West Berkshire

Personal Details:

Name: John Boston

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

I served as Clerk to Greenham Parish Council from 2008 to 2014 and have some experience of the confusion caused by the existing Ward boundaries. In my view whatever other action is taken by the Commission, Ward boundaries should be re-drawn to follow clearly identifiable local geographic features wherever possible so that they are more obvious to the electorate. Boundaries should also ensure that Wards are inclusive of local communities and that those communities are not artificially divided. I restrict my comments to Greenham Ward as I have insufficient knowledge of other wards. I suggest that the northern boundary of Greenham Ward should follow the northernmost side of the railway line to ensure that all of Hambridge Road is within one Ward. The north-western corner of Greenham Ward should be extended northwards up the A339 until it meets the railway line which will be the new boundary with Victoria Ward on an east-west axis. This gain in properties would be offset by the loss of properties in the north eastern corner of the ward. The eastern Greenham Ward boundary could follow the track which crosses under the railway line and to the west of Lower Court Farm until it reaches Burys Bank Road. Then eastwards along this road until it meets the current boundary and then continue south. The southern boundary will of course continue to be the Hampshire County boundary. To the west the existing boundary appears in places to be haphazard and to zigzag aimlessly across open land. This will cause severe complications within the forthcoming Sandleford development as it will certainly cut through the community and may even cut through individual houses. It is in any case preferable that the new development should be all within one Ward. I infer from the electoral figures that Greenham's 'share' of the Sandleford electors in 2022 is 1480. By 2022 Greenham will be the most populated Ward in West Berks and will be too large for 2 councillors to represent effectively. I suggest that the western boundary should follow the A339 and so exclude Sandleford. This would reduce the number of electors to be represented by 2 councillors to a more manageable figure in the region of 3,000 each. It appears that this figure closely matches the overall average number of electors per councillor for 2022. Clearly any change to Ward boundaries will impact on Parish boundaries and I am unclear to what extent the Commission's remit extends to Parishes but I suggest that Greenham parish's existing boundary should be amended to coincide with any amended Ward boundary to avoid the parish falling into 2 separate Wards.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded