

Response to the Boundary Commission Draft Proposals

I'd like to respond on two counts.

1. The eastern boundary of Walnut Tree ward.

The Liberal Democrat proposal missed resolving a boundary that makes no community sense whatsoever here.

As shown on the map below, the yellowish brown border which represents the boundary between Walton Community Council area and Wavendon Parish Council area starts in the south following the edge of the existing community. But at the north end, it follows old field boundaries that now have no meaning. The established community ended at Ortensia Drive, and the boundary zigzags randomly through the very new community east of that.

I gather that both parishes have agreed that it would be better to follow Ortensia Drive in the northern part, thus separating the new community, which largely faces east for its services, from the established community, which faces north and west, and I would like to express support for that.

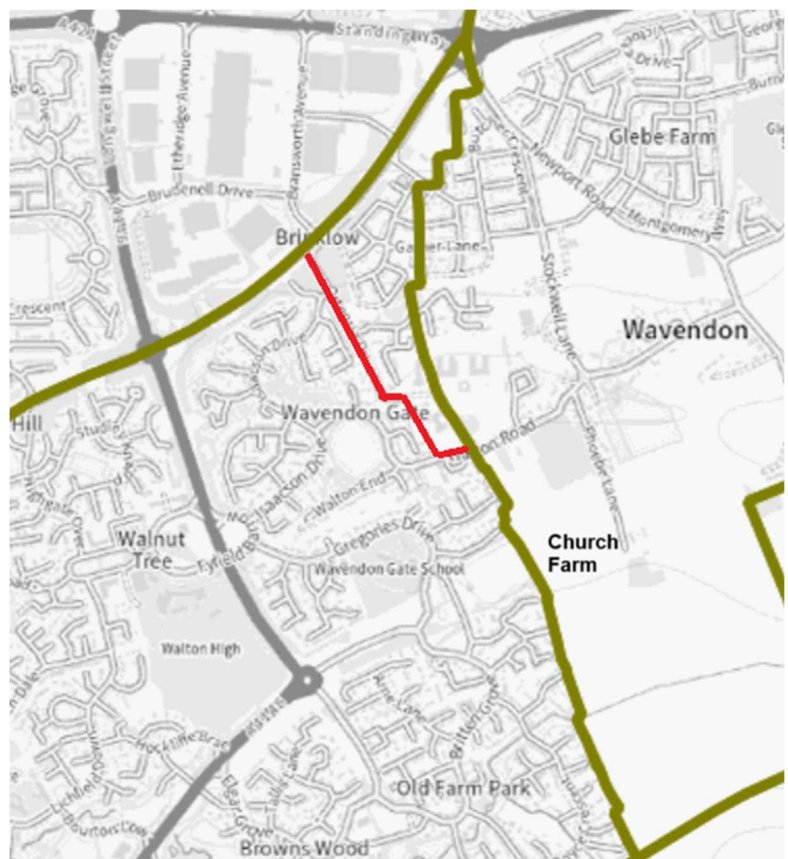
Just south of that there is a land ownership boundary roughly as our line in red shows, and we would suggest that that should be the boundary there until it meets the eastern edge of the current settlement.

Walton Community Council have also proposed that the Church Farm development area should also be included in their parish and therefore in Walnut Tree ward. During the planning stage it was proposed that there should be local road links between the two areas – and indeed some roads had been left with landscaped ends to facilitate this. However, the community, and the parish council strongly opposed this, so that the plans now have a complete break between the two.

The result is that the Church Farm development will connect south and east to the new SE MK development area, which lies in Danesborough ward, and so I believe that Church Farm should also remain in the new Danesborough ward and Wavendon Parish Council area.

So my proposed boundary change is the line in red. I hope you will support this.

Thank you



The second issue is an apology and a request.

I attended the meeting of Broughton and Milton Keynes Village Parish Council, who were discussing the proposed change in their numbers.

I had not realised that the Commission had the power to recommend numbers for Parish Councils – last time there was an imbalance in Kents Hill and Monkston Parish Council but as far as I can remember the Commission left that to the local boundary review to resolve.

I'm afraid I advised them that it would be a local issue to resolve, and as a result they did not discuss it fully at the Parish Council meeting.

There are a number of reasons why the proposed split may not be the most appropriate, not least because our demographic data suggests that the current ratio is at the extreme end of the curve, and that the ratio will soon begin to fall. There are many very elderly people in MK Village and Middleton, currently occupying large homes with only 1 or 2 adults. Over the next 10 years most will die or move on, and the local market indicates that the homes are likely to be bought by middle aged couples with teenage or adult children living at home. The number of electors is thus set to rise significantly and this was not taken into account in the data supplied by MK Council. No similar change will happen on the eastern side of the parish, so the ratio will swing back. The Parish Council has also not had an opportunity to discuss what overall size it wants to be.

I would therefore ask that, unless they have responded in a definite way, the Commission simply publishes the current ratio of electors per councillor, and recommends that this be rebalanced at the Local Government Review that MK Council has now commenced, rather than recommending specific numbers. The various considerations can be better debated at the local level.

Thank you