

VILLAGE BULLETIN

www.lowerkingswood.co.uk

July 2018

Reigate & Banstead Electoral Review

In early June 2018, the Local Government Boundary Commission for England (LGBCE) issued their draft recommendations on their planned electoral review for Reigate & Banstead and we included an article on the subject in our June/Summer issue of 'Village News'.

In determining these draft recommendations, the LGBCE have taken into account a number of responses to their initial suggestions - including a detailed submission made by the Residents' Association - and have sought to balance the following:

- To deliver electoral equality where each Borough Councillor represents roughly the same number of electors as others across the Borough.
- That the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities.
- That the electoral arrangements should provide for effective and convenient local government.

The Residents Association are concerned that the LGBCE may simply view roads (or railways) as a convenient "dividing line" for electoral wards and thus

balancing the numbers and could view Chipstead Lane or - worse still - the A217/Brighton Road as a means of achieving electoral equality.

The Residents' Association will, in due course, be submitting its own detailed comments and we understand that some other neighbouring communities are also circulating mail-shots to their residents. We would therefore like to encourage our residents to submit their own comments to the LGBCE. Should you wish to use the following letter as a template for your own comments, we have up-loaded a copy on to the Residents' Association's website: www.lowerkingswood.co.uk/petitions.php

Full details of the consultation are available on the LGBCE websites: www.consultation.lgbce.org.uk and www.lgbce.org.uk - including an interactive map and a 38-page report (although only pages 10 to 13 are specifically relevant to those wards north of the M25).

Comments can be submitted online via the above websites, by email to: reviews@lgbce.org.uk or by post as below.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT THIS CONSULTATION CLOSSES ON 13th AUGUST 2018.

**Review Officer (Reigate & Banstead)
LGBCE
14th Floor
Millbank Tower
London SW19 4QP**

Your address:

Date:

Dear Sir/Madam

REIGATE & BANSTEAD (BOROUGH COUNCIL) ELECTORAL REVIEW

As a local resident, I should like to submit my comments to the draft recommendations published in early June.

Whilst the history of Lower Kingswood is inextricably linked with that of Kingswood, it became identified as a separate entity in the early 1890s with the Church of the Wisdom of God being dedicated in 1892 and the then Kingswood Infants School opening in 1893. Since then it has grown to a community of some 1,250 households - with a variety of local community/voluntary groups, churches, school, businesses, shops etc. The largest local employer is Fidelity International - based on the site of what used to be the Kingswood Press.

Although the A217/Brighton Road runs north/south through the centre of Lower Kingswood, residents have always regarded "their" village as one entity. [N.B. When the A217 was made into a dual carriageway in the early 1970s this prompted a series of protests by local residents.]

The current boundaries of Lower Kingswood include (to the north) both sides of Chipstead Lane (with Birch Grove forming part of Kingswood), to the east Monkswell Lane (with Mugswell and the 'Well House Inn' forming part of Chipstead), to the south/south-west Mogador (including 'The Sportsman') and Margery (with the latter including a few properties to the south of the M25, which can only be accessed from the north) and to the west Holly Lodge.

There are a wide range of community based organisations, related activities and sporting opportunities for both children and adults within Lower Kingswood; it also benefits from having its own recreation ground and pavilion - and for the past 40 years has held an annual Village Fête.

Whilst my preference would be to maintain the historic links with Kingswood; if that should prove impracticable (perhaps in the interests of maintaining electoral balance), I feel that the name of any new ward should also include the name of Lower Kingswood.

In conclusion, I feel that it is vital that Lower Kingswood retains its own identity as one unified community, notwithstanding that it may end up being joined with other neighbouring village communities in one electoral ward.

Yours faithfully