

***Banstead and District Federation
Of Residents' Associations***

Chairman: Mrs Catalina Vassallo-Bonner

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Review Officer (Reigate and Banstead)
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SUBMISSION ON BEHALF OF BANSTEAD & DISTRICT FEDERATION OF RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION ENGLAND WITH REGARD TO THE CHANGES OF WARDS FOR LOCAL ELECTION PURPOSES

The area covered by the Federation is to the north of the M25 in the Borough of Reigate and Banstead. Apart from the villages of Banstead, Nork, Tadworth and Walton and Tattenham Corner the remaining settlements are small to medium in size and separated from each other by major roads and Green Belt. These villages have a strong sense of community and enjoy their own parish church, village hall and shops. To have that sense of unity threatened by possible electoral splits between wards, as suggested in the Boundary Commission's April report, was for some villagers something near to catastrophe.

The submission prepared by Reigate and Banstead Council in July has gone a long way towards restoring the equilibrium of the various villages most affected. The council has recommended that Kingswood should regain its station, shops and village hall and Woodmansterne its shops, church, village hall, recreation grounds and public houses.

The need for balancing the total electorate among 45 rather than 51 councillors has further created problems within the Federation area as the loss of a ward and its councillors could cast doubt on the quality of the communication between electorate and councillor. We would have preferred to see 48 councillors overall with 18 serving our part of the borough spread over six wards rather than the fifteen across five wards.

Banstead with the acquisition of Park Road, and Croydon Lane, has remained a coherent whole. The final line of the Woodmansterne/Banstead boundary, should it be drawn as Woodmansterne suggests will have only a marginal effect on voter numbers. It is also felt that the Queen Elizabeth Hospital development and Banstead woods should be added to Banstead. They are accessed via Holly Lane and are inside the Banstead parish boundary and have more relevance to Banstead than to Chipstead or Kingswood.

The borough submission has been generally more aware of local boundaries but there are some that we feel could be improved upon. Woodmansterne is a case in point. We feel that a better western boundary along Woodmansterne Lane between Banstead and Woodmansterne would be, on the south side, to the west of Barn Close and running down to Lakers Rise along Becken's Shaw and Puckstead Shaw rather than along the line of Blind Lane. In the same way Boundary Farm, on the north side of Woodmansterne Lane, and running down to Croydon Lane to the west of Fairlawn Close would be a more appropriate boundary.

While Reigate and Banstead Council have recommended that Lower Kingswood becomes part of the Tadworth and Walton ward no attempt has been made to identify its northern boundary on the eastern side of the A217. Our view is that both sides of Chipstead Lane should form part of Lower Kingswood (with Birch Grove forming part of Kingswood) and that Monkswell Lane should remain as part of Lower Kingswood with Mugswell (and the 'Well House Inn') forming part of Chipstead. This boundary runs along the line of a footpath and is shown on a 1946 OS map – and on earlier 19th/20th century OS maps. With regard to the southern boundary, it is broadly the M25, though Merrywood Grove which is to the south of the M25 (forming part of Margery) can only be accessed from the north. On the other hand, properties along Margery Hall and Fort Lane are only accessible from south of the M25 and have been moved from Lower Kingswood to the Reigate ward. The adding of Lower Kingswood to the Tadworth and Walton ward, while improving voter numbers for the ward is less logical. Lower Kingswood lies along the A217 towards Reigate and Tadworth and Walton along the B2032 towards Dorking. They are completely separated from each other by Walton Heath. There is no real synergy between the villages and if, indeed they are to come together as an electoral ward the names of all three villages must appear on all official documents.

Nork and Tattenhams reached a satisfactory agreement as to boundaries when it was proposed that Preston should be added to Tattenhams. Both Boundary Commission and Reigate and Banstead Council have agreed that these should be accepted.

Tadworth and Walton had hoped to be linked to Preston. Indeed, some roads off Shelveys Way have been ceded to Tadworth. If it is decided during the final part of this exercise that Lower Kingswood should join this ward, there is little in common between it and Tadworth and Walton.

There are three small settlements within the Federation area which have been the most affected; Burgh Heath, Hooley and Netherne. None of them have the number of voters to allow them to stand alone and the proposed pairing of Burgh Heath with Tadworth and Walton by the Boundary Commission was not well received. It is now suggested that they be part of Chipstead, Woodmansterne and Kingswood and this is a better arrangement as both Burgh Heath and Kingswood border the A217 and each other.

Netherne is an island in the middle of Green Belt and it and Hooley sit one each side of the A23. Though the A23 is their link with Merstham both settlements look north, more towards Purley and Croydon than anywhere else. It is again a pity that their respective voter numbers mean they have to join with settlements other than Chipstead. The road to the A23 from Banstead runs through Chipstead and Hooley.

Whatever the Boundary Commission finally decides it is important that none of the names of the various villages that make up the Federation should disappear in the new wards. The Federation, therefore, asks that all the names of the villages making up the various wards appear on official documents:

BANSTEAD

BURGH HEATH with CHIPSTEAD, KINGSWOOD and WOODMANSTERNE

NORK

LOWER KINGSWOOD with TADWORTH and WALTON

PRESTON and TATTENHAMS

HOOLEY with MERSTHAM and NETHERNE