

# Walsall

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**Organisation Name:** Walsall Labour Group (Political groups)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Bloxwich East & West, St Matthews, Blakenall, Birchills Leamore, Rushall Shelfield, Willenhall South, Short Heath, Paddock

Please see the attached file for the Walsall Labour Group submission for the boundary review 2024.

## Attached Documents:

- labour-group-submission-final.docx

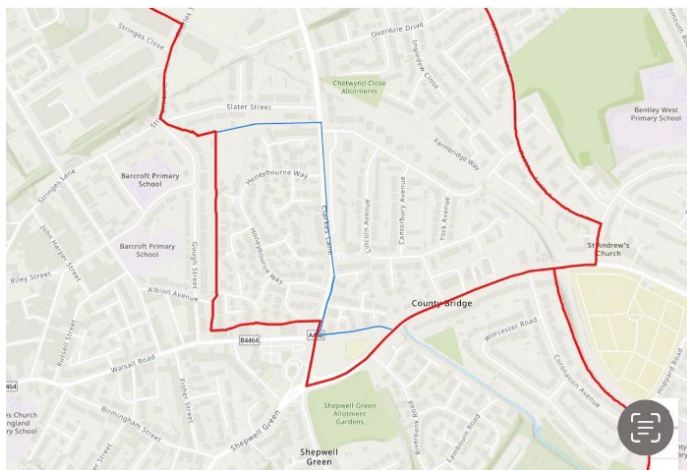
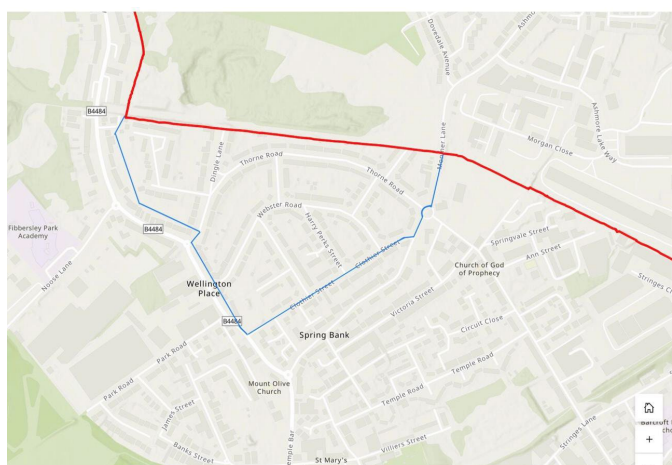
Whilst we welcome the commission's proposals, overall, there are amendments I would like to submit on behalf of the Labour Group.

## Short Heath

We do not support removing the Honeybourne Way estate and the Gurdwara from Willenhall South and adding this to the Short Heath ward. This is a very close-knit community with the Riverpoint estate located to the south of the temple. These two estates are very close in proximity and share many community ties. We feel that splitting this strong community would have negative impact on residents and the wider community. In the middle of these two estates is the Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara Willenhall, the congregation who use this temple identify as being a part of Willenhall and not Short Heath.

We also propose moving the roads Thorne Road through to the one side of Clothier and all the roads in between as these all surround the Five Fields playing fields that are used by the surrounding community which are currently located within Short Heath. This area is recognised as Short Heath and not Willenhall. If the Electoral Commission are minded accepting our proposal, it would mean Short Heath will have 10527 electors and Willenhall 9685 which will reduce the size of Willenhall based on future expectations.

We support the estate opposite Honeybourne Way going into Short Heath as proposed by the Boundary Commission – including Overdale, Western Avenue, Cumberland estates.



Blue line indicates alternative boundary lines proposed by Walsall Labour Group.

## Willenhall

As previously mentioned, we do not support the splitting of the Sikh community with the removal of Honeybourne Way and the Gurdwara. The Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara is associated with the community of Willenhall not Short Heath. In a previous submission to the Commission, Cllr Garcha said "The Short Heath community have a distinct identity which is separate to that of Willenhall Town, the North of Willenhall..." We believe that removing the Temple and the Honeybourne Way state out of Willenhall would tear apart the community and have a long-lasting negative impact upon residents and the wider community. Residents on the Honeybourne estate have no identity to the Short Heath ward, and many of the residents on the Honeybourne estate utilise Willenhall community facilities and places of recreation.

## Willenhall North - New Invention.

We support the name change to New Invention which represents the truer identity of the ward.

## Bloxwich East

We support moving the roads to the west of Stafford Road into Bloxwich East.

We support the moving of the Copper Works estate from Blakenall into Bloxwich East however we suggest moving the boundary to include the Dolphin Close and the houses alongside Goscote and end the boundary at the start of the palliative care site. Alongside Canalside Close, and on the opposite side of the road in Dolphin close, there are new houses that have been built. If the current boundary line goes ahead, this will isolate a community that we believe should be allowed to grow as one. This will narrow the variance from -9% and makes numerical sense.

We also propose the rejoining of the remaining streets of Blakenall Heath Village Centre. These streets are the heart of the Village Centre and have been separated from the rest of Blakenall Heath since the last review. We therefore recommend reuniting Blakenall Lane, Blakenall Row, Dawson Street, Chapel Street and the one side of Foster Street.

Blakenall Heath has a very proud heritage and a strong community who all use the amenities at the centre. Blakenall Heath boasts a number of shops, a church, a children's centre, a charity run community hub and at its heart, it has the "Peace Tree" that was planted in 1919 by Cllr Somerfield to mark the end of the First World War. Allowing these surrounding streets to rejoin the rest of Blakenall Heath will reunite a divided community. Given the strong community in Blakenall Heath and given that it makes up a large proportion of the Bloxwich East ward, we propose that the ward should become Bloxwich East and Blakenall Heath.



Proposed new boundary lines.





Peace Tree centre of Blakenall Heath

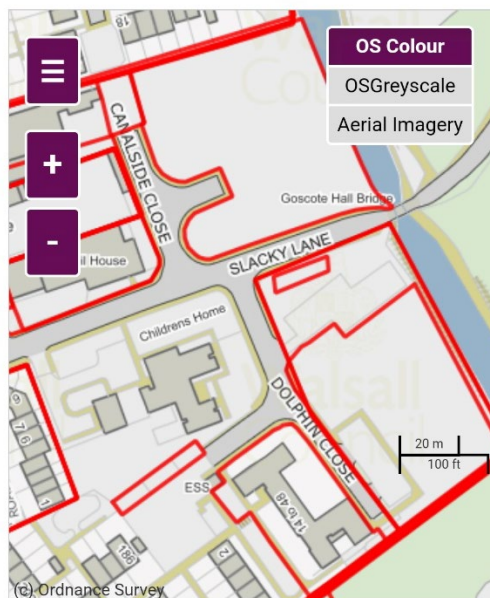


Blakenall Heath Church



Blakenall Village Centre

## Map of planning applications



Planning Applications showing developments both sides of Slacky Lane





Images showing new development separated across Slacky Lane which we propose should be included within the Bloxwich East and Blakenall Heath Ward.

**Blakenall Ward**

We support the removal of Proffit Street and the surrounding streets into the St Matthews ward. This move reunites the extensive Mirpuri community which is currently split between Blakenall and Birchills Leamore.

We also propose changing the name of the Blakenall Ward as most of “actual” Blakenall sits in Blakenall Heath, which is assigned within Bloxwich East. The ward is made up of a number of distinct communities that have very strong identities. Goscote, where we have the Goscote Green Belt corridor and Goscote Greenacres which is a community gardens and allotments. Harden which makes up a large proportion of the ward and Ryecroft at the bottom of the ward which has a strong community centred around the Ryecroft resource centre. Each of these communities have commonalities but have distinct identities within themselves. Within Ryecroft is a large cemetery which has a number of Commonwealth War Graves.

We therefore propose that we rename Blakenall to “**Harden, Goscote and Ryecroft**” as this represents the strong communities that make up the Ward.



**Ryecroft Resource Centre**

**Goscote Green Acres**

## **St Matthews**

We fully support the commission's proposals to form the new ward of St Matthews. It reunites the part of Chuckery that was sliced off during the last boundary review. Taking in the Profitt Street area of Blakenall and the Hospital Street of Birchills Leamore reunites the Mirpuri Community. These two areas have very strong links with each other and share a number of community facilities like the Doctor's surgery (St Peter's) and the community centre that was opened by former Cllr Ian Robertson to provide services to the Mirpuri community.

## **Birchills Leamore**

We welcome the proposals to remove Hospital Street area from Birchills-Leamore and add this to the new St Matthews Ward as this reunites Mirpuri communities.

With the removal of parts of Birchills-Leamore, we feel that a name change must follow to reflect the remaining communities that make up the new ward. Based on the commission's proposals, which we accept, we feel that a new name of **Beechdale, Leamore & Reedswood** is a more suitable name. These areas are all very different communities and each being proud of their area and identify. Each area has their own community identity and local amities which are named according to the area in which they are situated. Beechdale has a proud community and has a number of community organisations at the centre of the community: Beechdale Lifelong learning centre, Beechdale Over 60's Club and Residents R Us.

## **Paddock**

We are fully supportive of the commission's proposals to move the Cornwall estate out of Paddock and relocate this within Pheasey Park Farm. We also fully support the reuniting of the remaining part of Chuckery with the rest of the Chuckery community.

## **Bloxwich West**

We support the proposals to add in Nursery Rd et al, as this tidies up the boundary in that area the current Bloxwich West side of Stafford Rd makes sense as this unites a community around the "Wallington Heath" community.

## **Rushall-Shelfield and Pelsall**

We accept the changes as proposed as this re-unites Pelsall (as locals see it) and re-creates "Hatherton-Rushall".

We have no further comments to add above those detailed in this submission.

Matt Ward

Walsall Labour Group Leader.