

Surrey

Personal Details:

Name: Fiona Davidson
Email: [REDACTED]
Postcode: [REDACTED]
Organisation Name: (District or county councillor)

Comment text:

Hi,

Proposed changes to Guildford South East Division

As the elected Councillor for Guildford South East I wish to propose that the Commission retains the Abbotswood area in the current division, rather than moving the area to Guildford East. I understand the Commission's rationale for co-terminosity, but I do not agree that this is in the best interests of the community. Moreover, the retention of Abbotswood in Guildford South East delivers optimum electoral equality. See Option A in Table 1 below. Table 1 was supplied by Democratic Services at Surrey County Council.

My argument that Abbotswood should remain in Guildford South East is as follows.

1. The decision by Guildford Borough Council to incorporate the Abbotswood area into the Burpham ward was not based on taking account of community and geographic boundaries, affiliations, and characteristics. This decision should not be perpetuated at division level when there are strong arguments to retain Abbotswood in the current division, which meet the Commission's criteria.
2. There is a strong physical boundary and geographic separation along the existing south-western boundary of Guildford East and the corresponding north-east boundary of Guildford South East. This boundary follows a line at right angle to the A3100 London Road. Along this line, to the south of the A3100 London Road, the boundary is George Abbot School, and to the north of the A3100 the boundary is the line between

Abbotswood and the Wylea estate. There are no paths connecting the areas. The only connecting route is via the main A3100.

3. There is an historic physical parish boundary stone on the main A3100 identifying Burpham as starting at the north eastern boundary of Abbotswood. There is a very discernible and active village community in Burpham, an active Burpham Community Association (a Residents' Association) and many local societies and organisations, including the Burpham and Merrow Facebook Page, Burpham Bowling Club, etc. The Abbotswood area is not considered part of the village. There is a Neighbourhood Plan for Burpham, but it does not cover the Abbotswood area.

4. The Abbotswood area is not a cohesive community (unlike Burpham). It comprises a number of separate communities each with their own social organisations. There are three residents' associations in the roads named Abbotswood, Abbotswood Close and Westward Ho alone. The pattern in this area is generally that resident groups are organised by road, rather than area, and people tend to identify with the road they live in rather than the area. This is in contrast to Burpham village.

5. The Abbotswood area comprises mature residential housing, which is very similar to the housing in the rest of this area of Guildford South East – on the other side of London Road past Boxgrove Roundabout. There has been no significant development in this area for many years. In contrast, Burpham village has grown significantly with many new developments since the 1970s and 80s into the 2000s.

6. In addition to arguing for the retention of the Abbotswood area I accept the Commission's proposal to add C4 into Guildford South East. C4 is in the town centre and adjacent to an existing area of Guildford South East, so the areas are similar communities and share many characteristics.

Best wishes,
Fiona.

Fiona Davidson
Surrey County Councillor for Guildford South East

Attached Documents:

- Table 1.png