Dear sirs Please find attached the official response from Sutton Coldfield Conservative Association of The Sutton Coldfield Conservative Association (SCCA) is the local association of the Conservative Party covering the Parliamentary constituency of Sutton Coldfield. Our proposal is compiled in conjunction with members, councillors representing Sutton Coldfield wards on Birmingham City Council, local residents, local residents’ groups and our MP Andrew Mitchell. Our plan corresponds with that of the official Conservative Group on Birmingham City Council and as the representatives for Sutton Coldfield we wish to formally make our response specifically in relation to the proposals within the Parliamentary constituency of Sutton Coldfield. The attached document goes into more detail and we are happy to discuss any points should you need clarification. The main points of our proposed revisions are: More equal electorates within Sutton Coldfield – achieved by the oversized Walmley and Minworth and Boldmere wards being slightly smaller No communities divided - achieved by having all of Reddicap in the Sutton Reddicap ward and all of the Defence Estates within the new Sutton Whitehouse Common Ward. All communities represented – achieved by creating a Sutton Whitehouse Common Ward Communities better represented by more accurate names – achieved by renaming Parkside as Banners Gate and Maney as Trinity More sensible division of Sutton Park – achieved by ensuring those amenities close to various Park gates are within the corresponding ward A fairer division of electors across Birmingham and seeing Sutton Coldfield more fairly represented – achieved by creating a Sutton Whitehouse Common Ward. A proposal has been drawn up by local residents’ groups which differ greatly from their original proposals in that they now no longer divide communities and provide for the 11th council seat in Whitehouse Common. Whilst our plans differs from theirs’ in some ways we are in complete agreement about the need for the 11th councillor in Whitehouse Common and that areas of the Park should be in other, more appropriate wards. If their proposal makes this possible then we would be happy for LGBCE to adopt this residents led proposal.

Uploaded Documents:

Download
FAO: Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Regarding: Boundary changes for Birmingham City Council.

**Preface:**

The Sutton Coldfield Conservative Association (SCCA) is the local association of the Conservative Party covering the Parliamentary constituency of Sutton Coldfield. Our proposal is compiled in conjunction with members, councillors representing Sutton Coldfield wards on Birmingham City Council, local residents, local residents’ groups and our MP Andrew Mitchell.

Our plan corresponds with that of the official Conservative Group on Birmingham City Council and as the representatives for Sutton Coldfield we wish to formally make our response.

**Sutton Boundary:**

In the first instance, we applaud the Commission for keeping the boundary between the current Sutton Coldfield wards and the wards in Birmingham intact. This boundary is of huge importance for a great many people in Sutton Coldfield and we are pleased to see unanimity on keeping the boundary exactly as it is now.

**Overall representation:**

Sutton Coldfield has historically always been under-represented on Birmingham City Council. From 1974-2004 it was represented by only 9 councillors from just 3 wards (the three biggest council wards in the UK with electorates bigger than some Parliamentary constituencies). Since 2004 this was amended to 12 councillors from 4 wards which brought it in line with the 9 constituencies in Birmingham. However, as the second biggest constituency, with an electorate that far exceeds many in Birmingham, Sutton continues to find itself still somewhat underrepresented. The original proposal from LGBCE leaving Sutton Coldfield with just 10 councillors out of 101 would in fact give Sutton even less representation proportionally than we already have with some of the biggest wards in the City.

Initially we found ourselves at odds with other groups such as the Labour Party and the Sutton Coldfield Independent Residents’ Group (SCIRG) who suggested only 10 councillors. After discussion with other groups there now seems to be unanimity on this point as an 11th councillor would not only lead to fairer representation but would also better represent the communities of Sutton Coldfield as detailed later on. An 11th councillor is something that enjoys the support of several political parties and residents’ groups and we urge LGBCE to take this into account.
Growth:

Sutton Coldfield – as one might expect from such an attractive place to live – is one of the growth areas of the West Midlands. Using the population figures for 2021 has certainly helped but it fails to take into account growth that is expected to continue in Sutton thereafter. In particular, the building of up to 6,000 on Green Belt land around Walmley is scheduled to continue well beyond 2021 which would render the population figures for Sutton Coldfield after that time wildly inaccurate. If Sutton Coldfield were to already have some of the biggest wards in Birmingham and be under-represented, this new building would only exacerbate the problem.

