

Appendix 5

Sent: 18 December 2020 3:25 PM

To: Elections Mailbox <Elections@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk>

Subject: Stoke Heath Stoke Community Governance Review

Electors should be able to identify clearly with the parish in which they are resident. This is not the case as proposed. Harvest Close and Harrow Close are an anomaly created by the Boundary Commission. It would be best to look at any responses from Harvest Close residents and decide whether to put **all** of this road in one area. This would create a more defined area for residents to identify with.

Parishes should reflect distinctive and recognisable communities of interest, with their own sense of identity. This is certainly not the case at present. Residents in RHA area feel resentment. They are paying an unfair proportion towards amenities and services they are not/cannot use.

- 1) They pay their full contribution towards the Stoke Heath Recreation Area yet half of the residents find Charford Recreation area more convenient if. It is equipped to as good a standard, but differently.
- 2) Stoke Heath residents contribute towards a Parish lengthsman but have very little use for his services. Last year his services cost £2400 approx. net after a grant from Worcestershire C C. Almost none of this expense went towards any needs in RHA.
- 3) Street lighting cost Stoke Parish £4,257.11. RHA has already paid for its own Street Lighting
- 4) Churchyard maintenance, Tree works, Picnic site, etc

Stoke parish does try to involve all areas equally in projects but the two areas are 'chalk and cheese'. Stoke is mainly a rural area while RHA is part of an urban development. A good recent example is the defibrillator. Two were bought. It was easy to site the first one. In the middle of Stoke Prior shopping area in Stoke Parish. The siting of the second was problematic. Nowhere suitable in Stoke Heath. A site was eventually found in Avoncroft arts centre. This is two hundred yards from a public road. The staff of Avoncroft Arts Centre know it's there but few others do. Another example of RHA paying for amenities it will not benefit from.

The parish council recently decided to give prizes for the best seasonal lights. One for Stoke and one for Stoke Heath. Not a first and second for Stoke Parish. This is the sort of thing that Stoke Parish does in recognition that the two areas cannot 'gel'.

A careful balance to the considerations of changes that have happened over time, through population shifts or additional development for example, and that have led to a different community identity with historic traditions in its area. I have little comment to make on this point. I have looked at historical maps and can only find reference to a farm known as Forland's Farm and some cottages known as St Michael's Cottages. Neither of these would be suitable for the name of a new Parish Council. Stoke Heath would be the most suitable name.