

**Submission to the**  
**Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**Elmbridge Electoral Review**

I am writing in response to the LGBCE's draft proposals for new ward boundaries for Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC). I've represented Walton Ambleside on the Council since 2010 and have lived in Walton-on-Thames all my life.

**Rodney Road/Clements Road**

I fully support the proposal in EBC's submission to LGBCE regarding the draft proposals relating to Rodney Road in Walton. The boundary as proposed would see Walton Health Centre literally split in half – partially in Walton North and partially in Walton South. The majority of the building would be in North, with a small part and the car park in South. Walton Hospital opposite would also be in Walton South. The rest of Rodney Road would be in Walton North – this part is currently in my Walton Ambleside ward. Having a small part of the road in a different ward causes unnecessary confusion to residents, particularly when there have been local issues affecting the road (such as parking and a proposal to add a pharmacy to the Health Centre).

The Council's proposal would resolve this issue. In addition, one house in nearby Clements Road is in the proposed South and the rest of the road in the proposed North. The Council's proposal would tidy up the boundary creating a more logical and identifiable boundary with all of Clements Road and Rodney Road in the same ward. Both of Walton's main health facilities, located opposite each other, would be united in one ward. It would affect only 49 electors.

**Fieldcommon**

I would like to propose that the Fieldcommon estate is moved from the proposed Walton North to the proposed Walton South. Fieldcommon is a community in its own right within Walton-on-Thames. It consists of roads including Homefield Road, Fieldcommon Lane, Oakbank Avenue and Hurtwood Road. It is currently its own polling district – OA.

Fieldcommon is physically separated from the rest of Walton North by the Queen Elizabeth II Reservoir. It is not possible to get from Fieldcommon to the rest of Walton North – by car or foot – without leaving the ward and going through another ward. The Commission states that:

*“Our recommendations for ward boundaries will normally provide for people to move between all parts of the ward without having to venture outside of the ward. This normally means vehicular access by roads (but not including restricted-access roads such as motorways). Road access may include the use of roads which themselves form a ward or division boundary.”*

I live in [REDACTED] in Walton North. If I wanted to drive to say Fieldcommon Lane I would have two options. Firstly, along Cottimore Lane then Ambleside Avenue, turning left onto Rydens Road and at the end of that road left onto Molesey Road and finally right into Fieldcommon Lane. Half way down Ambleside Avenue I have moved into Walton South. This is the quickest route to do this journey. The other route I could take would be to go up Terrace Road, then turn right into Walton

Road (between the reservoirs) and then right onto Walton Road. When I've taken this right I've gone into the proposed Molesey West ward. The Commission also states that:

*There may be occasions, however, when parts of a community are linked not by vehicular routes but by footpaths, footways, pedestrianised streets, pedestrian and vehicular ferries etc."*

None of these apply in this instance. To walk from Fieldcommon to the rest of Walton North would involve the same routes as driving. Therefore, the proposed Walton North does not fit this section of the Commission's criterion.

In a separate section of the Commission's guidance it states that:

*"A practical example of effective and convenient local government for us when considering proposed warding arrangements is to ensure that wards are internally coherent. That is to say, that there are reasonable road links across the ward so that it can be easily traversed, and that all electors in the ward can engage in the affairs and activities of all parts of it without having to travel through an adjoining ward."*

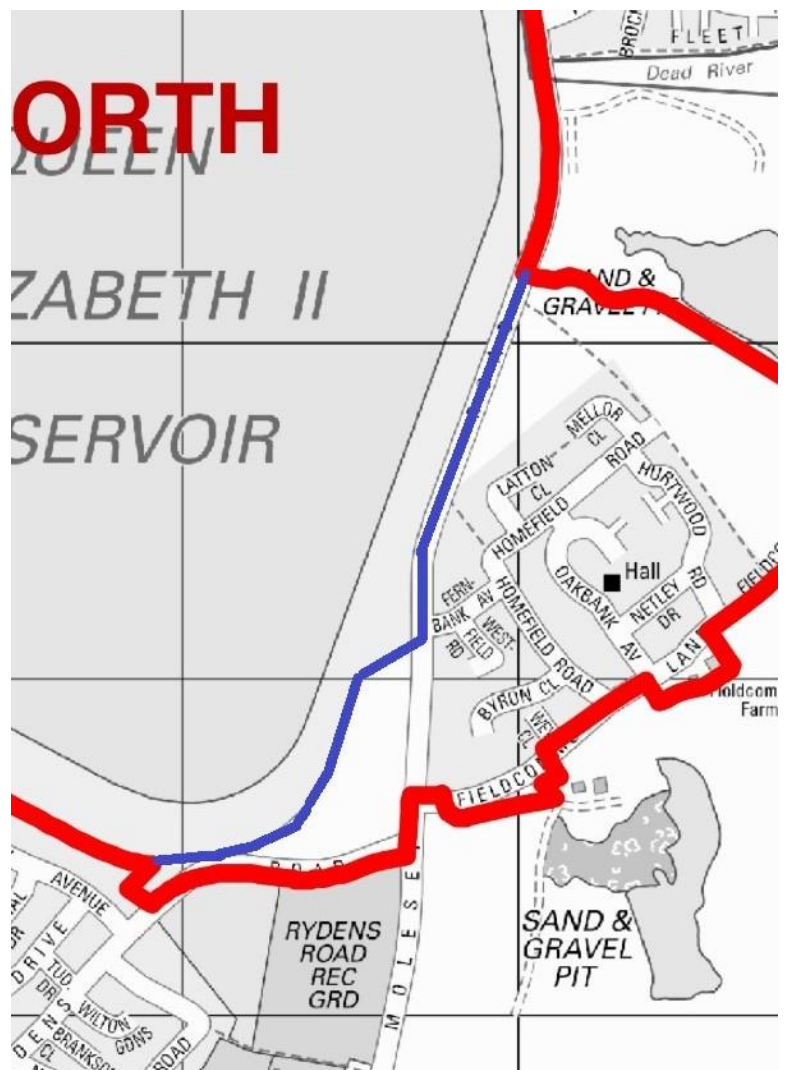
As I have explained above, there are no "reasonable road links across the ward" and the proposed Walton North could not be "easily traversed". Therefore the ward does not lead to effective and convenient local government.

