

## Felbridge District Councillor- Boundary Review Consultation

In regards as to what is best for Felbridge, my position has not changed from my previous argument. Felbridge has been used to benefitting from a local councillor living in the village for many years and because it is on the district boundary, Felbridge is best suited to remain as a single-councillor ward.

### **Electoral equality**

I would first like to discuss numbers and then physical circumstances.

Felbridge was identified as having the biggest residents-to-councillor ratio in Tandridge and, although that is accepted, predictions for the future are not. We are currently in quite an unstable situation when, as yet, we do not have a district plan, which could lead to massive changes all over the district.

We also have the proposed very real prospect of 750 houses being built over the border, which will affect demand and desire to live in Felbridge.

Gatwick are still working on their third run-way plans, which, depending on the outcome, will increase road and air traffic in the area.

Felbridge as a residential village is fairly full up, excepting green belt, so new developments are likely to be infill and rebuilds.

My attention was recently drawn to a planning proposal in a nearby village regarding 110 houses in one application. Although this has yet to be determined, if passed, it would, in one swoop, represent the entire increase for that area, just illustrating how quickly things might change to alter the balance.

I have found that Felbridge, as a ward, is manageable because in a number of days and weeks I can walk around the entire village to access every property. I am afraid that I could not say that about Dormansland because apart from in the main village, the homes are scattered over a large area. It must need two councillors to physically access those residents not in the main village. Not everyone has internet and there is no substitute for meeting electors in person, listening to them and building trust.

It is relevant to say that some residents in Felbridge have already decided never to participate in the electoral process again because they felt their voices were ignored regarding the Mid Sussex housing developments which has caused a detrimental effect on their day-to-day lives and well-being.

## **Community identity**

Most Felbridge children attend Felbridge Primary School. Some are able to walk there. After that, the nearest option would be Imberhorne School, which can be accessed on foot by some.

Dormansland also has a Primary School in the village. The remote location means that any senior school needs to be accessed using some form of transport. Sackville is the nearest and some may opt for Oxted School instead.

I drove up to Dormansland village last week for the first time in 38 years and sat outside the post office. It is a lovely village with some amazing views and nice people. We do not have a post office in Felbridge but the remote location of Dormansland must warrant the need for one. Felbridge residents travel into East Grinstead to use the post office there.

It is a minimum of 5.1 miles to Dormansland via East Grinstead or 6.1 Miles via Lingfield. If there are roadworks in Dormansland people in Felbridge may not even know about it. If there are roadworks in Felbridge everyone travelling on the A22/A264 will be affected.

Felbridge has bowling, ballet, cricket, tennis, scouts, football, Felbridge (horse) showground, the Star Pub, the village shop, the village Hall, Hedgecourt Lake, St John's Church and many other groups and activities. (I have no idea which activities go on in Dormansland).

## **Effective and Convenient local government**

The only way that Felbridge could reduce the number of electorates would be to trim some electoral roads off around the north edges, near West Park Road, Effingham or close to Lingfield but as those residents consider themselves to be Felbridge and have been for a long time, I would be reluctant to do this because they are a valuable part of Felbridge and unity and cohesion would be destroyed.

Before lock-down I used to be Head Gymnastic's Coach for East Grinstead's Sports' Centre and a Primary Teacher in Surrey and Sussex before 2016. I do know a few people from all over the place so perhaps I know a few in Dormansland but they may have moved on since then.

Both Felbridge and Dormansland have mostly Conservative and Independent voters in fairly equal numbers. At present, Dormansland and Felcourt have two

Councillors that are a part of the minority leading Residents' Group at Tandridge and Felbridge has myself as an Independent Councillor in the Independent Group. I have been working cross-party since 2016.

Some long-established Conservatives in the area struggle to accept any alternatives to Conservative rule. This can cause some friction.

Independent thinkers have become disillusioned with the 'group think' and decisions made by the top of the government.

Good governance works best by consent with people working together. A local councillor is a convenient councillor – visible and part of the community. Within the three-member ward system, there is a risk that Felbridge could end up without any local representation.

I walk my dog around the village every day. I have attended MSDC Full Council twice and East Grinstead Town Planning once. I also recently attended a Wellbeck housing presentation at East Court Manor and I sometimes liaise with a local Independent Mid Sussex District Councillor.

Sat in an office, looking at a flat map, it can appear that Dormansland is next door to Felbridge and the mix of people is similar with East Grinstead being the nearest town for both villages. The reality is it is not near and the two villages have little or no need to mix.

Councillor Judy Moore

District Councillor – Felbridge

Tandridge District Council.

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# Tandridge

## Personal Details:

**Name:** Ms Judy Moore

**Email:** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

**Organisation Name:** Tandridge District Council (District or county councillor)

## Comment text:

**Related subject:** Boundary Review Consultation - Felbridge

I do not feel it is my place to comment too much on areas that I do not live in. Village life is very different from town life and much additional building has taken place in towns which has changed the size and locations of the population. I agree that the towns need to be reassessed and boundaries reconsidered. Villages on the edges of Tandridge are affected by other regions as well as internally so their unique identity and boundaries need to be protected.

## Attached Documents:

- Felbridge District Councillor.docx