

# Bradford

## Personal Details:

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**Organisation Name:** Shipley Town Council (Parish or town councillor)

## Comment text:

Good evening.

I am writing in response to the request for further comments on the additional draft proposals for the Shipley/Bingley/Baildon areas of Bradford Metropolitan District. I am writing as a ward councillor for Shipley and on behalf of my fellow ward councillors, Cllr Anna Watson and Cllr Kevin Warnes

### Shipley Ward Councillors' Response

In September 2023 I responded to the request for comments on ward boundaries in the Shipley area, requesting that the Shipley ward, which I represent, be left intact as much as possible. In my submission I stated:

I was originally elected as a councillor for the old Shipley West ward prior to the last boundary review, which came into effect in 2004, and have represented the current Shipley ward since then. The 2004 changes improved the representative situation for Shipley by a huge amount and was universally welcomed as it did away with the previous Shipley East/Shipley West split which severed the Town Centre in two and meant that many residential streets were divided down the middle between different wards.

The current ward size is within the target band at 11,605 (2023 figures) and as such, in my opinion, does not need to be altered. A large

development is planned in Shipley on the site of the former HMRC offices, which in its current form will provide over 350 new homes, which should equate to approximately 700 new residents. There are also a number of smaller residential developments in the pipeline, which will further push the numbers closer to the average for Bradford District wards.

Shipley is a distinct town, with a combination of residential, industrial and commercial property. The residential make-up of the town and the ward is varied, including affluent leafy suburb, town centre flats, former Local Authority housing estates, edge-of-centre terraced homes, and a World Heritage Site. It is the perfect mix and the current ward boundaries serve the town well.

People living here identify with both the town and the ward.

Looking at adjacent polling districts I cannot see any that could be moved into Shipley where this would be the case, so without splitting existing polling districts my view is that the current ward boundaries are perfectly fine as they are.

I understand that Baildon Town Council have suggested that 22A, currently in Shipley ward, should be moved into Baildon ward. I would argue against this. 22A is linked well into Shipley both as a town centre, with a regular bus service, and to its ward representatives. Its population are happy as they are. The housing in 22A was mainly built in the 1950s to house people being moved out of sub-standard housing in Shipley Town Centre prior to its redevelopment, so many of the older residents still have that link in their pasts. Also, if it was moved, this would split the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Saltaire across 2 different wards as part of the WHS is in 22A, the rest being in 22B.

I trust that my views will be taken into account when the commission makes its final decision.

I was therefore very pleased that the draft recommendations published in November 2023 made only very minor amendments to the Shipley ward boundaries and I responded to that draft positively and urged the commission to implement the draft as proposed.

Several months on from the publication of the draft it now seems that the commission has reversed its position completely and is considering a different arrangement which is far inferior to the original draft, creating more problems than it solves.

My arguments for retaining polling district 22A within the Shipley ward, as outlined above, remain as valid now as they were when I wrote them, so I will not repeat them, but turn my attention to the alternative you have proposed.

The splitting of Eldwick village away from Bingley ward and putting it in a Baildon & Eldwick ward may not be ideal and I can appreciate some of the objections to the proposal, however by removing this anomaly the new draft creates another by proposing to split the village of Cottingley in two and putting much of it in the Shipley ward.

The residents of Cottingley have no affiliation with Shipley and are very much part of the Bingley area with regular bus connections to that town. They use schools, shops, medical facilities and other services in Bingley, not Shipley. This proposal would lead to these residents being less represented than they are now, for example ward councillors may not be able to fight for both Shipley and Bingley when the deployment of

funding or services is decided at a district or higher level. Dividing a community in this way would not serve the representative process at all well and I am sure will generate as much opposition from Cottingley residents as has been forthcoming from Eldwick people in response to your original draft proposals. Splitting Cottingley would be contrary to the second statutory criteria by which the commission carries out its reviews, namely to 'Reflect identities and interests of local communities – The Commission's core principles ensure that any reviews undertaken by the Commission reflect community identities and interests.'

Furthermore, your new draft proposals will mean the new Shipley ward will have a new electoral variance of +9%. There are large areas of what is currently grazing land to the south and south-west of Cottingley, adjacent to Cottingley Moor Road that have been put forward for housing development in the Draft Local Plan. Whilst these may not all end up being developed, a relatively small proportion would take the new Shipley ward way beyond the +10% maximum variance and if they all turned out to be developed the variance would be very much larger. This would contravene the first statutory criteria by which the commission carries out its reviews, namely to 'Secure equality of representation – The Commission aims to ensure that, within a single authority, a vote in one ward is the same in value as a vote in another ward.'

Although Bingley Town Centre is not part of my ward, I would also like to comment on your new proposals to split the town along the railway line into Bingley East and Bingley West wards.

This proposal would separate much of the population of Bingley from their town centre facilities, particularly their shopping centre, arts centre, park and other services and be in contravention of the second statutory criteria by which reviews are carried out, as outlined above. This would amount to a second anomaly being created, like the splitting of Cottingley, to rectify one issue in Baildon & Eldwick. Two wrongs do not make a right.

We would therefore respectfully suggest that the further draft proposals put forward in July 2024 are rejected and that the commission reverts to its original draft of November 2023, which present a set of boundaries that respect community identities and, whilst maybe not ideal, are fair to far more residents of the affected areas than the reworked version now before us.

I trust that our views will be taken into account when the Commission comes to its final decision and would appreciate it if you could acknowledge receipt of this submission.

Yours sincerely,  
Martin

## **Attached Documents:**

*None attached*