



# ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL

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03 February 2017

Ms Margaret Reed  
Head of Legal & Democratic Services  
Vale of White Horse District Council  
135 Eastern Avenue  
Milton Park  
Abingdon OX14 4SB

Dear Ms Reed

**Request for Community Governance Review of Abingdon-on-Thames – The Local Government and Public Involvement and Health Act 2007**

At the meeting of the Town Council which took place on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2017, it was resolved that the Council requests that the District Council undertakes a Community Governance Review of the parish of Abingdon, specifically in relation to:

- i. The boundaries of the parish;
- ii. The warding arrangements;
- iii. The number of parish councillors.

The Town Council understands that Community Governance should:

- Reflect the identities and interests of the community in that area;
- Be effective and convenient and;
- Take into account any other, non-parish, arrangements for the purposes of community representation or community engagement in the area.

The council believes that the proposals, which are set out below, would meet the "Community of Identity" test. I set out the Council's proposals below.

**Proposals in relation to the parish boundary**

- i. Boundaries with Radley and Sunningwell.  
Areas A and B on the attached map relate to land north of the Abingdon peripheral road (Dunmore Road and Twelve Acre Drive) and south of the A34. These areas are currently in the parishes of Radley and Sunningwell respectively and it is proposed that the parish boundary is amended so that both these areas are included in Abingdon. Both areas are allocated for

housing within the 2031 Local Plan (Part 1), and, should the housing developments take place as indicated within the Local Plan, then the residents will look to Abingdon. The A34 would be the boundary which would help to define one community from another and with the housing development effectively being a continuation of the parish of Abingdon it would be incongruous for people within these new developments to look to a different parish from those across the road, living south of Dunmore Road / Twelve Acre Drive.

These arguments have already been recognised by the District Council in that the neighbourhood planning areas for both Radley and Sunningwell Parish Councils do not include these particular areas of proposed housing development.

- ii. Boundary with Sutton Courtenay.  
The area marked D on the attached map relates to land which is currently within the parish of Sutton Courtenay. It is to the east of the South Town Park and the sewage works and the Council believes that it is logical for this area to be part of the parish of Abingdon.
  
- iii. Boundary with St Helen Without – Abingdon Common.  
The area marked C on the attached plan relates to land which is currently within the parish of St Helen Without and comprises Abingdon Common. Abingdon Common is owned by Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council and whilst the area covered by the Common does not include any dwellings or residents, it would seem sensible that the Common, owned by the Town Council and including an allotment site should be within the parish of Abingdon.
  
- iv. Boundary with St Helen Without – Shippon and Abingdon Station.  
The Town Council also request that consideration be given to amending the boundary with St Helen Without so that land which is currently within the parish of St Helen Without, specifically in relation to Shippon and Abingdon Station (the airfield and Dalton Barracks), is transferred to Abingdon.

Housing development along the Faringdon Road and into Shippon straddles the parish boundary between Abingdon and St Helen Without, resulting in people being in different parishes from their neighbours for historic reasons. Many people would not realise that Shippon is not part of Abingdon and that in passing over the A34 they are passing from one parish to another. The Council believes that the residents of Shippon and Dalton Barracks already look to Abingdon for their services and are functionally part of the town. Should further housing development take place following the sale by the Ministry of Defence of land at Abingdon Station (Dalton Barracks) any housing in this area would again look towards Abingdon in terms of services and infrastructure. Consequently, it is logical to consider amending the boundary and bring these areas in to Abingdon.

The Town Council realises that any proposals to change the parish boundary between St Helen Without and Abingdon would be controversial. However, the Town Council believes that this should be seriously considered in order to provide for effective and convenient representation of local residents at parish level. The amendment of the parish boundary as suggested would better reflect the identities and interests of the affected community.



Warding Arrangements for Abingdon-on-Thames

The Town Council believes that the parish should continue to be warded. Therefore it follows that if consideration is being given to amending the parish boundaries then the Council should also request that the District Council gives consideration to revised warding arrangements for the town.

Number of Parish Councillors to serve Abingdon

The Town Council also requests that alongside consideration of amending the parish boundaries, consideration should also be given to the number of parish councillors to serve the town of Abingdon.

In requesting a Community Governance Review of Abingdon I am aware that the Vale has a programme of such reviews and if you are minded to undertake such a review I would be grateful if you would indicate the likely timescale. From previous communication with Steven Corrigan I understand any review would allow for any changes to take effect from the next parish elections in May 2019.

Should the District Council agree to undertake a review, the Town Council may wish to bring forward further arguments and evidence to support the proposals set out above. I should be grateful if you could confirm that this may be done as part of the review process as we would not necessarily wish the arguments set out above to be the Council's "final word" on these matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nigel Warner', written over a horizontal line.

Nigel Warner  
Town Clerk



ABINGDON-ON-THAMES TOWN COUNCIL  
25<sup>th</sup> January 2017

Appendix to report of Town Clerk - Potential  
Changes to Parish boundary

