**Kettering Green Party**

c/o 38 Waverley Road, Kettering, NN15 6NT

**Consultation response to North Northamptonshire draft ward proposals**

We will be solely concentrating on the draft Brambleside and Kettering Central suggestions – the other Kettering boundaries we are broadly in agreement with.

The Clover Hill ward, comprising Brambleside and the All Saints area, is a very connected community. It has the obvious physical boundaries of Rockingham Road to the West, Montagu Street to the south, and North Park & Bath Road to the East. We feel very strongly that the majority of the All Saints area should not be merged into a new Kettering Central ward.

What follows is the justification for our view that Brambleside ward should not be segregated from All Saints and that the majority of All Saints ward should not be joined to a ‘Kettering Central’ ward.

A map with a road and a car

Description automatically generated with medium confidenceFor background, we have been working consistently in the Brambleside and All Saints area for nearly four years to foster a connected community – this has been incredibly successful and we have improved community identity through events and activities across the area.

We would suggest the creation of a two councillor ward known as ‘Brambleside and All Saints’ or ‘Kettering North’ with the boundary being from the south of Regent Street (between Regent and King St) and extending to the north to include the Weekley Wood Avenue trading estate and meadow and woodland to the east.

We consider it a benefit to have at least two councillors serving a ward so that in the event of one councillor being absent, a second is always available to assist residents.

This comprises approximately 4100 residents per councillor providing electoral equality. Please see the map illustrating our draft boundary from Xpress Maps (right):

A map of a city

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**Transport Links**

Firstly**,** we would like to address the transport links into and between Brambleside and All Saints.

The map above shows the several vehicle entrances to the Brambleside area, with road links in three places on Rockingham Road and one from Kipling Road (marked in pink). These give the residents many options to access the centre of town and the All Saints area.

Furthermore, there are multiple pedestrian and cycle routes between Brambleside and All Saints (marked in dark blue). The most used are the two alleys (or jitty’s as they are known locally) from Blandford Avenue on the north of the All Saints area to Brambleside. The one to the east is also well trafficked as it is the route used by All Saints parents and children who attend Brambleside Primary Academy.

Both the Blandford Avenue alleys lead to the nearest local pubs (The Beeswing to the west and the Briars to the east) which are the only two pubs in the ward and are frequented by residents from both All Saints and Brambleside.

All the pedestrian routes are used by a high number of dog walkers from the All Saints area, who head to Weekly Hall Wood, which is the other side of Weekley Wood Lane to the north, to enjoy the scenic footpaths (marked in red) and public right of way (marked in light blue).

This public right of way follows the path of an ancient road from the centre of Kettering through the Rockingham Road Pleasure Park, along Hallwood Road, crossing Brambleside to Weekley Hall Wood and onwards to Corby Old Village.

Via the pedestrian cut-through from John Clare Court on Brambleside, the Scott Road allotments can be accessed. Here there is a strong community, with residents from both areas cultivating allotment plots together.

Finally, the only bus to serve the area is the No.16, which routes through both Brambleside and All Saints with stops on Cotswold Ave, Pennine Way, Brambleside, Kipling Road, Bath Road, Burghley St, Hallwood Rd and Neale Ave.

**Community Groups and Amenities**

The Rockingham Road Pleasure Park is a central focus of the All Saints area and draws in many resident from Brambleside. It has the largest children’s play area in the ward as well as a variety of amenities including outdoor gym equipment, a bowls club, putting green, BMX track, segregated dog walking area, and Victorian band stand. Various events are held there through the year, including a summer program of ‘bands in the park’, community festivals, fairs and the annual Kettering carnival ends in the Park. The Rockingham Road Pleasure Park is also the only Kettering town park that holds the prestigious Green Flag award, which requires community involvement with the upkeep of the park to be awarded.

All these things together make it a key destination for residents of Brambleside for their leisure and recreational activities.

**Historical links**

The Brambleside area itself has grown from the first houses built in the 1960’s through a phased development across a five decade period up to the 2000’s.

It is worth noting the shopping area and Briars pub were not built until 1992 and until then, there were no amenities in Brambleside. As a consequence, residents would use local shops and other amenities serving the All Saints area.

The Brambleside Primary Academy was built in 1996 and is the only infant and junior school on Brambleside. There is no senior school at all in Brambleside. Before 1996, the children of Brambleside’s nearest schools were the Victorian Park Road School for juniors and infants, in the heart of All Saints, and the Kettering Buccleuch Academy for seniors, on the boundary of the All Saints ward.

