

## BOUNDARY REVIEW OF THE BOROUGH OF KING'S LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK.

This paper is endorsed by members of the Brancaster Parish Council.

### **Present Structure.**

The Brancaster Ward consists of the parishes of Brancaster, Brancaster Staithe, Choseley, Thornham and Titchwell. Elizabeth Watson is the Borough Councillor.

The Saxon Shore Benefice consists of following parishes: Burnham Deepdale, Brancaster, Titchwell, Thornham, Holme next the Sea and Old Hunstanton.

### **King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Proposals.**

Under the proposed changes to be discussed at a Special Cabinet Meeting of the Borough on August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Brancaster Ward will be broken up and be subsumed into the Docking and Burnham Wards. The main purpose of this exercise is to reduce the number of Borough councillors by maximising the number of single member wards by establishing a relatively equal number of registered electors in each new ward.

The new Burnham Ward is to include Brancaster, Brancaster Staithe, Burnham Deepdale, Burnham Over Staithe, Burnham Market and North Creake.

The new Docking Ward is to include Titchwell, Thornham, Holme next the Sea, Choseley, Ringstead, Docking, Stanhoe and Bircham Newton.

### **Comment.**

The creation of these two new wards brings together settlements and parishes which have a diverse set of issues.

The coastal parishes which fall within the Saxon Shore Benefice have much in common. They are all coastal settlements and share the problems of coastal villages with a high number of second homes, a severe lack of affordable housing for residents, ageing populations, planning issues, shoreline management including flooding risks and tourism. The coastal area includes the North Norfolk Coast area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which does not apply to the inland areas that fall within these two new proposed wards. The coastal areas will benefit from a common approach to planning and other shared issues relating to environmental management including climate change. The range and location of local services along this coastal region cut across the new proposed boundary between the Burnham and Docking wards. As these issues grow in significance it will be helpful if a common approach can be understood and put forward by one Borough Councillor rather than by two who will inevitably be torn by the diversity of interests within the two new proposed wards.

The King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough appear to have decided to recommend these changes on the basis of the number of registered electors in each village. At the same time this ignores the fact that the issues along this coastal area relate to a far greater population, as much as twice the number, than on this register. This follows from the large number of second homes and the fact that local residents are having to move inland to meet their housing needs given the premium attached to house prices along the coastal strip. The crude criteria of the registered electors obfuscates the needs of a definable area which falls under the care and responsibility of the Borough. No benefits can be determined through splitting up the coastal nature of the Brancaster Ward. Indeed there would be benefits in including Holme next the Sea.

Proposal.

Following on from the above comments, the proposal for consideration is for the Brancaster Ward to remain (and possibly called the Saxon Shore Ward) and consist of: Brancaster, Brancaster Staithe, Burnham Deepdale, Choseley, Titchwell, Thornham, Holme next the Sea, Ringstead and Old Hunstanton. This blends together the settlements with common interests and issues along the coastal area and the Saxon Shore Benefice with Ringstead being included as a settlement of similar size to the others. The total population served will be more significant than that of the registered electors and this area would be better served by one Borough Councillor who would gain an intimate knowledge of the ward and its issues, needs and interactions with the relevant authorities such as the Environment Agency.

Edward Gould  
Chairman, Brancaster Parish Council

28.8.17