

## Malvern Hills District Council

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### Comment text:

The Commission's proposals for MHDC appear to breach its own basic principles and fail in many areas to respect long-established administrative, social and cultural linkages. I note in particular, the bizarre proposed new Ripple ward with parishes either side of the River Severn that have no possibility of interaction with each other - a clear breach of the Commission's primary stated principle to respect natural boundaries and parish integrity. The town of Upton will be dismembered electorally, being split across two or three wards and not linked to its natural hinterlands to the south and east, as will the parish of Longdon, Queenhill and Holdfast due to the artificial creation of the proposed Ripple ward. Similarly, the town area of Malvern produces an entirely artificial ward of Lower Howsell, an area that exists only as a map and street name and is always referred to by residents as part of the Dysons area, reflecting the importance of the local secondary school and the historic association of Mr Dyson with Malvern. In MHDC's northern half, both Alfrick & Lulsley and Leigh & Bransford parishes are split artificially and unnecessarily. In each case, those parishes are a cohesive entity. Alfrick and Lulsley share a common shop and church (in Alfrick) and public house (in Lulsley). Lulsley does not look to Martley in any respect and there is only a weak linkage north to Knightwick in respect of the doctor's surgery in Knightwick. Links between Lulsley and Alfrick, or even to Suckley (for the social venue provided by the Hop Shed brewery attended by many Alfrick & Lulsley residents) and beyond to Leigh Sinton or Malvern for schooling are far stronger. Finally, in respect of Lulsley, several houses on Green Lane would be marooned by the new boundary, physically unable to reach Lulsley other than by proceeding via the centre of Alfrick. In Leigh and Bransford, the situation is even worse under the Commission's proposals. Bransford and Leigh are an integral whole with a common parish council. All meaningful facilities for Bransford (shop, church, school) are in Leigh Hurst or Leigh Sinton. The parish boundaries are such that if the split envisaged is implemented, five properties on Stocks Road in Leigh Sinton would be cut off from their immediate neighbours and linked with Rushwick, without any connection either physical or social with either Bransford or Rushwick. A similar situation would happen on Suckley Road and the Leigh road in Bransford. On both, houses on either side of each road would be in different wards, despite the community in Bransford being a cohesive single entity. For the Alfrick and Leigh area, the only sensible option is to follow the suggestion made by the Independent and Green group and create a two-councillor ward that incorporates ALL of Alfrick & Lulsley, plus Leigh & Bransford and Suckley. To that, Rushwick must be added to respect the +/-10% electorate threshold mandated by the Commission, assuming that principle is still to be observed. While not an ideal fit, this geographic area has the very high merit of respecting all current parish, social and cultural links, rather than needlessly breaking them. It also has the backing of every parish council involved.

### Uploaded Documents:

None Uploaded