

**From:** Lynn Devereux  
**Sent:** 30 August 2017 12:00  
**To:** Ray Harding  
**Subject:** Boundary Commission Review - proposals for Holme-next-the-Sea

Ray Harding  
Chief Executive  
Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk

Dear Mr Harding,

Councillor Watson has asked me to let you have a copy of the Parish Council's submission to the Boundary Commission setting out our case for a change in the Ward Boundaries in order to allow Holme-next-the-Sea to be incorporated into Brancaster Ward (attached). You will see from this that our case is based on the shared interests and priorities (both current and future) of the low-lying rural coastal parishes – including those linked to physical planning and communications, the natural environment, climate change / rising sea level, management of tourism impacts, home ownership and direct community interactions.

It is difficult to see how Holme Parish or our immediate neighbours would benefit from a closer alignment with inland wards such as Bircham and Docking which have a very different outlook. Our case is forward-looking and based on some very practical considerations for the parish community. I hope therefore you will agree that the arguments are sound and that the Borough Council will offer its support.

I understand that you will be considering warding arrangements at a Special Council Meeting tomorrow evening and I would appreciate any feedback to inform the Parish Council's discussion of proposals at our forthcoming meeting next Tuesday 5 September.

Kind Regards  
Yours sincerely

Lynn Devereux  
Vice Chair – Holme-next-the-Sea Parish Council

**Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**Review of warding arrangements in Kings Lynn and West Norfolk**  
**Proposal from the Parish Council of Holme-next-the-Sea**

## **Introduction**

Holme-next-the-Sea is a rural Parish of around 200 residents, located on the north coast of Norfolk some 30kms north of Kings Lynn and 5 kms north-east of the seaside town of Hunstanton. The Parish currently falls within the Electoral Ward of Hunstanton but the Parish Council would like to propose the revision of the ward boundaries in order to accommodate a move to the neighbouring rural ward of Brancaster to the east. The main reasons for the proposed move are set out below.

## **Electoral Equality**

The inclusion of Holme in Brancaster Ward would help to improve the electoral equality balance for local voters by boosting the numbers registered in Brancaster and adjusting for planned growth in Hunstanton town. Hunstanton Ward will grow significantly in the near future as a result of new edge of town housing allocations (in excess of 300 new homes in the period 2016-2026) in the Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Site allocations and Development management Plan (SADMP). Part of this development is already underway and the associated marked changes in population and infrastructure will place increasing demands on the three Hunstanton Ward Councillors.

## **Shared Interests and Identities of Local Parishes**

Brancaster Ward comprises several coastal villages (Brancaster – Burnham Deepdale, Tichwell, Thornham and the adjacent hamlet of Choseley) linked by the A149 Coast Road and extending from the boundary with Holme in the west to the boundary with the Burnhams in the east.

Like Holme, all lie within the North Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty which in planning terms (NPPF, para 115) enjoys the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations throughout the AONB and both Holme and the Brancaster Ward parishes are characterised by the presence of European Protected sites /SSSI's. The special landscapes and environment shared by the parishes offer particular opportunities and impose common constraints. This very special, protected environment faces growing pressures from tourism which call for an equally special management approach. Again, this is in marked contrast to the situation throughout most of Hunstanton Ward, most notably

the town which is geared to catering for quite different forms of 'mass tourism'. In this and many other respects the rural parishes benefit from a common approach to planning for the future.

Like Holme, the Brancaster parishes are low-lying and together face the growing challenge posed by the Shoreline Management Plan in response to climate and coastal change. Adaptation and resilience to managed coastal retreat is emerging as the single biggest common consideration for the future of the communities along this coastal strip. In the absence of an earmarked investment pot, as sea level continues to rise, realignment of sand dunes takes place and coastal flooding becomes a more frequent occurrence, it is likely that the parishes will need to adopt a more formal, collaborative stance to identify resources to defend their coastline and negotiate agreements with the Environment Agency. This will require input from a committed Ward Councillor who can move the common cause up the political agenda. The situation in the rural parishes differs significantly from that around Hunstanton where the hard coastline / cliffs face a rather different type of threat from coastal erosion / undercutting and (unlike the soft, marshy coastline shared by the rural parishes to the east) responsibility for their management falls directly within the remit of the Borough Council.

The small, rural coastal communities also face the further challenges posed by the dominance of second homes (upwards of 50 per-cent) and an ageing population. These create issues ranging from seasonal employment and services viability through to pressures on health care and supporting services. None of the coastal parishes enjoys the luxury of a doctors' surgery and most residents depend upon the Burnhams health centre. For many years Holme Village Hall has provided the base for the shared Community Car Scheme which provides transport for residents in the coastal parishes needing assistance to access the surgery in Burnham Market. A prescription collection point has also been made available through the Farm Shop at Drove Orchards in Holme and this is also well-used by the residents of Thornham, Choseley and Titchwell. Holme in conjunction with Brancaster also operates a highly successful Oil Syndicate. Over the past 5 years this has increased its membership across the coastal villages, bringing increasing buying power and some very significant financial benefits to the largely oil dependent parishes.

For planning purposes, the largest settlements of Brancaster and Burnham Deepdale are designated as the Key Rural Service Centre. A range of local services is on offer here, with the next largest settlement of Thornham also offering a greater variety than the other smaller villages and hamlets. The employment and retail centre at Drove Orchards lies on the boundary between Holme and Thornham, serving both villages and the wider area. Holme and Thornham are currently discussing a possible collaborative approach to improved pedestrian access to this site.

Many of the social activities in the Brancaster Ward are stimulated by the local Churches. The Ward is served by The Saxon Shore benefice which is made up of the following Parishes:

Deepdale, Brancaster, Tichwell , Thornham, Holme-next-the-Sea and Old Hunstanton. These parishes share a Rector who participates actively across the community. They co-operate with one another not just in religious functions but across a very wide range of social activities. In this respect Holme-next-the-Sea would fit naturally into the Brancaster Ward, putting five of the six Saxon Shore Parishes within the Ward.

The recently built Village Hall at Thornham offers a particularly wide range of social, cultural and sporting activities including cinema and satellite theatre – generally open to surrounding parishes and very popular with Holme residents as well as those further along the coast.

### **Promoting effective local government**

The benefits of a wider common approach are already emerging as a result of the opportunities offered through the Localism Agenda. This demonstrates that interests are much more closely aligned within the coastal villages – Brancaster has shared its Neighbourhood Plan experience with Holme and the similarities between our rural, coastal communities means that it has been possible to pass the questionnaire survey developed for Holme NDP on to our neighbours in Thornham.

We have already alluded to the fact that the planned expansion of the urban area of Hunstanton will place increasing demands on the three Hunstanton Ward Councillors. Their available time is already devoted to the pressing issues associated with a growing town with economic and related social problems. The priorities for the town contrast sharply to those of the coastal villages as described above. Since May 2015, Holme Parish has benefited from less than two visits from a Ward Councillor. None has been able to participate in our evolving Neighbourhood Plan. In our view it would be more effective and efficient to share the support of a Ward Councillor whose focus is on the particular, common issues of the rural, coastal parishes.

**Holme-next-the-Sea Parish Council**

**10 August, 2017**