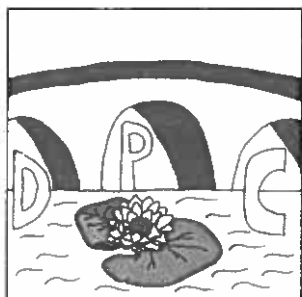


DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL



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9 August 2011

Review Officer
Hart Review
The Local Government Boundary Commission for England
Layden House
76–86 Turnmill Street
London EC1M 5LG

Dear Sir / Madam

Thank you for your letter of 19 July 2011 alerting Dogmersfield Parish Council to the Boundary Commission's draft recommendations for Hart District Council's electoral arrangements.

Dogmersfield Parish Council has studied the Commission's proposals and supports them as they impact the Parish of Dogmersfield.

The Parish Council was deeply concerned at Hart District Council's earlier recommendations which included the Parish of Dogmersfield within its "Ward E". The residents of rural Dogmersfield most certainly do not identify themselves with the urban areas of Zebon Copse or the edge of town housing estates of the Queen Elizabeth Barracks and Hitches Lane. Their affinities both past and present are with their neighbouring communities of Hartley Wintney, Crondall, Odiham and Winchfield.

The Boundary Commission's recommendations are consequently fully attuned with the desires of the local community. We spell out our reasons why we support the Commission's recommendations in the following paragraphs.

Dogmersfield Parish Council believes that it must remain distinct from the urban area based on Fleet in order to retain its identity. The community in Dogmersfield has a strong desire to retain its rural identity as evidenced by the Parish Plan.¹

The Parish is under threat from creeping urbanisation, most recently demonstrated by the Edenbrook development on Hitches Lane and the threat of substantial development at Grove Farm now being proposed by Hart

¹ A draft of the Parish Plan is available at
<http://www.dogmersfieldparish.co.uk/DOGMERSFIELD%20PARISH%20PLAN%202009%2001%2014.pdf>.

DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

District Council as part of its Local Development Framework.² To create a ward that links Dogmersfield with these developments is tantamount to acknowledging that in the near to medium future Dogmersfield will be swallowed up by the expansion of Fleet.

The Parish Council welcomes and supports the Boundary Commission's recommendation that Dogmersfield should remain linked with other rural communities and not with the urban areas of Fleet. It supports the logic that puts the Edenbrook development at Hitches Lane within the proposed Fleet West ward.

Other arguments for the continuation of an identity for Dogmersfield that is distinct from that of Fleet include the following:

- Prior to 1974, the Parish of Dogmersfield was part of Hartley Wintney Rural District Council. It was never part of the Fleet Urban District Council. The River Hart is an acknowledged boundary.
- The post code (RG27) used by Dogmersfield residents is in a completely different area to that used by Fleet and Crookham Village residents (GU).
- The ecclesiastical parish of Dogmersfield is served, as is Winchfield, by the Vicar who is based in Hartley Wintney. A monthly "Contact" magazine links Dogmersfield residents to Hartley Wintney; not to Fleet.
- Dogmersfield residents can register with the Odiham Health Centre and many do, rather than register in Fleet.
- It has long been a bone of contention by some Dogmersfield residents that the Parish of Dogmersfield is not within the catchment area of Robert May's school in Odiham.

The remaining issue for the Parish Council is whether inclusion within a three-member Odiham ward makes more sense than inclusion within a three-member Hartley Wintney ward.

There are a number of shared interests between the adjacent parishes of Winchfield and Dogmersfield and both face similar issues. So it would be advantageous to both parishes if we shared the same District representatives.

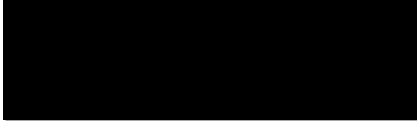
On balance Dogmersfield Parish Council would prefer to be linked to Hartley Wintney rather than Odiham but we have no objections to the proposed link with Odiham and will be content with the Commission's final judgement on this issue.

² See <http://www.hart.gov.uk/index/top-planning/planning-policy/planning-policy-ldf-consultation-summer-2011.htm>.

DOGMERSFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

I hope that this letter has been of assistance. Please get in touch if you have any queries.

Yours faithfully



Christine Toms
Parish Clerk
Dogmersfield Parish Council