

## Buckinghamshire Council

### Personal Details:

**Name:** Nick Southworth

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**Organisation Name:**

### Comment text:

The Chiltern Ridges Ward as a proposal fails a number of obvious tests for viability: 1. It fails (almost) the Boundary Commission's own stated desire not to have wards which 'donut' other wards, in this case Chiltern Ridges would almost entirely encircle the town of Chesham. 2. Paragraph 43 of the Draft Report states its aim is "Providing for effective and convenient local government". The Chiltern Ridges Ward will have one councillor covering a large and rural ward which incorporates (I estimate) over 10 parish councils. The size of this ward, and the number of sub-ordinate councils makes it completely unwieldy to effectively cover and to represent, especially as one Councillor. No Councillor will be able to effectively cover this large an area solo, and the residents will suffer in the quality of representation and attention that they receive. It is common for Bucks Councillors to seek to also attend where possible Parish Council meetings to ensure issues are picked up quickly and there is good communication between levels of local government, no councillor can practically attend the meetings of 10 different Parish Councils as well as their own, it is almost impossible and so the villages will suffer. It therefore again fails the BC's own stated aim to provide 'effective and convenient' local government, being neither for councillor or resident alike. 3. Paragraph 43 of the Draft Report states that a consideration was "Reflecting community interests and identities", the proposed boundaries are completely contrary to this. The villages of Ashley Green through to Chenies have little to nothing (identity wise or indeed geographically) in common with those of the Lee or South Heath, and even between them their identities vary significantly, defined by their proximity to their different larger spheres of influence in centres like Chesham, Amersham, Little Chalfont or Great Missenden. It feels like all of these villages have been simply lumped together to make up the numbers, there is no coherence to it. Given that their spheres of influence are very different and are in part defined by the influence of their larger towns, the villages would be better incorporated with their nearest towns, the obvious benefits are: 1. They will have greater representation as part of a multi-member ward as there are more resources (in terms of councillors) available to make sure their concerns are not ignored or simply left unaddressed due to their proposed single councillor not having the capacity to deal with all of the issues arising. 2. As villages on the outskirts of various larger towns, they are on the front line of future development decisions that may involve towns expanding into the periphery around them. Having representation that also covers the towns means that they will have a better voice in any debate that takes place around the issue of future development pressures and councillors will have to better balance the competing concerns of rural and urban. 3. The community identities of these areas mean this ward should clearly be split and form part of a number of other wards, with the various villages forming a part of their nearest sphere of influence (i.e. Ley Hill, Chenies and Flaunden to little chalfont/Chesham South, ashley green, Hawridge, Cholesbury, Bellingdon, Chartridge to Chesham North, South Heath to Amersham and Swan Bottom to the Missendens/Wendover. There are the towns to which the respectively gravitate, and it makes logical sense for them to form a part of the same.

### Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded

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My comments on this Ward (Chesham North) are largely driven by the proposal in the Chiltern Ridges Ward which is completely incoherent and inconsistent with the stated aims of the Boundary Commission. If you want a Chesham North seat, it would be better to make it Chesham North and Rural as a three seat ward including the villages of Ashley Green, Whelpley Hill, Bellingdon, Hawridge, Cholesbury etc and the other villages around north Chesham (as Chesham is their historic and current gravitational pull). This would constitute a c. 12k voter seat and so would sit more comfortably with three councillors, this would also deal with the issue of the Chiltern Ridges seat which on its own would be almost unworkable in practice.

### Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded