

Eleanor Gregory

From: Simon Rossiter [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 January 2010 15:07
To: Arion Lawrence
Cc: Richard Buck
Subject: Emailing: Electoral Review Central Bedfordshire
Attachments: Electoral Review Central Bedfordshire.doc

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached a representation regarding the proposed boundary changes for the Plantation ward in Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire.

Yours,

Simon Rossiter
Plantation-Heath and Reach Conservative Association

The Review Officer (Central Bedfordshire)
The Boundary Committee for England
Trevelyan House
Great Peter Street
London
SW1P 2HW

8th January 2010

Ref: Electoral Review of Central Bedfordshire

Dear Sirs,

I represent the current Plantation and Heath and Reach Ward Conservative Association. We are a local political group which supports the residents of the existing Plantation Ward which includes the village of Heath and Reach within South West Bedfordshire.

We have read with interest the documents regarding the proposal to create a new ward pattern in Leighton Buzzard and its surrounding villages and note that there has been a recommendation to remove Heath and Reach from the current Plantation Ward and place it out of the main town wards in a village grouping instead.

I note from your letter to Mr Richard Carr on the 27th October 2009 that you have a paragraph which is headed "Creating a Ward pattern". This states that these wards should "reflect community identities and interests and would seek to use strong, easily identifiable boundaries. We as a committee wholly agree with this statement.

Heath and Reach although holding a village status is in no way separated from Leighton Buzzard either physically or environmentally. The Heath Road (The C 194) runs through the Plantation ward and continues through Heath and Reach to the A5 without a break in housing, thus there is no strong boundary between the two. The residents of both Plantation and Heath and Reach use the schools, facilities and parks which adjoin both areas and all share a common environmental program with the shared recycling centre and waste disposal services. The Leighton Buzzard Golf Club for instance has its club house in Plantation Road, Leighton Buzzard yet the course bisects Heath and Reach parish. We consider Heath and Reach to wholly be a part of this ward in every sense.

During a previous review of boundaries in 2004 the conclusion was drawn that Heath and Reach should remain as part of the main body of Leighton Buzzard's ward pattern and nothing has changed since then. The autonomy of the Parish Council has worked successfully since 2004 and has not been overrun by the Town Councils will and in this case I believe the Parish Council have written to you to express their desire to remain in the Plantation Ward also.

We fully realise the need to reduce the size of the number of council members but we feel there are many alternatives the proposed grouping of Plantation, Planets and part of Central Leighton Buzzard. With a population of only 1300 in Heath and Reach a grouping which includes Planets, Plantation and Heath and Reach would be both geographically and socially more coherent.

From the political perspective to maintain consistent representation this would also make sense as by moving Heath and Reach into a group as suggested to include Woburn, Ridgmont etc this would also change the boundary for the South West Bedfordshire Parliamentary Ward into Mid Bedfordshire thus changing the residents elected MP.

In conclusion, we would respectfully like to request that Heath and Reach is not removed from the Plantation Ward pattern and that an alternative grouping is considered where the long and amicable links between the residents of Leighton Buzzard and Heath and Reach are allowed to continue.

Yours sincerely,

Simon Rossiter
Chairman
Plantation- Heath and Reach Conservative Association

