

South Gloucestershire**Personal Details:**

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Organisation Name: Oldbury on Severn Parish Council

Comment text:

LGBCE – CONSULTATION STATEMENT FROM OPC. The Oldbury on Severn Parish is in the Severn Ward of South Gloucestershire. In terms of the objectives of the LGBCE to 'adjust' wards for electoral voter equality the Severn Ward has a shortfall of 690 voters and will need to be 'balanced'. On this basis we recognise that an adjustment will be required and our desire is to remain within the Severn Ward for the following reasons. Our Ward is a Rural one and not Urban and this makes a large difference in the consideration of how one approaches rural issues. These being very different to those of an urban environment. We do not wish to have the application and 'management' of our Ward from an urban viewpoint. So far, with five rural parishes within our Ward, it has worked well. If we were to be moved to another ward with, predominant urban voters to 'top it up', then we fear that our interests will be drowned out by a far greater majority of larger town issues. In the future there is to be a new Power Station built at Oldbury and this would provide a large degree of added work and business to our community which would not be there if we were to be placed into another ward. The existing Power Station Authority has recognised the need to integrate with and help our rural community. This has been done via regular support funding made to differing groups within our Parish. Beneficiaries being the Community Shop, Primary School, Annual Fun Run & Fair as well as the Church and Chapel. Should we come under urban control this desire to help the parish community would disappear. Oldbury is on a flood plain and there is constant concern over excess water drainage impacting on us with a long record of flooding in our village and area. We are already contesting several build planning of large concentrations of houses on the boundaries of our parish which cause an added possibility of more water flowing down to our area. One third of the parish is in the riverbed of the River Severn and a lot of the parish is in the area where the Lower Severn Internal Drainage Board has responsibility for inland drainage conveying water out to the river at low tide. We have a need for affordable houses for younger people in our area which are constantly being under provided by builders of new housing. An urban control would not have the same concerns on this and the flooding issues as indeed is the case at present. In the last three years we have set up a Village Shop run by volunteers which has proven to not only be successful as a business venture but, more importantly, has drawn the village community more together. The shop has currently hosted five local children who are part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award. In the previous year we got recognition via the Plunkett Rural Community Co-operative Awards in "The Best Newcomer" category against competition from around the UK. We also were given a "Silver Fairtrade Business Award" from the Bristol & South West Fairtrade Organisation. All of the foregoing is due to the value of a rural community rather than an urban orientated one. This, we fear, would not occur if we were to be placed in an Urban Ward. Finally, it would, to us, make more sense to import a parish from the southern area of South Gloucestershire which also has the River Severn as a boundary. This would bring a degree of 'balance' to the Severn Ward in having several parishes with a river border.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded