

Bristol

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Comment text:

Related subject: Boundary Review

Boundary change

I would like to see a boundary change for Clifton Down ward which would take in the CENA polling district that is currently part of Central ward. Bristol's Clifton Down ward coalesces around Whiteladies Road, the main road route running north to south through the ward. It connects the Downs with the Triangle, with the BBC at one end, Clifton Down station halfway up and the Downs at the top. The route is not only an important artery but also the focus of the Clifton Down community with shops, a small shopping centre, the library, restaurants/bars, and homes. However, there is currently a puzzling anomaly in the ward boundary at its southern edge. While the ward is on both sides of Whiteladies Road for most of its route, the ward boundary stops short on one side of the road, after polling district CLDD at the bottom (the south eastern side). It means that the entirety of one side of Whiteladies Road is in the ward (including polling district CLDF at the south west end) while the other side isn't and falls within Central ward (polling district CENA). This causes no end of confusion with residents and businesses on this side of the road who assume that they are in Clifton Down ward when they are in fact in Central.

It would make much more sense for CENA polling district to be within the Clifton Down ward boundary. Not only would this mean that both sides of Whiteladies Road are in Clifton Down ward, but the character of the ward, with its many students and young people, would be a better fit with CENA which is home to many the University of Bristol's key facilities. Along with Clifton Down ward, CENA also has an inner suburb character rather than that of the centre of the city. Clifton Down is currently one of the smallest wards in Bristol per population (c.7520) so taking in CENA should be manageable for its councillors. By contrast, Central Ward is already a very large ward so this change could lighten the workload of its councillors.

Ward name change

In addition, I think Clifton Down ward should change its name. The current name is a misnomer as Clifton Down (the green space) isn't in Clifton Down ward but is in Stoke Bishop ward. In fact, very rarely for Bristol, we have no public green or play space in Clifton Down ward. With a lot of people living in flats this is a real disadvantage. Then the road 'Clifton Down' is in Clifton ward.

Instead, I suggest we rename Clifton Down ward as Whiteladies ward as this is the road that pulls the ward's identity together (see above).

The origins of the name Whiteladies are uncertain. But according to research by local newspaper Bristol Live: 'The only certain thing is that it is very unlikely that Whiteladies Road is connected to Bristol's slave trade and the practice of rich ladies owning enslaved black boys. In the early 1700s, Clifton was a tiny village on the top of the hill above Bristol. What seems to be possible is that the field was known for its snowdrops and became known as White Ladies field, and someone built a big house there, and named it Whiteladies House.'

Attached Documents:

None attached