

To: The Local Government Boundary Commission

**ELECTORAL REVIEW OF BATH AND NORTH EAST SOMERSET: WARDING ARRANGEMENTS**

Charlcombe Parish Council discussed the electoral review of B&NES in relation to the Warding arrangements at its meeting on 12 September 2017. The comments here reflect a unanimous view.

Parish Councillors are aware that our present Ward, Bathavon North, is the largest within B&NES consisting of 9 Parishes and with 3 Ward Councillors. It would seem inevitable that there will be changes within our Ward in order to reduce the overall number of B&NES Councillors by 6 and to achieve a more balanced representation of approximately 2300 residents per Ward Councillor. However, there are no obvious solutions which we can suggest. The river Avon does not provide an obvious divide; the 3 largest Parishes in the Ward, Batheaston, Bathampton and Bathford, which sit astride the river, have a natural relationship, sharing many common interests, and it would probably make sense to keep these together in whatever warding arrangements evolve.

It is understood that it is possible for a rural Parish to be absorbed within a Bath city Ward. If that were to be proposed for Charlcombe, we would most strongly advocate being placed in Lambridge Ward, where there are strong community links. Many of the residents in Charlcombe Parish (Charlcombe, Langridge, Woolley) make regular use of the shops and facilities within Lambridge Ward, both in Fairfield Park and in Larkhall. The Parish has a long shared boundary with Lambridge Ward and our lanes (eg Colliers, Woolley and Charlcombe Lanes) lead directly down to Larkhall. We have no such relationship or common identity with the other 2 city Wards with which we share a boundary (Lansdown and Weston) and have no wish to be placed within either.

One fundamental relationship we have is with Swainswick Parish Council with whom we share a long boundary running along the Lambrook at the bottom of the Woolley/Swainswick valley. We have many common interests, not least the protection of this very important valley, and have worked closely together very successfully for many years, for example over unauthorised development in the valley which had a huge effect on residents of both Parishes. We therefore believe that it is imperative that in any reorganisation Charlcombe and Swainswick Parishes stay together within the same Ward. The same is not true for our other 2 neighbouring Parishes, North Stoke and Kelston, with whom we have very little in common.

Alastair MacKichan

Chairman, Charlcombe Parish Council

September 2017