

Submission to the Local Government Boundaries Commission for England (Cambridgeshire County Council)

From: Windsor Road Residents' Association (WIRE)

Re: The Case against the proposed transfer of Windsor Road, Cambridge, to Arbury Division and the case for Windsor Road to remain in Castle Division or Castle/Newnham

The committee of the Windsor Road Residents' Association (WIRE)* request that the Commissioners reconsider the proposal that Windsor Road be moved from the current Castle Division to the reconfigured Arbury Division.

We appreciate that the suggestion for this change came from the submission made to the Commission by Cambridge City Council, but this does not take into account the local situation that we experience as residents.

Our case is based on the second criterion referred to in the draft proposal, that is, that a review must reflect community identity.

There is a strong sense of identity in Windsor Road with other roads that are proposed to remain in Castle/Newnham. This is especially true of our relationship with Oxford and Richmond Roads, but is also true of other roads e.g. Halifax, Wentworth, Hoadley, Eachard, Woodlark and Sherlock.

The origin of this 'community identity' is probably historical, in that these roads were in existence before the war at which point most of the Arbury community did not exist. This sense of community identity has persisted, possibly because there is no direct vehicular access between Windsor Road and the roads in Arbury (current or proposed) but there is a clear road link with Oxford, Richmond, Wentworth and Halifax Roads.

However, this is only a small part of the common experience of the residents of these roads that we 'belong' together.

The residents' associations of Windsor, Oxford and Richmond Roads have worked closely together on various issues over a number of years.

For example:

1. Over the last two years a joint committee of representatives of the three residents' associations has worked to produce plans for traffic calming measures that will affect both Oxford Road and part of Windsor Road. This has included discussions with representatives of the University, the County Council and the City Council, and the organisation of public meetings for residents of the three roads.
2. The community facility at St Augustine's Hall, in Richmond Road, is home to a programme of lectures and musical events, which is supported by the three residents' associations. Many residents of Windsor Road attend and/or take part in these events. They also attend the community lunch, which is organised monthly at St Augustine's and the newly instituted weekly community coffee morning.
3. Social events are organised by a 'joint roads committee' representing the three roads and also representatives of Hoadley, Eachard, Woodlark and Sherlock Roads. These have included summer and Christmas events.

The committees of Oxford Road and Richmond Road Residents' Associations support us in this request.

We realise that it is incumbent upon us to suggest an alternative arrangement. We note, from Table A1 in the Draft recommendations for Cambridgeshire County Council, that the suggested divisions result in a +1% variance from average in the Arbury electorate and a -1% variance in the Castle/Newnham electorate. The numerical difference between the two is 186.

There are 210 registered voters in Windsor Road. The transfer of Windsor Road from Arbury Division to Castle/Newnham Division would, therefore, create a numerical difference of 234 and would simply reverse the positive and negative 1% variances between the two divisions. We suggest that no compensatory change is required as the changes in electoral numbers are insignificant.

We therefore propose that Windsor Road should stay in Castle Division or Castle/Newnham.

In addition, we wish to record our opposition to the use of double sized, two member divisions, believing that these are too large to facilitate a close relationship between councillors and their constituents.

**Note: Windsor Road Residents' Association (WIRE) is a formally constituted Residents' Association with a paid-up membership of 91 of the 109 residences in Windsor Road. The majority of the non-member households are rented out, predominantly to students. WIRE therefore represents the vast majority of long-term residents of the road. This submission, drafted by the WIRE committee and circulated to the full membership, produced only comments strongly supportive of our case, with no dissenters.*