From: Lower Kingswood RA[redacted]
Sent: 01 April 2011 17:30
To: Reviews@
Subject: Electoral Review - Surrey County Council

Dear Sir/Madam

A couple of days back we were forwarded a copy of the response of our County Council to the review of electoral divisions and, given that the deadline for initial comments/responses is only a couple of days away, I have been asked by our Residents' Association Committee to lodge our objections to the proposals to "move" Lower Kingswood from the existing 'Banstead South' division to the proposed new 'Merstham & Banstead South' division.

Our objections are on the following grounds:

(a) Firstly, an examination of the County Council's response makes no mention whatsoever of Lower Kingswood. The only way in which the "move" can be deduced is by the reference to Chipstead Lane/Hogcross Lane forming the boundary between the proposed new divisions of 'Tadworth, Walton & Kingswood' and 'Merstham & Banstead South'.

(b) There are in excess of 1,100 households in Lower Kingswood - including the outlying areas of Margery, Mogador etc. - with a variety of local community/voluntary groups, churches, school, shops etc. Our Residents' Association publishes a quarterly newsletter (which is distributed free to all households) and maintains the local community website. The largest local employer is Fidelity Investments based in Millfield Lane - on the site of what used to be the 'Kingswood Press'.

(c) The County Council's response mentions Chipstead Lane/Hogcross Lane as being a "main road" joining the east & west of the Borough (of Reigate & Banstead). We can only assume that those responsible for drafting this response have never driven down the narrow winding "lane" that is Chipstead Lane/Hogcross Lane (beyond Millfield Lane). Other than being the main access route for Fidelity employees travelling by car or coach - it is little more than a cut through towards Chipstead.

(d) The clearest east/west demarcation is, in our view, along the line of the North Downs escarpment - which coincides with the route of the M25; junction 8 (Reigate Hill) of the M25 is about a mile south from the centre of Lower Kingswood. This geographic separation has always served to divide the "north" of the Borough from the "south".

(e) Historically this part of the north of the Borough has formed part of the Ecclesiastical Parish of Ewell and the (detached) Liberty of Kingswood. Kingswood Liberty was bounded on the west & north by Banstead, on the east by Chipstead & Gatton and on the south by Reigate. The Ewell Parochial Trusts still exist for charitable purposes. Lower Kingswood also forms one of the areas covered by the Banstead History Centre - based in Banstead Library; this is run in association with the County Council.

(f) From the point of view of public transport, the buses serving Lower Kingswood only run in a north/south direction - northbound to Epsom or Sutton and southbound to Redhill - there is no way of getting to such areas as Merstham without a change of bus. The nearest railway stations are at Kingswood or Tadworth.

Please let me know if there is any further information that you require.

Yours faithfully

Robert Brown - Secretary

Lower Kingswood Residents' Association

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