

Buckinghamshire

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Comment text:

Related subject: Chalfont St Peter/ Gerrards Cross

The proposals submitted so far take either part of the Parish of Gerrards Cross and incorporate it into a ward called Chalfont St Peter or take part of the Parish of Chalfont St Peter and incorporate it into a ward named Gerrards Cross & Denham. Both are emotive proposals and have caused concern to residents that they will be "moved" to a different parish and that are that their personal views will be ignored by elected councillors who are mainly focussed on another parish area.

There was a significant campaign on social media which produced the large number of responses to the latest proposal. There is currently a campaign by Gerrards Cross Town Council urging their residents to support the current proposals so that parts of Chalfont St Peter "will officially be part of Gerrards Cross"

The current proposal reduces the number of councillors for the whole of the Bucks council area from 98 to 97, increasing the number of electors represented by each councillor. This increases the democratic deficit, meaning that residents currently struggling to deal with a very large council, already perceived by some to be remote, will have even more difficulty competing for the attention of their ward councillor.

The combined proposed wards of Gerrards Cross & Denham and Chalfont St Peter could be represented by 6 and not 5 councillors as currently proposed. It has been shown that it would be possible to create an additional single member ward incorporating the northern part of Gerrards Cross and the southern part of Chalfont St Peter, leaving the remainder of the current wards within the Commission's 10% tolerance levels. The councillor representing this area would be able to work closely with the members in the adjoining wards and with both Gerrards Cross Town

Council and Chalfont St Peter Parish Council without the distraction of issues in Denham and Chalfont Common.

Residents of both parish areas are rightly proud of the communities to which they belong and this alternative solution allows identities to be preserved and allows for improved representation.

Comments regarding the prominence of Gerrards Cross should be put into context. Chalfont St Peter was a Domesday Book village and has a much larger population than neighbouring Gerrards Cross which grew around the introduction of the railway. Gerrards Cross is however the postal address of the whole of Chalfont St Peter and features in names of clubs etc , including the Chalfonts and Gerrards Cross Hospital situated in the heart of Chalfont St Peter. The schools, clubs and hospital are used by residents from both settlements.

Attached Documents:

None attached