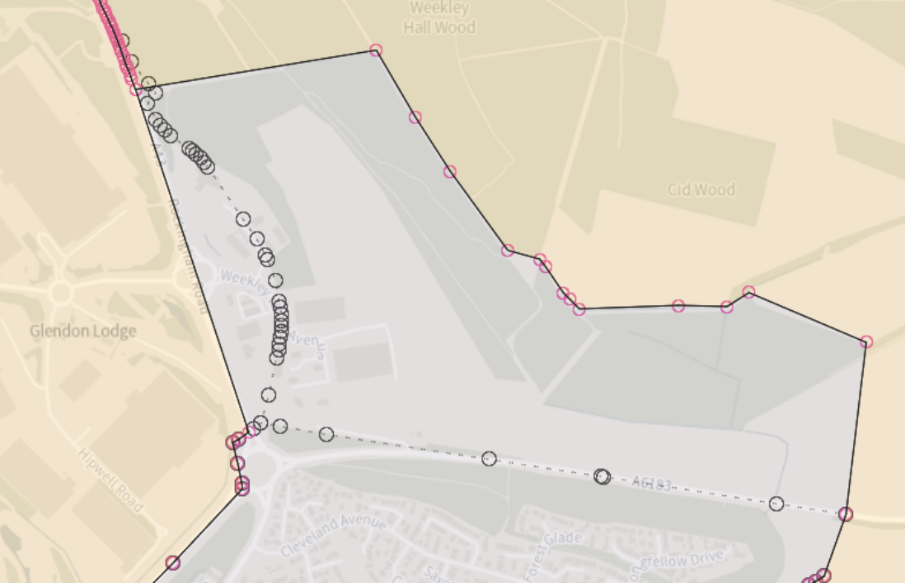
The shared schools for the children of All Saints and Brambleside has created probably the greatest bonds of friendship between the people across these areas.

That gradual expansion and shared use of amenities allowed the sense of community to grow between Brambleside and All Saints. Brambleside residents do not have any community hubs, aside from the two pubs, so come to use facilities in All Saints, including the Midland Band Club, Rifle Band Club, Athletic Club, All Saints Church, St Andrews Church, Kettering Arts Centre and Bowls club.

Kingsley Avenue to the north of the All Saints area has a very strong community. For the last few years their residents have organised an annual street sale that extends out into Brambleside and a hugely popular Halloween event, which our councillors support with a street closure and stewarding. Both these events draw in residents from Brambleside and the surrounding area.

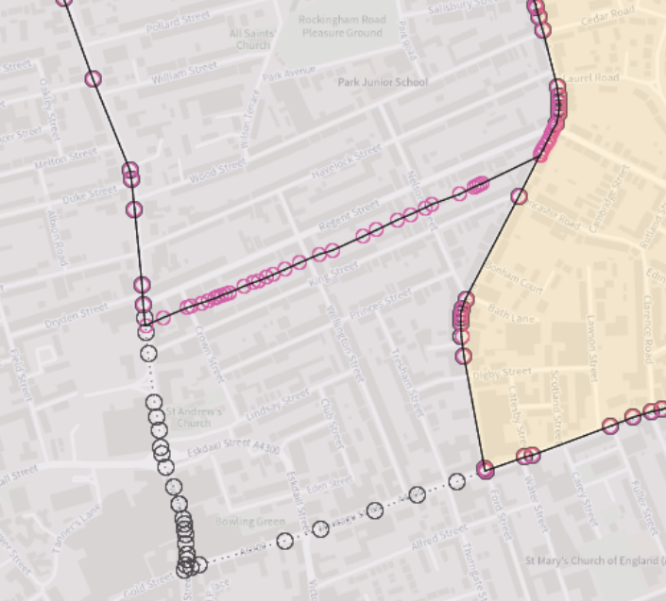
The ward’s councillors are incredibly community focussed and deliver a quarterly All Saints and Brambleside newsletter to all homes, which features street sales, litter picks, community festivals and meetings, gardening groups, cost of living support and ways residents can feed into council consultations. We run monthly litter picks which span both the Brambleside and All Saints areas and draw in people from across the whole ward. Our councillors also installed popular dog poo bag dispensers which are heavily used by dog walkers.

**Our preferred boundary changes in detail**

**Northern boundary**

We would like to see the northernmost boundary extended to include the Weekley Wood Avenue trading estate, the last two houses on the former route of Weekley Wood Lane and the area of meadow and woodland most frequented by residents of Brambleside and All Saints.

It makes more sense include the two houses on Weekley Wood Lane as they are much closer to Kettering than Weekley, Newton or Geddington (the nearest villages and part of the ward they are currently in). The inclusion of the meadow and woodland is due to it being most used by residents of Brambleside and All Saints for dog walking, exercise, cycling and walking. The area is also the site of a controversial planning application which is of great concern to the local residents. The inclusion of the area to the ward will allow the residents to feel more connected to the last remaining part of the forest on their doorstep.

**Southern boundary**

The boundary should change to between Regent Street and King Street to include the approximate number of residents for a two councillor ward. Regent Street and the two terraced streets to the north – Wood and Havelock Street are more connected to the rest of the All Saints ward with their proximity to the Rockingham Road Pleasure Park. They are also the last streets that are linked by alleys forming part of the ancient footpath which extends to the north.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, splitting up the community of Brambleside and All Saints will be detrimental to both areas. Brambleside should not be allocated only one councillor, and although we would prefer not to lose any of the All Saints area, we do recognise that the number of residents does not match with the allocation for councillors. Therefore, we urge consideration of our proposal to change the boundary to Regent Street in the south and extend it north to include the Weekley Wood Avenue trading estate and meadow and woodland to the east with Brambleside as a single, two councillor ward, as indicated in the first map above.

Dez Dell & James Towns representing Kettering Green Party

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