**Proposed New Ward Boundary for St Peter’s**

**Angel Association’s concerns for submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England**

1. The Commission has proposed radical and damaging changes to St Peter’s Ward boundary as part of an Islington-wide review. These are all set out on the website of the Local Government Boundary Commission for England at lgbce.org.uk. If these proposed changes are made, then they would be used for local elections from 2022 onwards.
2. Reponses to the Commission’s proposals must be sent to them **no later than** **Monday 7 October**. To do so, email your views to **[reviews@lgbce.org.uk](mailto:reviews@lgbce.org.uk" \t "_blank)**, or write to the following address:

   The Review Officer (Islington)

    Local Government Boundary Commission for England

   1st Floor, Windsor House

    50 Victoria Street

   London  SW1H 0TL

1. This note summarises the Angel Association’s main concerns and we hope that many residents will send their own views to the Commission.
2. The current boundary of St Peter’s Ward follows the Commission’s own stated guidelines, largely following busy main roads and the Canal towpath which act as obvious and natural boundaries – Upper St, Essex Rd, Rotherfield St, towpath/Canal, Wharf Rd/Canal Basin, City Rd. These boundaries are easily understood and are logical.
3. The current boundary includes within it facilities and amenities which provide and encourage the sense of neighbourhood and community, another important Commission guideline. These include local churches particularly our local parish church, St James, the much used local St James church hall, a new community centre (The Arc), the local secondary school with its facilities. **All these facilities would be in the adjoining St Mary’s ward if these changes went ahead, making a nonsense of the Commission’s own “fostering the sense of neighbourhood guidelines”**.
4. As an example of our community working together, local residents have got together to provide pupils from the Ward primary schools a summer activities programme using these local facilities. This is precisely the kind of initiative which reflects the current strength of the neighbourhood dynamic.
5. There are active local associations within St Peter’s Ward, including the Angel Association, the Arlington Association and the Duncan Terrace Association. Amongst many other matters, they all work closely with the Council on greening initiatives and enhancing our local parks, and on community safety issues. These are practical and beneficial examples of the strong neighbourhood feel here.
6. The relationship with the Council through a wide range of meetings with local Councillors is strong and productive. The local Police Panel, dealing particularly with community safety issues, also provides a constructive local forum. The current St Peter’s boundary encourages and efficient and effective basis for local government, another one of the Commission’s guidelines.
7. The Commission proposes to move the current Ward boundary south into Bunhill by crossing City Rd. This makes no sense when assessed against the Commission’s own guidelines. City Rd, one of the busiest roads in London, also marks a stark change in local community interests and concerns. On the northern and eastern side of the Ward we would lose Essex Rd as our boundary. The new boundary would follow St Peter’s St and Rheidol Terrace and then go round Packington Estate to the Canal.
8. These proposed changes are significantly driven by what Islington Council has said is an expected very large increase in the Bunhill electorate from 2019 to 2024. (The projected increase would be by far the largest increase in the electorate of any Islington ward). The stated purpose of the redrawing of the boundary of our present Ward to the south is therefore to equalise the electorate of wards across the Borough. The key elements of the projected change in the Bunhill electorate, according to the LGBCE’s statement, and apparently supported by Islington Council are:

* The Bunhill electorate is projected to increase from 9,834 to 14,463 . This would obviously make Bunhill a statistical outlier and we are surprised that this projection, which is both very large and astonishingly precise, has seemingly been accepted without question by the Boundary Commission.
* According to the Council, there are new developments which might add 1,450 dwellings to Bunhill in the period 2019-2024. But this is obviously not enough to drive the projected change in the electorate calculated by Islington Council and reflected in the Commission’s proposals.
* Bunhill’s population is assessed by the Council to increase by 2,450. Again, this is radically inconsistent with the projected electorate increase, which as indicated above, is an increase of 4,629. If there are other demographic factors which explain the electorate increase, our question to Islington Council and the LGBCE is: why do these not apply to other Islington wards in equal measure. The electorate projection for Bunhill simply makes no sense.

1. An alternative set of proposals, to achieve the aim of making electoral distribution more equal between wards, might be to:

* reconsider the (eastern) boundary between Bunhill and Clerkenwell
* in order to retain valued facilities within St Peter’s, the boundary with St Mary’s should be drawn along Packington St and Popham St.
* In addition, the tower blocks at 250 City Rd COULD be incorporated into our Ward, recognising their coherence with the tower block cluster around the Basin.

1. Once again, I would hope that local residents will feel able to draw on these points in responding to the Boundary Commission’s consultation.

Eric Sorensen

Chair

Angel Association