

## Mansfield, Simon

---

**From:** chair@headley-pc.gov.uk  
**Sent:** 03 December 2021 11:59  
**To:** reviews  
**Cc:** 'Tracy Hamer Parish Clerk'  
**Subject:** Mole Valley DC boundary review  
**Attachments:** HPC submission (2).docx

**Categories:** Submissions, Simon

Please find attached the submission from Headley Parish Council

Regards

**David Preedy**

**Chair, Headley Parish Council**



*This e-mail and any files attached with it are confidential and intended solely for the individual(s) or entity to whom they are addressed. If you are not the intended recipient, be advised that you have received the e-mail in error and that any use, distribution, forwarding, printing or copying of this e-mail is strictly prohibited.*

*While this e-mail has been scanned for viruses, recipients are recommended to carry out their own virus check on any attachments.*

## Mole Valley District Council boundary review

### Headley Parish Council (HPC) submission to LGBCE

This submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England was agreed at the meeting of Headley Parish Council on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

#### Background

Headley is a small village at the top of the North Downs to the South-East of Leatherhead. The current population of about 450 electors lives in about 250 houses. The village comprises a number of smaller settlements linked by a network of footpaths.

The village includes 64 houses that acted until 2018 as married quarters for the staff working at the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre (DMRC) at Headley Court. Headley Court is awaiting redevelopment with an anticipated significant residential element, which is partially included in the 2027 estimates used for this boundary review.

The heart of the village on Church Lane includes the Village Hall, a shop/tea-room, the pub and the church. Pre-pandemic a number of activities took place including a Women's Institute, Gardening Club, Computer Club and annual Flower Show. During the pandemic, the village pulled together as a community; the shop extended its range of food supplies and a mutual help organisation arranged prescription collections and phone calls to vulnerable people.

There is also a very large equestrian community with stabling for more than 500 horses in Headley and the nearby area. Some are racehorse stables linked to the nearby Epsom Downs, but many are for livery or private leisure use. The Headley Horse-Riders Association has historically raised funds to create permissive horse margins to improve off-road connectivity. However there remain many routes where horse-riders are forced onto the local roads.

Whilst the village has a limited bus service (2-hourly during working hours except Sundays) most households are reliant on cars for most journeys. The location at the top of the North Downs is a disincentive to cycle for functional journeys and the footpath network does not link well to the nearby larger towns of Ashted and Leatherhead. The roads in Headley are all designated as Unsuitable for HGVs and comprise narrow lanes with various pinch points. Only at the centre of the village and near Headley Court are there any pavements. Roads are unlit apart from in the immediate vicinity of Headley Court. Following recent re-surfacing Surrey Highways decided not to paint white lines down the centre of the lanes.

Especially at weekends, the roads are widely used by leisure cyclists. Sustrans route 22 goes through the village and many sports cyclists use the popular Zig-zag climb at Box Hill and descend through Headley – often at speed.

The village itself has limited sports facilities – the cricket pitch is a local landmark near the Heath and serves a local club and the City of Freemans School from Ashted; a clay-pigeon shoot is very active every other Saturday and part of Tyrrells Wood Golf course is within the village. There used to be a football pitch at Headley Court but this has now been abandoned.

The village is washed over by the Green Belt which restricts development and residential extensions. It is on the edge of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and the Area of Great Landscape Value; in the forthcoming AONB boundary review, proposals are expected to extend the AONB to cover more of the village, including Oyster Wood which provides the skyline visible from much of London.

The village is surrounded by conservation areas:

- To the South-West, Headley Heath is owned by the National Trust whose estate extends to the Box Hill viewpoint; the car park in the village is especially popular with dog walkers from neighbouring towns;
- To the West, Nower Wood is an educational centre run by Surrey Wildlife Trust;
- To the North-East, the Woodland Trust has recently established its Centenary Wood which includes memorials for the First World War.

### Community Links

Politically the village is part of a single-member ward with the neighbouring village of Box Hill; historically it has also formed part of a larger ward with Mickleham and Westhumble.

Residents see themselves very much as a rural community and many of the new residents who have moved into the previous married quarters at Headley Court have told us they moved here because they want to be part of a smaller rural village. One of the recognised characteristics of Headley is that almost all houses look out directly over open countryside either at the front or rear.