By contrast, Fieldcommon would be a natural extension of the proposed Walton South via Molesey Road. The map on the right shows, in blue, my proposed amendment to the Commission's proposal in red. The boundary would continue following the dead river until it reaches Molesey Road; then it would go along Molesey Road until joining the boundary as already proposed.

My proposed amendment would correct the anomaly of having part of the ward not accessible from the rest of the ward. It would lead to more effective and convenient local government with Councillors better placed to represent it. The amendment would have further benefits, as follows.

The entire Walton section of Molesey Road and its offshoots (including Fieldcommon) would be united in one ward. This road shares many of the same concerns and issues including the speed and volume of traffic on Molesey Road.

Located off Molesey Road is the Weylands/Lyon Road industrial estate. This estate, and continual proposed expansion of it, has been a big concern for local residents in the Rydens and Fieldcommon areas for



many years, e.g. the many HGVs that travel local roads and past residents' homes. If all the area most affected was in one ward this would lead to better and more effective local government as all the residents would be united in the same ward with the same Councillors addressing their concerns.

Fieldcommon is – like the Rydens part of the proposed Walton South – served by Hersham train station. Two buses service Fieldcommon – the 514 and the 461. The 514, the only one to go into the estate, connects with Molesey Road in Walton South but does not connect with Walton North. The 461, which stops outside Fieldcommon, also stops in Rydens Road, Cottimore Lane and Walton town centre.

Fieldcommon has one small convenience store located in Oakbank Avenue. The next nearest retail premises, including a Tesco Express, are located on Molesey Road – one on the corner of Lyon Road and the other next to Walton Park Lane. These two stores also serve the Rydens area of the proposed Walton South. The rest of the proposed Walton North is served by two different small retail areas at the other end of town – the Terrace Road shops between Cottimore Lane and The Grove; and three premises on Cottimore Lane near Cottimore Crescent.

Another recent issue shared by Fieldcommon and the Rydens area is the Green Belt between Fieldcommon and the Weylands/Lyon Road industrial estate. An application is currently being considered for a large-scale housing development on this land. This contravenes our local planning policies due to the Green Belt. However, residents in these two areas in particular have been very concerned by the proposal since it was first suggested. This shows that the Rydens and Fieldcommon areas have similar concerns due to their location in the town. The rest of the proposed Walton North is some distance from this area and thus does not feel this issue as strongly.

The draft proposal for the Walton North/Walton South boundary would also entail other, smaller anomalies. For example, the site of the Walton-on-Thames Camping & Caravanning Club – the oldest such club in the world – is located and accessed off Fieldcommon Lane. The site itself would be located in Walton South but the access would be from Walton North. In addition, the land off Fieldcommon Lane (which is the land mentioned above proposed for a housing development) is located in Walton South yet accessed from Walton North. My proposal would resolve both of these anomalies.

I appreciate that any proposal must also ensure electoral equality. The Commission's draft proposals have the following electorates for Walton North and Walton South:

- |                                    |                                   |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| - Walton North, 2014: 6,897 (+12%) | - Walton South, 2014: 5,844 (-5%) |
| - Walton North, 2020: 6,816 (+8)   | - Walton South, 2020: 5,865 (-7%) |

The moving of Fieldcommon from Walton North into Walton South would result in the following electorates:

- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| - Walton North, 2014: 5,928 (-3%) | - Walton South, 2014: 6,813 (+11%) |
| - Walton North, 2020: 5,860 (-7%) | - Walton South, 2020: 6,821 (+8%)  |


Therefore my proposal would continue to ensure electoral equality with the electorates of the two wards effectively swapped from the Commission's draft proposals. No additional changes would need to be made and therefore Fieldcommon could be moved without having to make any consequential amendments to the Commission's Walton proposals.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, I would recommend to the Commission my proposal to move Fieldcommon from Walton North to Walton South. The draft proposals would see two parts of Walton in the same ward despite there being no road or pedestrian link. My proposal would ensure Fieldcommon is connected by road, pedestrian and community ties to the rest of the ward it is located in. It would have better transport links to the rest of the ward than as currently proposed. The boundary would be clearer and more identifiable to local residents. It would lead to more convenient and effective local government with the Councillors able to represent an internally coherent ward. The residents of Fieldcommon would have the same Councillors as the Rydens area which they share more in common with than the rest of the proposed Walton North. Finally, but importantly, both new wards would still fulfil the Commission's electoral equality criteria.

Thank you for your consideration.

Cllr Andrew Kelly  
Councillor for Walton Ambleside, Elmbridge Borough Council

  
23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015