

Received 13/6/06 & ack sent.

ELECTORAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL

Ladden Brook Ward - Section 147

Dear Sirs.

I was extremely disappointed in your conclusion to my request to amend the boundary between Iron Acton East and Village wards. In your introduction – Section 5 – you state :-

- reflects the identities and interests of local communities.
- secure effective and convenient local government.
- achieve equality of representation.

Firstly with (1) I must disagree with you in that you have NOT reflected the identity and interest of the local community.

With (2) you have moved the boundaries so far that I, as the current councillor, instead of having at least a one mile buffer zone all round my house, in fact find myself living in the next proposed Ward.

Lastly I cannot argue with (3) as the number of voters is spot on at zero %.

Ward Boundary.

The current boundary between the East and Village Wards in Wotton Rd is mainly hedges and field boundaries. I live in Wotton Rd, and therefore in the Village Ward, because my driveway exits onto Wotton Rd – my next door neighbour exits onto Chaingate Lane and is therefore in the East Ward. The boundary is the hedge/fence between our gardens across which we can talk and shake hands. I regard this division as unacceptable in rural areas when we have modern routes of communication which are far more acceptable and identifiable as divisions or barriers.

Identity.

The people of Wotton Rd, especially from Chaingate Lane northwards, are inclined to use the facilities of Rangeworthy (school, village hall and clubs etc) rather than having to cross the by pass into Iron Acton Village. There is no shop in either village centre and you have to go to the North Rd. Post Office/Shop, which is in the East Ward, for this facility. I would therefore say that the residents of Wotton Rd have more in common with the residents of Rangeworthy and the Iron Acton East Ward than Iron Acton village, and certainly no connection with Frampton Cotterell whatsoever.

Distance.

In my previous letters I pointed out that the furthest point in Wotton Rd was about 4 miles from Frampton Cotterell centre – not much nearer than Thornbury and about the same as Yate. There is therefore nothing to draw people to go to Frampton Cotterell from Wotton Rd that is not available in either of the major towns nearby.

Electoral Variance.

In your final recommendations you leave Ladden Brook Ward rising from 2795 to 2885 voters (equating to 0% going to –1% in 2008). If the 68 voters in Wotton Rd and the North side of the Iron Acton by pass were moved between Wards the approximate effect would be to change the voters to (2% going to 1% in 2008).

Voters on the Ground.

If the Ward is left in your recommended shape, the voters of Wotton Rd, apart from Muddedown and Acton Range Farms, all live close to the road itself. The shape is therefore rather like a pencil sticking out of the top of a circle, with the pencil being over a mile long. It is not a sensible shape for a Ward in any way or form because the rest of the area going round to the Latteridge Rd. has no inhabitants at all.

Conclusion.

I am therefore writing to you again and requesting that you review the boundary between these two wards so that they are more identifiable both on the ground and to the voters.

I again request that the 68 voters in Wotton Rd. and the North side of the Iron Acton by pass, are moved from the Village Ward to the East ward and thus leaving the by pass as the boundary.

As a secondary option, but still leaving some hedgerows as the boundary, you may wish to consider just moving the Northern length of the road, from the Chaingate Lane junction, including Muddedown Farm, into the East Ward. This would be about 40 voters.

I am after all, only asking you to change where people vote, to let them do it in an area in which they live and know, and not to alter any Parish boundaries.

I hope that you will be able to accede to my request.


Howard J.A.Gawler.
Member for Ladden Brook Ward.
South Gloucestershire Council.

June 8th 2006.