Headley shares boundaries with 4 other communities in Mole Valley – Box Hill, Mickleham, Ashted and Leatherhead.

The strongest links are undoubtedly with Box Hill village. The two villages share a range of common interests:

- geographic location at the top of the North Downs;
- dependence on the 21 bus service;
- their churches are linked (along with Walton-on-the-Hill) and served by shared clergy;
- many residents use the neighbouring village's shop and/or pub; Headley residents often rely on the Post Office at Box Hill;
- the National Trust is a major landowner in both villages, which can be directly affected by its policies and decisions, such as the licensing of cycling events using the Zig-zag;
- There are a variety of shared highways concerns: as well as Headley Common Road which links the two villages, residents tend to use the same roads to reach other communities; notably they share concerns about the dangerous junction at the top of Pebblecombe Hill for traffic heading towards Reigate or Dorking; there are shared concerns about pedestrian & equestrian safety and the impact of high levels of cycling;
- two of the properties within the HPC boundary – Keepers Planting and North Lodge – can only be accessed from Box Hill.

The links with Mickleham are somewhat weaker:

- Lodge Bottom Lane provides a direct road link which is used by many cycling events, including the twice-yearly Ball-buster;

- Both see themselves and rural communities with Parish Councils;
- Both contain a small number of affordable homes;
- At times when Headley Common Road may be shut, Mickleham provides an alternative shop and post office;
- The High Ashurst outdoor centre straddles the boundary between the two villages.

Ashtead and Leatherhead have few obvious common interests. From the perspective of Headley residents they are largely seen, along with Epsom, as convenient destinations with a wider range of shopping, entertainment and restaurants. Ashtead station is a convenient place with parking to catch a train.

### Recommendations for warding

Headley's priorities for creating new wards are as follows:

1. Headley should not be split between District Council wards:
  - the number of residents in Headley is too small for it to be practical to create wards on HPC;
2. Headley should continue in the same ward as Box Hill:
  - Both communities are happy for the current situation to continue;
  - It is interesting to note that recent councillors have included Conservatives and Liberal Democrats and residents of both villages.
3. Headley should be linked to other rural communities;
  - If Headley were linked to either Ashtead or Leatherhead in a 3-member ward, the elected councillors are likely to represent the dominant urban interests and the rural interests of our community would take second priority;
  - The numbers indicate that the Northern urban areas of Bookham, Fetcham, Leatherhead and Ashtead provide a good fit to seven 3-member wards with their existing boundaries.
4. If the LGBCE insists that all wards must comprise 3 councillors, then the most natural fit would be to link the current Box Hill & Headley ward with Brockham, Betchworth and Buckland.
  - This would link 5 rural communities, 4 of which have Parish Councils;
  - This would be a good numerical match for a 3-member ward;
  - We understand that all 5 communities would accept this warding pattern;
  - However we understand that this would provide problems for the communities of Mickleham and Westhumble.
5. If the LGBCE decides that the community interests outweigh the desirability of 3-member wards, then we would support the creation of two 2-member wards for the North-East rural area of Mole Valley, i.e. to combine Box Hill & Headley with Mickleham, Pixham & Westhumble, and to retain the current 2-member ward of Brockham, Betchworth & Buckland:
  - This is the only warding pattern we have seen that meets the preferences of all communities in the area to have a rural perspective;
  - It reduces the geographical extent of the area that would be created by a 3-member ward in a rural area.

