

From: Graham Cooper [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 June 2018 18:58
To: reviews
Subject: WARWICK DISTRICT COUNCIL BOUNDARY PROPOSALS: RESPONSE

Response to Consultation on the Proposed Ward changes for Warwick District Council

Old Milverton and Blackdown Joint Parish Council is opposed to the proposal to include the parishes of Old Milverton and Blackdown in a new Ward for Warwick District Council to be called Cubbington and Leek Wootton.

The parishes of Old Milverton and Blackdown are in the Green Belt and form the northern boundary of Royal Leamington Spa. The landscape is open, mainly farm land and playing fields. The two Parishes provide a gateway to and preserve the setting of the historic town of Royal Leamington Spa. There is close bond between the two Parishes which is due to both historic ties and their differing facilities and topography, which are complementary, serving to enhance the amenity value for residents and the local community.

The communities are small, 160 dwellings and a few businesses. Old Milverton has 176 residents on the electoral roll and Blackdown 138 residents. Few people live and work in the parishes. The Parishes' facilities (e.g.: church, sports clubs, footpaths, hospital and popular nearby gastro-pub) are used by the neighbouring towns, which in turn provide facilities for the Parishes (e.g.: schools, employment and shops). The extensive footpath network in the Parishes provides access to open countryside, close to Leamington Spa and Warwick, for many walkers, runners, horse riders and cyclists to enjoy. The Joint Parish Council is a very effective vehicle to preserve these facilities and amenities.

As a consequence, the two Parishes are closely linked to and influenced by the activities that take place in the neighbouring towns. For this reason, we believe that it is in the interests of both the residents of the Parishes and those of Leamington Spa for the Parish of Blackdown to continue to be linked to North Leamington and to be part of the new Leamington North Ward, and for the Parish of Old Milverton to continue to be part of the Milverton Ward.

We understand the Boundary Commission's desire to have equal numbers of residents represented by each of the District Council's Wards. However, the very low numbers of residents in Old Milverton and Blackdown would not result in any significant distortion in the balance of voters represented by each District Council Ward. In addition, we note that Milverton Ward is "light" on electorate and retaining the Parish of Old Milverton will help to address this deficit.

The current Ward representations for Old Milverton and Blackdown were introduced only in 2015 following the last Boundary Commission review in 2013. The current arrangements work very well and The Joint Parish Council is opposed to another change after such a short period of time.

In conclusion the Joint Parish Council believes that it is in the best interests of the residents of Old Milverton for that Parish to be part of Warwick District Council's Leamington Milverton Ward, and for the Parish of Blackdown to be part of the Leamington North Ward. The Joint Parish Council asks the Boundary Commissioners to take note of the arguments set out in this letter and to amend its proposals accordingly.

Your acknowledgement of this e-mail would be very much appreciated, if that is possible, please.

GRAHAM E. COOPER
Clerk
Old Milverton and Blackdown Joint Parish Council.




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