

To: The Secretary,
The Electoral Commission,
Trevelyan House,
Great Peter St.,
London SW1P 2HW

Received
AZK 21.06.06
21.06.06 13th June 2006

Re: Proposed boundary changes within North Herts. District Council.

Dear Sirs,

I understand that over the last year there has been a review carried out by the Boundary Committee, into the future electoral arrangements in North Hertfordshire. I am dismayed that there has been no public consultation around the proposed changes, and indeed have only recently been alerted by our ward councillors.

As a resident of a small hamlet in the rural ward of Hitchwood, it is clear that the proposed merging of three rural wards into one, will not provide the quality of representation at a very local level. One councillor cannot possibly provide the same service to the community, currently fulfilled by three councillors who have come to know 'their patch' over time.

Rural needs do vary from area to area, and the issues affecting Lilley are not necessarily those affecting Whitwell. This is currently reflected in our councillors being able to offer a degree of specialism, which they can contribute to their various roles within the council.

If local people do not enjoy local representation, it is likely that the turnout for elections will be further reduced, already acknowledged to be of major concern at every level of electoral representation. Dislocation and disaffection from the democratic process is contrary to the Government's expressed aim to bring everyone closer!

If this is an exercise to level numbers within each ward for purely bureaucratic demands, then you should remember that there are proposals to build a huge number of new homes within Hertfordshire, which would require further consideration in terms of representation.

I ask you to consider the points raised within this letter, and urge you to reconsider the proposal to merge three rural wards into one single ward covering a large tract of rural North Hertfordshire.

Yours sincerely,



Graham Ritchie Sarah Ritchie