



The Friends of Old Headington

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Submission by the Friends of Old Headington on proposals for Headington Ward boundaries

The Friends of Old Headington (FOH) was formed by a group of local residents who joined forces in 1959 to protect the special character of Old Headington village, what is now the Old Headington Conservation Area. FOH is an active membership organisation with elected trustees which meet regularly to promote our aims, organise local community events (Open Gardens and winter meetings), and hold an annual AGM.

The Aims of the Friends of Old Headington include

- retaining Old Headington as a village, with special emphasis on preserving its lanes, walls, grass verges, and trees;
- ensuring that new buildings and alterations are in keeping with the existing character of the village;
- co-operating with the Oxford Preservation Trust and the City Council in their declared policy of preserving the village; and
- involving as many as possible to achieve these aims successfully

Our comments on the proposed boundary changes focus on the following points made by the Commission (paragraphs 61, 62, 64) that wards should:

- reflect the identity and interests of local communities
- include evidence of community links
- show electoral equality
- have an identity that includes a residents' association or other group that represents the area
- have interests or issues that bind the community together or separate it from other parts of the area



The Friends of Old Headington believes that the interests of the Conservation Area are best served by ward boundaries that include the entirety of the Conservation Area within a single ward. As a result issues can be discussed with and represented by one pair of councillors rather than two sets as proposed (or three as at present).

The most appropriate area is Headington Ward and the Conservation Area is a distinct neighbourhood north of the London Road, ranging from Dunstan Park and historic parts of the JR hospital site in the west, through the village core, and to Bury Knowle Park in the east. The ring road forms a northern boundary and much of Cuckoo Lane forms the boundary to the south. The Conservation Area is described (2011) and mapped (to last extension in 1998) on the Oxford City website at https://www.oxford.gov.uk/directory_record/376/old_headington.

The draft boundary proposals are a step in the right direction in that the eastern side of the Conservation Area is now within the proposed Headington Ward. However, on the western side those parts of the Conservation Area within the JR Hospital grounds have been removed and the area northwards with Dunstan Park remains outside the ward.

Our proposal is simply to make the western boundary of the Headington ward align with the Conservation Area boundary. There would be little effect on voting numbers as few households would be affected, but the advantage would be in providing a unified voice and representation for the areas affected by conservation and planning issues.

The schematic, right, shows new boundaries in dark blue, superseded proposals in broken red, and the rest of the Conservation Area in light blue for information.

Our recommendation is to align the new boundaries in the west precisely with the Conservation Area.

Peter S. McCarter, Chairman

