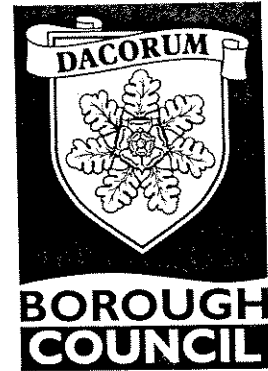


Received 07/09/06



The Secretary  
ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
LONDON SW1P 2HW

Cllr. Alan Anderson BSc CLP  
Kings Langley, Dacorum Borough Council  
& North Ward, KL Parish Council,

31st August 2006

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Electoral Review of Dacorum - Last Consultation Submission**

I would be grateful if the following detailed comments could be added to the enclosed complaint to form my submission for the last consultation of the review.

***Boxmoor / Apsley***

I was trying to explain that it was ironic that when the last review wound up the old ward of Hemel Hempstead South, it decided to put the moor that is Boxmoor in the Apsley ward, rather than the Boxmoor ward. The actual Boxmoor is not a part of Apsley, and I remain of the view that it should be taken out of the Apsley ward and put in the Boxmoor ward.

***Chaulden / Warners End***

Despite reconsultation, the Boundary Committee refused to take on board the fact that these two communities are very set apart, and therefore in my view should be kept separate.

***Central Ward***

The ward is currently central both with respect to the town, and the Gade valley. Moving it in the way proposed negates its existence, and is a key driver of the knock-on effect that would wreck the community identities all round Hemel Hempstead.

***Grovehill / Piccotts End***

I do not believe Piccotts End, as a small village, should be added to Grovehill across a large area of open countryside, because clearly the ward wouldn't have any synergy.

***Adeyfield East / Adeyfield West***

The Longlands boundary neatly splits Adeyfield, and is a clear and obvious boundary. It would in my view be unfair and confusing to move a chunk of electors east of the boundary to the west ward, in a petty attempt to resolve the numbers problem elsewhere in the town.

[ Continued overleaf ... / ]

### *Bennetts End / Leverstock Green*

We already have a problem in that a third of what is clearly Bennetts End is currently located in the Leverstock Green ward. To resolve this, and compromise with those residents who would argue they weren't in Bennetts End either, the Council, with widespread support, proposed a new ward between the two wards called "Tile Kiln".

The Boundary Committee dismissed the idea on the grounds that it had been developed for a different ratio of electors per councillor, even though it would work regardless of the two ratios. Instead, it proposed putting even more of Bennetts End in the Leverstock Green ward.

Having proposed putting one half of Bennetts End in the Leverstock Green ward, the Committee reconulted on putting the other half of Bennetts End in the Leverstock Green ward instead.

The Boundary Committee finally settled on a proposal that puts half of the main road through the middle of Bennetts End, Bennetts End Road, in the Leverstock Green ward.

I would therefore like the Commission to revert to the Council's proposal for a new ward.

### *Apsley / Cornerhall*

I object to merging these communities into one ward, because they are clearly separate, because it would breach the main artery road corridor in the south east of the town, and because it is the change that would make the most mess of the County Council divisions.

I haven't had the time to do it, but I believe those that have, haven't done enough analysis of the distribution of electors in the Apsley area to resolve the numbers problem.

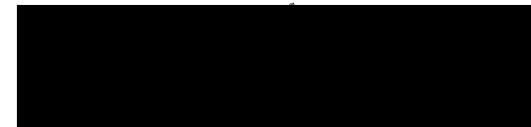
### *Tring Central*

The Committee misinterpreted what I was suggesting. I was trying to propose that the breach in the eastern boundary should be increased until the numbers balance, so that the very clear west boundary along Christchurch Road is retained. This way one would reduce the damage to the boundaries and the potential for confusion.

### *Aldbury & Wigginton*

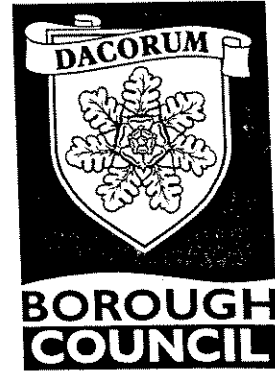
It is inconsistent for the Committee to recommend reducing electoral imbalances in Hemel Hempstead to the absolute minimum, wrecking nearly every community identity and boundary in the town, whilst backing down on the issue of merging Aldbury & Wigginton with Tring East, because it would destroy their community identity.

Yours Faithfully,



Cllr. Alan Anderson.

