

**From:** Claire Reilly <deputyclerk@paddockwoodtc.co.uk>  
**Sent:** 05 October 2022 10:55  
**To:** reviews  
**Subject:** Proposed Ward Boundary and representation changes-Response Paddock Wood Town Council  
**Attachments:** electoral review twbc March2022.docx; ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEWsubmission.docx

Good morning

Paddock Wood Town Council have agreed the attached submissions for the consultation process. There are two submissions as the first one submitted in March 2022 was lost in the ether somehow. Please confirm receipt.

Regards  
Claire Reilly  
Deputy Clerk to the Council

## Electoral Review for Borough Council Wards TWBC

Paddock Wood Town Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to Borough Council seats for the Borough of Tunbridge Wells.

Town Councillors attended briefings and noted the assumptions made in the proposals, key points being:

Reduction of the total number of Councillors from 48 down to 39.

There should be approximately 2400 electors per ward. (Current average over 20 wards with 48 councillors being 1766 per ward)

Forecasted electorate for the Paddock Wood wards is : 4084 for Paddock Wood East and 4117 for Paddock Wood West giving a total for the whole Parish of 8201. This would result in 3 members for the whole Parish.

The Town Council comments as follows:

1. PWTC (Paddock Wood Town Council) are disappointed that the boundary commission has decided not to take into account at this time any the proposals for around 4000 dwellings in the area of Paddock Wood in the Draft Local Plan as requested by the Borough Council .Whilst PWTC appreciates the need for planning certainty they feel that at least a proportion of these are certain to come forward and PWTC have in fact been consulted regarding a development of 1100 houses on one of the sites by two developers who has made clear that they have the application fully ready for submission irrespective of what happens regarding the Draft Local Plan.
2. Whilst it is understood that the majority of proposed developments as outlined in the Draft Local Plan are not to be included for consideration in projecting the electorate numbers it is clear to the Town Council that the electorate numbers for the three developments currently under construction, and already partially occupied have been significantly underestimated. There has also been no allowance made for smaller consented infill developments and property extensions designed to accommodate multigenerational living both of which add to the number of electors.
3. For the three large developments alone the electorate is projected to rise from 6198 to 8201 an increase of 2003. The Town Council feels this is a substantial underestimation as the 3 major developments will have a total of 1144 dwellings. Many of the properties are 3-5 bedrooms facilitating multi generational living,an increasing trend in the South East. There is no uncertainty about these sites as they are under construction, many homes are occupied and many have already been sold off plan. There is also no allowance for the numerous consented infill developments where small groups of flats are replacing single bungalows and additional dwellings are being built on gardens. Again the Council refers to developments that are either complete or under construction. The Council therefore feels that even with a conservative view the electorate increase should be projected to rise to 10400 resulting in 4 members for the whole Parish.
4. The Town Council does not object to Paddock Wood being treated as one large ward area as the current distinctions between East and West Paddock Wood are unrecognized by the community and are also rendered nonsensical by the allocation of the new estates that have been allocated to balance the numbers rather than by their geographical proximity to the original wards.
5. A suggestion has been made that the Parish Boundary might be changed to include a proposed development site in East Capel that is entirely adjacent to the existing western edge of Paddock Wood. The Town Council feels that this is entirely logical as any residents in that area would look to Paddock Wood for facilities,transport and services. Such a development would clearly identify as part of the Paddock Wood community, having the same community interest and identity. This view is supported by the findings of the TWBC Settlement Role and Function Study as submitted with the TWBC Draft Local Plan evidence base.

Approved by Paddock Wood Town Council in March 2022

## ELECTORAL BOUNDARY REVIEW

Members met on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2022 to consider a draft response to the proposed changes to the electoral wards for Tunbridge Wells Borough Council. The Council sent a detailed response in March 2022 when the original consultation was carried out. It has subsequently transpired that the Town Council's comments have not been included in the original consultation response document

The members present at the discussion meeting agreed that the original document should be submitted along with the following additional comments:

- The Town Council strongly objects to part of Paddock Wood being placed in a different ward for electoral purposes
- Residents in the area designated Paddock Wood South will identify with Paddock Wood NOT Capel and Pembury.
- There is already a strong Hong Kong community in this area who have established connections with Paddock Wood.
- The council disputes that the residents of Badsell Road and surrounding properties share less community than the rest of Paddock Wood – their addresses will be Paddock Wood and they will consider themselves to be Paddock Wood residents.
- The Council is totally opposed to the changes – however if the proposals are approved then the ward name should include Paddock Wood to reflect its proximity to the town, and not just refer to Capel & Pembury.