

Tandridge

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Comment text:

Related subject: Caterham Valley

We have lived in Caterham Valley for more than 15 years and Alun Jones has been an excellent councillor in every respect. The proposed changes to the council ward boundaries would mean that Stafford Road, Stafford Rise, Milner Approach and Milner Close would all become part of the Queens Park Caterham-on-the Hill ward, this would lead to a loss of connection and relationship between residents in the aforementioned roads and councillors. This would also essentially divide communities which appears to directly oppose the Electoral Commission's view regarding keeping communities together. Secondly, the proposed changes would lead to a much bigger ward - the Caterham Valley Ward would include all of Harestone and most of Caterham Valley. Bigger wards also mean councillors will struggle to help residents with issues such as littering, check planning applications, housing issues etc. Caterham and Whyteleafe residents would also - politically - have less representation and less power over decisions as these wards would have fewer councillors than, rural south wards such as Oxted and Lingfield. This can be seen in the draft plan where wards in the north of Tandridge are above average and all the wards in the south – with the exception of Burstow – are below variance. This is likely to mean that the views of residents in those areas, will have more of an impact on decisions made about e.g. the local plan - which is not acceptable.

Furthermore, The Woldingham Residents Association and Woldingham Parish are proposing that Woldingham remain as a one councillor ward, as opposed to the three that are proposed elsewhere – whilst we agree with these proposals, Woldingham is no different to the villages for example, Tatsfield and Chaldon and therefore, should be treated the same. However, it could be argued that Tatsfield has an affinity with Limpsfield Chart – via Titsey or Woldingham, Tatsfield, Chelsham and Farleigh could be grouped together as residents in these rural communities are likely to have similar issues and concerns. Finally, Stafford Road, Stafford Rise, Milner Road and Milner Approach should remain in the Caterham Valley ward as the green belt ridge is a natural boundary between the Caterham Valley and Caterham-on-the Hill communities.

Furthermore, both of these communities feel that they are different from each other and have different profiles. Therefore, due to the aforementioned reasons we would like to retain the current, two, two councillor wards and not transfer a large area of the Valley ward to outside of the ward. By maintaining the status quo, this will ensure that the focus of the ward councillors continue to be on communicating the needs and priorities of Caterham Valley ward residents to Tandridge District Council and not struggle to do so, due to a substantial increase in workload. We also believe that the reasons given for the substantial changes to the current ward boundaries are not warranted as there appear to be no extreme electoral balances to address – this is of no surprise given that the 1998 Boundary Review ensured that any wards created, met the three criteria and therefore, much remains unchanged. Therefore, any changes to the current status quo should be minor and we hope that the Boundary Commission will agree with those residents who live in the wards where substantial changes will have a detrimental impact.

Attached Documents:

None attached