Sutton Coldfield Town Council:

In May 2016, Sutton Coldfield will elect councillors for a new Town Council, initially on the current boundaries – 6 for each of the 4 wards with 24 in total. LGBCE has of course taken this into account and proposed that each of the single member wards are represented by 2 Town Councillors except for the proposed Sutton Boldmere ward which would have 3 and the proposed Sutton Walmley and Minworth ward which – as a double member City Councillor ward - would have 5 rather than the 4 one might expect. The reason for this is seen in that the Sutton Walmley and Minworth Ward as proposed by LGBCE is unusually large and as will be explained below takes in communities that are better suited to other wards and the same could be said of the Boldmere ward.

The proposal we will present as part of the Conservative Group proposal would ensure much more equal distribution of electors enabling the new Sutton Town Council to be represented by 22 Town Councillors, with 2 in each ward except the much large Sutton Walmley and Minworth ward which would have 4.

Sutton Park:

Currently – and indeed since 1974 – the whole of Sutton Park falls within the Sutton Four Oaks Ward. The original proposal by LGBCE came up with this suggestion as well. There are in fact a very small number of people who live within the park around some of the various gates. Some residents’ groups have called for the Park to be divided between these wards. Certainly, a resident of the House just inside the Banners Gate entrance to the park would indentify with the Banners Gate area of Sutton Coldfield rather than Four Oaks. Likewise, as Town Gate will be a priority for residents living around the centre of Sutton Coldfield it does seem logical for at least some areas of the park around the gates to be included with appropriate wards nearby. Other groups have gone further by suggesting wholesale division of Sutton Park with boundaries that stretch into the middle of this historic area and whilst that was not our original intention we would support this if LGBCE felt this was appropriate.

Naming of the wards:

In our original proposal we suggested naming one of the wards Royal Sutton Parkside. We chose this name to reflect the fact that some residents refer to the area as New Oscott, others called it ‘the other side of the park’, some called in Banners Gate and some from the extreme North West of the proposed ward identified their area as ‘Streetly’. We therefore felt that ‘Parkside’ was an appropriate name. However, local residents’ groups have expressed a desire for that area to be called ‘Banners Gate’ and so therefore we would suggest renaming this ward as Banners Gate.

Likewise, our original proposal – and indeed many others – included a Sutton Trinity Ward. The
proposed Sutton Maney ward included other communities, not least the area of Tudor Hill. As Maney is an accurate description for only one part of the ward and as the Holy Trinity Church is the Parish Church for the Royal Town of Sutton Coldfield we feel that the Trinity name should be maintained and would therefore proposed renaming this ward as Sutton Trinity.

**Royal Status:**

Our original proposal included the prefix ‘Royal Sutton’ before every ward in Sutton Coldfield. Whilst we understand that naming any wards as ‘Royal’ might involve seeking permission from the appropriate powers we would implore the LGBCE to do so. The Steering Group that is managing the formation of the Town Council have already requested this and we fully support this.

**Proposed wards:**

Below is a description of the proposed changes to the wards within Sutton Coldfield with each summarised in bullet points at the end. As mentioned above, if an accommodation could be made to include the word ‘Royal’ in the prefix it would better reflect the status of Sutton Coldfield as an ancient Royal Town.
(Royal) Sutton Banners Gate:

SCCA proposes very little in the way of change to this ward save for the name for the reasons stated above and the inclusion of areas of the Park as detailed in our map.

In must be said that whilst there was complete agreement with residents groups on the name and support for the inclusion of areas the Park there is a disagreement over whether the Banners Gate Ward should become a two member ward with the Boldmere area. The original proposal of SCIRG and SCCA was these areas to be separate.

These areas have different postcodes – B73 6 and B73 5, schools with catchment areas that hardly overlap, Church parishes which do not overlap and a separate history.

