**Bradford Ward Boundary Review 2023/24**

**Baildon Town Council’s Response to the Local Government Boundary Commission’s Proposal to create a ‘Baildon and Eldwick’ Ward and other consequential proposals.**

1. **Introduction**

BTC appreciates that the BC is clearly still open to proposals in respect of Baildon and Shipley:- “*We are interested in hearing further evidence from electors in this area as to whether there is a warding pattern that can provide good electoral equality and reflect the extent of Baildon and Bingley parishes.”* We take this to mean that the BC welcomes alternative proposals and are pleased to submit such a proposal for consideration.

* Baildon Town Council maintains the views and approaches described in its original consultation submission and offers this further information and response as a supplemental to it.
* We believe that our alternative Ward Proposals (see below) better support the Community Identity of Baildon, Shipley and Bingley and also deliver electoral equality
* This submission in addition widens its perspective in recognition of the requirement for the BC to make a constituency wide proposal
* Baildon Town Council recognises that the topography and natural boundaries which have shaped settlements over millenia are not clearly seen in a virtual viewing, and warmly extends an invitation to representatives of the Boundary Commission to visit the areas for a tour so that these natural barriers can be understood more clearly
* BTC consider that the Local Government Boundary Commission’s current proposals are flawed in a number of ways and there are inconsistencies of application in their proposals. *(For example, the reason for rejecting one area being linked to another is the large expanse of moorland” . This same moorland divides the communities of Baildon and Eldwick which are proposed to be placed within a single ward.) [[1]](#endnote-1)*

1. **Historical and Geographical context :**

**There are three major communities in this section of the Aire Valley, which were all separate, independent Urban Districts until 1974 ie:**

* **BAILDON:** whichhas the right number of electors in 2023 and in 2029 to form one Ward
* **SHIPLEY** (Shipley Ward; Windhill & Wrose Ward):whichis too small to form two Wards and needs to add more electors from another area
* **BINGLEY:** ( Bingley and Bingley Rural)which is too large to form two Wards and needs to transfer one area to Shipley and exchange another area between its two Wards

The Local Government Boundary Commission’s lack of local geographical knowledge is demonstrated clearly on your website in the section “Explore your area”, where the Baildon, Bingley and Shipley communities are split into three separate areas (see below) for this Ward Boundary Review. These three communities together form most of Shipley Parliamentary constituency. Incorrect assumptions have been made resulting in groupings which do not make any sense ‘on the ground’.

The Local Government Boundary Commission’s illogical division of this Ward Boundary Review area

1. Bingley, Baildon and Shipley Wards
2. Bingley Rural Ward is placed with Worth Valley Ward which is in Keighley parliamentary constituency
3. Windhill and Wrose Ward is grouped into “North East Bradford” with Bolton & Undercliffe; Eccleshill; Idle & Thackley which are all wards all in Bradford East parliamentary constituency.

The Local Government Boundary Commission comments on its “virtual tour of Bradford”, and there is no evidence that it ever actually visited Bradford during this Ward Boundary Review.

1. **Reasons to reject the current proposals for Baildon and related areas:-**

Baildon Town Council have considered the issue in great detail, including careful study of the numbers both in Baildon ward and also those adjacent. **Baildon Town Council urges the Boundary Commission to reconsider its current proposal to create a new Baildon and Eldwick ward for the following reasons:-**

1. **Baildon has the right number of voters for electoral equality** if the 1,157 voters currently in Shipley ward are moved into Baildon ward. There is no need for an artificial construct of Baildon and Eldwick.
2. Both Baildon and Eldwick are **historic settlements**, Baildon having it’s own council until 1974, and Eldwick has always been part of Bingley
3. There is **no current community of interest** between Baildon and Eldwick
4. **Physical separation:** the two places are separated by high moorland separated by over a mile of a single narrow moorland road. (see photograph attached from 17th January 2024) There are zero public transport links. There are no street lights or pavements. The two places are physically separate
5. **Baildon is a self contained community, served by Baildon Town Council and bounded by the River Aire**. The proposal from the Boundary Commission misses the opportunity to align the Baildon ward boundary with the current community identity. The Boundary Commission’s new Baildon & Eldwick Ward would separate most of Baildon Town Council South West Ward *(Polling District 22Aexcept for 95 electors on Lower Green and Milner Road*) from its other five Town Council Wards and join it with Shipley Ward. Baildon Town Council South West Ward is only connected with Shipley by one circuitous road link over the River Aire’s Baildon Bridge
6. Large parts of Baildon stand as a formally agreed “buffer zone” for the World heritage site of Saltaire. **There is no logic or practical reasons** for taking one small part of Baildon and placing it in the Shipley ward containing Saltaire

The BC proposal states that one respondent supported the retention of the existing ward, “*in particular the part of Baildon Parish that contains the World Heritage Site of Saltaire*” This is factually incorrect. Polling District 22A is not part of the World Heritage Site.

