

Maidstone Borough Council

Personal Details:

Name:

[REDACTED]

E-mail:

[REDACTED]

Postcode:

[REDACTED]

Organisation Name:

Comment text:

Please find below my personal response to the Boundary Commission Consultation for Maidstone. My comments focus on the impacts of any changes to the existing Ward Area for Harrietsham and Lenham, which is the area in which I live and work. I am very concerned and object to the Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) proposals for the current Harrietsham and Lenham Ward. Lenham is a particularly close rural community, linked by its residents, community organisations, businesses, infrastructure (including schools, medical practices, and transport networks) and the Lenham Neighbourhood Plan 2021 – 2031. I therefore don't agree with MBC's proposal to place a Ward Boundary through the middle of the Lenham parish and village settlement boundary along the railway line. This would clearly cut through our existing community, where significant new and allocated development sites lie on the South side of the Railway (some already built and occupied and not shown on MBC's map), as well as the existing Parish communities of Sandway, Lenham Heath and Platts Heath. The people that live here use Lenham shops, schools, doctors, etc - how could they be placed in a ward for Headcraze whose facilities are 6 miles away! The Boundary Commission's criteria to maintain "the need to reflect local community identities and interests, and provide for effective and convenient local government" needs to be upheld and this MBC proposal to cut our rural community in half should not take place. This proposal would clearly dilute the collective democratic voice of our community and damage the everyday functioning of our existing community structure, including the role of both the Lenham and Harrietsham Parish Councils which mirror the existing Harrietsham and Lenham Ward Boundary. In the first instance, I believe the ward boundary for Harrietsham and Lenham should remain as it is, lots of development is planned in both villages and the increase in electorate numbers should be taken in to account and reviewed as part of this boundary review process. As an alternative and as has been suggested by Lenham Parish Council, I would support a new boundary for the existing Harrietsham and Lenham Ward which includes the current ward area as well as parts of the current North Downs Ward - the parishes of Wormshill, Frinsted, Otterden and Wichling. These other rural communities are closely linked to Lenham and Harrietsham, geographically, environmentally (through the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), through shared infrastructure (including schools, medical practices, and transport networks) and local employment areas.

Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded