

Thurrock

Personal Details:

Name: [REDACTED]
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: N/A (Member of the public)

Comment text:

Related subject: Ward names for Grays North/South and Tilbury North/South

Please see the attached word document for my proposals to the Commission in its consultation for Thurrock.

Attached Documents:

- thurrock-lgbce-consultation-proposals-14.09.24.docx

Hello, I am writing as part of the Local Government Boundary Commission's public consultation on its review of Thurrock, held between 9 July to 16 September 2024. I am a member of the public and a local resident in Thurrock, having lived in Grays for almost my whole life, and would like to make some proposals to the Commission on the ward names.

My proposals in full are below:

First proposal: Rename the proposed **Grays North** ward to **Grays Central**

I am particularly concerned about the Commission's proposal to name the ward which covers the central part of Grays as "**Grays North**". As a local Grays resident who lived in the area covered by the proposed ward for ten+ years and continues to live elsewhere in the wider town, having only moved a few years ago, I am concerned about the Grays North name because of its inaccuracy and the misinformation and confusion it may cause to residents in the area and from further afield. I must stress that the Grays North name fails to meet one of the criteria statutorily expected of the Commission, in particular the criteria "that the pattern of wards should, as far as possible, reflect the interests and identities of local communities", as this ward as proposed only includes the central parts of Grays and not the northern parts as they are widely understood by the town's residents and other legal bodies.

Grays is a large town with several distinct areas, including the Stifford Clays estate and Little Thurrock/Blackshots areas in the north and northeast of the town. In the draft recommendations by the Commission, Stifford Clays and Little Thurrock (north and south) remain separate from the rest of Grays as their own wards. Likewise, a separate ward is formed from the central parts of the town, including Hathaway Road, Bradley Avenue and the town centre for example; this is the ward which as currently proposed is to be called "Grays North". It goes without saying the Grays North ward as proposed does not include the northern parts of Grays; it stops at the end of Hathaway Road at Lodge Lane and does not continue north into Stifford Clays or into the other parts of town in Little Thurrock to the east/northeast, so cannot be considered to cover the north of Grays.

As such, the name of the ward as proposed is problematic because it is inaccurate and, as evidenced below, does not reflect the local identity of the full Grays area, excluding those communities who live in the north of town and in turn neglecting local identity, which breaks the criteria above. It is also problematic because it may serve as a source of confusion or misinformation for those who are not familiar with the area, making them incorrectly believe that Grays ends at Hathaway Road/Lodge Lane and doesn't include parts of the town to the north like the area around William Edwards School (or as we locals like to call it, Willy Ed's!) and other places in Grays like Windsor Avenue.

To rectify this, the Commission should rename the ward to “**Grays Central**”, which I notice has also been proposed by another resident in the first consultations to the Commission. This name is used for a largely concurrent area by [Essex Police](#), in the name of [Grays Central Library](#), and also by the [local press](#) for parts of this area. In contrast, the name Grays North from what I can find has only been used to refer to [Stifford Clays and Little Thurrock Blackshots](#), the northern parts of town and not the central parts like in the draft recommendations as I explained above. Again, this means the name Grays North would fail to meet the criteria, neglecting the local identity of the area and also providing a source of inaccuracy. Grays Central meanwhile is accurate, as the proposed ward consists of the central parts of the town, and does also meet the criteria, because that is the name used by locals and others to identify that area, making it a far more suitable and preferable name for the proposed ward, and that is why I think the Commission should adopt it in its recommendations to best meet its obligations and rectify the issues caused by the Grays North name.

Second proposal: Keep the **Grays Riverside** name for the proposed **Grays South** ward

My second proposal is to keep the existing name of Grays Riverside for the newly proposed ward of Grays South, which covers much of the same area. I live in the area which would be covered by the new ward and is currently covered by the existing Grays Riverside ward. As a resident of the area in question I feel it is clear that we as a community identify much more strongly and closely with the Grays Riverside name, rather than the “Grays Thameside” name proposed by another Thurrock resident and the “Grays South” name proposed by the Commission and the Conservative Party.

Several locations and communities in our area use the Riverside name, including the Grays Riverside Beach and Park, the Grays Riverside MOT Works and our main community organisation the Riverside Community Big Local, formerly known as the Grays Riverside Community Forum. It is also more accurate in a geographical sense, as the new ward will mainly follow the riverside area of town, i.e. the part below the railway that follows the river. The proposed Grays South name neglects our local pride in the Riverside name and in a similar issue to the Grays North name (see above) does not actually reflect the true extent of the proposed ward boundaries, with other southern parts of Grays like South Stifford not included in the ward, which may cause confusion and exclude these southern residents of Grays. Therefore, I think it would be best for the Commission to keep to the status quo and keep the name of Grays Riverside in its final recommendations for the new ward covering this area, as this is the name that best reflects us locals and the community and the most accurate geographically whilst not excluding the other southern parts of the town not included in the new ward.

Third proposal: Rename **Tilbury North** and **Tilbury South** to **Tilbury Town North** and **Tilbury Town South**

Although I don't live in the Tilbury area, I feel it would be best to name the proposed Tilbury North and Tilbury South wards **Tilbury Town North** and **Tilbury Town South**, as the town of Tilbury (or Tilbury Town, as we in Thurrock also call it to distinguish it from the villages, hence the proposed name) is a separate settlement from the villages of West Tilbury and East Tilbury. In accordance with the popular local usage of Tilbury Town to distinguish the town from the separate villages of the same name, these names would help avoid any confusion like with the Grays North name situation.

I agree with the name of the proposed East Tilbury, Linford & West Tilbury ward, as this distinguishes between the two separate settlements of East Tilbury and West Tilbury and also the separate settlement of Linford which are all located in the ward, rather than having it all under the inaccurate and confusing name of East Tilbury as was previously the case.

Those are all the proposals I have for the Commission. I look forward to reading the Commission's final report and would like to thank you for giving us local residents the opportunity to have a say in these important matters!