1. Baildon Town Council makes good and well thought through proposals for other wards adjacent to Baildon which demonstrate that issues of **electoral equality in adjacent areas ( Shipley, Bingley etc) can be achieved** without creating a Baildon and Eldwick ward.
2. **Eldwick is historically and physically part of the continuously urbanised area of Bingley. The new proposed ward would artificially divide Polling District 2C** (Eldwick Town Council Ward of Bingley Town Council) into two areas by an arbitrary line – the smaller part with 1193 electors (44%) remaining in Bingley; the larger part being joined artificially to Baildon. BTC understands that **residents of Eldwick are not supportive** of a proposal to move part of their community into an artificial ward with Baildon.
3. LOW SPRINGS

The small anomaly of the moorland settlement of Low Springs located between Baildon and Hawksworth (part of Guiseley, Leeds), but currently part of Bingley Ward, should not be used to justify creating an artificial Baildon and Eldwick Ward. The inclusion of Low Springs within Baildon ward of Bradford Council would better serve the small number of residents by having access to Baildon councillors to represent their concerns within Bradford Council.

**The Local Government Boundary Commission’s reasoning that Low Springs on its own would be too small to be a Parish Ward is spurious**. This review concerns ward boundaries not Parish Council wards. Low Springs and East Eldwick would not join Baildon Town Council; Low Springs would remain part of Eldwick Town Council Ward within Bingley Town Council.

(The Local Government Boundary Commission’s same Ward Boundary proposals for Bradford includes moving Polling District 14C (Ilkley Town Council’s Ben Rhydding North Ward) from Ilkley Ward to Wharfedale Ward. There is no suggestion that PD 14C would move from Ilkley Town Council to Burley Parish Council.)

The paragraph below from your proposal confuses changes to District council ward boundaries with those of the parish/town councils. *“We agree that the most appropriate part of Bingley parish to move to a neighbouring ward to provide for electoral equality is Eldwick, and this allows for the hamlet of Low Springs to be included in a Baildon ward as suggested by Baildon Town Council. We would not be able to include the hamlet in Baildon ward without also including Eldwick, as that would create a parish ward with fewer than 100 electors. We do not consider that a parish ward with fewer than 100 electors constitutes effective and convenient local government.”*

**Baildon Town Council’s Alternative Ward Proposals for Baildon, Shipley & Bingley**

1. **Baildon Ward**

The Baildon Town Council area (the former Baildon Urban District Council area): Polling Districts 1A, 1B, 1C, 1E, 1F, 1G & 22A (Baildon Town Council South West Ward);

***Retain***the small village ofEsholt (Polling District 1D) in Baildon Ward

***add*** Low Springs hamlet (38 electors from Polling District 2C)

**2023 2029**

**electors electors**

Current Baildon Ward (PDs 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, 1F, 1G): 11,965 12,875

Polling District 22A (Baildon South West) 1,157 1,234

Low Springs hamlet (part of PD 2C) 38 38

**Proposed revised Baildon Ward 13,160 14,147**

1. **Shipley Ward**

The Shipley Town Council area: Polling Districts 22B, 22C, 22D & 22E

***add*** part of Cottingley1 Polling District 3D2 (2,688 electors in 2023)

**2023 2029**

**electors electors**

Current Shipley Ward (- PD 22A Baildon South West) 10,448 11,559

Polling District 3D (part2) 2,688 2,688

**Proposed revised Shipley Ward 13,136 14,247**

1There is a clear “community of identity” between Shipley and Cottingley. Cottingley is connected to Shipley by the main A650 road & B6269. Shipley does not have a Secondary School; the catchment area for Dixon’s Cottingley Academy (previously called Nab Wood Grammar School and Nab Wood School) includes Cottingley and the adjacent area of Shipley south of A650 (Polling District 22D Nab Wood & Moorhead). Shipley Golf Course is located in Cottingley.

