

**From:** LizBurn [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 18 July 2022 20:59  
**To:** reviews  
**Subject:** Personal Response to the Local Government Boundary Commission for England - Re. Epping Forest District - Ward Boundary Review

**Categories:** Submissions, [REDACTED]



## **Epping Forest District – Ward Boundary Review**

18<sup>th</sup> July 2022

### **Review Officer (Epping Forest)**

LGBCE (Local Government Boundary Commission for England)  
PO Box 133, Blyth NE24 9FE

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Dear Sirs,

### **Epping Forest District Council – Ward Boundary Review – Public Consultation**

Having considered the proposal by the Boundary Commission to reduce the number of Ward Councillors in Epping Forest District to 54 (from 58) and the number of Wards to 18 (from 32), I would like to make the following comments, as part of a personal response. I should add that these are my own views and are not intended to reflect those of any other party or representative body.

As a resident of the parish (and the electoral ward) of Theydon Bois, we are represented at Epping Forest District Council ('EFDC') by two Ward Councillors, who participate in a number of decision-making committees, and/or working groups, run by the Local Authority. Present and past members have sat on the Parish Council, for at least part of their term of office at EFDC, and have engaged closely with parishioners, a number of whom also take a keen interest in local affairs and in the preservation of the natural environment within our parish, which we are fortunate to enjoy.

But the political landscape is a more challenging one and, as I write on what may be the hottest day on record, economic recession looms, in the wake of the pandemic, with rising food and fuel prices, war in the Ukraine, and bitter feuding within Westminster.

Who then would be a Ward Councillor, I wonder? The Boundary Commission's Review was not sought by EFDC and it presents a further difficult logistical equation, at both local and district level, to which I have heard no satisfactory resolve. Residents here, and within the District, have long since wanted a greater level of involvement, and a greater say, in how their communities are shaped for the future, but I believe that reducing the number of Ward Councillors will not achieve this, nor will amalgamating such Wards based primarily on statistical data.

Areas to the south, and west, of the District are more densely populated and the One, or Two, Councillor Wards often reflect cohesive boundaries in terms of the type of housing, amenities, and landscape, within their perimeter. Three Councillor Wards in more rural areas could also result in vast swathes of land being banded together under the governance of local representatives who may have little practical knowledge of the history or character of each parish.

With respect to Theydon Bois, I am, therefore, of the view that the present level of representation works well for us and, if residents so wish, may result in the election of two Councillors of different political persuasions, or of the same: male candidates tend to focus on the economic necessities, whilst women are often more focussed on emotional well-being. Or you may disagree with me, of course, and choose another candidate! With elections presently every two years (for a four-year term), the current rotation works well.

Therefore, the combination of Two Ward Councillors is the one I would choose for the electorate of our village and, if those in other Wards across the District feel as strongly about the present level of representation in their communities, I would ask you to respect their views too.

These are challenging times and I believe that reducing the number of Wards, and Ward Councillors, in Epping Forest District will not lead to a better level of representation, understanding or social cohesion, but could severely disrupt the established community identity of many of the current Wards and the localities within them.

Please keep me updated re. the next period of consultation, and thank you for your consideration of this response, which is much appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

*Elizabeth Burn*

