

## Birmingham District

### Personal Details:

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**Organisation Name:** Ward councillor

### Comment text:

From Councillor Jon Hunt, Perry Barr ward I thought it might be helpful to give you a commentary on the issues in my ward as I know you are seeking to identify cohesive communities to form the basis of new wards. The ward was created in 2004 from the bulk of the former Perry Barr ward combined with two districts from the former Aston Ward, now marked as polling districts CWI and CWJ. CWJ is an anomaly in every sense as it sits on the far side of the railway line that bounds the rest of the ward. It is known to us as the Yew Tree estate. It is a small self-contained community centred primarily on a school and a mosque. It has never integrated with the rest of the ward and continues to identify primarily as part of Aston. By this I mean that residents of CWJ will not attend meetings elsewhere in the ward, even in the neighbouring CWI Witton district. Initially we held monthly advice bureaux there but gave up after using two venues and having increasing difficulty gaining access to them. Recently however the local councillors helped organise a successful street party in the area. CWI is an 'orphan'. We call it Witton and it regards itself as Witton. However like CWJ it has never integrated with the rest of the ward. As it has a good community centre we have used that for regular ward meetings and for monthly advice bureaux/ resident meetings. These are well attended by local residents. Residents will not travel to other parts of the ward for meetings – nor will community reps from the remainder of the ward travel to Witton for meetings. Its identity is along the Brookvale Road where the rest of Witton is situated and is currently part of the Stockland Green ward. The remainder of the ward CWA to CWH has a long history, common centres and facilities and resident groups that are used to working together. It would be well-served as a two councillor ward. If the numbers necessitate CWI could also be tacked on as an "orphan" neighbourhood. It does however split into two distinct neighbourhoods, which you should know about. CWB and CWC are marked on maps as Perry Beeches jointly, although locally CWB is known as Booths Farm and CWC known as Beeches. CWB has a particularly strong identity, centred on Calshot School. There is a Booths Farm Neighbourhood Watch and Booths Farm Neighbourhood Forum, together with a Friends of Turnberry Park, that cares for the parkland sitting between Turnberry Road and the motorway. Forum members administer the community centre located in Trehurst Avenue. As well as including CWB, the organisations include the east side of the Walsall Road, down to Beeches Road. The forum also includes small parts of the CVE polling district in Oscott ward – primarily Bowman Road and Caddick Road. CWB and CWC are shared by common bus routes and the community facilities along the Beeches Road as well as the local shopping centre on Thornbridge Avenue. Since CWC was split from the other half of the Beeches estate, now part of CVE and largely bounded by Thornbridge Avenue and Beeches Road in 2004, we have struggled to build community institutions in that neighbourhood. As well as looking to Beeches Road and Thornbridge Avenue for facilities, its residents are the prime users of Perry Park, which lies to the south. CWA, CWG, CWD, CWE and CWF are represented by the Perry Hall Community Association, as well as two active neighbourhood watches. The Towers Neighbourhood Watch covers most of CWA while the Sandringham Neighbourhood Watch covers parts of CWD and CWE. The community organisations from CWA to CWF, including CWB, have worked closely and effectively together in recent years in pursuit of common issues. They are brought together regularly under the auspices of the Neighbourhood Tasking Group and the Ward Advisory Board. Attendance from CWJ and CWI at these bodies has been poor, even when

community organisations have been established. These issues have included retaining the leisure facilities at Beeches Pool and campaigning for improved road safety at the Tower Hill/Walsall Road/Beeches Road junction. CWD and CWE are specifically known jointly as Perry Hall (although the PHCA extends a little further) and have a real pride in the Perry Hall Park that sits east of the railway line together with one of Birmingham's most active and successful Friends of the Park groups. We are in the early stages of establishing a Neighbourhood Plan, and the statutory Neighbourhood Plan Forum that will have to oversee the process. This will probably encompass all of CWA to CWF, clarifying the role of local green spaces and setting local planning guidance. It will also have a focus on developing the local centres at Tower Hill and Thornbridge Avenue. Tower Hill is a particularly important centre as it is a significant bus interchange and has some substantial facilities. Were you minded to create two single wards from CWA to CWF, the most feasible boundary would seem to be the A34 Walsall Road. The alternative of using the canal would divide CWC from Perry Park – making the potential establishment of a Friends of the Park group even more difficult. It would also divide the Perry Hall Community Association area . Any division would "separate" many of the users of the Tower Hill facilities from the councillor representing the neighbourhood.

**Uploaded Documents:**

None Uploaded