

# **Warding Submission to the Boundary Commission by Nork Residents' Association (Borough of Reigate & Banstead)**

Nork is a ward with 6215 electors in 2016, or 2071 per Councillor, which is close, within 1%, to the average for the Borough. It is forecast to grow to 6724 electors and with the reduction in the number of wards to 45, there is a requirement to grow to 7799.

Nork has a solid, well-established community. There are many reasons for this:

Most of the boundaries of the ward are clearly defined. To the west is the green belt of Epsom Downs and Epsom Golf Course. The southern boundary line is Yew Tree Bottom Road, which joins it with Claremount Gardens to the Reigate Road A240. The southern boundary continues, but is less well defined, by Nork Park and the north side of The Drive. The northern boundary of the ward is the railway; to the east is the A217 dual carriageway.

Historically, the ward is formed from the inner core purchased by Halden Estates in 1925. Following their bankruptcy, Banstead Common Estate had these boundaries and was acquired by Perrys (Ealing) Limited in 1927. Much of the housing in the ward was therefore built in the years soon after, with more recent building by infilling.

The early housing plots all have long gardens and the more recent developments have been in those back gardens with some 20 short access roads. It is likely that such developments will continue and give some 40 extra electors per annum, ie 200 in the next five years. This supports the case for Nork being under the target electorate to support expected above average growth through windfall developments.

## **Name**

The name Nork is well established, being recorded in 1615 in Nork Meadow and used for Nork House built in 1740, a country house in what is now Nork Park. It was publicised as the name of the area in 1925 by Halden Estates. The name for the Ward has therefore been used for at least 400 years, and even if there is modest expansion, there is no need to change it.

## **Community**

The community has been held together by the Nork Residents' Association (NRA) which was formed in 1927. It has published since then a Quarterly magazine delivered to over 2000 member-households by over 70 volunteer road stewards. Some 30 years ago the NRA decided to put forward its own candidates as Borough Councillors and since then all three Councillors have lived in the ward, representing the NRA, and have been elected with huge majorities, usually the largest in the Borough.

Nork has the least indices of deprivation for the whole of the Borough. Though not necessarily affluent, electors are mostly owner-occupiers. We have some social housing in flats opposite the main Nork shopping parade, and also on an estate at the Reigate Road end of Nork Way, though many of these have been purchased by their tenants. There is also a very small amount of privately-rented housing.

Nork has two railway stations, Epsom Downs and Banstead, on the same line. The train service runs north to London but not south to the rest of the Borough. Nork's buses only have a slight link with the rest of the Borough, 166 to Epsom, Banstead and West Croydon, 318 to Burgh Heath, Tattenhams and Banstead, 408 to Banstead. Apart from at school times, the take up of the bus services, because of choice of destinations and frequency of service, is low.

Nork is very hilly, so very few electors cycle. New cycle paths and route signage are planned in the coming years, to encourage healthy exercise and green travel. Depending on your location within the ward, to walk to Epsom or Banstead Village, the nearest towns, would take from 15 minutes to the best part of an hour. As a result, electors resort to car ownership with almost entirely 2 cars (or more) per household.

Nork has two shopping parades, one in Nork Way and the other in Fir Tree Road, Epsom. Nork has no bank, but Nork Way and Fir Tree Road both have sub-post offices, with free cash machines at the Nork Way Post Office and Nork Way Co-op. Nork has no public house but has its Nork Community Association in Nork Way, with a licensed bar and activities throughout the day and evening.

Nork is well served with open spaces; in addition to Nork Park there is Beecholme Recreation Ground with its children's play area, accessed from Osier Way, several housing estates have large open spaces and it is surrounded by Banstead Downs to the north and Epsom Downs to the west.

Nork has three churches covering the main Christian faiths: the parish church St Paul's in Warren Road which covers the whole ward; Banstead Methodist church off The Drive and St Anne's Catholic Church in Brighton Road, which both serve the northern wards of the borough. Its youth facilities are two Scout Troops, in Warren Road and Banstead Road and a Guide company in The Drive.

Nork has two primary schools, Warren Mead Infants and Warren Mead Junior Schools, which encourage the parents to be part of the community. For secondary education, most children go to The Beacon School which serves all of the northern wards and is currently just across the boundary in Tattenhams.

In sum Nork is a self-contained ward with a firm and stable community and its three councillors serve the Borough average number of electors.

## **Growth**

Any sensible extensions to the ward therefore have to be by absorbing part of Tattenhams Ward to the south. The heart of Tattenhams is Tattenham Corner with its railway terminus station and shopping parades. Historically, this area in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was called Upper and Lower Tattenhams, so there is a solid link to this area. We therefore respect that the area north of Tattenham Corner should remain part of Tattenhams Ward.

For Nork to grow, firstly we see a little tidying, with two houses in Downs Reach moving to Nork from Tattenhams, for Home Farm Close to revert to Nork (it was displaced from Nork to Tattenhams in the last Boundary Review) and for Nork to include the houses on the west side of the Reigate Road up to the Great Tattenhams road junction.

For further growth we look to the other side of Nork Park and suggest the north side of The Drive, Picquets Way, The Brindles, the west side of the A217 Brighton Road, Gables Way, Bywood Close and the whole of Tattenham Way to the Reigate Road junction. We see that this community may feel they have some association with Nork, due to their easy access to Nork Park. Further, as mentioned above, many Nork teenagers attend The Beacon School for secondary education and the school also acts as the second polling station for Nork ward. This would give Tattenham Way as a clear boundary to the south for the ward. Nork would thereby grow to 7348, or 94.2% of the requirement.

We are reluctant to extend further south, as we do not see these houses having a particularly strong link with Nork. However, as our total of electors is still insufficient, we accept we might be forced to

include the area south of Tattenham Way up to the present boundary with Burgh Heath. This would then include Meadow Way, Tangier Way, the rest of Brighton Road, Tangier Wood, Ruffetts Way, and possibly even Waterer Gardens. This would give a clear boundary for the southern part of Nork as the A217 and the Reigate Road. This extension means that Nork will grow to 7738, or 99.2% of the requirement based on the Council's projections.

Finally, we have noted an error in the Council's forecast calculations. An 80-bed care home in the A217 Brighton Road, approved on appeal in 2017, has not been included (it is currently under construction). We also question the growth rate for the Ward. As we still have long back gardens and are designates for windfalls in the Core Strategy, we believe our likely growth rate is higher than has been estimated. We suggest both these arguments should be considered in the search for 100% electors. Simply adding, say, 78 of the 80 bed residential home gives Nork 7816 electors, or 100.3% of the requirement. In reaching the required sum we have taken into account the communities and provided strong boundaries in accordance with the guidance of the Boundary Review Commission.

We have been briefed by the Conservative Group on their proposal for the growth of Nork Ward. We find it has no consideration of communities or history and see no merit in it. We therefore consider it totally unacceptable.

**George W Hinton**

*Chairman, Nork Residents' Association*