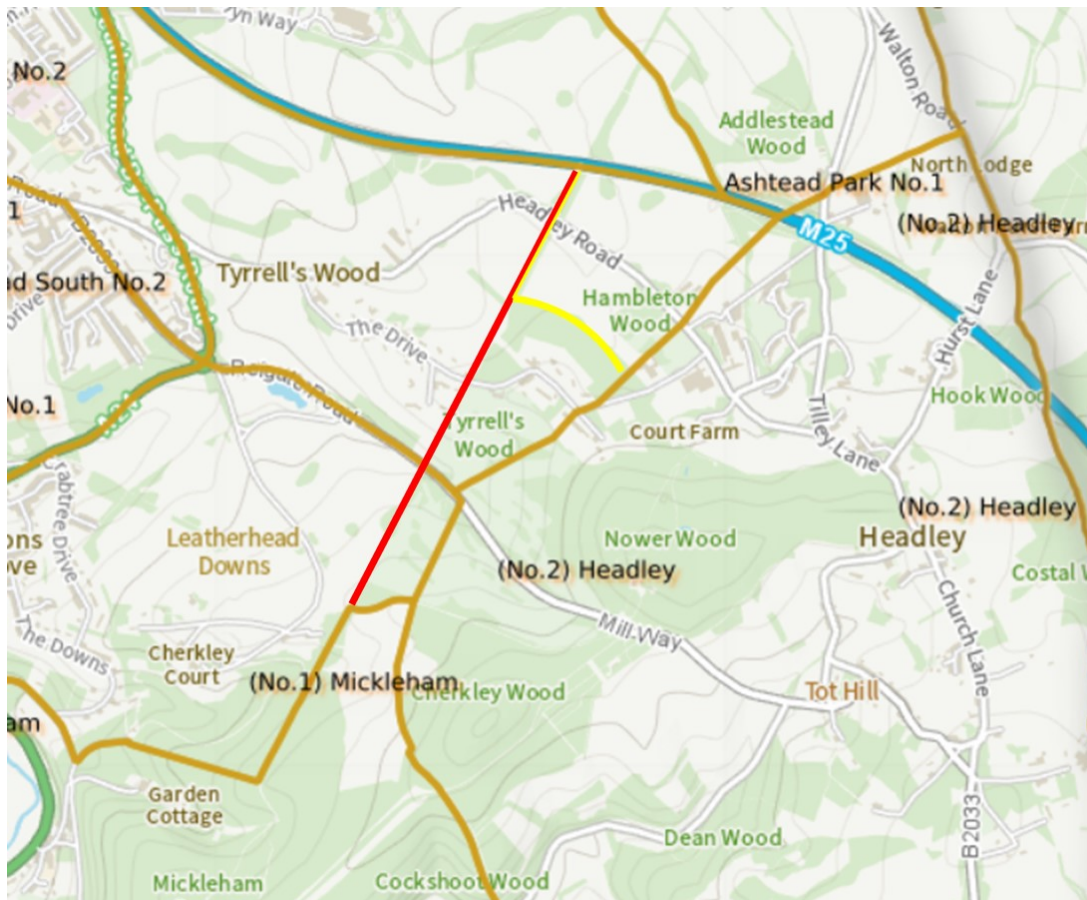
6. Headley would be opposed to the creation of a 3-member ward which links us to Wotton or Abinger parishes because of the large geographical spread that would be very difficult for a councillor from Headley to cover.

### Request for detailed boundary change

The historical HPC boundary currently crosses the Headley Court estate. The only practical effect has been that three properties in The Drive (Tyrrells Wood) are included in Headley.

The current (deferred) application for residential development at Headley Court proposes 70 new houses of which about 20 would be in Leatherhead South. However these would be accessible solely from Headley. It would seem highly appropriate to ensure that this entire development be served by the same Councillor(s), so we are proposing a minor change to the boundary to include a small (unparished) area currently within Leatherhead South be transferred to whatever ward includes Headley.

The following map shows two ways this could be achieved:



- The yellow line shows a minimal change that would only transfer the affected new properties in Headley Court; from the North it follows Stane Street (Leatherhead footpath 118) and then branches East along Leatherhead FP 55 until it meets the HPC boundary. This change would ensure that all new dwellings in the Headley Court redevelopment would lie within the same ward.
- The red line shows a somewhat larger change that simply follows Stane Street (FP 118) until it reaches the boundary of Mickleham PC. This has the advantage of following a clearly-defined

boundary (the 2000-year old roman road). Although it transfers quite a large area, it would only transfer 14 current properties in The Drive (including the Tyrrells Wood Golf Clubhouse).

To be clear this proposal is only to create a new polling district. It does not represent a change in the HPC boundary, although it would make it easier if HPC subsequently wishes to consult the affected residents about whether they would support a change of the HPC boundary.

HPC asks the LGBCE to give serious consideration to this proposal whatever warding pattern is decided.