2 Proposed division of Polling District 3D Cottingley:

3,173 electors in 2023

To Bingley West Ward: 485 electors in area adjacent to Polling District 3C (Bradford Road 9; Bradford Old Road 64; Fairy Dell 37; Manor Drive 135; New Row 11; Roundhill Avenue 109; Roundhill Mount 51; Woodlands Grove 68)

To Shipley Ward: 2,688 electors - the larger area adjacent to Polling District 22D Shipley (Nab Wood & Moorhead).

However, if BTC’s proposed Shipley Ward’s 2029 forecast electorate is deemed to be above the maximum threshold, the Dockfield area of Shipley (part of Polling District 22C Shipley Centre & Dockfield) could be moved to Windhill & Wrose Ward. The Dockfield area is nearer to other housing in Windhill than to other housing in Shipley centre. Windhill Green Medical Practice is Dockfield’s nearest GP surgery.

The Dockfield area has 313 electors in 2023 (Cygnet Way 118; Dock Lane 92; Dockfield Place 12; Dockfield

Road 45; Dockfield Terrace 46). If the Dockfield area was moved to Windhill & Wrose Ward this would

**reduce the number of electors in Shipley Ward** to 12,823 in 2023 and to 13,934 in 2029.

1. **Windhill & Wrose Ward**

**No change proposed to** Local Government Boundary Commission’s Proposal:

**2023 2029**

**electors electors**

**11,413 11,990**

However, if BTC’s proposed Shipley Ward’s 2029 forecast electorate is deemed to be above the maximum threshold, the Dockfield area of Shipley (part of Polling District 22C Shipley Centre & Dockfield) could be moved to Windhill & Wrose Ward. The Dockfield area is nearer to housing in Windhill than to other housing in Shipley centre. Windhill Green Medical Practice is Dockfield’s nearest GP surgery.

The Dockfield area has 313 electors in 2023 (Cygnet Way 118; Dock Lane 92; Dockfield Place 12; Dockfield

Road 45; Dockfield Terrace 46). If the Dockfield area was moved to Windhill & Wrose Ward this would

**increase its number of electors to** 11,716 in 2023 and to 12,303 in 2029.

1. **Rename a new Bingley West Ward** (currently Bingley Rural Ward)  **2023 2029**

**electors electors**

Local Government Boundary Proposal3 11,847 12,607

***move*** part of Cottingley (part of PD 3D2) to Shipley Ward -2,688 -2,688

***add*** PDs 2A, 2G and 2J (Bingley Central & Myrtle Park) 2,564 2,842

**Proposed new Bingley West Ward**  **11,723 12,761**

2 Proposed division of Polling District 3D Cottingley; see Section 2 Shipley Ward (above)

3***moves*** *Denholme (polling Districts 3G & 3H) to Worth Valley*

1. **Rename a new Bingley East Ward** (currently Bingley Ward)

***move*** PDs 2A, 2G and 2J (Bingley Central and Myrtle Park) to Bingley West Ward. 2023 electorate 2,564; 2029 electorate 2,842

***move*** Low Springs hamlet (part of PD 2C) 38 electors to Baildon Ward

**2023 2029**

**electors electors**

Current Bingley Ward 14,114 15,721

***move*** PDs 2A, 2G and 2J to Bingley West Ward -2,564 -2,842

***move*** Low Springs hamlet (part of PD 2C) to Baildon Ward -38 -38

**Proposed new Bingley East Ward 11,512 12,841**

**Summary - Ward Sizes & Permitted Variation**

**City of Bradford:**

Total Electorate 2023: 370,124 2029: 393,754

Average per ward: 2023: 12,336 2029: 13,125

Range within 10% 2023: 11,102-13,570 2029: 11.812-14,438

Bradford Wards more than 10% larger or smaller than average number of electors:

>10% above average: 4 Wards: Bingley; Bingley Rural; City; Craven

>10% below average: 4 Wards: Wharfedale; Wibsey; Worth Valley; Wyke

Current Baildon Ward (5 out of 6 Town Council Wards & Esholt):

2023: -3% of average electorate; 2029: -2% of average electorate

1. *Baildon Town Council (BTC ) would like to highlight that we have been misrepresented in the previous Labour Group submission. “….we propose…the east side of 2C will transfer to Baildon ward which we propose should be renamed Baildon & Eldwick…When discussing this proposal with* ***Baildon town councillors,*** *they also raised…”*

   *This erroneously suggests that BTC were supportive of the proposal to move part of Eldwick to Baildon and this is categorically not the case. These views were never approved by BTC and do not represent BTC position.* [↑](#endnote-ref-1)