

Sarehole Residents' Association:
The combined residents of Green Road B13, Burke Avenue and Keel Drive:
Submission to revise the proposed Moseley Ward Boundary.

The revised proposed changes to the Electoral Wards show many sensible alterations in line with the information provided by Moseley residents. However our enclave in the Sarehole/Wake Green area of Moseley has been left in an untenable situation. The boundary line has been drawn through the middle of our community along Green Road. This means that neighbours who share similar outlooks, interests and geographical location have been put into different wards. The boundary separates a cohesive community who, despite being comprised of families with a range of cultural heritages, identify closely with Moseley and each other. The Moseley Forum included our area in their previous submission and the local residents emphasised their affiliation with Moseley Ward - and their objection to being placed in Sparkhill Ward.

It makes no sense to divide our community. This part of Green Road, that includes two cul-de-sacs, Burke Avenue and Keel Drive, is a small country style lane with a community centred around a communal green space that has accommodated street parties to celebrate national and local events. We have enclosed some photographs that illustrate this.

We share a Neighbourhood Watch and work together to prevent and remediate anti-social behaviour in the area. Our community comprises 11 dwellings in Burke Avenue, 9 in Keel Drive and 22 along both sides of Green Rd. The River Cole divides the Moseley postcode B13 and Hall Green postcode B28. The only exits from Burke Avenue and Keel Drive are onto Green Road and direct access from Green Road is the Wake Green Road and Moseley. Furthermore, due to the historical and cultural links, residents of Green Road, Burke Avenue and Keel Drive turn towards Moseley for their personal, familial and domestic needs. There are no direct road links or affinity with Sparkhill.

In a recent door-to-door survey we were able to speak with 35 of the 42 households in this area (85%). The Boundary Commission's proposals regarding our community were unanimously rejected. We want to stay together within Moseley Ward.

Our enclave is historically connected to Gracewell and Foster Trusts (located in Gracewell Road that has been included in Moseley Ward) as Mr. Foster, the solicitor who bequeathed the land, used to live in a house on Green Road. His garden extended into what is now Keel Drive. Another house and garden, similar to that on the corner of Green Road and Gracewell Rd used to occupy the area that is now Burke Avenue.

The areas of Sarehole and Wake Green are part of Moseley's contribution to the literary heritage of JRR Tolkien. He lived within the hamlet of Wake Green that includes Moseley Bog, Green Road and the Ford, Gracewell Road and the Wake Green Road as well as parts of the Millstream Way around Sarehole Mill. These all provided the inspiration for his novels. The attractions are rightly connected together in Birmingham City Council's literature about JRR Tolkien and his connection to Moseley.

There is no reason why the boundaries demarcating different areas cannot be drawn along the rear borders of gardens and green spaces rather than roads and we can see from the Local Government Boundary Commission for England's map that this precedent has already been set. On the map, the road you have chosen to divide appears to be

equivalent to main roads on the map but is actually a single track road for a significant proportion of its length, barely 3.5 metres wide. The enclosed photographs show this. We have enclosed a map with a new boundary that includes all of our community in the Sarehole Residents Association (and the houses in the Lower Wake Green Road Residents Group who have entered their own submission).

Green Road B13, and the residents of Keel Drive and Burke Avenue, should be kept together and be part of Moseley Ward as this makes sense in terms of community, identity and governance. It is a small number of people and will make no difference to electoral parity. A local boundary aims to keep communities and services together. Thus breaking up a cohesive community goes against Local Government guidelines. It will split our representation in the Council, thus ending unified Council Services in the area and potentially increasing costs. Already on the margins of several wards, we are concerned that our interests will be ignored and our access to funding limited unless we are included in a ward that reflects our political and social connections.

Our affinity with Moseley has been partially recognised by placing half of Green Road B13 and Gracewell Road into the Moseley Ward. Keeping communities together makes a huge difference in terms of social cohesion, appropriate political representation and the effective use of limited resources both in terms of time and money.

PLEASE DO NOT DIVIDE US.

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