

**Mrs Sally Marks**  
**Surrey County Councillor – Caterham Valley Division.**

22<sup>nd</sup> March, 2011.

The Review Officer (Surrey)  
Layden House  
76-86 Turnmill Street  
London EC1M 5LG

Dear Sirs,

**The Local Government Boundary Commission for England**  
**- Review for Surrey.**

I am the current County Councillor for the Division of Caterham Valley in the District of Tandridge. I have been in this role for nearly ten years and have lived in the area for over twenty years. I thus know the area very well

I am disappointed that Surrey County Council has decided that the current Division of Caterham Valley should be cut and that its most rural village be moved to the neighbouring Division – without any consultation with the local communities and residents. I am further frustrated that Surrey County Council ignored my pleas that this should not happen. The Parish at issue is that of Woldingham. This is a small, very rural village perched the other side of a deep valley from Warlingham (the centre of the Division that it might be moved to). Woldingham sits on the top of the North Downs escarpment, surrounded by Green Belt, farmland and wooded hillsides. It has no community link with the Division of Warlingham which is essentially an urban village – albeit the edge of the urban fringe of London and suburbia. The residents of Woldingham gravitate towards either Caterham – a rural town to its south western side or to Oxted to its southern side. They do not tend to travel north into the urban or suburban areas. There is no link between the Parish councils or Woldingham and Warlingham.

Indeed there is a better link between the Parish Council of Woldingham and that of the Caterham Valley Parish Council especially as both have spearheaded Planning reviews because of very special planning issues which are relevant to both and which have both now been incorporated into the District Council planning guidance.

Residents of Woldingham tend to use the Doctors' surgeries in Caterham and use the local community hospital in Caterham. Otherwise they go down into Oxted – I know of no-one who uses a Doctors' surgery in Warlingham.

The shops and supermarkets in Caterham – and Oxted - are the preference of Woldingham residents. Rarely do I hear of neighbours using the only supermarket in Warlingham. Since this is a rural community a Veterinary Surgeon is much used and the Caterham practice is the one of choice – or maybe one in Oxted. There are no leisure activities in Warlingham which attract residents of Woldingham; instead the swimming pools of both Caterham and Oxted are used by many as are the fitness centres. The small theatre in Caterham has many supporters and members from Woldingham.

**Woldingham remains in the catchment area for secondary schools in Caterham and Oxted NOT Warlingham. This is very important to residents. The local Independent School for both Boys and Girls (from 3 – 18) is in Caterham.**

The village of Woldingham prides itself as being a discrete village away from the urban fringe.

I do not believe that the topography of the land lends itself to promote its removal from its current Division to its neighbouring one.

Currently the electorate of Caterham Valley Division is absolutely on the average for the County. If it were to lose Woldingham it would be at a much greater variance from the average than necessary. I do not see the point of meddling in the numbers when surely it is people that count – let alone community cohesion. Surely 'Localism' means that local people should be heard and communities be allowed to decide for themselves about things that affect them.

It should also be pointed out that in a set of guidance notes sent by your Commission to Surrey County Council it clearly states that four criteria for boundaries are advised; a) Good Electoral Equality, b) Community Identity, c) Easily Identifiable Boundaries and d) Support from local residents, parish and town councils. Surrey's official response only ticks one of those boxes – that of 'good' electoral equality. To keep the status quo ticks three of the boxes. Surely this should count for more than just the numbers game? The Woldingham Parish Council is very against being moved into another Division – as are, I believe, the Woldingham Association (a residents association formed for many decades and which campaigns tirelessly to protect the rural nature of the village.)

I ask the Commission, therefore to reject Surrey County Council's view that Woldingham should be removed into another Division and act to represent and reflect the views of its residents and keep it in the Division of Caterham Valley.

Yours faithfully,

Sally Marks (Mrs)  
Surrey County Councillor – Caterham Valley Division.