

Boundary Commission
Harrietsham, Lenham and North Downs Ward; response to the most recent suggested
alterations made at last week's Maidstone Borough Council Democracy and General
Purposes Committee Meeting of 21st Sept 2022.

We would like to support Councillors Sams in their response to the suggested move of Stockbury out of the Harrietsham, Lenham and North Downs Ward for the reasons which they have given. However this new 'last minute' suggestion of a North Downs Ward (without Lenham and most of Harrietsham,) has further negative ramifications for the present electorate of Lenham who live north of the A20 and Pilgrims Way:

This 'last minute' suggested ward (North Downs without Lenham and most of Harrietsham) runs along the A20 just north of the Lenham village square by about 200 metres, (and even much closer to Lenham Community Centre and Health Centre) and therefore does take out a good number of the electorate who regard Lenham as their centre. Whilst this newly suggested variation might look 'neat' on a map, the geographical and rural nature of the land in this area makes Lenham the natural centre. Lenham has always been the centre of this rural area.

This 'last minute' proposal would remove the significant landmark of the Lenham Chalk Cross, from the ward of Lenham, it is the logo for Lenham Parish Council and features on the coat of arms for Lenham Parish; Lenham Chalk Cross and the Pilgrims Way which runs immediately below the Cross, and the North Downs in this area have identified and influenced the development of Lenham for centuries.

The Boundary map of Harrietsham, Lenham and the North Downs that was accepted by the Boundary Commission by 1st September 2022 does respect the existing balance in electorate, geography and culture that has worked well for many years.

Councillors Sams reasonably request that Stockbury is taken in to Boxley Downs. These places have never been identified with Lenham, they are far removed geographically and by their very different road communications to Maidstone, Sittingbourne and the Medway Towns. Councillors Sams have many years experience of successfully representing the Lenham and Harrietsham Ward; surely their knowledge should be respected?

I appeal to you not to take any action that would split the ward so that Lenham and Harrietsham no longer takes in the geography, the culture and the electorate of the North Downs.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Lenham.

[REDACTED]

27th September 2022