We have even on many occasions had to put other different promotional literature at election time to the two areas after residents in the Banners Gate area complained that they ‘did not want to hear about Boldmere.’

We understand that a local neighbourhood forum had suggested merging these two wards but the feeling within SCCA is that these two areas would be better represented by their own councillor.

- Ward renamed to reflect wishes of their community
- Westwood Coppice and the area just within Banners Gate entrance to the Park added to the ward
- Other than that no changes

(Royal) Sutton Boldmere:

SCCA proposes some changes to this ward. The area of the Park around Boldmere Gate is better included in the Boldmere Ward, particularly those amenities around the Gate itself.

However, as detailed above, the area to the North of Jockey Road – comprising Morven Road, Elwyn Road, Braemar Road and Roxburgh Road – are not strictly speaking part of Boldmere. Indeed they have a B73 6 postcode rather than the B73 5 of Boldmere. They also do not come under the jurisdiction of the Boldmere Neighbourhood Forum.

Including the roads listed above make Boldmere unusually large (leading to the problem of it having more Town Councillors than other single member City Council wards) as well as not being part of Boldmere. We feel therefore that this area very clearly belongs in the central ward in Sutton (Sutton Trinity as we proposed).

- Ensures access to Boldmere Gate of Sutton Park and access to the amenities with that Gate
- Moves the area around Braemar, Morven and Roxburgh Roads to the more appropriate Sutton Trinity Ward
- Other than that unchanged
(Royal) Sutton Wylde Green:

Our original proposal included a joint Boldmere and Wylde Green Ward named ‘Tudor’. However LGBCE clearly favours single member wards and we support this. Our proposed changes to the Wylde Green Ward are minimal.

Currently the boundary of the ward runs down the middle of Maney Hill Road. It would be hard to over-exaggerate how much of a problem it has been over the past five years having this road divided with issues over street lighting and a proposed care home making residents contact two sets of councillors.

Maney Hill Road on both sides and the small roads running off it (Moss Drive, Sandy Croft and Mottrams Close) clearly belong in the central Sutton Ward which we propose to call Trinity.

- Ensures that Maney Hill Road moves to the more appropriate Sutton Trinity ward rather than being split
- Otherwise no changes

(Royal) Sutton Trinity:

This ward is largely based on the proposed Sutton Maney Ward. There appears to be near unanimity on renaming the ward as Sutton Trinity to better reflect it being comprised of more communities than just Maney.

We propose changes which would move the half (but not all) of Whitehouse Common into the new Sutton Whitehouse Common Ward. The current proposal sees the ward cross a major railway line and splits the community of Whitehouse Common.

It also excludes the areas around Morven, Braemar, Elwyn and Roxburgh Roads running off Monmouth Drive which are currently in the proposed Sutton Boldmere Ward but are well connected to and are a better fit within the Sutton Trinity Ward. These roads are not within the jurisdiction of Boldmere Neighbourhood Forum thus demonstrating that they do not belong in Boldmere.

- Name changes to Sutton Trinity to reflect the wishes of residents
- No longer crosses a busy railway line
- No longer splits Whitehouse Common
- Includes instead the area just off Monmouth Drive which are a better fit in Trinity
(Royal) Sutton Walmley and Minworth:

We largely agree with the proposals for this ward save for an area that clearly belongs in the Reddicap Ward. The initial proposal of LGBCE used the wholly artificial boundary currently used to separate the existing Sutton New Hall and Sutton Trinity Wards. This artificial boundary only exists as the current Sutton Trinity Ward is already very large (the fifth largest in Birmingham) and the existing Sutton New Hall ward is one of the smallest which necessitated this area being in the Sutton New Hall Ward. The area is clearly part of Reddicap.

We therefore propose that the Northern boundary of this ward run down Thimble End Road. There are no houses on either of this busy 40mph road and so it is the perfect place to place a boundary as it will not involve splitting any communities. The maps below showing the difference between the LGBCE’s proposed boundary (red) with our proposed revision (blue) highlights the need to amend the proposal.

