

I would like to use this opportunity to put forward the following recommendations for changes to the composition of electoral wards currently under consideration by the Local Government Boundary Commission.

Mica Drive, a street situated in the Beechmount area, should be transferred from the Clonard ward into the Beechmount ward. Mica Drive is in the centre of Beechmount and the residents of Mica Drive identify with the area. Mica Drive is very much part of Beechmount and not Clonard and therefore should be part of the Beechmount ward.

Beechmount Gardens, Beechmount Close and Beechmount Grove also should be moved out of the Clonard ward into the Beechmount ward to keep the Beechmount area together in the same ward and avoiding the division of the Beechmount area. These streets are represented by the Beechmount Residents Association and people in these streets, who very distinctly identify with the Beechmount community, would not view themselves as part of the Clonard area.

Iris Close, Iris Grove, Iris Mews, Iris Walk and Iris Court should be transferred from the Beechmount ward to the Clonard ward. This area, known locally as 'new Iris', is part of the wider Iris/Cavendish and Cluain Mor areas, all of which are in the Clonard ward and are represented by Clonard Residents Association.

Beechmount Avenue, Braemar Street, Brighton Street, Broadway, Irwell Court, Islandbawn Drive, Islandbawn Street, Shiels Street, Thames Court, Thames Street and the houses along the front of the Falls Road (Mulholland Terrace) between St Marys University College and St Dominics Grammar School should all be moved from the Falls ward into the Beechmount ward.

These streets are part of the greater Beechmount area.

Beechmount Avenue is the main thoroughfare in the Beechmount area and many of the streets in the Beechmount ward run off Beechmount Avenue. There is no logic in Beechmount Avenue being placed in the Falls ward.

Braemar Street, Brighton Street, Broadway, Irwell Court, Islandbawn Drive, Islandbawn Street, Shiels Street, Thames Court, Thames Street and the houses along the front of the Falls Road between St Marys University College and St Dominics Grammar School are all part of the Beechmount/Iveagh community.

This part of the mid-Falls area is represented by the Beechmount Residents Association and the Iveagh Residents Association, two groups that work in

tandem with each other on issues affecting the Beechmount and Iveagh areas.

The Blackie River centre also works in all these streets as part of the greater Beechmount community.

The area of the Falls ward should begin at the corner of the Springfield Road as this would be the start of the lower end of the Falls area.

I would also like to take this opportunity to make the following recommendations in relation to the names of electoral wards.

I would ask that you consider the following ward names;

- Falls should become Ceantar na bhFal
- Clonard should become Cluain Ard
- Beechmount should become Ard na bhFea

Ward names should reflect the growing and vibrant Irish language community in west Belfast where there are many Irish language nursery schools, primary schools and an Irish medium secondary school. There are also Irish speaking areas including the Gaeltacht Quarter, (An Ceathru Gaeltachta), in my own area and the Shaws Road Gaeltacht. There are many Irish language groups, Irish language classes, Irish language businesses and thousands of Irish language speakers in west Belfast.

Many of the streets in west Belfast have bilingual street signage and many of the businesses have bilingual signage, provided by Belfast city council, and changing these ward names in west Belfast would be widely welcomed within the community. This is an opportunity for the Boundary Commission to make these changes.

The Irish language community in west Belfast is growing enormously and I would urge that the ward names reflect the Irish culture and identity of people in these wards.

Is mise le meas,

Sean Duffy,