1791  
4/9/06



Mr Sam Younger  
Chairman  
ELECTORAL COMMISSION  
Trevelyan House  
Great Peter Street  
LONDON SW1P 2HW

Cllr. Alan Anderson BSc CLP  
Kings Langley, Dacorum Borough Council  
& North Ward, KL Parish Council,

cc Mr Peter Wardle, Chief Executive  
of the Electoral Commission  
The Secretary of the Electoral Commission

31st August 2006

Dear Mr Younger,

**Complaint re the Boundary Committee's Further Electoral Review (FER) of Dacorum**

In addition to taking part in the consultation at the last stage of the review, I am writing to make a formal complaint about the Boundary Committee's FER of Dacorum.

Far from simply failing to get my way, the review was an overt nonsense, producing recommendations which are demonstrably unjustified and damaging.

In determining the number of electors per councillor, the Committee:

- Said the comparison of this ratio with other councils would not be relevant, when their rules clearly state they are required to make the ratio as consistent as possible.
- Used grounds outside their remit to propose increasing the ratio, when it is already one of the highest. (The smallest political party's complaint about the Council's political management system is not, as far as I can see, in the Committee's rules as grounds to increase the ratio.)
- Having ruled complaints about increasing the ratio as irrelevant, interpreted the relative lack of objections as support for their proposal.

The Committee's irrational determination to increase the electors per councillor still higher causes the big problems when one tries to apply it to the fifteen wards in the Borough's main town, Hemel Hempstead. As everybody found with the review, it isn't possible to do this without considerable conflicts with the Committee's requirements to balance electors, to identify communities and to use clearly identifiable boundaries.

At the start of the review, the Borough Council proposed a solution that resolved the under representation caused by new developments, reduced the number of three member wards, and tidied some anomalies, whilst minimising the amount of change/disruption. The electoral variances broadly fell within the limits permitted, the community identities were improved, the boundaries were clearly identifiable, and the County Council divisions were unaffected.

But the Committee wasn't interested in the Council's approach, and in applying a higher,

[ Continued overleaf ... / ]

unworkable ratio of electors per councillor, developed a proposal that wrecks community identities all round Hemel Hempstead, and breaches their rules about boundaries.

Leaving aside the detail, but giving just two examples, one change involved taking a small village from an established ward and adding it to a strong suburban community the other side of a large tract of open countryside, and another change involved increasing the proportion of a community in the wrong, neighbouring ward from a third to a half.

Overall, the proposal involved weakening local representation, by increasing the number of three member wards, and wrecking Hemel Hempstead's County Council divisions. There is no way one can group the proposed wards in the town to create county divisions, and it would be spectacularly foolish, never mind against the Committee's rules, to prevent the County Council from having internal boundaries when we don't know if that council is to be abolished or not.

Having been told the Committee wasn't going to listen to arguments about the ratio of electors per councillor, the Council attempted a compromise that tried to apply the Committee's ratio whilst limiting the damage to communities and boundaries as much as possible. But, it doesn't matter where in Hemel Hempstead one applies the ratio, it has a knock-on effect, which works round the town until nearly every community identity and boundary is affected.

The Committee's two extraordinary consultations showed it had learnt little about the town's communities, because none of the options identified the relevant communities accurately.

In its final recommendations, the Committee again overlooked the Council's advice about Hemel Hempstead and its communities, and left its first proposal mostly unchanged. It also completely ignored my advice about the town's County Council divisions.

At the Parish Council level, Kings Langley didn't fair any better either. Its Parish Council is highly politicised, achieving election turnouts of very nearly 50%, but one of the wards has an electoral imbalance of 31%. First, the Committee agreed with the councillors enjoying the 31% advantage that the electoral imbalance was "Not a compelling case for change". Then, the Committee decided resolving electoral imbalances was not their business.

Throughout the review, the Committee:

- Misunderstood many of the points made, be it the advice about Hemel Hempstead's communities, or more specifically, my comment about a boundary in Tring.
- Used arguments that weren't relevant to dismiss opposing views, the best example of this being the Committee's dismissals of the Council's widely supported Tile Kiln proposal.
- Accused parties of not using arguments to justify their views, when they had, e.g. my reasoning for why my ward should be kept separate, or the Committee was trying to avoid embarrassment at having adopted a political party's proposal.
- Referred to their requirement to avoid breaching main artery road boundaries, and then proposed breaching a main artery road boundary, e.g. by merging Apsley & Cornerhall.

In summary, I believe the review has been so awful that it would not be too strong to describe it as farcical, and appeal to you to intervene in whatever way you can.

Making Apsley a two member ward and restarting the review after May's elections may be an option if there isn't time to make the Committee start again, I don't know.

But either way, please stop this review from wrecking the representation of Dacorum.

Yours Sincerely,



Cllr. Alan Anderson.