To further illustrate this point, were a resident on Stephens Road in this area (covering Froggatts Ride, Berryfields Road, Springfield Road and the many culs-de-sac running of it) to decide to shop at their local Coop Supermarket, they could walk to the one in the Reddicap shops on Hollyfield Road South in less than a quarter of an hour, only having to cross one major road which has a crossing point. Should they decide to shop at the Coop in Walmley Village, it would take them three quarters of an hour and involve crossing Thimble End Road which as previously stated is a 40mph road and has no crossing point! Clearly, this area belongs in Reddicap as the map above should help illustrate.

- The ward moves into line with other two member wards in terms of electorate
- Ensures the area of Reddicap into the Sutton Reddicap ward
- Uses the busy Thimble End Road as its Northern boundary rather than splitting a housing estate in the unconnected area of Reddicap
- Otherwise unchanged
**Royal Sutton Mere Green:**

Our original proposal saw the Mere Green area as part of a two member Royal Sutton Four Oaks ward. However, as stated before we understand the LGBCE’s desire to create single member wards wherever possible. We propose only a small change for this ward with the area known as Little Sutton moving into the Sutton Roughley Ward.

This area which runs off Dower Road and encompasses roads such as Ley Hill Road and Trinity Road is only connected to Mere Green bar one small road – Jordan Close—and thus is a much better fit with the Sutton Roughley Ward. This also means that the busy Little Sutton Lane is no longer split between two wards.

It also ensures that the boundary runs to the busy roundabout by Four Oaks Station which forms an excellent natural boundary.

- Little Sutton moves to Sutton Roughley ward as only one small close connects it to Mere Green
- Uses the busy roundabout by the train station as a boundary
- Otherwise unchanged

**Royal Sutton Four Oaks:**

Here again we propose only a very small change which sees the busy Lichfield Road, A5127 used as the boundary between the Tamworth Road (A453) junction and Four Oaks Train station, with both acting as very suitable natural boundaries. This also moves the community of Doe Bank into the Roughley Ward where it belongs.

- Uses major ‘A’ roads (A5127 and A453) as boundaries
- Ensures that area on one side of Lichfield Road known as Doe Bank is situated within the Sutton Roughley Ward where it more properly belongs
- Otherwise unchanged
Our proposal for this ward involves only very small changes. In the original LGBCE proposal, it was necessary to split the Defence Estates (also known as the Barracks Estates) to ensure the ward was big enough. However by including the areas of Reddicap which were originally included in the Sutton Walmley and Minworth Ward (which as detailed above clearly belong in Reddicap) there is no need to include the section of the Defence Estates (around Blakemore Drive and Langley Park Way). The maps below shows the Defence Estates marked in blue and shows how the current proposals literally split them in half. The picture at the bottom of the page shows boundary running through a small hedge.

Likewise, roads running near to but clearly not in the Falcon Lodge Estate (known in Sutton simply as ‘The Lodge’) such as St Chads Road, St Thomas Close, St Martins Road and Chadwick Road to be included in the newly proposed Sutton Whitehouse Common Road.

- Unites the Reddicap area which is currently split between two wards
- Moves one half of the Defence Estates into the ward with the other half and thereby ensuring this community is not split
- Uses the busy, 40MPH Thimble End Road as it South Western boundary
- Uses the busy Springfield Road (currently with houses only down one side) as it South Eastern Boundary
(Royal) Sutton Whitehouse Common:

The original proposal from LGBCE saw Whitehouse Common unrepresented. With 10 large wards it is impossible to represent all the communities in Sutton Coldfield and leads to split areas. Whitehouse Common would be divided between a Maney Ward – with which it has nothing in common – and a Roughley Ward – with which it has even less in common.

The proposed new ward uses some very clear boundaries such as a busy Tamworth Road (the A453) to the North, and the two railway lines that run through Sutton Coldfield in the West. Finally it uses the very clear boundary of the outskirts of the Falcon Lodge Estate (a very distinct community) to the South.

It includes all the Defence (or Barracks) Estates which solves the problem of these communities being divided. It also means that Bedford Road – which includes one of the entrances to Good Hope Hospital – would no longer be split in half. The maps below demonstrate the problem caused by the current proposal.

Public feeling about creating a ward to recognise this area was so strong that a public meeting was held attended by over 50 people who agreed with the proposal for a Whitehouse Common Ward. One attendee wistfully remarked how he had once been on the committee for the Whitehouse Common Neighbourhood Forum and how it would sadden him to see it go unrecognised.

- Sees the historic community of Whitehouse Common recognised instead of split between two barely connected wards
- Unites the Defence Estates
- Uses the busy Tamworth Road (A453) as its Northern border
- Uses the railway lines as its Western border
- Uses the busy Reddicap Heath Road and the edge of the Falcon Lodge estate as its Southern border
(Royal) Sutton Roughley:

This ward does change quite substantially but for a good reason. The original proposal saw a Roughley Ward that comprised the communities of Roughley, Harvest Fields and Moor Hall with the wholly separate and barely connected areas of half (but not all) of Whitehouse Common and half (but not all) of the Defence Estates.

It did not however include Little Sutton with which it shares a clear link. The two completely separate and distinct areas of the ward as proposed are in fact only connect by one solitary road – Weeford Road. On either side of Weeford Road are a golf course and a stretch of Green Belt land. It also saw these two areas separated by the busy A453. Clearly this proposal divided communities. The map below demonstrates this:

Our proposal sees the Southern boundary run along the Tamworth Road (A453) which as an arterial road is a clear place to run a boundary. We do not propose to change the North Western boundary which runs properly down Grange Lane. A quick look at the polar opposite appearances of the houses on either side of Grange Lane shows how they are separate communities and is also the boundary between the Roughley and Mere Green Neighbourhood Forums.

Our proposed changes also use the Lichfield Road (the A5127 as the boundary to the West running up to Four Oaks station which runs off a roundabout. On one side of the Lichfield Road are a small run of houses and a relatively small estate known as Doe Bank. On the other is the prestigious private Four Oaks Estate (also known as Four Oaks Park) and thus the Lichfield Road seems a
suitable place to run the boundary, finishing at the junction of the A5127 and the A453.

- No longer includes two wholly separate and virtually unconnected communities by moving half of Whitehouse Common and half of the Defence Estates into a more appropriate ward
- Includes the very well connected Little Sutton area
- Avoids breaking Little Sutton Lane
- Uses the busy A453 and A5127 as boundaries
- No change to the North Western boundary

**Closing remarks:**

The main points of our proposed revisions are:

- More equal electorates within Sutton Coldfield – achieved by the oversized Walmley and Minworth and Boldmere wards being slightly smaller
- No communities divided - achieved by having all of Reddicap in the Sutton Reddicap ward and all of the Defence Estates within the new Sutton Whitehouse Common Ward.
- All communities represented – achieved by creating a Sutton Whitehouse Common Ward
- Communities better represented by more accurate names – achieved by renaming Parkside as Banners Gate and Maney as Trinity
- More sensible division of Sutton Park – achieved by ensuring those amenities close to various Park gates are within the corresponding ward
- A fairer division of electors across Birmingham and seeing Sutton Coldfield more fairly represented – achieved by creating a Sutton Whitehouse Common Ward.

A proposal has been drawn up by local residents’ groups which differ greatly from their original proposals in that they now no longer divide communities and provide for the 11th council seat in Whitehouse Common. Whilst our plans differs from theirs’ in some ways we are in complete agreement about the need for the 11th councillor in Whitehouse Common and that areas of the Park should be in other, more appropriate wards. If their proposal makes this possible then we would be happy for LGBCE to adopt this residents led proposal.

**Appendix:**

The public meeting held on 22nd January at Hollyfield Primary School attracted the following attendees, many of whom also signed a petition calling for the introduction of a Whitehouse Common Ward: The details of these people and the copy of the petition are on the following pages.

We understand that in the published version of this comment that those details would be blacked out.
I/we, the undersigned, call for an 11th Council Seat to be created around the Whitehouse Common area.

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Conservatives