAL* *1011 new homes*

In a 3 to 5 year time frame there will be a significant additional number of electors in the Parish, at which time we will be asking for more Parish Councillors. It is clear that it is short sighted to reduce the number of Parish Councillors now.

***We propose retaining the fifteen Councillors already on Bray Parish Council and adding one further Councillor for the Fisheries, making sixteen in all.***

Finally we would point out that the Conservative Party initiated the Localism Agenda to involve local people and so that changes reflected their views. Bray Parish Council is disappointed that the interests of local residents and the Parish Council have so far been ignored, leading to a potential loss of faith in Government and a significant reduction in support from local residents.

We commend our proposals to your urgent attention and await your response.

Yours faithfully



Mrs Susan Cook  
Clerk – Bray Parish Council

Cc: Rt Hon. T. May MP



