

Starkie, Emily

From: BARWELL, Gavin [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 May 2017 06:59
To: reviews
Subject: Representation on draft recommendations on new electoral arrangements for the London Borough of Croydon

I am writing to make representations on the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's draft recommendations on new electoral arrangements for the London Borough of Croydon.

I have lived in Croydon virtually my entire life, first in South Croydon, then in Shirley, then on Monks Hill and now in Sanderstead. Since 2010, I have served as the Member of Parliament for Croydon Central, which is currently comprised of eight wards of the London Borough of Croydon (Fairfield, Addiscombe, Woodside, Ashburton, Shirley, Heathfield, Fieldway and New Addington). Before I was elected as an MP, I served for 12 years as a councillor for the Coulsdon West ward.

I broadly welcome the Commission's draft recommendations. They achieve the required level of electoral equality and they both better reflect community identities and are based on more identifiable boundaries than the current wards.

In my original submission, I referred to the fact that a number of the current wards straddle community boundaries (as a result of the Commission, in its last review, having a strong preference for three-member wards). My old ward of Coulsdon West is part Coulsdon, part Purley; of the eight wards in my constituency, Heathfield is part Selsdon, part Shirley; Ashburton is part Shirley, part Addiscombe; and Fairfield is part the town centre, part Addiscombe. I am pleased that this time the Commission has opted for a mix of two- and three-member wards and that this has allowed it to recommend wards that better reflect community boundaries.

I am also pleased that the Commission has not adopted Croydon Council's proposals to create two new wards - Coombe and Croham Hurst - that do not reflect community identities. The Council has put significant effort into identifying the communities that make up the borough of Croydon as part of its work on the Croydon Plan and built significant consensus around this work. I found it bizarre that it should propose a ward structure that in a number of areas did not reflect those community boundaries.

I will restrict my comments to areas within the constituency I have represented for the last seven years.

Woodside

I agree that it is necessary for electoral equality for a small area east of the railway to be in South Norwood ward and that this is acceptable in community terms as there are strong road links between that area and the rest of South Norwood (the West Croydon to London Bridge railway is more permeable in this area than to the west).

I also welcome the tidying up of the not very strong boundary between Woodside and Addiscombe.

Addiscombe

I agree that the railway to the west and Coombe Road to the south form strong boundaries. As noted above, I also welcome the tidying up of the boundary with Woodside. As far as the eastern boundary is concerned, I agree that Shirley Road is the best option available. I suspect that the Commission will receive some representations from the Stroud Green estate and from three cul-de-sacs off the Shirley Road (Glenthorne Avenue, Peabody Close and Shirley Park Road) that people living in these roads look to Addiscombe more than Shirley, but I can't see a better option.

How to split Addiscombe into two wards is less clear cut. On balance, I think the Commission is right to opt for an east: west split. The proposed Addiscombe West & Park Hill ward has a shared interest in that it comprises those residential areas that are within walking distance of East Croydon, whereas the Addiscombe East ward mainly consists of larger residential properties further from the station. I would however suggest three small changes to the Commission's proposals:

- first, **Elgin Road would fit better in Addiscombe East** with the other roads that are part of the HOME Residents Association area; and
- second, **Park Hill & East Croydon would be a better name than Addiscombe West & Park Hill**. Residents in roads just to the east of East Croydon station think of themselves as living in East Croydon not Addiscombe as evidenced by the name of their Residents Association (<https://eastcroydon.org.uk/>); and
- third, **if the Commission accepts the recommendation above Addiscombe East should be renamed Addiscombe**. This proposed ward contains Addiscombe High Street (the section of the Lower Addiscombe Road between its junctions with Shirley Road and Bingham Road where most of the shops are), Addiscombe tram stop, Addiscombe Recreation Ground, most of Addiscombe Railway Park (the remainder would be in Woodside ward), nearly all of the Addiscombe & Shirley Park Residents Association area (everything apart from the three few cul-de-sacs off Shirley Road mentioned above) and Addiscombe Cricket Club (which is within the Whitgift estate area).

Central

I strongly welcome the Commission's proposal to use Roman Way not North End as a strong boundary. It is bizarre that the Centrale shopping centre is in a different ward (and as a result a different Parliamentary constituency) to the Whitgift Centre on the other side of North End.

Shirley

I agree with the Commission that the tram line is a strong northern boundary to Shirley. As noted above, I agree that Shirley Road is the best available option to the west together with the boundary of Shirley Park golf course. I also agree that the Wickham Road is the right dividing line between Shirley North and Shirley South.

Ideally, **Barmouth Road, Nursery Close and Spring Park Road should be in Shirley North so that the ward boundary doesn't cross the Wickham Road at all** and **Bishops Walk should be in Shirley South along with the rest of Shirley Hills**, but the need for electoral equality may make these suggestions unworkable.

New Addington

I welcome the name changes from Fieldway and New Addington wards to New Addington North and New Addington South. Many of the roads in the current Fieldway ward are not part of the Fieldway estate.

King Henry's Drive is a strong boundary. **Wolsey Crescent should be moved to New Addington South.**

Selsdon, Addington & Forestdale

I strongly welcome the link between Forestdale and Selsdon Vale, which makes a great deal of sense in community identity terms.

Addington Village is difficult to place - it certainly doesn't identify with New Addington. On balance, Selsdon is the right choice because this is the district centre most people in Addington Village would use.

In conclusion, I commend the Commission for a well thought-out set of proposals. I have suggested six minor modifications, but the draft recommendations are already a big improvement on the current boundaries.

Yours sincerely,

Rt Hon Gavin Barwell

MP for Croydon Central (May 2010-May 2017; currently Conservative candidate for Croydon Central)

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